The EU and East Asia and ASEM

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Introduction

For many commentators, globalization has resulted in the creation of a tripolar world, comprising the United States/North America, the European Union and East Asia. Defined in different ways at various moments, each of these three poles has dominated the economic, political and security dynamics of the first decade of the twenty–first century. In reality, however, the North American pole has continued to set the terms of the normative framework for global activities, and relations between the US and the EU on the one hand, and the US and East Asia on the other, have continued to strengthen. Somewhat surprisingly, given that they jointly constitute around sixty per cent of global trade, relations between the EU and East Asia have historically been, and remain, relatively weak and lack international visibility. This chapter examines some of the principal reasons for this apparent mutual

disinterest, by focusing on the dominant role of the US and different perceptions of the international realm, on the one hand, and on challenging intra-regional preoccupations, on the other. The final part of the chapter suggests that the EU and East Asia find themselves today as part of a new and complex multilateralism, in which strategic alliances are likely to become increasingly significant.

A History of Region-to-Region Engagement

During the first two postwar decades, Europeans had little time or inclination to pay attention to East Asia. In 1946 Winston Churchill made his famous speech about the 'Iron Curtain', describing the physical and ideological divide that was to split the continent of Europe in half until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. At the end of World War Two, the states of Western Europe were eager to combine their much-needed resources and to work together to sustain one another economically. At the same time, they needed to draw defeated Germany into their economic and political ambit, in order to ensure that such a war might never be repeated. Intensifying their efforts towards community building, six states in the region established the European Economic Community (EEC) on 1 January 1958, following the signature of the Treaty of Rome the previous year[1)] . Western Europeans advanced their moves towards integration as the Community was enlarged, to become the European Union in 1993, deepening the areas of common activity as it went[2)] , and the Treaty of Lisbon was signed in 2007, in order to advance Union's efficiency and ability to work as a group[3)] . Amongst other things, it introduced greater powers for the European Parliament, a long-term President of the European Council and a High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs. The postwar years also witnessed the creation by a number of European states, along with the US, of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a security alliance for the region. With these concerns before it, Europe had little opportunity

to observe what was happening in East Asia.

On the other side of the globe, Japan was occupied by Allied (principally American) forces from 1945–1952, China was fighting a civil war that ended in victory in 1949 for Mao Tse Tung, and most of the other states in the region were continuing to battle colonial masters, or attempting to build themselves up in the wake of newly found independence. This process of decolonization throughout the Cold War period ensured that the region remained fragmented; with a war on the Korean Peninsula between the Cold War major powers; a succession of wars in Indochina; and coups and uprisings throughout Southeast Asia[4]. Despite the fact that East Asia was as ideologically split as Europe, as Pempel notes there was no NATO–like security structure in East Asia, but rather the US operated a so–called 'hub and spokes' arrangement, through which bilateral alliances predominated[5]. As a result of these structures, there was no opportunity for deepening institutional ties in East Asia until much later.

In fact, closer relations between East Asia and Europe began only in the 1970s when ASEAN sought out cooperation in order to challenge the discriminatory processes of the European common market. Thus, for example, in 1973 when the UK joined the EC both Malaysia and Singapore complained about the loss of preferential trading benefits accorded to Commonwealth states, whilst ASEAN also feared significant losses[6]. In spite of these growing trade tensions, paralleled in Europe to some extent by fears of the penetration of European markets by the growing economic presence of Japanese goods, Rüland and Storz observe that East Asia and Europe only maintained an 'unspectacular and distantly friendly relationship' throughout that decade[7]. Only slowly did globalizing trade incentives, growing institutional linkages and greater non–state activism contribute to putting pressure on European leaders to examine their relations with the region of East Asia as a whole.

The 1990s & ASEM

It was really in the 1990s, then, that major new initiatives inched East Asia and Europe together. Trade between Europe and Asia had tripled (to US$310 billion) between 1980 and 1993, and the 1994 EU paper entitled 'Toward a New Asia Strategy' was the first time EU elevated Asia to priority of external relations[8]. The strategy paper proposed a means of managing collective relations with the growing region of East Asia within a broad format to encapsulate issues from trade to the protection of the environment and research on HIV/AIDS, and it represented for Pelkmans and Balaoing a 'most-useful process of changing the ways of thinking on Asia and EU-Asia relations'[9]. In practice, although it did not amount to tangible policy developments (except for a number of business and investment opportunities), these developments did lead to calls within East Asia for: the strengthening of regional collaboration in a perceived trilateral (EU-US-East Asia) global economy; for the creation of some kind of currency union akin to the European model: and for greater institutionalized relations.

It was on the basis of the strategy document that in November 1994 Singapore and France proposed that an EU-Asia summit meeting be held, to consider how to build a new partnership between the two regions, and subsequently the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) was held for the first time in Bangkok in 1996. While there was clear interest in Southeast Asia for closer ties with the expanding and deepening EU, the principal motivation for the EU to participate in ASEM was a growing sense, particularly expressed by the European Commission and European businesses, of the need to capture some of the economic benefits likely to accrue from the rapidly developing markets of East Asia; in other words, East Asia was becoming an economic powerhouse and the EU was already late to take some of the opportunities it offered. For the EU, then, the ASEM structures formalized a means of dealing collec-

tively with the states of East Asia; for East Asians, it offered a similar means of dealing collectively with the EU states, but also provided a first-hand examination of the practices of regional integration and established a framework in which East Asia could present itself as a regional political and economic entity and realize the 'third side' of that putative global triangle[10].

The inaugural summit meeting agreed that ASEM would function according to the three pillars of economic relations, political dialogue and cultural and social affairs, through an informal and non-binding structure, and according to the four principles of informality, multi-dimensionality, equal partnership and a high-level focus[11]. Alongside the formal summits and associated ministerial and senior officials' meetings, the Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF) has also created on the margins of ASEM an effective voice for non-state actors. The essence of ASEM, as set out in the Chair's Statement of ASEM 2 in Seoul in 2000, was to build a 'new international political and economic order in light of the growing interdependence of Asia and Europe'[12]. Each summit has addressed a particular theme, so that for example, the 1998 summit centred on the financial crisis, and the 2000 summit (in Seoul) had at the core of its agenda Korean peninsula security developments. Since it began, ASEM has been both praised and maligned: praised for bringing together two formerly distant interlocutors and also for strengthening the voice of an increasingly coherent 'Asian' contingent; and maligned for creating no more than an expensive talk shop and for contributing very little to international relations[13].

The European Commission strategy paper on Asia was updated in 2001 to emphasize the need for cooperation in the wake of the 1997 financial crisis, as well as to reflect EU enlargement and developments within the World Trade Organization (WTO). Similarly, the continued dynamism of the East Asian region and the intensification of EU partnerships with, *inter alia*, China, India and Japan, came to be set along-

side a region-to-region mutual interest in engaging in dialogues over key global and regional issues, from climate change to human rights. In order to address these, the EU engages through fora such as ASEM, as well as the EU-ASEAN dialogue, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and dialogue with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)[14].

Whatever its shortcomings, ASEM continues to attract attention and interest, as shown by its growing membership. At the seventh meeting in Beijing in 2008, ASEM had 45 partners, including all EU member states, the European Commission and ASEAN secretariat, alongside all ASEAN member states[15], China, India, Japan, Korea, and Pakistan. New members Australia, Russia and New Zealand are scheduled to join at the eighth ASEM summit in Brussels in 2010. As a result, it now represents a key component of East Asia-Europe relations and a 'multi-faceted dialogue facilitator'[16]. Thus, whilst accusations that ASEM is no more than a talking shop continue to be valid, nevertheless it is an increasingly important framework in which to situate expanding EU-Asia relations and has implications for the institutional structures of contemporary regional (and inter-regional) governance. Indeed, since the inaugural ASEM summit, East Asia witnessed the 1997 development of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) process (bringing in Japan, China and South Korea), and the first East Asian Summit in 2005 (adding India, Australia and New Zealand). In addition, a new 'ASEAN Charter for ASEAN Peoples' came into force in December 2008, with the aim of responding to the financial crisis and emphasizing political-security, economic and socio-cultural dimensions. This third dimension is especially important for offering a 'platform for engagement with representatives from governmental agencies, educational institutes and civil society organisations'[17]. The extension of regional cooperation in the form of the East Asian Summit has led to calls for the development of an East Asian Community, although at present regionalizing projects remain focused on the closer integration of ASEAN with a supporting role by the 'plus three' states. By utilizing inter-regional structures as one

mechanism for managing economic and political relations with this growing yet disparate region, the ASEM process could be seen to have influenced the concept and shape of an 'East Asian region' itself[18]. The following sections will examine the different sectors of economic, political and social relations among the states of Europe and East Asia.

Economic Relations

By the 1990s it was clear to many Europeans that the phenomenal economic growth in East Asia made it an ideal location for new investment and mergers and acquisitions, and offered new and exciting prospects for European manufacturers[19]. In spite of this enthusiasm, by 1996 only fifteen per cent of all Asian imports came from Europe and only one per cent of EU investment went to Asia[20]. Continuing problems with trade barriers, differences in economic structures and the predominance of US investors were frequently cited as reasons for this mutual neglect. For its part, East Asia did not have the ability to address collectively the opportunities and threats presented to it by an enlarging European Union, despite the fact that Japan and South Korea increased their foreign direct investment (FDI) in Europe at that time.

In 1996 ASEM aimed to bridge the economic divide between Asia and Europe, by promoting the transfer of research and development and technology, offering technical assistance and opening dialogues about regulations and standards. ASEM 2 adopted a Trade Facilitation Action Plan (TFAP) to reduce non–tariff barriers in areas such as customs, tests, standards and certification, and the Investment Promotion Action Plan (IPAP) to increase investments. These initiatives flagged in the face of ASEM informality and as a result of the fact that they depend on the independent activities of business communities who have little or no incentive for adhering to ASEM–imposed criteria[21].

More significantly, perhaps, the Asian financial crisis of 1997 led to a barrage of European criticism attacking East Asia's so-called 'crony capitalism' and further provoked European condemnation of 'Asian' business practices. One of the principal problems was that the crisis split the region into states such as Korea and Indonesia that accepted International Monetary Fund (IMF) rescue packages, and those such as China and Malaysia that took independent action. From 1997 to mid-1998 the flow of investment to Asia dropped by half, and yet there were no mechanisms to create a common Asian response[22]. The Japanese government offered a regional solution in the form of the Asian Monetary Fund in 1997, and although this was rejected (notably by the US), it did provide the foundations of what later became the Chiang Mai Initiative[23]. If the crisis revealed that European interests in Asian economic problems were at best 'vague'[24] the mechanisms created within the framework of ASEM did at least engender a flurry of meetings to discuss European assistance and common programmes, and to examine the lessons learned by the unfolding events. Most significantly, ASEM 2 issued the ASEM Trade and Investment Pledge and the ASEM Trust Fund, in order to provide the seven states most affected by the crisis with money for technical assistance, financial sector advice, and means of dealing with the social consequences of the crisis, to the tune of US$45 million (42 million ecu)[25]. Since the end of the 1990s, the ASEM framework has continued to provide the forum for dialogue about economic issues. It offers the possibility for exchanging information, capital, ideas, and personnel in the area of trade and investment and has focused *inter alia* on market reform, liberalization and transparency, and compliance with international economic rules[26].

Between 2000 and 2007 the EU's trade with its Asian ASEM partners grew by around 60 per cent. During that same period EU exports to ASEM Asia rose from 146 billion euros (US$197 billion) to 228 billion euros (US$308 billion), with increases in imports from 285 billion euros (US$385 billion) to 459 billion euros (US$619 billion)[27]. At the same

time, ASEAN has moved towards closer economic cooperation, notably through its ASEAN Free Trade Area, designed to lower intra-regional tariffs through[28]. In these ways, the economic pillar of cooperation between the EU and Asia, notably but not exclusively through the ASEM process, is regarded as a vehicle for encouraging trade liberalization and for enhancing trade and investment across the two regions. The seventh ASEM summit held in Beijing in 2008 was principally concerned with addressing the effects of the unfolding global economic crisis alongside a focus on sustainable development, as well as issuing an agreement to work together to create better regulation and fiscal stimuli[29]. Thus, EU-Asia relations are firmly 'nested' within the WTO process and seek to offer alternative venues for supporting decisions taken within the WTO itself[30]. In addition, however, the ASEM process and other channels of inter-regional dialogue have begun to focus on specific issues of mutual concern, such as piracy and energy security. Thus, for example, the ASEM Dialogue Facility has been utilized to examine trends in energy in all the member states of ASEM[31]. These areas will be illustrated further below.

Political Relations

Alongside their economic dialogue, the states of the EU and East Asia have developed channels for political dialogue. Like the economic dimension, this area of dialogue has had to bridge the distance left between the two regions in the wake of cold war structures and in light of the phenomenal growth of both regions. Many aspects of what might be termed 'political' are covered by the various dimensions of EU-East Asian relations and they tend to reflect the points of discussion in other fora, notably the United Nations and G7/8. They are also underpinned by international agreements, such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and UN Charter. In ASEM, for example, discussions have centred on topics are diverse as post-conflict reconstruction in Bosnia

and Kosovo, to UN reform and nuclear non-proliferation[32] .

As noted above, EU-East Asia relations have grown to incorporate a range of mechanisms and have also contributed to the development of a political identity for East Asia itself. ASEAN in particular has recognized both that the so-called 'Asian Ten' can muster greater leverage vis-à-vis Europe than it could manage alone, and has also found such regional fora useful for drawing China more closely into a regional framework. At the same time experiences through ASEM and other institutions have resulted in a strengthening of ASEAN *per se*, as it has gained a voice in new arenas[33] . These developments were recognized in the European Commission strategy papers, in which relations with East Asia have been represented as a 'partnership of equals'. From an Asian perspective, the extension of European Union competencies deepens external perceptions that the EU has a political voice to match its economic powers.

East Asia-Europe relations tend not to focus specifically on 'security' issues, although their dialogues do cover many facets of contemporary notions of security. The Chair's Statement at ASEM 3 outlined how ASEM would address specific security issues, rather than develop its own security mechanisms. As a result, most discussions are deferred to more appropriate loci, such as the UN Security Council and Nuclear Non-Proliferation (NPT) Review Conference[34] . At times, then, it may appear that a list of political and security interests are simply reported, rather than dealt with, in EU-Asian fora. As will be shown below, there is scope for much greater activity.

Social Relations

The EU and East Asia enjoy a range of dialogues in the fields of social and cultural affairs, and these form the third pillar of the ASEM

structure. At the centre of these activities has been the Asia–Europe Foundation (ASEF), charged with with developing exchanges among groups such as students, academics, journalists and 'young leaders'[35]. For example, the third ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting took place in Malaysia in April 2008 and focused on how best to cooperate in the face of the diversity of the two regions. ASEM's Cultural Action Plan agreed, *inter alia*, to develop and advance networks of individuals in the cultural arena, to encourage programmes for promoting cultural understanding and diversity and to expand cultural tourism[36]. Frequently criticized for being too closely linked to the governments that sponsor it (although private enterprise also funds its activities), ASEF, has, nevertheless, developed initiatives such as the Asia–Europe Environment Forum, ASEM Informal Seminars on Human Rights, the Asia–Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS), and the ASEF University Programme. One exemplary activity is the Asia–Europe Young Urban Leaders Dialogue, the second of which took place in July 2010 in Shanghai and brought together 29 young professionals from 26 countries to engage in dialogue with the theme of 'Transforming Lifestyles, Designing Sustainable Cities'[37].

One of the important dimensions of growing institutional linkages between Europe and Asia, and expanding intra–Asian regionalism, has been the rise of non–state actors. The ASEM structure has welcomed the inclusion of business interests through the creation of the Asia–Europe Business Forum (AEBF) and through their meetings business leaders are able to make recommendations directly to government officials, regarding issues of global trade and cooperation over inter–regional investment. The AEBF Chair's Statement from Finland in 2006, for example, issued three key messages to ASEM state leaders: the need for all leaders to support WTO Doha negotiations, in order to create a 'predictable regulatory and economic environment'; a desire for fair competition and stability; and the need to address the challenge of sustainable development through energy efficiency[38].

The role of NGOs has not been as warmly embraced by many ASEM leaders, although aspects of civil society are of course represented in ASEF activities. When NGO activists were to be excluded by ASEM 1, a number of NGOs grouped together in Venice in January 1996 to establish a joint Asia–Europe NGO Conference alongside the summit. From that event the Asia–Europe People's Forums (AEPF) was eventually formed, representing a coalition of multiple interests of non–state actors from East Asia and Europe. The AEPF has had a number of successes, particular on the margins of those summits held in Europe. For example, in Finland in 2006, the AEPF dialogue with the Finnish prime minister was reported by international media; the foreign minister participated in the plenary session of the AEPF; and there were opportunities for AEPF representatives to lobby a number of national governments. Thus, NGO activists have succeeded in some cases at gaining at place at the table and shaping some agenda items, as well as disseminating information about particular issues to a wider audience. What they still lack are sanctions against the non–implementation of pledged measures and a more uniform voice across the states of Europe and Asia.

Obstacles and Opportunities for Inter–Regional Relations

The preceding sections illustrated the various fields in which the states of East Asia and Europe take a mutual interest. This section focuses on those obstacles and opportunities likely to hinder or advance further developments.

Obstacles

Asia–Europe relations, particularly in the form of ASEM, have never sought to replace or to 'balance' the US. Underpinned as they are by the normative framework predominantly established by US hegemony, East Asia–Europe relations never intended to supersede each region's

respective relations with the US. As a result, Europe–East Asia relations are sometimes regarded as the poor relative in the tripolar articulation of globalization. The informality that underpins relations — whether in the form of ASEM, EU–ASEAN agreements or others — means that it is very difficult to pin partners down to concrete agreements, with the result that only the lowest common denominator is often adopted.

In addition to the dominant role of the US, however, is the disparate nature of the region of East Asia. Whilst the EU currently enjoys an impressive level of contractual agreement, which gives it the ability to act as 'one voice' on a range of different stages, the states that go to make up the East Asian contingent vary in size, levels of economic development, political regime and security and cultural attributes. This makes it hard for East Asian participants to agree intra–regional arrangements, and makes it particularly difficult for external interlocutors to engage. If the EU is the most institutionalized region of the world, East Asia at present has only loose and non–binding institutional mechanisms through which to garner agreement. What is interesting is that the number of institutions in the region has proliferated during the last decade and that the need for Asia to try to speak with one voice has necessitated growing institutional linkages, however much they might be resisted from within the region itself.

Finally, for fora such as ASEM one of the most intractable problems has been to sustain interest by all parties in maintaining the framework and pushing it forward. Two factors impinge on this problem: a preoccupation by each side with intra–regional developments; and the relative stability and therefore straightforwardness of the relationship between the two regions. In terms of intra–regional developments, both the EU and East Asia (ASEAN) were consumed by enlargement processes from the 1990s in particular. Institutionalized Europe expanded to incorporate many states of the former Soviet bloc, whilst ASEAN grew to

include formerly warring parties and to embrace the international pariah that is Myanmar. In the EU expansion was accompanied by deepening, notably through the creation of a single currency and later through the structural changes brought about by the Treaty of Lisbon. As the events of 2010 demonstrated, these institutional linkages have led to concerns about supporting weak economies in the face of financial crisis and engendered serious discussions about the future of the euro currency. Leaders of ASEAN and other Asian states, for their part, have been trying to define the potential for an East Asian future; in economic, political and ideational terms. Could East Asia replicate the European model? Would it ever wish to? Proposals have abounded for an East Asian community and even an East Asian currency, but the reality at present is that there remain many intra-regional obstacles to greater institutionalized regionalism. For many commentators and leaders within the region, loose regionalism serves as a mechanism through which to enhance mutual understanding and to face collectively the challenges of the international realm. Most significantly, however, the creation of a joint table around which to calculate Asian interests represents the chance to embrace China within multilateral frameworks and thereby to attempt to minimize potential intra-regional hostilities. This will be developed further in the next section, but suffice it to note here that gatherings such as ASEM can be regarded at times as an irritation in a busy foreign policy schedule, rather than as an opportunity.

Opportunities

If the obstacles to greater EU-East Asia cooperation seem insurmountable, it may be that we need to rethink the ways in which multilateralism functions in this era of globalization. Robert Keohane distinguishes between two types of multilateralism: institutional multilateralism is simply 'institutionalised collective action that involves a set of membership criteria and permits access to all who fulfil them'; whilst normative multilateralism focuses on the principles that underpin collective behaviour and therefore tends to be more restrictive[39] . Histori-

cally, the type of multilateralism advocated by the EU and the US broadly inhabits the latter category, whereby agreements are also linked to principled expectations about (for example) human rights and free trade criteria. Agreements that fall into the former category are often seen to be non-binding, transient, and, therefore, weak. However, literature on alliances in International Relations is useful for thinking about how non-binding collaboration may be used to manage difficult relations in an environment of competition and conflict[40]. This form of multilateral action is not constrained by legal obligation, but rather offers a way for accepting diversity amongst participants and for permitting loose alliance-building for issue-specific ends. This *ad hoc* approach to alliances, moreover, is not dependent on sustained institutional frameworks, but enables participants to come together to resolve or discuss an issue of common concern.

In reality, states in East Asia and Europe have already begun to utilize such forms of alliance, as a result of being unable to secure binding and lasting collective agreements of the highest order. The reality of their situation has made Asian and European participants focus on what they are able to address, with the result that areas such as concern for humanitarian aid combine mutual, if diverse, interests. By way of example, at the July 2010 ASEM Conference on Europe-Asia inter-regional relations in Brussels, Kristalina Georgieva, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, noted that disaster responses represent a key area of mutual concern for the EU-Asia dialogue, as the Asia-Pacific region suffers exceptionally from natural disasters and the EU is a major donor[41]. This example also illustrates the value of EU-East Asia dialogue as a 'minilateral' arena, in which opinions can be expressed, and at times common agreement be achieved, amongst Europe and Asia prior to their mutual engagement in larger, international fora. In essence, then, groups such as those that come under the ASEM umbrella, can address particular areas of interest when they arise, without situating them institutionally or ideationally

into a specific normative frame of reference. Other examples of specific issues include the 2003 European Commission call for engagement with ASEAN over anti-terrorist measures and the joint support of development in poorer states[42]. ASEM in 2006 also heralded another success, by focusing on an issue-specific agenda that reflected a commonality of interests among NGOs; namely, labour issues.

For Georgieva, the dialogue between East Asia and Europe can be used to develop 'diversity as an asset in international collaboration', by bringing together the different views of these important participants of the G20 process[43]. Indeed, as ASEF Director Bertrand Fort suggested in a 2004 article, it is the very 'multidimensionality' of ASEM that permits its members to engage in a range of political-security issues, such as the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea and assisting to ensure China is integrated into multilateral security frameworks[44]. Without the normative underpinnings of binding forms of multilateralism, then, states like China that have historically been wary of institutional participation, are able to come to the table as part of a new group of Asian, or inter-regional interests. And in the longer term this process may even engendered the socialization of East Asian states into a closer or deeper (institutionalized or not) frame for joint action.

Conclusion

The region of East Asia does not raise particularly contentious issues for the EU, beyond specific problems with states like Myanmar. As a result there have been frequent complaints from Asian counterparts that the EU does not value the ASEM process fully, a criticism that is vindicated by the frequent absence of high-level European participants at ASEM meetings. In addition, in the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the subsequent clamour over the apparent rise of China, the EU showed relatively little interest in dealing with East Asia as a re-

gion. Nevertheless, the many levels of meetings in the name of ASEM, including the summits themselves, do give European leaders, ministers and senior officials the opportunity to engage with partners both formally and informally over a range of issues, and in this way ASEM offers additional institutional structures for engagement. This Conclusion suggests that the EU and East Asia may have to change slightly their mutual approach and perceptions, in order to realize their maximum advantage.

First, it is necessary to reconsider what is meant by multilateralism, regionalism, and the like, in terms of EU–East Asia relations, for both normative and institutional reasons. In terms of its normative value, multilateralism can be laden with expectations about human rights and universal values, and can render problematic particular assumptions about the nature of regions and globalization when they are cast in such terms. As the long–held, if vague, notion of 'Asian values' makes clear, there is regional resistance to having external, 'Western' models of behaviour superimposed onto non–Western arenas. Thus, in all of their diverse fora, representatives of Europe and East Asia have found it hard to come to agreements about issues such as human rights and over the admission of Myanmar to ASEAN. What they have found, however, is that a focus on specific issues of interest such as piracy, greater market access or the need to communicate more effectively with businesspeople may not raise the profile of inter–regional relations but may nevertheless offer a long–term solution to the maintenance and effectiveness of the arrangements in place. Second, there is an expectation that without more intra–regional institutional mechanisms in place East Asia cannot function effectively as a regional interlocutor for Europe. Here again, however, an *ad hoc* approach and the utilization of the multiplying regional fora may offer the most amenable means of finding solutions to specific collective action problems.

Second, at the end of the day, EU–East Asia relations are only part

of a complex picture of globalization. Nevertheless, the states of these two regions share a mutual interest in certain global issues (such as the financial crisis) and specific concerns over topics affecting their own regions (such as market access and transnational crime). Thus, it is necessary for observers and practitioners alike to attenuate their expectations with regard to what Europe and East Asia can offer to international affairs. Rather, by focusing on specific issues of mutual concern and by utilizing varied fora for their discussions and for finding solutions, they may reveal a longer term reason to enhance inter-regional relations.

1) The original six member states were: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.
2) Today the European Union constitutes 27 member states; namely, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.
3) Opponents of the treaty claimed that it would move power still further away from elected national parliaments.
4) T.J.Pempel 'Introduction: Emerging Webs of Regional Construction', in Pempel (ed.) *Remapping East Asia: The Construction of a Region* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), pp. 7–8.
5) Ibid.
6) Julie Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2002), p.66.
7) Jürgen Rüland and Cornelia Storz, 'Interregionalism and Interregional Cooperation' in Jürgen Rüland, Gunter Schubert, Günter Schucher and Cornelia Storz (eds) *Asian-European Relations: Building Blocks for Global Governance?* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 7.
8) Gilson, Asia Meets Europe, pp. 59 and 114.
9) Jaques Pelkmans and Annette Balaoing, 'Europe Looking Further East: Twinning European and Multilateral Interests', paper presented at the Transatlantic Workshop: Towards Rival Regionalism? Ebenhausen: EIAS, 4–6 July 1996; Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe*, p. 87.
10) Victor Pou Serradell, 'The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM): A Historical

Turning Point in Relations between the Two Regions', *European Foreign Affairs Review* 1 (1996), p. 191.

11) Chair's Statement, ASEM 1.

12) Chair's Statement, ASEM 2.

13) Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe*, p. 60.

14) http://www.eeas.europa.eu/asia/index_en.htm

15) Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

16) Chair's Statement, ASEM 7.

17) www.aseansec.org

18) Julie Gilson, 'New Interregionalism? The EU and East Asia', *European Integration* 27 (2005), pp. 307–26.

19) Julie Gilson, 'Trade Relations between Europe and East Asia', *Asia–Europe Journal* 2 (2004), p. 186.

20) *The Economist*, 2 March 1996.

21) Gilson, 'Trade Relations between Europe and East Asia', p. 190.

22) Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe*, p. 87.

23) Glenn Hook Julie Gilson, Christopher W. Hughes and Hugo Dobson, *Japan's International Relations*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 238.

24) Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe*, p. 90.

25) Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe*, p. 91.

26) Gilson, 'Trade Relations between Europe and East Asia', p. 194.

27) *Xinhua News Agency*, 21 October 2008.

28) www.aseansec.org

29) Chair's Statement, ASEM 7; ec.europa.eu/external_relations/asem/2010-conference/index_en.htm

30) Vinod Aggarwal, *Institutional Designs for a Complex* World (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), passim.

31) http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/energy/events/asem_energy_2009/index_en.htm

32) Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe*, p. 108.

33) Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe*, p. 114.

34) Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe*, p. 120.

35) www.asef.org

36) http://www.aseminfoboard.org/page.phtml?code＝MinisterialMeetings_CMM

37) http://www.asef.org/

38) www.ek.fi/businessforums/aebf/en/liitteet/Chairman_Statement_FINAL_11sept06_1000_logolla.pdf

39) Robert O. Keohane, 'The Contingent Legitimacy of Multilateralism,' GARNET Working Paper, no. 09/06, 2006, available at http://www.garnet-eu.org/fileadmin/documents/working_papers/0906.pdf. 1.

40) Arthur A. Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate: Circumstance and Choice in International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 152–54 and 168.

41) ec.europa.eu/external_relations/asem/2010conference/index_en.htm

42) Lay Hwee Yeo, 'The EU as a Security Actor in Southeast Asia'.

43) ec.europa.eu/external_relations/asem/2010conference/index_en.htm

44) Bertrand Fort, 'ASEM's role for co-operation on security in Asia and Europe', *Asia-Europe Journal* 2 (2004), pp.361.