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East Asian Cooperation : The Question of Identity

Makmur Keliat
Center for East Asian Cooperation Studies
Indonesia

organized by
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Thammasat University

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Ministry of Foreign of Thailand

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By Makmur Keliat

A number of initiatives have been taken to intensify cooperation between ASEAN and countries located in the Far East such as China, Japan, and South Korea. Such initiatives for instance can be seen from the introduction of ASEAN+3 process mechanism, ASEAN+1 dialogue and the idea to establish ASEAN Free Trade Area with China and also with Japan in the year 2012. The following paper argues that in the long term the scope of cooperation needs to be expanded by including people to people contacts. The main presumption is that as long as the people are not actively included in the scope of cooperation, there would be great difficulty to create a regional identity in East Asian cooperation.

For the purpose of analyses, the following brief paper will be divided into three parts. The first part will analyze three frameworks that can be used to explain why the people factor has become more important than ever in international relations. The second part will explore the challenges that are faced by ASEAN and countries in East Asia to intensify 'people-to-people' cooperation. The third part will try to identify strategies that can be implemented to intensify 'people-to-people' interaction.

People and Identity in International Relations

From the discussions and discourses among the academic community, there are, at least, three frameworks that can be used to rationalize the increasing significance of the people factor in international relations. The first framework relates to the traditional thoughts in international relations studies, particularly the British School of International Studies. Generally, this school of thought has developed three distinguished groups of thought, which are known as Machiavellian, Grotian, and Kantian group.¹

From this categorization, it is the Kantian group which truly emphasizes the significance of the people factor. The main difference between the Kantian and the other thoughts lies in their understanding about the essence of international relations. The Kantian group opposes the Machiavellian's viewpoint, which presumes that international relations is only about interstate conflicts. The Kantian group also refuses to accept the Grotian's viewpoint that international relations are simply a combination of interstate conflicts and cooperation.

For the Kantians, international relations should not be seen from the viewpoint of interstate relations, but it should be seen in the lower level, i.e. in the interaction among people with its moral aim to create brotherhood. This does not mean that state as a unit of analysis is considered insignificant. But state is conceptualized as an institution which articulates the interactions among people with a view to creating such a brotherhood. From this point of view, there are two practical implications that deserve special attention particularly in the context of diplomacy implementation.

First, the Kantian group, in general, states that diplomacy mainly aims at reducing the tension. It is then natural if the proponents of Kantians oppose the exercise of diplomacy by strength and gun boat diplomacy. Secondly, open diplomacy is vital due to its moral obligation to strengthen a sense of brotherhood among human beings. For the

Kantian group, open diplomacy means that diplomacy should not be done secretly and quietly. Diplomacy should provide people with wide space to express their opinion. For that purpose, the dissemination of information to public is considered as a precondition for the implementation of open diplomacy. Because of that reason, the proponents of Kantian thought typically have a viewpoint that all the citizens have rights to know the agreements which have been concluded by the government on behalf of them. Furthermore, all the citizens also have rights to involve in every process to reach agreements which are signed by their government with other governments.

The second framework relates to the emergence of the new thought in international relations studies known as Constructivism perspective. This perspective, which started to be widely known in the 1990s, is different from the other conventional framework. As stated by Kubalkova, Onuf, and Kowert,² this perspective presumes that ideas will never be neutral. Ideas are not given, but socially constructed. Thus, ideas as well as theories will always be constructed for someone's interests and for particular purposes. Based on this point of view, the people factor becomes significant to create such an idea or theory. People, according to this perspective, always see the "reality" or the world through the "lenses" which are artificially put on their eyes. Further, even the people themselves would probably never figure out, that he, as an individual, has the "lenses". To underline the extensive influences of the artificial "lenses", Kubalkova, et. al. made the following analogy.

The scholars whose thinking is based on the Liberal perspective, for instance, always examines how to remove fire from the forest. While, the scholars who adopt the Realist perspective always consider that fire is always there in the forest. Thus, they are more concerned with how to control the impacts. On the other hand, the radical Structuralists would never blame the people if there were forest devastations, because the devastations are considered naturally happened as a result of their economic position in the world economy. Such an economic position, then, has not given any other choice to the people.

The practical implication of such understanding of international relations is distinctive. Value, norms, and identity which can be analogized with the artificial "lenses" have become as important as material power. For the Constructivists, such as John Gerard Ruggie,³ an organization or a regime, in the regional as well as international level, is able to survive not only because it has the material power but also because its purposes have taken strong roots in and been accepted by the people as legitimate. In other words, we can say that the organization's identity has been embedded in the people to the point that organizational norms have also become integral part of the social norms. For that reason, the organization's needs for survival should not be seen merely from the availability of financial and physical instruments.

The third framework relates to the globalization process marked by impressive progress in communication technology and liberalization measures. The on-going globalization has brought about significant changes in giving sense to the region, issue, and actor. As a result of globalization process territory has been defined loosely in the sense that local, national, regional, and global events could be overlapped. For example, the emergence of new terms such as 'intermestic' and 'glocalization' has shown this tendency. If seen from the issue aspect, the similar tendency also appeared. For example, environment and economic issues could be seen as security issues and that is why new

terminologies, such as 'environment security' and 'economic security' have been introduced.⁴ From the actor aspect, globalization process has also led to the emergence of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with their pluralistic global networks and their meetings, which are typically transnational in nature.⁵ These organizations generally operate in order to manage the space given by state and market. Their activities are done on behalf of public interests and most of them are very skeptical to the liberalization process, which has been taken at regional as well as multilateral levels.⁶

There have been a number of impacts brought about by those tendencies on the role and activities of the state. For example, from the territorial dimension, the idea of territorial sovereignty --that has always been claimed by state as a part of its absolute authority-- could not be longer used arbitrarily. The idea of individual sovereignty has been mooted to challenge the idea of territorial sovereignty. From the issue dimension, state is also being obliged to use a holistic framework. Finally from the actor dimension, now state is not the only actor on whom the people depend in order to articulate their interests. The ideas of economic benefits from liberalization that have been promoted by policy makers, now are challenged by social welfare and social justice issues that have been aired by NGOs on the behalf of the people.

East Asian Cooperation and the People

By using analytical frameworks that have been described above, at least there are three big questions faced by the member countries of ASEAN and their partner countries (Japan, South Korea and China) in their efforts to intensify regional cooperation in East Asia. First, from the Kantian point of view, could the countries accept the importance of open diplomacy? Second, from the Constructivist point of view, why there is an urgent need for East Asian countries to highlight identity as a vital issue in their economic cooperation? Third, from the globalization point of view, what should be done to evolve constructive relationship between state and NGOs in East Asia region which claim to have struggled for the people's interests?

Related to the first question, East Asian cooperation was facing two main obstacles in implementing open diplomacy. The first obstacle came out from diverse political systems between countries in the region. For some countries, efforts to promote open diplomacy become far more difficult because it requires democratic political processes. Because of its political repercussion at the domestic level the term "open diplomacy" would be considered as a very sensitive issue. Probably, this was also one of the reasons of why ASEAN has preferred the 'quiet diplomacy' style and rejected the 'megaphone diplomacy' style,⁷ which is generally used by the NGOs that has been socialized in carrying out their activities through advocating and campaigning agendas.

The second obstacle comes out from the consensus and non-interference principles that have been mainly agreed upon under the framework of ASEAN+3 processes. In certain degree, these principles actually could strengthen the cohesiveness in evolving East Asian cooperation. However, on the other hand, those principles could also make the implementation of open diplomacy more difficult particularly in reaching consensus. Formulated in other words, we could say that open diplomacy would be rejected because it would make the decision-making process will be trapped in the time-consuming process. Besides, the creation of space for public or non-state actors'

engagement, before or after the decision-making process, definitely needs an extraordinary patience and behavior that is not easily achieved. In other words, if we want to implement open diplomacy, then it might require a transformation in consensus and non-interference principles that have been firmly maintained by ASEAN.

Related to the second question, there is a must for East Asian countries to improve the relations between the people due to the increasing economic interdependency in the region. The financial crisis in 1998 at least delivered a clear message. The message is that the object affected by the crisis was the people but no regional cooperation that has been developed has the institutional and collective capacities to handle it. In addition, the economic disparity between members can give an incentive for workers trafficking from the low-income to the higher income countries. The negligence to handle such trans-boundary issues would create a perception that initiatives taken by states to strengthen regional cooperation in East Asia would be perceived as part of the vested interests of the bureaucrats and not for handling issues connected with the people's interests.

In this context it is also necessary to point out that the idea of territorial border should not solely be understood in the meaning of *boundary*. It could also be a time for us to comprehend the terms in the meaning of *frontier*, which refers to the zone that enable the people who live there to explore outside the borders made by states.⁸ It is a factual reality, that to the people who live in borders, the states' territorial boundaries only have an artificial meaning.⁹ Moreover, if we observe the regional dynamics in East Asian region, the most dynamic factor indeed lays in market and the peoples. This does not mean to play down state's role in the whole dynamics. However, it should be noted that, there has not been any addition of state actor in the last thirty years in the region. On the contrary, market has become very dynamic as a result of the ongoing liberalization process. The society factor have become likewise because of population growth. The demographic changes have given birth to new generations with new expectations and with collective memories, which are probably different from the earlier generations. However, if we only pay attention to and accommodate market interests and dynamics without giving any concern to the importance of accommodating civil society --that has become the moral inspiration and values of life-- a regional cooperation would physically exist but without the soul from its people.

Related to the third question, it seems necessary to say from the outset that there has been a variation in the growth of non-governmental organizations among East Asian countries. But, a few studies that had been done could be used to give us more evident illustration or mapping about NGOs in Southeast Asia. First, from the quantity as well as network aspects, a study that is done by Yamamoto et. al.¹⁰ indicates that NGOs at local, national, and regional levels have improved in Southeast Asia as well as Asia Pacific regions. One of the reasons for their existence and cooperation network seemed to be based on the thought that economic interaction was not adequate to underpin the creation of 'sense of community'. On contrary, economic interaction is believed to have become the source of social disintegration. Moreover, the issues that have emerged as the result of globalization process were complex that no country could resolve them individually. Based on this consideration, regional cooperation process should be best accompanied by multilayer levels of interaction between NGOs.

Second, in the context of global level, there are differences between the NGOs in the developed countries and those in the developing countries. A study by Helmut Anheir et. al. shows that if measured by quantity, the number of NGOs with international networks is actually more centralized in developed countries instead of developing countries. Apparently it is related to the funding resources of NGOs' activities, which mostly come from developed countries. However, this study also mentions that funding resources do not only come from the NGOs based in the developed countries, but also from states and multilateral funding resources.¹¹

This study gives a clear message that there is still wide-open space available in establishing cooperation between NGOs, states and multilateral funding institution representing states. Thus, the relationship between NGOs and states should not always be understood as conflicting relationship, but also in cooperative relationship towards a positive-sum game. Based on this consideration, the intensification of dialogue mechanism between states and NGOs (state-society dialogue) is a step that needs to be institutionalized—in the local as well as national level—concerning the issues related to the people's interests. If it can be done institutionally, then the same process can be transformed to the regional level, starting from the senior officers, ministerial level, and even the possibility, for example, to hold a parallel summit.¹²

Concluding Remarks

From the brief explanation above, at least there are three major points I would like to underline for the future cooperation in East Asian region. First, the cooperation needs not to rely heavily on quiet diplomacy. Secondly, policy makers involved in strengthening cooperation in East Asia need to be aware that the efforts to create "sense of community and identity" in could not be accomplished if it is merely based on the big agendas of liberalization, both in the context of deepening and widening, and if the security issues are merely understood from the conventional point of view. The social issues related to social welfare and human security are also necessary to be taken as an agenda with equal attention. Thirdly, the opportunity to involve people in East Asian regional cooperation can be started from institutionalizing the state-society dialogue in every member countries and then bringing it to the regional level.

Endnotes

¹ See Martin Wight in *International Theory: The Three Tradition* (London: Leicester University Press, 1991)

² For interesting discussion, see Kubalkova, Vendulka, Nicholas Onuf, Paul Kowert, *International Relations in a Constructed World* (1998)

³ See, John Gerard Ruggie, *Constructing the World Politics: Essay on International Institutionalization* (London: Routledge, 1998)

⁴ See, Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework of Analysis*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

⁵ See, Ariel Colonomos, "Transnational Networks: Old Games, New Rules," in Marie-Claude Smouts (ed.), *The New International Relations: Theory and Practice*, (London: Hurts&Company, 1998).

⁶ See, Jerry Mender and Edward Goldsmith (eds.), *The Case Against the Global Economy and for A Turn Toward the Local*, (San Fransisco: Siera Club Books, 1996).

⁷ See, Rodolfo C. Severino, ex-ASEAN Secretary General on The Fourth Meeting of UN and Regional Organization in Cooperation for Peace-Building, United Nations, New York, 6-7 February 2001.

⁸ See, Ronen Palan (ed.), *Global Political Economy* (London: Routledge, 2000)

⁹ See, Great Evans, et. al., *Where China Meets Southeast Asia: Social and Cultural Changes in the Border Regions* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2000)

¹⁰ See, Tadashi Yamamoto (ed.), *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community*, (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1995). See also *A Directory of Southeast Asia, Selected Organizations Related to Sectoral Training and Capacity Building*, (Bangkok: Asian Regional Resource Center for Human Rights Education, 2001).

¹¹ Further, see Helmut Anheier, et. al. (eds.), *Global Civil Society 2001* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). See also, *Direktori Peace Building Indonesia* (Indonesian Peace building Directory) (Yogyakarta: Cordaid and CRS, January 2003)

¹² See, Mark Ritchie, "Cross Border Organizing" in Jerry Mender & Edward Goldsmith (eds.), *The Case Against the Global Economy and for a Turn Toward the Local* (San Francisco: Siera Club Books, 1996)



Emerging East Asian Identification: A Cultural Perspective

Yu Xintian, Professor
President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

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Emerging East Asian Identification: A Cultural Perspective

Yu Xintian

An important result of the international division of labor in recent decades is the formation and rise of the East Asian region. Region not only refers to the geographic, economic and political formation but also includes psychological and cultural identification. Without the latter, the concept of region is incomplete and infirm. People have noticed that East Asian identification has taken shape. Then, the causes and characteristics of the identification, its significance to East Asian international relations and its problems and prospects are worth an in-depth study. This paper will present my views to seek advice.

I. Causes and Cultural Characteristics of East Asian Identification

What is meant by identification? It can be divided into domestic and international. Here it refers to international identification, also called collective identification. Identification is a cognitive process in which the Self-Other distinction becomes blurred and at the limit transcended altogether. Collective identification merges the Self and the Other into a single identity. Collective identity involves shared characteristics, but not all shared characteristics involve identification. France and Algeria both speak French, but they do not identify with each other. Collective identity, in short, is a distinct combination of role and type identities, one with the casual power to induce actors to define the welfare of the Other as part of that of the Self, to be altruistic. Altruistic actors may still be rational, but the basis on which they calculate their interests is the group or team.¹

The identification of East Asian countries is a kind of regional collective identification and, to a considerable extent, is related to economic globalization and regional integration. We have found regional organizations and identification of all forms in the world. The birth of the East Asian identification is a matter in recent years. East Asia includes Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia was integrated through the ASEAN in the 1970s and 1980s. Soon afterwards, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir set forth the proposal of setting up the East Asian Economic Caucus in 1991, to which the Chinese Government responded. Though the developed countries such as the U.S. took exception to and even obstructed it, at the time of the first Eurasian Meeting, East Asian countries specially held consultations on this proposal and naturally formed the framework of the enlarged ASEAN plus China, Japan and the ROK. East Asian regional cooperation in an embryonic form thus appeared. In the meantime, the academia in these countries explored a lot of plans and ideas for East Asian cooperation, such as China-Japan-the ROK Economic Cooperation Circle, 10+1, 10+3, Tumen River Area Development Zone and Mekong River Delta Development Project. The Asian financial storm in 1997 spurred the intention of East Asian countries joining hands in resisting negative effects of economic globalization, making the East Asian identification enter a new phase. Japan has signed the Free Trade Agreement with Singapore and is discussing a similar agreement with the ROK. China and the ASEAN have declared that they will set up a free trade zone in 2010 and China is intensifying its efforts to research on China-Japan-the ROK and China-Japan-the ROK-ASEAN free trade agreements. Close economic intercourse between East Asian countries is unprecedented and economic interdependence between them is enhancing. Interest interrelation is the basis of regional identification, while recognition of shared interests is the key to promoting identification. Around 1997, the economic intercourse between East Asian countries didn't undergo qualitative change immediately, but their leaders and peoples made a leap in the process of cognition, understanding that only by relying on collective strength can the negative effects of economic



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

globalization be resisted. As a result, the regional identification was intensified. Moreover, the vigorous development of regional cooperation mechanisms also raised the regional identification to a higher level. For example, after the Chinese Government decided to set up a free trade zone with the ASEAN, in 2002, it decided to exempt Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam from debts totaling US\$ 3 billion. This is obviously an act of combining China's own interests and other countries' interests.

The first characteristic of the East Asian identification is the identification of East Asian countries on modernization. Enthusiastic pursuit of modernization and learning from Western culture for reference are the basis of the East Asian identification. East Asian cultures are rich and diversified, but in the current international system, their basic norms of behavior have accepted international standards mainly coming from the West, such as sovereign equality, nonaggression and mutual respect, providing a premise to combination of self-interest and the Other's interest. A Western theorist holds that when the world is considered in a state of anarchy, because of difference in identification, state-to-state relations can be defined as three different kinds of anarchy: Hobbesian anarchy, Lockean anarchy and Kantian anarchy, i.e. enmity, rivalry and friendship. The process of East Asian countries changing from enmity in the Cold War period to rivalry and friendship or from the Lockean anarchy to the Kantian anarchy, is a great leap forward. If relations between East Asian countries were still in the Hobbesian anarchy---the state of the weak being the prey of the strong or confrontation, identification would have never been achieved. After WWII, sovereign equality has been realized among the majority of countries in the world, which has laid a foundation for identification but will not certainly lead to it. East Asian countries have moved a step further. Their achievements in modernization are not only economic growth but also reforms in system and idea. To accept market economy means to recognize individual rights, individual values and competition awareness. East Asian countries not only have set up the modern political system in the light of the Western model for a long time but also have actively pushed forward democratization after the end of the Cold War. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir has often been criticized by Westerners because of criticizing the West and advocating Asian values, but he repeatedly stresses in his works the necessity of learning from Western culture. He said that the fact that I have championed Asian values does not necessarily mean that Western values are bad. They could also be good; we do not live in a simplistic either-or world. But we live in a culture different from Western one and hope cultures besides Western culture be respected. Everyone should be open-minded enough to ponder other possibilities. He does not agree to calling the 21st century Asian Century, advocating that this is a World Century and all countries, nations and regions enjoy same opportunities.ⁱⁱ There is no need to cite the exposition of other Asian elite. The majority of them know that East Asian countries must learn from the West to give impetus to the process of modernization. Mahathir's view is representative, that is, Asians, like the majority of peoples of developing countries, tend to cultural relativism and want to contend for a equal position with Western culture.ⁱⁱⁱ

The second characteristic of the East Asian identification is it embodies the commonality and similarity of East Asian cultures. East Asia is the converging point of the Chinese cultural circle, the Indian cultural circle and the Islamic cultural circle. In their long historical intercourse, the three cultures have influenced one another, changed their respective faces and extended to include the factors of one another. The things in common among them surpass those between them and Western culture. For instance, Buddhist culture not only dominates in some of Southeast Asian countries but also has huge influence on China, Japan and the



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

ROK. Under the impact of Chinese culture and Indian culture, the formation of Islamic culture in East Asia is quite different from that in the Arabian Peninsula. The basic creed is the same, but cultural manifestations and explanations are different. Arabia lays stress on tribe, while Southeast Asia stresses family and clan, respect of parents, respect of the state and emphasis on education. Arabia advocates force and blood revenge, while East Asia praises highly harmony and peace. East Asian cultures have many common tendencies, which mainly are social harmony, cliquism resulting from clan, emphasis on education and respect of authority. They not only have exerted impacts on psychology and behavior of the broad masses of people but also have given birth to a political culture with East Asian characteristics. East Asian countries have learned from and absorbed Western values in the process of nativization, just as light being refracted by glass. In this process native cultures have been renewed and transformed, presenting new formations. On this basis, the cultural values of East Asian elite have much commonality. In 1994, David Hitchcock, former Director for East Asia and Pacific Affairs at the US Information Agency, issued a questionnaire to elite of all circles in the U.S. and East Asia. He asked them, including this author, to choose six societal values and five personal values they think are the most important. The order of societal values which East Asia thinks are the most important was as follows: 1. having an orderly society; 2. societal harmony; 3. ensuring the accountability of public officials; 4. being open to new ideas; 5. freedom of expression; and 6. respect for authority. But the order of the U.S. was different. 1. freedom of expression; 2. individual rights; 3. individual freedom; 4. open debate; 5. thinking for oneself; 6. accountability of public officials. Obviously, East Asia placed more emphasis on order, harmony and respect for authority, while the U.S. paid more attention to individual rights, open debate and freedom of expression. As for the most important personal values, 39% of East Asian respondents and only 19% of Americans chose "fulfilling obligations to others" while 59% of US respondents and only 33% of East Asians chose "individual achievements". And 69% of East Asians and only 15% of Americans stressed respect for learning and 48% of East Asians and only 22% of Americans emphasized self-discipline.^{iv} Not a few surveys have showed that East Asia has shared or similar cultural values quite different from Western ones. This is the cultural source of the East Asian identification.

East Asian values have influence not only on the elite but also on the youth, which shows the strength of cultural inheritance and indicates the future of East Asian cultures. This is the third characteristic of the East Asian identification. Scholars of China, Japan and the ROK made a survey of values of the youth, the result of which is very interesting. The values of the youth in these three countries have been clearly modernization-oriented. Less than 10% of the young respondents approved the traditional family with the authority of husband. More than 50% thought relations between generations to be friendly. Less than 20% held politics to be dealt with by politicians. Less than 25% considered it necessary to often extend respect to authoritative personages. Meanwhile, traditional Confucian culture exists in their values. Over 77% of respondents were proud or relatively proud of their own country and 80% of them were strongly or relatively strongly willing to serve their country. Most of them welcomed foreigners as their neighbors, which indicated openness in their private life. But on the attitude to dealing with national foreign relations, more respondents in China and the ROK chose national interests, while the proportion of respondents choosing world interests in Japan was the highest. More than 80% of the young respondents in the three countries advocated inheritance of traditional national culture but no hostility to Western culture. Only less than 20% considered Western culture as one making people hostile.^v



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

The fourth characteristic of the East Asian identification is that Japan is quite different from other East Asian countries in cultural diachronism. As is known to all, besides synchronism, culture has the feature of diachronism, that is, manifestations related to the degree of social development. In this regard, the ideological trend and value judgment of the Japanese are closer to those of Western developed countries, but of course they also have the characteristics of Japanese culture. Other East Asian countries are closer to one another and are far away from Japan in cultural diachronism.^{vi} For example, the Japanese youth pay more attention to global interests, while the youth in other countries lay more emphasis on national interests. This is an issue we can not ignore in understanding the East Asian identification.

II. Significance of East Asian Identification

As Alexander Wendt pointed out, without interests identities have no motivational force, without identities interests have no direction.^{vii} Identification gives East Asian countries collective identities, guiding them to seek interests through cooperation. According to Realism, every country is egotistic and wants to pursue maximum self-interests. This is to some extent correct, but it can not explain many issues such as why European countries have renounced part of their national interests to form the European Union. Interests naturally have their objectivity, but they also have subjectively recognized factors, behind which is the role of culture. The gap in strength between Japan and Malaysia is very wide and no doubt both of them seek national interests, but they are quite different in cultural psychology of cognizing and defining interests. So, in WWII, Japan invaded Malaysia, but now Japan forges friendly relations with Malaysia. National interests refer to the possibility of countries maintaining subsistence, security, development and dignity. In all these respects, identification will change people's definition of national interests and the channels of seeking national interests. The ASEAN has conducted with skill free trade cooperation respectively with India, China and Japan, being in a beneficial position. This is related to drastic changes in mutual definition of interests. The ASEAN will no longer feel apprehension about any big power and it is impossible for any big power to regard the ASEAN as its sphere of influence. Only by so doing, can such a win-win-win result be achieved.

Security is the most sensitive issue in sovereignty. On this issue, the definition of interests by East Asian countries has changed subject to identification. In fact, there still exist territorial, border and sea areas disputes between East Asian countries, but they have begun to settle these disputes through peaceful consultations. If unable to resolve the disputes for a short while, they have also shelved them. Singapore and Malaysia as well as Malaysia and Indonesia have peacefully resolved their border and other disputes. After the 1970s, when rich oil was found in the South China Sea, six countries and regions respectively occupied several islands and there were signs that further actions would be taken. Following the Asian financial crisis, China and the ASEAN discussed this problem for years and issued the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, adopting a code of conduct for maintaining the status quo. The September 11 attacks again sounded a warning to East Asian countries and spurred their new understanding of nontraditional security. Terrorism, drug-trafficking, weapons-trafficking, transnational crime, AIDs and other activities have all transcended the borders, so leaders of all countries have no choice but to join hands. With Singapore outlawing the Islamic underground organization and Indonesia's explosion in Bali as the chance, East Asia set up a framework of exchanging and sharing intelligence about terrorist activities and laundering. In the field of environmental protection, as the destructive smoke resulting from Indonesian burning the grass on wasteland caused other countries'



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

economy to suffer, an agreement on cooperation in preventing the destructive smoke was signed. In 2003, when the SARS indulged, leaders of China and the ASEAN met and jointly adopted effective measures to fight against the disease. They planed to set up an Asian fund into which China pledged US\$ 1.2 million and Thailand US\$ 0.25 million. At the same time, countries also reiterated their commitments to keep open their borders and economy, showing the will of mutual understanding and working together. It was at this summit that Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao declared that China decided to enter into the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. The identification between China and the ASEAN has further been enhanced. Pondering of nontraditional security has pushed ahead cooperation in traditional security. It is a good proof that since 2002 China has attended the Cobra Gold military exercises in Thailand as an observer.

It goes without saying that identification can promote common development. East Asia has formed multilevel and multiform cooperation mechanisms. Indeed, it is a fact that the ASEAN was once worried about foreign investment transferring to China. In the 1990s, the foreign capital the ASEAN absorbed accounted for 30% of that flowing into Asia, but in 2000 it dropped to 10%. Most has transferred to China. Lee Kuan Yew, Singaporean Senior Minister, said that though China had absorbed more foreign capital than Southeast Asia, its economic growth would benefit countries in this region. He predicted that in the coming 30-50 years, Southeast Asia, China, the ROK and Japan would form a chain production and operation group, which would re-divide the Asian economic territory. This identification has produced obvious results. China's market demands have brought along East Asian prosperity. In 2001, China's trade volume with East Asian trade partners (excluding Japan) accounted for 40% of its total volume and its foreign investment from East Asia accounted for 67% of its total. When East Asia was in contact only with the U.S. and Japan, the industries in East Asian countries had the same structure and lacked horizontal contact. After China's rise, East Asian horizontal economic contacts have been greatly strengthened and endogenous economic variables are gradually becoming the leading force of development. Between 1990 and 2001, the export from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia to China increased by 600%, while that to Japan, Europe and the U.S. only 250%. China has had a deficit in its trade with the ASEAN, so ASEAN countries have benefited a lot. It has also supported the economic resurgence of Japan and the ROK. Osamu Watanabe, Chairman of the Japan External Trade Organization, recently pointed out that East Asian economy is rapidly developing and a new Pacific industrial zone from Japan and China to Southeast Asia is taking shape. The strategy of the Japanese External Trade Organization will no longer focus on Europe and the U.S. but transfer to Asia. In 2002, Japan's economic leaders changed their views of "China threat" and "hollowed industry", holding that Japan should upgrade the knowledge-related industries rather than complaining neighboring countries. This is also a drastic change in interests and identification.

The East Asian identification will further enhance the confidence of East Asian countries in success and affirmation of East Asian cultures is the motive force of promoting economic success. Max Weber summarized the Western capitalist spirit, that is, individualism, market competition, *laissez faire* and others. However, East Asian work ethics and corporate spirit are very different. Individuals are meaningful only in organizations. Everyone must observe his/her responsibilities and obligations in the organizations and attach importance to mutual cooperation. American scholar Michael Bond investigated 40 values in 22 countries and found that East Asia placed special emphasis on respect, humbleness, frugality, willpower, sense of shame, mutual courtesy, steadiness, reputation, tradition and others. Yu Shaohua



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

with the National University of Singapore investigated the values of enterprise managers in Singapore and Malaysia and also agreed to the interrelation between cultural background and economic development. Of course, the importance of political system and economic structure is not excluded. Samuel P. Huntington affirmed East Asian cultures' role in economy in his new work. He found that around 1960 the economic level and structure of the ROK was similar to Ghana. Thirty years later, the ROK became an industrial giant in the world, while Ghana's per capita GNP was only one fourteenth of the ROK. There were many reasons, but culture was an important factor.^{viii} In the same work, three scholars from developing countries maintained that poverty, autocracy and injustice in Africa and Latin America had resulted from traditional cultural values.^{ix} Although after the East Asian financial crisis many people denied East Asian cultures and their values, a lot of experts have strengthened positive evaluation of East Asian cultures. Du Weiming wrote that the West is the source of modernization, but East Asian modernization has a cultural form quite different from that of West Europe and North America. If the West seriously understands the modernity of East Asia, it will be sharper in seeing the strong and weak points of its model to the rest of the world. This will be a big step of the West and other areas of the world towards real exchanges. Without such exchanges, there will be no basic trust and effective cooperation between civilizations.^x East Asian successful experiences are inspiring for other ethnic groups. Culture cannot be simply transplanted but can be learned for reference. After the Asian financial crisis, East Asia has no longer simplistically regarded culture as the cause of economic development, but rather the chance of understanding economic development and the background of improving institutions. The deeper people cognize, the better they can explore the role of culture in economic development.

Another significance of the East Asian identification is it has enhanced East Asian position in the international arena or collective self-esteem. While the U.S. is making efforts to establish a Pan-American free trade zone and Europe will become a stronger actor, East Asia is able to match them in economic strength, but it lacks mechanization. Only deepened identification can promote strengthened organization and only integrated East Asia can play a bigger role in the world. In the past hundreds of years, the Western powers have destroyed the most of civilizations and societies in the world and negated or changed local cultures and morals by means of Christianity, law and trade besides force. The West has bragged itself as the spiritual teacher of other ethnic groups and determined the destiny of them in accordance with its standards. While dominating the world with its hard power, the West has taken precedence in soft power. The rise of East Asian countries will enable East Asia to get its thoughts, cultures, and value systems onto the international stage, to set forth its propositions, to participate in reform of the international order, establishment of international organizations, adjustment of international mechanisms and distribution of international interests as well as to affirm its existence with its unique political culture. This has made the West strongly feel the challenge of heterogeneous cultures and the overturn of the rule of its culture. As early as 1980, British famous politician Roderick MacFarquhar pointed out that in the next century Russian challenge will be military, Middle East challenge will be economic, while only East Asia will pose an all-round challenge to the West, from the style of economic development to basic values. Indeed, only East Asia, in its high-speed economic growth, clearly put forward "Asian values", which aroused hot debates and will also arouse debates in the future. I always hold that the proposal of the "Asian values" itself is of political significance, which will increase rather than decrease.



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

In my opinion, the development of the current East Asian cultures has undergone two phases. The first phase was from the 1960s to the end of the Cold War, in which a new East Asian culture was formed and the "Asian values" were put forward. Since the end of the Cold War, East Asian cultures entered the second phase, in which the East Asian identification has taken shape and developed. This phase may take decades of years. East Asia will strive for its due rights and utter a louder voice in the international political arena. The unique cultural identification will be one of its weapons. However, this is definitely not Huntington's so-called clash of civilizations. The reason is that the East Asian people have undergone the painful colonial and semi-colonial rule and cultural coercion caused two deviations: strongly resisting all the Western culture and blindly worshipping all things of the West. After national independence, people have chosen and learned cultures on their own, thus gradually reducing the two deviations. Western countries have no such experience, which is a past luck to them. For this reason, however, it is difficult for them to understand the excellence and greatness of world diversified cultures, which is their future misfortune. Judging from the present phase, the East Asian identification has just started and is still paving the way for East Asia striving for international position. Even if it achieves this objective in the future, East Asia can not advocate autocracy repelling other cultures. It is not only because East Asian ethnic groups have suffered from enslavement and are unwilling to impose sufferings on others but also because the values East Asian cultures stress can more contain the essence of human thoughts and cultures. Therefore, Arnold Toynbee, a master in historical culture, pointed out that the peace and unity he foresees are bound to center about the geographic and cultural spindle and to continuously crystallize. He has a premonition that the spindle is not in the U.S., Europe and the Soviet Union, but in East Asia.^{xi}

III. Problems and Prospects of East Asian Identification

The East Asian region is full of hopes, but crises and challenges there are very severe. First, the East Asian identification remains in its embryonic stage and has to grow, blossom and bear fruit in fighting against hardships. East Asian integration is still a difficult matter. There is a wide gap in economic development level and political system between countries, which is the objective cause. Special emphasis of countries on their own national interests is the subjective cause. All the countries have obviously seen the necessity of integration, but the process of realizing it will be one of balancing and coordinating their political will. Challenges are more in the aspect of security. How two divided countries move to reunification is conspicuous. Disputes over border and territorial waters between countries have not yet been finally settled. Arms expansion does not proceed from the actual needs but rather surpassing neighboring countries. What impacts will bilateral or multilateral military alliances have on regional security? Tense relations between ethnic groups and religions and unequal distribution of wealth, which may ferment nontraditional security threats, have also perplexed countries in the region. As many problems cannot be resolved only through bilateral efforts, the countries can only move in the direction of regional integration. The EU is the example of regional integration, but it is not clear what model East Asia will adopt. This depends not only on East Asian further development in politics and economy but also on the depth and characteristics of East Asian cultural identification.

Second, though East Asian religions are in general modest and plural, extremism is rising inside them, creating an atmosphere for such nontraditional security threats as terrorism. In Northeast Asia, the emergence of extreme churches such as the Falun Gong and the Aum Supreme Truth reflects the influence of extremism. In Southeast Asia, problems are



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

more complicated. Most of Southeast Asian countries have a dominant religion, which plays an official or tacit role in societal life. The religious renaissance has quietly risen during the period of their economic growth and social progress. Economic globalization has promoted people's self-awareness and regression to the vernacular culture. Many Malaysian returned students have taken a more active part in Islamic activities. Of course, they do not oppose modern science and technology. Southeast Asian Muslims are very proud of the more important role the Middle East Muslim countries play in the international arena. To make the complicated and diversified society more cohesive, the governments of Southeast Asian countries declare that they are the protectors of Islam. Though the heads of governments are unwilling to see the situation of religion overriding politics, their policies are conducive to this situation.^{xii} In the Buddhist movement, there are also ultra-Left and ultra-Right leaders. The extensive religious renaissance has tolerated religious extremism, which can easily become the hotbed of terrorism. East Asian religious diversity may directly or indirectly influence identification. For example, on the anti-terrorism issue, the countries being the most active in supporting the fight against terrorism are Singapore and the Philippines, rather than Islamic countries. In the Southeast Asian Islamic countries, the sentiments of the broad masses of the people have impacts on governmental policy making. Only by prudently dealing with sensitive religious issues, can identification between East Asian countries be promoted.

Third, nationalism is still rising in East Asian countries, which has positive effects, but we must watch out for its negative effects. Except for the DPRK, the ROK and Japan, most East Asian countries have a lot of ethnic groups. Indonesia has more than 100 ethnic groups, Myanmar has 135, Vietnam over 60 and Thailand more than 30. With the progress of modernization, the peoples of East Asian countries have enhanced their national self-confidence and have more identification with national states. The generalization of mass media, the consolidation of state power, the industrialization and the urbanization have all become strong forces pounding at traditional national groups. At present, in East Asia as a whole, nationalism still has positive effects, but it is very imperative to control its negative effects. In nontraditional security threats, some activities are often related to particular ethnic issues. For example, the drug traffickers in the Golden Triangle between Myanmar, Laos and Thailand are mainly Shans in Myanmar, Miaos in Laos and Thailand and Remnants of the Kuomintang. The immature political modernization and the unfinished national integration in East Asian countries may sometimes lead to social clash and even turmoil and even spill over the borders. For instance, in social riots, people of Chinese descent often bear the brunt. Without a correct direction, nationalism in big powers and large countries may cause corrosive of regional identification. So it is a major topic for achieving identification to advocate positive nationalism and prevent negative and destructive nationalism.

Lastly, thinking deeply about this issue, East Asian cultural identification also needs consideration of the integration of cultural diversity and unity. Its long-range objective is to seek universal significance and value of East Asian cultures. At the present stage when Western culture dominates, what East Asia demands is cultural tolerance, recognition and respect. However, seeking universality is just denying cultural tolerance. From a static view, the two are not synchronous. East Asia mainly remains in the former, but with the passage of time, the latter will be put on the agenda. If the result of East Asian identification is replacement of the universalization of Western culture with that of East Asian culture, this will be evidently unfavorable to world peace and development and will also not be a good deed to the leap of East Asian culture. Therefore, we must bring the East Asian identification



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

within limits, that is, cultural identification should not violate the principle of cultural tolerance, either within the East Asian region or in the whole world. The UNESCO issued a report written by an expert group, pointing out that the mankind needs diversity and also unity. At present, big cultures are the source of diversity, but they have not yet encouraged unity. Unity is not identity and is not based on eliminating differences but rather integrating these differences into a harmonious whole. Without integration, there will be no growth, evolution and development in the most profound sense.^{xiii} I wrote an article years ago, holding that common values should be formed in the future. That is to say that all cultures contribute their excellent values and turn them into ones accepted universally by the mankind. The dissemination of Western cultural values all over the world is a good model. Other cultures all have the potential of generalization, but they must first undergo upgrade of modernization and then be popularized to the rest of the world.

As far as the present is concerned, the East Asian identification is not enough and needs overcoming the above-mentioned problems and intensifying efforts to develop identification among the peoples of all the countries. The development of economic interdependence between East Asian countries has laid the material base for the East Asian identification, but the identification can not be naturally increased. Only by making the idea of achieving win-win results through cooperation strike root in the hearts of the people can the original definitions be gradually changed. Mutual support in adversity can touch people to the heart and change their ideas the most. On those issues of vital importance, providing timely help and appreciating them as a personal favor are conducive to shape a real community. Intercourse between leaders of governments and peoples of countries should be strengthened and all forms of meeting, exhibition, match and celebration in all walks of life should be promoted. Research in sociology and psychology shows that human memory exists not because of relative time, but because of the shared idea of groups. All contacts including sports games and youth cultural activities set up new collective memories, making participants examine matters from the angle of a group, accept its delight and follow its inclination for rethink. This will cultivate collective identity once and for all. Generally speaking, people consider creation as a personal matter. In fact, on the contrary, creation takes root, to a great extent and even completely, in collective phenomena. All these joint activities are not static, but rather ferment atmosphere for East Asian innovation.^{xiv} Compared with all forms of activity mechanisms taking shape after WWII, East Asian contacts and collective activities are astonishingly few.

To end up, we have to develop and ultimately reach the East Asian consensus. The idea of the East Asian consensus is as follows:

- To keep peace and stability of the region by common efforts;
- To promote social progress through healthy and sustainable economic development;
- To reach harmony and co-prosperity of nations, religions and cultures through tolerance and dialogues;
- To realize the world prosperity and international justice through intra- and inter-regional cooperation

We ought to write words of peace, development, progress, harmony, cooperation and justice on the banner of the East Asian value, and therefore the East Asia identity will rise to a new high in the 21st century.

(Revised on July 5, 2004)

Notes:



Yu Xintian, Professor, President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies

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- ⁱ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p229.
- ⁱⁱ Mohamad Mahathir, *A New Deal for Asia*, Peladuc, 1999, p68, p135.
- ⁱⁱⁱ See my paper "Outline of Research in International Culture", *Academic Quarterly of Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences*, No. 1, 1999.
- ^{iv} David Hitchcock, *Asian Values and United States: How Much Conflict?*, 1994.
- ^v Wu Luping et al., *Convergence and Clash of East Asian Social Values---comparison of social awareness between the Chinese, Japanese and South Korean youth*, Social Sciences Documents Press, 2001, pp10-12, pp144-155.
- ^{vi} See My paper "Similarities and Differences between Chinese and Japanese Values and Their Impacts on Bilateral Relations", *Pacific Journal*, No. 1, 2000.
- ^{vii} Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p231.
- ^{viii} Samuel P. Huntington, et al., *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, Xinhua Publishing House, 2000, Preface p1.
- ^{ix} Ibid., p14.
- ^x Ibid., p383.
- ^{xi} *Dialogue Geared to the 21st Century between Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda*, International Culture Publishing Company, 1985, p294.
- ^{xii} *Religion and Southeast Asian Modernization*, China Today Press, 1995, p180.
- ^{xiii} Ervin Laszlo et al., *The Multicultural Planet---A Report of A UNESCO International Expert Group*, Social Sciences Document Press, 2001, pp230-231.
- ^{xiv} Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2002, p92, p44.



Toward East –Asian Borderless Identity : A Concept Paper

Assoc. Prof. Dr.Worapol Promigabutr
Chair,Korean Studies Program
Institute of East Asian Studies
Thammasat University

organized by

Institute of East Asian Studies
Thammasat University

Saranrom Institute of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign of Thailand

Thailand Research Fund

Toward East–Asian Borderless Identity : A Concept Paper

Dr. Worapol Promigabutr

Introduction

The term “ ASEAN plus three “ (Asean+3) has been referred to a combination of Northeast and Southeast Asian countries. This term has been coined and used within diplomatic as well as academic networks after the outbreak of the “ 1997 Financial Crisis “ in Thailand and Southeast Asian countries. The term also notified the significance of the three Northeast Asian countries ; China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea, in cooperative attempts to reduce severe negative impacts of the crisis within the region.

The 1997 Financial Crisis, as occurred in Thailand and had repercussion within Southeast Asian region, was a crisis highly related to the malfunction and misconduct of both state and private-sector mechanisms within the so-called “ neo-liberal” conceptual framework of global economic activity. In this case, financial “ neo-liberal” initiatives, as proposed and regulated by the influential International Monetary Fund (IMF), had played much role before the outbreak of the crisis and continually reproduced policy framework proposed to countries under crisis for restructuring their socioeconomic as well as political infrastructure in accordance to a new level of neo-liberal global capitalist order.

Within the context of IMF-influenced policy framework in the region, former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohammed proposed a crucial alternative, based upon criticisms to active intervening role of IMF in the region, that Asian countries could well be relied on themselves and financial resources within the region in resolving their crisis instead of heavily relied on conditionally tied IMF measures.

It turned out to be China and Japan that had strong international financial resources capable of helping resolve the crisis within the region. With the increasing significant role of China and Japan (and also the Republic of Korea) in resolving the Asian Financial Crisis, the notion of “ plus three” countries has been tied more tightly to the formerly established “ASEAN” countries and the term “ASEAN plus three” has been introduced to international arena.

Cooperative negotiations and measures within the context of “ASEAN plus three” has been focusing heavily on economic dimension. Vision of economic cooperation towards a roughly single “ East Asian Community” (including Southeast and Northeast Asian countries together as a single regional economic geography) has been focused, for example, as an introductory conception “ Asian Monetary Fund” (AMF) has been released to international mass media. Less has been focused on political dimension during the forming period of “ ASEAN plus three” vision, especially before an urgent and highly complicated issue of “ terrorism” has been escalated within the US policy framework under President George W. Bush administration. Cooperative negotiations concerning mutual security in a more political terms has been initiated within “ASEAN plus three” policy framework during the past few years.

During the formation period of the “ASEAN plus three” vision, least has been focused or discussed concerning socio-cultural aspect of what to be called “East Asian Community”, however.



Heterogeneity and the “Four Plus One” Cultural Pillars

Roughly speaking, “ASEAN plus three” region covers a wide geographical area where numerous group of people and communities have been living and inherited different cultural ways of life from the past. Some of their cultural heritage, such as animism and mythology, could be traced back to pre-historic period although diversity and uniqueness reflected within the detailed content of animism and mythology emerged from different tribal communities within the whole region.

On top of the arrays of animism and mythology socially produced and redistributed within the vast geographical area of East Asia, Northeast and Southeast Asian societies had evolved upon four major philosophical-ideological frameworks ; Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, before European traders and diplomats came to introduce Christianity to the Far Eastern world after the age of Enlightenment.

Among the “four plus one” philosophical building blocks of East Asian cultures , only Confucian thought had been formulated and socially established within East Asian geographically . The other four were of other geographic origins but transferred and assimilated into different context of East Asian communities at different points in time . Hinduism and Buddhism were both from India subcontinent, a region adjacent to Southeast Asia. Islamic thought emerged from Arabia, a little far-beyond area west to India. Christianity, although originated from within ancient Semitic society under the Roman Empire, had been introduced within the region of East Asia through European missionary after the age of Enlightenment.

Thus, above diversified animism basis within vast geographical area of East Asia; Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islamic thought and Christianity could be regarded as the “four plus one” major cultural pillars in the region, each held by large number of its population throughout modern history.

“Statist” Framework of Politics and “Bordered” Identity

Introduction of European Christianity to East Asia since the sixteenth century could be seen within the historical process connected to European trade and politics. Within such process innovation and thought from Europe found more effective mechanism to westernize the far world, not only in the newly –discovered America but also in the old world as ancient as India and China.

Since the conceptualization of Machiavelli ’ s “State” philosophy in The Prince , European political philosophers had elaborated theories of the state as well as approaches to rationalize and utilize statist framework of politics in practical circumstances. It turned out to be commonly held later that the abstraction called “ state” must have its sovereignty over the people within a certain boundary of geographic space.

This certain boundary of geographic space could well be captured more concretely by means of modern geography through mapping process to draw what would be commonly called borderline. People attached to each state sovereignty basically by means of birth within this conceptual state boundary related to geographic borderline. Ethnic identity, which was of highly significant in the past, was less significant in statist politics, comparing to a new



conception of people's identity attached to the statist framework related to geographical boundary.

The statist – related identity has been commonly called “nationality”. This conception signified population identity within the conceptual framework of the state (nation-state) connected to the a more concrete framework of geographic boundary of borderline.

The statist framework of politics had been introduced and utilized within East Asian through the historical process of westernization combining trade, diplomatic and cultural missions. Kingdoms in Northeast as well as Southeast Asia, large as well as small, encountered with the waves of westernization, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, struggled their ways to find alternatives to response to western state powers during the period of mercantilism and colonization. Some such as the Burmese, Indo-Chinese, Malay, were colonized under the British and French governance; other such as the Siamese and even the Chinese in mid-nineteenth century were forced under European policy framework. Most of these kingdoms were forced to open their land to European “free trade” and to begin developing politico-economic infrastructure for western-originated statist politics combining with mercantilist policy framework in the long run.

State Without Border : A Changing Paradigm ?

Common socio-cultural experience of people within East Asian region during the nineteenth century, elites as well as grassroot population, had been political experience under general influence of westernization and, in many cases, direct colonization.

However, the diversified and complex arrays of their cultural heritages before the age of westernization had not been totally annihilated. In contrast, various aspects of western culture including Christianity and modern “scientific” thought as well as innovation had been assimilated and blended into their cultural backgrounds through more or less carefully selective process within each society.

Globalization during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries proceeded in East Asia under influential direction elaborated among powerful state and private sectors in western nation-states. In East Asia, significant roles of the British and French during the nineteenth through early twentieth centuries had been observed; the significant role of US dominant policy framework on a global scale came to exist more clearly in the latter part of the twentieth century. Globalization process, within which many elements of western culture had been transported into East Asian societies, produced and reproduced dynamic blending of western culture (including European science and Christianity) within the long-established basic of the four cultural pillars rather than totally abolishing East Asian cultural heritages or establishing a newly-westernized single set of cultural framework in the region.

Even in late twentieth century, while western way of life, ranging from eating to philosophical thinking, prevailed in major metropolitan and cities in East Asia, traditional folk cultures inherited from the past within the framework of the four pillars could still be seen in practice within the same geographic boundary of each nation-state. Traditional wisdom including technique and certain sets of knowledge in organic agriculture, herbal medicine, household manufacturing, for example, had not been completely annihilated by



organized force of western-inspired socio-politico-economic “national” development plans under modernist or modernization theoretical framework employed in many nation-states in East Asia during the latter half of the twentieth century.

With that context of globalization, “nationality” has been established culturally and legally as important type of identity among global population. As already mentioned, this type of identity signified the important linkage between the conceptual “state” and the more concrete geographical boundary called “borderline”. Even though the conception of nationality had been strongly taken-for granted by a large extent of population in East Asia during the twentieth century, this type of western-inspired identity could not alter the fact that within East Asia the blending process was far more stronger than the annihilating process in cultural intercourse. Even among a same group of people identifying themselves as having the same “nationality” nowadays, differences in detailed mixture of cultural way of life and thinking between them can be observed. National identity (or “nationality”) could be much important whenever they encountered with state-related activities such as registering for political rights, traveling across borderline between different nation-states, importing and exporting economic goods, or even paying taxes, and so on; however, the significance of “nationality” was less irrelevant for laymen in most part of their socio-cultural everyday-life activity. People did not identify themselves with “nationality” most of the time.

Nationality provided another conceptual framework for defining people’s identity in addition to formerly-established frameworks using ethnicity and religion as well as philosophical ideology. The essence of “nationality” was related tightly to western philosophy of state elaborated through the eighteenth and nineteenth century. It (the nation of “nationality”) referred to a “bordered identity”.

Conceptually, it would not be possible to conceive either the whole East Asian region or a given single nation-state in East Asia as a geographic area within which population had a single common set of identity. Nationality, with its cultural meaning relevant to state politics, was as artificial as every cultural artifact. Thus, one could conceptually eliminate the theoretical-geographical state boundary and reach more easily to an assumption that East Asian population (as a whole) had lived, reproduced and experienced a common set of blended cultures and identities within the framework of the “four plus one” cultural pillars.

This assumption provided more conceptual space to elaborate further a conception of “borderless identity” that could be shared by different groups of people within a certain region.

Ironically, a major sector of western subpopulation who encouraged the significance of “bordered state” in order to lay effective political infrastructure for their ventures and interests during the period of mercantilism and colonialism (that is, the private sector) was among the first who encouraged a newly-formulated conception of “borderless” framework for transnational economic ventures within the latter part of the twentieth century, multinational corporations conducting transnational investment had more tendency to realize that the significance of state’s political boundary and people’s national identity had laid obstruction as well as more politico-economic burden for them to invest and accumulate freely across different nation-states. Significant attempts to reduce such burden, as easily seen and conceptualized within the practical outcomes of “Free-Trade Area” (FTA) negotiations among state and private sectors from different nation-states, also paved way to



reformulate the notion of people's identity from bordered to borderless identity, more suitable to objectives of economic ventures in the new century.

More ironically, not only the private sector focusing on their economic interests within an established legal framework but also the "undergrounded" private sector focusing on their economic interests without justification by state-related legal framework was among those whose interests had been obstructed by the legitimacy of state's borderline. This subset of private sector, undergrounded and illegal in terms of state politics, conducted transnational politico-economic ventures ignoring or avoiding the existence and significance of state borderlines.

As it could be seen more easily in late twentieth century that a new framework of borderless identity and a new conception of the state with less border-related obstruction to transnational economic ventures would be further elaborated regionally ; educational institutions within East Asian countries could rationally facilitate by reviewing and disseminating facts and data on socio-historical development of East Asia, as a whole regional part of the world, in order to develop a common set of knowledge on East Asia to be distributed and included within each country's curriculum.

More-organized activity within educational circle among East Asian countries including Southeast and Northeast Asian states should be encouraged both politically and economically in order to proceed their venture aiming at reinterpretation and building more mutual understanding among East Asian population on the value of their cultures and identities.



The AsiaBarometer : Its Aim, Its Scope, Its Prospect

Takashi Inoguchi
University of Tokyo, Japan

organized by

Institute of East Asian Studies
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The AsiaBarometer : Its Aim, Its Scope, Its Prospect

Takashi Inoguchi

1. Introduction

The AsiaBarometer represents the largest ever, comparative survey in Asia, covering East, Southeast, South and Central Asia. The AsiaBarometer focuses on daily lives of ordinary people. It is not primarily about values or democracy. It is primarily about how ordinary people live their life with their worries, angers, desires and dreams. It focuses secondarily on their relationship to family, neighborhood, workplace, social and political institutions and market place. In short, it is a survey based on the principle of bottom up rather than that of top down. Bottom up in the sense of adopting the down-to-earth perspective.

The AsiaBarometer distinguishes itself from many others in that it makes utmost efforts to be sensitive to cultures and languages. First, focus groups are conducted where deemed necessary. Second, the English language questionnaire and the questionnaires in local languages are thoroughly compared and discussed including those familiar with both. Third, local academics participate in questionnaire formulation and data analysis. In short, the AsiaBarometer tries to be culturally fluent as a whole.

The AsiaBarometer was first conducted in summer 2003 in 10 countries, Uzbekistan, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, China, Korea and Japan. The AsiaBarometer sourcebook will be published containing the descriptions of its aims and scope, fieldwork report, questionnaire, all the basic figures (tabulated and cross-tabulated) on all the questions surveyed, links, and references. It will be published in 2004 as a sister volume to the sourcebook of the World Values Surveys and European Values Surveys combined and co-edited by Ronald Inglehart, Miguel Basanez and their associates by Siglo XXI Editores for distribution with Quality Global Research editing, formatting and doing all other matters (Inoguchi, Tanaka and Dadabaev, forthcoming; Inglehart, Basanez et al, 2003). The survey was a nationwide survey in principle. But for some countries like China and India only some big cities were surveyed. For countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, the Java island and the peninsular Malaysia were surveyed excluding the non-Java Indonesia and the eastern Malaysia. Each sample size was 800 and the sampling method was a multi-stage random sampling in principle with some notable exceptions. Also it was done by a face-to-face interviewing except in Japan. All the expenditures were covered by business donations to the University of Tokyo for this purpose. The AsiaBarometer 2003 Survey was carried out by the Gallup International coalition led by the Nippon Research Center.

After cleaning and integrating the assembled data from the ten countries, the AsiaBarometer 2003 data set was sent to prospective authors of country profile and comparative papers drawn from academics of the ten countries to examine and analyze the data set for presentation and discussion at the AsiaBarometer conference. The AsiaBarometer conference was held on January 14-15, 2004 at the University of Tokyo with academics bringing their papers. Their revised papers came out subsequently as Discussion Papers of the Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo in March 2004. These papers are to be included in the afore-mentioned volume (Inoguchi, et al, forthcoming). In conjunction with the AsiaBarometer conference, an open symposium was held also. It drew wide attention region wide. Not only Japanese, but also Korean, Sri Lankan and Malaysian newspapers and TVs reported about the AsiaBarometer. It must be noted that for access to the data set, open access will be made possible when it is accepted by two data consortiums, the Social Science Data



Archives of the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo and the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan.

On the basis of the success of the AsiaBarometer 2003 Survey, its 2004 survey has decided to focus on Southeast Asia plus three (Japan, Korea and China), receiving the basic funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the University of Tokyo. Like its 2003 survey, it will hold the AsiaBarometer conference and symposium early in 2005. After the cleaning and integration of the data assembled from surveyed countries, country profile and comparative papers will be drafted, presented and discussed in its annual conference and symposium. A similar annual source book will be published like the preceding volume for 2003. A similar donation of the data set will be done similarly as in for the 2003 data set.

2. Gauging Developmental, Democratic and Regionalizing Potentials

It would be most appropriate to give thoughts on the futures of Asia as the AsiaBarometer is to measure many things in people's minds and hearts. It is my conviction that conducting the AsiaBarometer every year in all parts of Asia would enable us to gauge Asia's potentials of economic development, democratization, and regional integration. In this last section I will give my thoughts to each of the three potentials of Asia in the next half a century.

Economic development in Asia has a vast future. Only in various parts of Asia, most importantly in coastal East, Southeast, and South Asia has economic development begot its self-sustained momentum. Tangible fruits of self-sustained economic development affect merely some ten percent of the total population of Asia. Two giants, China and India, have a long way to go before they can declare that they have reached their self-sustained and mature developmental stage. Vast population and vast space pose a formidable challenge to any engineer of economic development of China and India. Even what looks like more manageable continental Southeast Asia, Vietnam and Myanmar, for instance, need huge investments before one can talk about self-sustained and mature economic development. Some optimists like Andre Gunder Frank(1998) optimistically talk about the coming historic shift of global economic weight to the Orient notwithstanding, Asia's economic developmental potentials are huge and thus challenging. Where is a most visible turning point in terms of an economic developmental take off stage? In my view, one's desire to purchase a refrigerator in the near future and one's recent acquisition of a refrigerator seem to be a most accurate and convenient indicator of things to come. Food purchasing tends to take a lot of time. No less tangible changes can be detected by the steady increase in the sale of disposable diapers. Use of cloth diapers takes away too much precious time from a mother, a second and indispensable household earner.

Democratization in Asia has a long way to go. Two largest and longest non-Western democracies, Japan and India aside, many remain to be more deeply democratized even in the democratic corridor of coastal East and Southeast Asia. Continental East and Southeast Asia and most of South and Central Asia need far more time before they are democratized. Take China as an example. One can wait patiently believing that once per capita national income goes beyond a certain threshold, democracy is bound to come. Alternatively the Gorbachev syndrome may work. During a transition period the failure to make its policy transparent and accountable to the public like in the case of SARS disease in 2003 would make this process faster. A likely collapse of an accumulating bubble of the Chinese economy in the aftermath of the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 would make it much faster. At any rate, in my view



Takashi Inoguchi, University of Tokyo, Japan

one tangible indicator of democratization in the initial stage is the reverse of two contrasting options to the question, "Generally, do you think people can be trusted or do you think that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? (1) Most people can be trusted; (2) Can't be too careful in dealing with people." More operationally clear is whether a certain question is approved or not to be asked to interviewees by the government. Even before formal democratization takes place, de facto democratization will start creeping in once the government approves the question on confidence in institutions, for instance.

Regionalizing potentials are more difficult to grasp with the questionnaire. Questions on identities, primary and secondary and tertiary, would enable one to be more precise on such potentials once questions about sub-regional identities, such as East Asian, are to be included. Take a look at Japan, Korea and China. Japan has a long way to go before they forge regional identity. Those Japanese who think their Asianness is next important to national identity are some 60% in contrast to the case of Koreans, 96%. Chinese secondary identity seems to go more parochial such as Fukienese and Siquanese rather than going more regional such as Asian. They seem to stick to the formula of Chinese versus the rest at each level. But if free trade agreements are to be concluded among the three, the picture might as well change fast. Koreans and Chinese are audacious in this regard while Japanese remain cautions in moving in that direction. No less complex pictures may be drawn as to Southeast Asia, South Asia and Central Asia.

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in Japanese September 2003, Tokyo



CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Identity

Name : **Makmur Keliat**
Place and date of Birth : Medan, 15 Agustus 1961
Address : Jl. Mesjid IV No.8 Kelurahan Bidara Cina
Cawang, Jakarta Timur 13330
Phone : 62-21-8511287
Mobile : 62-82-9624924
E-mail : makmurkeliat@ceacos.org/makmurkeliat@pacivis.or.id

Educational Background

1984, B.A., International Relations Department, School of Social and Political Sciences, Gajah Mada University, Yogyakarta

1986, Drs, International Relations Department, School of Social and Political Sciences, Gajah Mada University, Yogyakarta

1995, Ph.D, School of International Relations Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India

Working Experience

1987-1999 : Lecturer at International Relations Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Airlangga University, Surabaya

1999 till present : Lecturer at International Relations Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Indonesia, Depok

2001-2002 : Head of Research Division, Research Institute for Democracy and Peace (RIDEP)

2001 till the present : Research fellow, Research Institute for Democracy and Peace (RIDEP)

2002- till the present : Head of Graduate Program, International Relations Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Indonesia

2003-2004 : Executive Director, Center for Global Civil Society, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Indonesia, Depok

2004 till the present : Executive Director, Center for East Asian Cooperation Studies (CEACoS)



CURRICULUM VITAE

YU Xintian

Prof. YU Xintian, born on Feb.22, 1947, is currently President of Shanghai Institute for International Studies (SIIS). Prior to this new position, she was Vice President of Shanghai Academy of Social Science (SASS) (1994---2000), Director of Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at SASS (1992---1994). Prof. YU specializes in the studies of international relations of Asia-Pacific region, comparison of modernization of developing countries. She has published a series of academic papers and books in these fields, such as *Opportunity and Limitation: Comparison of the Conditions of Developing Countries* (SASS Press, 1998) , *Taking Our Own Road: Overall Design of Modernization of China* (Shanghai People 's Press, 1994) and *World Tide from the South: Impact of Developing Countries on International Relations* (SASS Press, 1993). Prof. YU is now undertaking the national top project "the Cultural Function in the International Relations" sponsored by the National Social Science Foundation. Prof. YU Xintian was visiting scholar of SAIS, John Hopkins University and Institute for East Asia Study, UC. Berkeley between 1990 and 1991. In 1997, she was fellow of Eisenhower Exchange Fellow of the States. Prof. YU Xintian frequently participates in the international seminars concerning international relations.



CURRICULUM VITAE

WANG Zichang

Dr. WANG Zichang, born on Feb.2nd, 1967, is currently Associate Professor in Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Jinan University in Guangdong province of China. He now focuses his research on the field of international relations in Asia Pacific region. He got PH.D from College of International Politics, Shangdong University in 1997. He was a visiting scholar in the ISEAS, Singapore in 2002. He once worked in South China Normal University (1992-1994) after he had got Master Degree from Department of Political Science, Shangdong University.



CURRICULUM VITAE

Takashi Inoguchi

Education

- B.A.(1966) University of Tokyo
- M.A.(1968) University of Tokyo
- Ph.D.(1974) Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Teaching and Research

- Associate Professor, Sophia University (1974-1977)
- Associate Professor, University of Tokyo (1977-1988)
- Professor, University of Tokyo (1988-present)



Visiting positions (research and/or teaching) at:

University of Geneva (Switzerland), Harvard University, Australian National University, University of Delhi (India), Gadjah Mada University (Indonesia), University of Aarhus (Denmark), Johns Hopkins University, University of California at Berkeley, Peking University (China), National University of Singapore (Singapore)

Administrative Positions:

- Senior Vice Rector (Assistant Secretary General of UN), United Nations University Headquarter(1995-1997)
- Under Secretary General, International Secretariat of the University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (1998-2000)
- Representative, Business-University Forum of Japan (1999-2000)
- President, Japan Association of International Relations (2000-2002)

Government Council Member

- Academic Council
- Economic Council
- National Life Council
- Legal Council (2000-)

Professional Memberships:

- Japan Association of International Relations (President 2000-2002)
- Japan Political Science Association
- American Political Science Association
- International Studies Association
- International Political Science Association
- Japanese Association of Electrical Studies
- Japanese Association of Public Choice
- Association of Contemporary Japanese Political Studies
- Japanese Association of Policy Research

Academic Journal Editorial Board or Advisory Board Member:

(* denotes membership in the recent past)

- *Japanese Journal of Political Science* (executive editor), jips@ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp
- *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* (editor-in- chief), irasia@ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp
- *International Studies Review* (Brown University)
- *International Studies Perspectives* (University of Connecticut)
- *Review of International Studies* (University of Exeter)
- *European Journal of International Relations* (University of Munich)
- *International Relations* (University of Wales, Aberystwyth)
- *Government and Opposition* (London School of Economics and Political Science)



CURRICULUM VITAE

- *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (Yale University)
- *Journal of Japanese Studies* (University of Washington)
- *Asian Journal of Political Science* (National University of Singapore)
- *Australian Journal of History and Politics* (University of Queensland)
- *American ASIAN Review* (College of William & Mary)
- *Journal of East Asian Studies* (Korea University)
- *World Politics* * (Princeton University)
- *International Organization* * (Harvard University)
- *International Studies Quarterly* * (Iowa State University)
- *Leviathan: Japanese Journal of Political Science* * (University of Tokyo)
- *Journal of Japanese and International Economies* * (University of Tokyo)



Institution-Building for East Asian Cooperation

SU Hao Ph.d.
East Asian Studies Center
China Foreign Affairs University

organized by
Institute of East Asian Studies
Thammasat University

Saranrom Institute of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign of Thailand

Thailand Research Fund

Institution-Building for East Asian Cooperation

SU Hao Ph. D.

The Building of the East Asian Community has been set as the long-term goal for the regional cooperation. Shall the member countries in the region take the actual action to seep up the institution-building? We should take sometime to deliberate this issue.

1. Review on the development of regional institutionalization in East Asian

1.1 New Regionalism In East Asia

The contemporary world politics and economics have been on the rapid ways to the globalization and regional integration. The regional integration takes its premise for the process of globalization. The realization of regional integration makes the formation of geo-political and geo-economic plates, which determine the stable structure and order of international relations.

After the end of Cold War, the new regionalism has emerged in the Asia-Pacific region. In the context of this dimension, the process of the APEC and the ARF has taken the important roles for the economic and security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. And going along with the process, the East Asian awareness has come out and taken its particular characters with the differences to the European model. The East Asian cooperation has become a new follower with its great momentum to promote the regional integration.

So far, East Asia is on the way to the process of regional integration. I would argue that, in the long term (may be about one hundred year from now on), the East Asian integration would take such a course divided with at least five stages. **1. stage of gestation:** the early of 90 in last century, Malaysia made a proposal to convene a so-called "East Asian Economic Grouping-EAEG", and then changed into "East Asian Economic Caucus-EAEC". In this period, the East Asian cooperation was just in mind and a kind of idealistic device. But thanks for the ASEAN countries, the term of EAST ASIA has come into being on the international arena since the end of World War II. **2. Stage of Startup:** ASEAN plus 3 was a useful model for East Asian cooperation. This was result of the joint efforts form East Asian countries for they had been shared a common awareness of facing the big challenges of the fasting processes of regional integration in Europe and North America and the financial crisis in 1997. **3. Stage of Development:** the formal cooperative mechanism of East Asia will be created and the format will be taken into various forms, such as the holding of the East Asian Summit and then the establishment of Organization of East Asian Cooperation (OEAC). **4. Stage of Maturation:** the Building of East Asian Community will have been completed. **5. Stage of Success:** maybe we will have the last stage of regional integration as the result of the East Asian Union for celebration of our regional integration, which is an argument of some scholars in their research papers to predict the last consequence of East Asian integration long time later.

In what stage are we now in the East Asian integration? I would argue that we are in the second stage of startup and will prepare to move into the third stage of development. In a other word, we will be in the period of transition between stage 2 and stage 3. What did we, the East Asian countries, do in the process of institution-building so far? Now let us have a look at our deeds, of which we have done to promote the regional multilateral cooperation.

The regional multilateral framework might take its guarantee for the process of regional integration. The multilateral framework should be weaved by vertical official institutions, the horizontal field's cooperation and the fabric of diverse societal sectors. The constant and stable institutions determine the formation of regional community.



1.2. Existing Multilateral Framework in East Asia

A. Horizontal Regional Mechanism

There has been establishing a series of regional cooperative mechanism within East Asia. They are the ASEAN plus Three Summit, three of ASEAN plus one summit, informal China-Japan-South Korea summit, East Asian Ministerial conferences, Mekong sub-regional cooperative mechanism, senior official meetings and lot of bilateral cooperation. And the diverse arrangements of track two diplomacy enhance this framework as well. Those are the kind of multi-layer mechanism as the main pillars to support the regional integration.

B. Vertical Regional Mechanism

In the framework of ASEAN Plus Three, there are multidimensional subject of pragmatic cooperation, by which the different fields have been exploring for cooperation. So far, there are at least twelve areas in which the regional countries explore the further cooperation guided by the ministerial meetings. More and more areas are engaged into these pragmatically cooperative mechanisms, such as economy, finance, tourism, labor, agriculture and forestry, environment, health, culture, energy, transnational criminals and communication/IT, and the dimension for the vertical cooperation will be proliferated in the foreseeing future.

C. Fabric Materials with East Asia

There are many types of civilian cooperation in East Asia in the fields, such as trade, investment, distribution of industries, tourism, cultural and educational exchanges, direct collaboration among private sectors. The pattern of flying geese, leading with Japanese industrial sectors, had taken its efficient role to upgrade the level of East Asian industries. And now the more intensive complexity of distribution of regionally industrial/agricultural production has been enhancing the economic amalgamation. The businesspersons and financiers bustle in the region. Thousands and thousands people are traveling around within the region, and scholars and students exchange mutually among the countries each year, by means of weaving the civilian contact. The meeting of the mayors of cities in East Asia was held in Kunmin, China, and the ESEAN Exposition will be conducted in a few months in China as well.

2. Principles for East Asian Institutionalization

Firstly, let me set the general goal of the regional institution-building as for helping in community-building. Now that the East Asian Community has accepted by the regional countries as an idea and has been set as a long-term goal for which the regional countries promote the regional integration, community-building should be realize and embodied with the institution-building.

Secondly, particular goal of the regional integration are set with two points: 1. by means of institution-building, to make the regional cooperation more sufficiently; 2. by the upgrading the institution-building, to promote the regional cooperation to move forward.

Thirdly, we may have some fundamental principles for our institution-building.

1□East Asia may has a explicit geographic range covering the Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia.



2. The member states within the East Asian institutions should be the East Asian countries, that means the ASEAN +3 countries at the present, and then North Korea and Mongolia will be engaged into the process sometime later.

3. The institution-building should promote the East Asian cooperation and be suitable to with the reality of regional cooperation.

4. The institution-building was and still will be the key framework to safeguard the regional peace and development.

5. The institution-building should follow the concepts of inclusiveness and openness, guiding by which the cooperative mechanisms will be established compatible with countries out of region and other regional organizations.

6. The progress of the institution-building might be in the comfort of member states.

Lastly, we should take the practical approaches:

1. to make the institutional building gradually (We should not promote the process of institutionalization too quick and going beyond the actual situation, and at the same time, not draggle to the status of real needs for the regional cooperation.) 2. to push the institutional arrangement a little bit anteceding to the reality so that to stimulate the further regional cooperation; 3. to build the institutions from up to bottom, driving by the officials, and setup some formats of institutions from bottom to up, initiating by the policy research.

3 Setting the Rules for the Institutions-Building in the near Future

The goal for the East Asian Countries to promote the regional integration is to achieve the integration. As the result, the East Asian Community will come into being in the long term. Therefore, the complete institutions take the premise of the community building within the region. Road-map for the regional institution might show off ahead of us. Taking the European experience, we may know that the institutional building is very important for regional integration. So far, East Asian cooperation goes on in a successful way just for the reason of establishing the 10+3 framework, but it is a kind of informal mechanisms, which is loose talking forum without serious obligation. And in the coming year, the East Asian institutional arrangement should be upgraded because the existing mechanisms have the relative loose internal relations among East Asian countries and work not enough efficiently.

Now the East Asian Summit, one of the medium-long-term measures proposed by EAGS's final report, have been put on the agenda as a immediate approach for upgrade the institutional arrangement in the regional cooperation. Here I would like to elaborate the function of this new coming framework with my personal point of view, and make some proposals for implement the regional institution-building.

3.1. About East Asian Summit

Due to the common understanding of the ASEAN+3 countries' officials, East Asian Summit will be held next year in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and will have the second round in China in 2007. This summit should be some kind of mechanism upgraded from the framework of ASEAN+3, and will become a landmark of the process of East Asian integration, which us a bright stage for our regional cooperation.

But in case of the diversity and complication in the region, we should hold on for sometime to think of how to cope with syndromes going along with the fast process. For the sake of keeping the constant momentum, I would argue that the East Asian Summit will become the main channel for the regional cooperation in long run; but in the short-term, the reliable option for us is to have the two platforms, e.i. East Asian Summit and AEAN plus



three Summit, co-exist for a while. These two mechanisms may have the different duties. The East Asian Summit may set the strategic goal, principles and the long-term plans for the regional cooperation, whereas the ASEAN+3 can set the agenda of the projects and choose the approaches to implement them.

3.2. Setting the Professional Committee

Since the 10+3 ministerial mechanisms have not enough efficiency to settle down the concrete cooperative projects or to implement the projects in time, it is imperative to enhance the institutionalization by means of establish some kind of professional committees. These committees will function as the policy-suggestion, and urge and coordinate the implementation of measures adopted by member countries. In recent year, such committees like "Business Council", "Currency-interconvert Committee", "Custom Coordinating Committee", "Industrial Distribution and Investment commission" and "Managing Non-traditional Security committee", so on and so forth.

3.3. Discussion on the Non-traditional Security

The East Asian countries are facing a lot of non-traditional security issues. Security issues should be put on the agenda for track one. Not only the ministerial conference on transnational security may be held annually, but a committee should be established for discussing these security issues in detail and designing the practical measures to treat with such matters. Besides, the track two can take more active role to enhance the security dialogue. For instance, NEAT may initiate some workshops for managing the issues, like maritime security, anti-terrorism, energy security, environmental security, the prevention of infectious diseases, annihilation of drug-trafficking.

3.4. Coordination for Track II Activities

Going along with the implementing the 17 measures of short-term proposed by EASG, the track II has been performed the more and more important roles in the process of regional institution-building. It is necessary to put these mechanisms in the proper ways and divide the works with their individual functions: The East Asian Forum might be a platform for politicians and senior officers present their views to promote the regional cooperation; The NEAT may be a mechanism to conduct the policy oriented research; and East Asian Studies Program can impulse the academic research work on East Asian integration at the strategic levels; and the East Asian Congress, even though it is not on the ASEAN+3 track II, may be a wonderful concourse in which the statesmen, scholars with the region and from all of the world to speak out their views on East Asia.



**ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS
OF COOPERATION IN EAST ASIA: Problems and Prospects**

Mushahid Ali
Senior Fellow
Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies
Singapore

organized by

Institute of East Asian Studies
Thammasat University

Saranrom Institute of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign of Thailand

Thailand Research Fund

ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF COOPERATION IN EAST ASIA: Problems and Prospects

Mushahid Ali

Summary

This paper is essentially a historical review of the various institutions of cooperation in East Asia that had been attempted since World War II and the reasons for the survival of ASEAN while the others have faded away. It examines the dynamics of ASEAN cooperation regionally and with extra-regional powers through PMC and ARF and how these have brought about the emergence of the institution of ASEAN Plus Three. It assesses the prospects of a pan-Asian security community and the likelihood of greater economic integration and the formation of an East Asian Community in which ASEAN will continue to have a central role.

Historical development

Initiatives for some form of East Asian cooperation have been floated since the 1940's, such as the Greater East Asia co-prosperity sphere of Imperial Japan. However Japan's idea was motivated less by altruistic considerations than by a strong desire to drive the western imperialist powers out of Asia and bring the Asian countries from India to Korea, along with their natural resources, under Japan's benign umbrella. After World War II the Soviet Union led a global campaign by the Communist International (COMINTERN) to bring revolution throughout the western colonies in Asia and bring them under a commonwealth of socialist republics like the People's Republic of China. The United States and United Kingdom responded by creating two military oriented pacts called the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) for West Asia and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) for East Asia. These did not last beyond the 1960s, with the withdrawal of British forces from east of Suez and American forces from Southeast Asia.

There were also other grandiose schemes proposed by Asian nations. Afro-Asian nationalists like Soekarno of Indonesia convened a Conference of the Newly Emerging Forces (CONEFO) which embraced countries like North Korea, China, North Vietnam, Cambodia and Pakistan. Later Asian allies of the United States, ie Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, Philippines and Thailand (former SEATO members) got together in an Asian Pacific Council (ASPAC) with the ANZUS states, USA, Australia and New Zealand. Sub-regionally Malaya, Philippines and Thailand formed the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA). That was a period when Southeast Asia was wracked by two conflicts – the Vietnam War (1963-73) involving American and allied forces versus Soviet and China-backed Vietnamese communist forces; and British and commonwealth forces resisting Indonesian confrontation of Malaysia (1963-66).

ASEAN

Out of these imbroglios emerged the Association of Southeast Asian nations – formed by Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – in 1967. While all the other alphabet-soup concoctions have disappeared, ASEAN has survived and established itself as a successful regional grouping, without an outside power's involvement. ASEAN has been less an organization and more a forum for consultation and consensus in regional cooperation. ASEAN has developed and maintained institutions for regional cooperation while jealously insisting on the sovereignty of its member countries



These institutions are essentially the policy-making council of the Annual Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministers, served by the ASEAN Standing Committee of national Directors-General of ASEAN and chaired by the Foreign Ministers rotating in alphabetical order; serviced by the ASEAN Secretariat. There are also parallel councils of ASEAN Economic Ministers, and functional councils of other ministers, as well as their directors-general and experts. When political and security issues came to the fore, the senior officials of the foreign ministries began meeting to prepare agendas and recommendations for the consideration of their ministers. They came to prominence as ASEAN took the lead in opposing the invasion and occupation of Cambodia by Vietnamese forces and mobilising the United Nations to seek their withdrawal and the return of sovereignty to Cambodia. After the end of the Cold War and the peace settlement in Cambodia, ASEAN expanded to include all 10 countries of the region.

The institution of political cooperation among ASEAN was elevated to the summit level when Indonesia hosted the first Meeting of ASEAN Heads of Government in 1976, issued a Declaration of ASEAN Concord and signed a Treaty of Amity and Cooperation committing themselves to peaceful settlement of disputes among members. The Bali Concord called for bold measures to promote economic cooperation and integration among the ASEAN member countries, beginning with Preferential Trading Arrangements and launching ASEAN Joint Industrial Ventures. However these came to nought after meandering their way through endless ASEAN meetings and negotiations, because the member countries were not ready to give up their protectionist tariffs and non-tariff barriers nor were they prepared to sacrifice their respective national economic interests for intangible and uncertain regional benefit. Economic nationalism and structural impediments such as having competitive agro-based economies and weak infrastructure hindered the development of effective institutions of cooperation in the ASEAN region.

It was not until the early 1990s – when many of the ASEAN members had successfully embarked on industrialisation, - with FDIs and technology transfer from the developed countries of America, Europe and Japan - that ASEAN members were prepared to consider a free trade arrangement among themselves. They signed a treaty in Singapore in 1992 to bring about an ASEAN Free Trade Area(AFTA) by 2003 and undertook to reduce or remove tariffs on a whole range of goods over 10 years to bring this about. ASEAN also moved to form a common investment area and to allow their investors and industrialists to operate freely throughout ASEAN. When the four CLMV countries, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, joined ASEAN in the late 1990s they were given extended periods within which to open up their markets and be fully part of AFTA by 2010 or thereabouts.

ASEAN has all along recognised the need to engage the developed countries in economic and functional cooperation, which it conducted through its annual post-ministerial conferences immediately after the AMM. However as these dialogue partnerships were essentially of the nature of donor-donee relationships they did not carry such cooperation very far. Still the AMM-Post-Ministerial Conference(PMC) served to bring together ASEAN FMs and FMs of Dialogue Partners in an annual affirmation of their mutual interest in maintaining and furthering their relationships, in economic and functional cooperation. The end of the Cold War and easing of tensions in East Asia were conducive to the emergence of new institutions for addressing the new security challenges in the Asia-Pacific.



Mushahid Ali, Senior Fellow, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore

ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM

The changed global configuration since 1990, especially the demise of the Soviet Union and the economic emergence and rise of China and India, offered ASEAN a new opportunity to play a catalytic role in creating a new security framework in East Asia. Responding to a Japanese call for security issues to be discussed during the PMC, ASEAN came up with the concept of an ASEAN Regional Forum, where ASEAN members and associates and dialogue partners could exchange views on security issues. The objective was to bring about a dialogue on security in general and regional issues in particular in a forum which included China, Russia and United States, as well as European Union. The ARF has since become an institution for confidence building among the participants and a vehicle for bringing about dialogue between countries that were going through periods of tension such as North Korea and the United States. Though clearly lacking in any enforcement powers or organisational capacities apart from having inter-sessional groups discussing confidence building and enhancing activities, the ARF nevertheless has developed into a viable institution for security cooperation in the Asia Pacific. The accession of India in the late 1990s and Pakistan this year to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation of ASEAN and thereby to membership of ARF, have made the ARF a pan-Asian framework covering South, Southeast and Northeast Asia. ASEAN has played a crucial role in the creation and consolidation of the ARF by being in the driver's seat of the institution.

Playing a complementary role in a parallel development has been the institution of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) involving non-governmental policy and research institutes as well as government representatives, exchanging views on ideas and mechanisms for promoting such cooperation.

APEC AND EAEC

On the initiative of the Australians the dialogue partners proposed the formation of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, APEC, which straddled the Pacific and brought together the countries of East Asia and North America (and subsequently Latin America). While APEC was formed to promote trans-Pacific economic cooperation and regional integration it was geographically too dispersed and politically too diverse to be cohesive.

Following the terrorist attacks on the US on Sept 11, 2001, and the US-led war on terror, the US has introduced counter-terrorism into the agenda of APEC leaders, with the argument that security was an essential requirement for economic cooperation and global trade. This would bolster efforts by APEC members to bring about a liberalised economic regime across the Pacific to consolidate reform efforts after the 1997 crises.

However APEC generated geopolitical tensions between the United States and East Asian states such as Japan and China, over issues like whose interests should prevail. When Malaysia proposed the formation of an East Asian Economic Group or Caucus (within APEC) to promote their common interests the United States made clear its opposition and pressured Japan and other countries to drop it.

Notwithstanding the initial American reservations about an East Asia grouping that did not include the US, ASEAN has initiated another institution for East Asia cooperation by inviting the Leaders of three Northeast Asian states, China, South Korea and Japan to meet ASEAN Leaders at their annual summit, from 1997. The ASEAN plus Three meetings symbolised the



Mushahid Ali, Senior Fellow, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore

new direction that ASEAN was going to recover from the financial and economic crises, one that looked upon cooperation within East Asia first, rather than depend on western powers and institutions.

CREATING AN ASEAN COMMUNITY

For ASEAN to continue to play an effective, if not leading, role in the new East Asian configuration, its members recognised the need to speed up economic integration and consolidate intra-regional cohesion among themselves. In 2002 ASEAN Leaders agreed to bring about an ASEAN Economic Community by 2020 based on the realisation of the AFTA. ASEAN also recognised the need for any economic development and cooperative framework to be underpinned by a framework for political, economic, socio-cultural and security cooperation in which they would work together to ensure peace, security and stability. Accordingly the ASEAN Leaders meeting in Bali last year signed a second Declaration of ASEAN Concord committed to the establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2020 to ensure durable peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region. This would enhance ASEAN's capacity to deal more confidently with the larger economic and political entities of South Asia and Northeast Asia in the larger East Asian community. The ASEAN Leaders reaffirmed the TAC as the key code of conduct for states in the region and held up the ARF as the primary forum for enhancing political and security cooperation while staking a bigger role for ASEAN in furthering cooperation in the ARF.

The ASEAN Leaders adopted a framework to achieve the ASEAN Community comprising three pillars – the ASEAN Security Community (ASC); the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC); and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). The ASC would be based on 12 principles, which among other things, reiterate that existing political instruments such as the TAC, the Declaration of ZOPFAN, the Zone of Peace Freedom and Neutrality, and the SEANWFZ Treaty will continue to play a key role in confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy and approaches to conflict resolution. In this regard the ASC would fully utilise existing institutions and mechanisms within ASEAN to strengthen national and regional capacities to counter terrorism, drug trafficking and other trans-national crimes, and would work to ensure that Southeast Asia remained free of all weapons of mass destruction.

ASIAN SECURITY COMMUNITY?

The Bali Summit was also notable for the signing by both China and India of the protocols acceding to the TAC, besides committing themselves to strategic partnerships and economic cooperation and free trade areas with ASEAN. India also signed a joint declaration with ASEAN for cooperation to combat international terrorism. China had signed a similar declaration on cooperation in non-traditional security issues in 2002. Both undertook to continue efforts to accede to the Protocol to the Treaty on SEANWFZ. And Japan acceded to the TAC last year to strengthen political and security relations as well as economic ties with ASEAN.

This network of frameworks among the countries of Northeast, Southeast and South Asia usher in a new era of non-military security cooperation across Asia, while not precluding defence and security cooperation with non-Asian powers such as the United States. Indeed this development reflects a growing trend towards less reliance on military alliances and bases by the major powers and more emphasis on cooperative arrangements to work for the common security of countries big and small around the world.



It reflects the decrease in conflicts and security threats from states and an increase in threats from non-state actors such as trans-national terrorists and insurgents, and which call for a matching response by a network of states which want peace, security and prosperity for their peoples. Such a response has been expressed through the ARF, as when the ARF Foreign Ministers issued joint statements to cooperate in counter-terrorism measures and strengthen maritime security.

These interlocking initiatives could provide the momentum to bring about a pan-Asian network for cooperation in security while ensuring peaceful engagement with other security communities around the region. The decisions by Asia's three major powers, China, India and Japan to accede to the TAC and into strategic partnerships with ASEAN, signal a new enthusiasm for an Asian Security Community dedicated to building peace, security and stability based on mutual respect and peaceful settlement of disputes.

EAST ASIAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

The expansion of ASEAN to include all 10 Southeast Asian states in the late 1990s and the upgrading of their dialogues with Japan, South Korea and China to summit level, brought a new dimension to their cooperative relations. It raised the prospect of an East Asian Community comprising Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia which could provide a combined market of three billion people and gross domestic product of trillions of dollars. To balance the possible domination of this grouping by Northeast Asia, ASEAN invited India to become a dialogue partner at summit level, thereby opening the prospect of creating a pan-Asian Economic Community.

The two regions are already embarking on the building blocks for such a community by competing to negotiate Free Trade Area arrangements, as between China and ASEAN and India and ASEAN in 10 years. Japan too proposed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership with ASEAN. Similar economic arrangements are being discussed between ASEAN and Australia-New Zealand. It's not likely that these economic communities will be as strongly welded together as the European Union or even the European Economic Community, with their supra-national organisational underpinnings.

Nevertheless certain factors are driving and strengthening East Asian economic integration, in particular market forces. Intra-regional trade is growing, at present representing 5% of the global trade of the APT region. The role of FDI is also increasing in importance. The logic behind the proposed China-ASEAN FTA (CAFTA) is that more benefits are to be gained from a larger market. However the difficulty of reconciling the different interests and demands of the 13 national economies, (14 counting India), cannot be overstated. Given the historical and political tensions among the Plus Three countries, it seems that APT integration has to be driven by ASEAN and proceed on the basis of ASEAN FTA with each of them, after which an attempt can be made to harmonise the arrangements among the ASEAN Plus Three as a whole.

ASEAN and Chinese economists agree that ASEAN and China are playing important roles in shaping APT cooperation and building institutions to establish an East Asian community in the three areas of socio-economic development, regional peace and security cooperation and cultural affirmation of an Asian identity. They also see merit in going about creating a future East Asian Community by stitching together a web of bilateral FTAs regionwide, to create an East Asian FTA. The efficacy of such an approach would depend on the political will and



sincerity of all the countries involved to consolidate such region-wide cooperation on the basis of their mutual interest in forging such an East Asian Community and identity to underpin the institutions of cooperation that emerge.

CONCEPTS AND VISIONS OF EAC

While prospects for an East Asian Community have become brighter, there are no clear visions of what such a community would entail. Malaysia has stressed the urgency of building an East Asian community that would embody a peace community, economic community, and diplomatic community. Acknowledging that such a multi-pronged venture would take up to two generations to realise Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi eschewed the need for a formal treaty of East Asia.

He thought a simple declaration of an East Asian Community, along the lines of the Bangkok Declaration of 1967 which established ASEAN, could be sufficient. Such a declaration could be adopted at a future ASEAN plus Three Summit.

Singapore senior statesman Lee Kuan Yew has stressed that economic integration was the key to making possible the emergence of an EAC despite the disparities and diversities in the region. What could be achieved was what the Europeans started with, an Economic Community. Although sharing common experience and values, the region would find it hard to adopt a European-style union as Asia did not share Europe's geographical compactness and common history and was also religiously diverse. Lee said while the ongoing efforts to create FTAs between ASEAN and Japan and China, might take 10 years, it would take another 30 years for the region to achieve a certain coordination of their economic policies to increase their bargaining power against the EU and US.

There are competing ideas and concepts for such pan-Asian cooperation, which could complement the overall mosaic. One such enterprise is the Asia Cooperation Dialogue which embraces countries from India to China. Another is the sub-regional functional grouping BIMST-EC stitching together the countries around the Bay of Bengal. While they do not match in scope and status the ASEAN plus Three and Four Summits, these sub-regional and pan-regional arrangements serve as additional building blocks for region-wide and multi-lateral cooperation, promoted and supported by all countries in East Asia.

ASEAN PLUS THREE COOPERATION

In this regard both China and India have pledged to work for the creation of an East Asian Community while acknowledging the key role of the ASEAN Plus Three process in East Asian cooperation. The ASEAN Plus Three FMs meeting in Jakarta on 1 July 04 reaffirmed the central role of ASEAN advancing the ASEAN Plus Three process, towards realising an East Asian Community. The Ministers agreed that the establishment of such a community was a long term objective that would be achieved through a building block, step-by-step approach.

This confirms the view of scholars that the APT is best placed to be the key institution for economic cooperation in East Asia, underpinned by a number of major trends. These trends have lead to the idea of an East Asia becoming firmly embedded in the thinking and discourse of governments and opinion leaders around the region. As observed by a Canadian scholar, Richard Stubbs, although the regional political culture of the East Asian states means that the APT's institutional development would not be as extensive as the European Union or