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# International Relations of Asia

Edited by  
David Shambaugh and Michael Yahuda

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Dedicated to

Michael Leifer and Thomas W. Robinson

Cherished colleagues, friends, and pioneers  
in the study of the international relations of Asia

38. Alagappa, "International Politics in Asia," 86.
39. See IISS, "Armed Conflicts and Fatalities, 1945-1994" in *The Military Balance* 1997/98 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1997).
40. Cohen, *East Asia at the Center*, 362.
41. See Marc S. Gallichio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia: American East Asian Policy and the Fall of the Japanese Empire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).
42. Barry Buzan, "The Present as a Historic Turning Point," *Journal of Peace Research* 30, no. 4 (1995): 386-387.
43. Mark Selden, "China, Japan and the Regional Political Economy of East Asia, 1945-1995," in *Network Power: Japan and Asia*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997), 306-307.
44. See Robert Jervis, "The Impact of the Korean War on the Cold War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 24, no. 4 (December 1980): 563-592.
45. According to one official Chinese estimate, combat casualties were more than 360,000 (including 130,000 wounded) and non-combat casualties were more than 380,000. See Zhang Aiping, *Zhongguo renmin jiefang jun* [China's People's Liberation Army], Vol. 1, Contemporary China Series (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo Chubanshe, 1994), 137.
46. See Kent Calder, "U.S. Foreign Policy in Northeast Asia," in *The International Relations of Northeast Asia*, ed. Samuel S. Kim (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 225-248.
47. Alagappa, "International Politics in Asia," 93-94.
48. For the rise and fall of tripolarity, see Robert S. Ross, ed., *China, the United States, and the Soviet Union: Tripolarity and Policy Making in the Cold War* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1993); and Lowell Dittmer, *Sino-Soviet Normalization and Its International Implications, 1945-1990* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), 147-255.
49. Selden, "China, Japan and the Regional Political Economy of East Asia," 313.
50. Robert Legvold, "Sino-Soviet Relations: The American Factor," in *China, the United States, and the Soviet Union: Tripolarity and Policy Making in the Cold War*, ed. Robert S. Ross (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1993), 87.
51. Kang, "Hierarchy in Asian International Relations," 174.
52. Cohen, *East Asia at the Center*, 480.
53. Harold James, *A German Identity, 1770-1990* (New York: Routledge, 1989).
54. See Oksenberg, "The Issue of Sovereignty in the Asian Historical Context," 87, 91; Amitav Acharya, "Will Asia's Past Be Its Future?" *International Security* 28, no. 3 (Winter 2003/2004): 156.
55. See Samuel S. Kim, "Chinese Foreign Policy Faces Globalization Challenges," in *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, ed. Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), 276-306; David Shambaugh, ed., *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

## 3

## Theoretical Perspectives on International Relations in Asia

Amitav Acharya

Any discussion of theoretical perspectives on the international relations (IR) in Asia confronts the paradox that much of the available literature on the subject remains atheoretical. Whether from within and outside the region, students and analysts of Asia are largely unconvinced that theory is either necessary or useful for studying Asian international relations.<sup>1</sup> Although interest in it is growing in the region, particularly in China,<sup>2</sup> theory is seen as too abstract, or too divorced from the day-to-day concerns of governments and peoples to merit serious and sustained pursuit.

Moreover, theory is criticized by many in Asia as too "Western." Thus, even among those writers on Asian IR who are theoretically oriented, disagreement persists as to whether IR theory is relevant to studying Asia, given its origin in, and close association with, Western historical traditions, intellectual discourses, and foreign policy practices. International relations theory, like the discipline itself, has been, and remains, an "American social science," to quote Stanley Hoffman's much quoted phrase.<sup>3</sup>

The recent advances made by the "English School" and continental European Constructivism have not made IR theory "universal"; it might have entrenched and broadened the Western dominance. The question of how relevant IR theory is to the study of Asian security has evoked strikingly different responses. On the one hand, David Kang has seized upon the non-realization of Realist warnings of postwar Asia being "ripe for rivalry" to critique not just Realism, but Western IR theory in general for "getting Asia wrong."<sup>4</sup> In analyzing Asian regionalism, Peter Katzenstein comments: "Theories based on Western, and especially West European experience, have been of little use in making sense of Asian regionalism."<sup>5</sup> Although Katzenstein's remarks specifically concern the study of Asian regionalism, they can

be applied to Asian IR in general. And it is a view widely shared among Asian scholars. On the other side, John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno defend the relevance of Western theoretical frameworks in studying the international relations of Asia. While intra-Asian relationships might have had some distinctive features historically, this distinctiveness had been diluted by the progressive integration of the region into the modern international system. The international relations of Asia have acquired the behavioral norms and attributes associated with the modern interstate system that originated in Europe and still retains much of the features of the Westphalian model. Hence, the core concepts of international relations theory such as hegemony, the distribution of power, international regimes, and political identity are as relevant in the Asian context as anywhere else.<sup>6</sup>

To this observer, this debate is a healthy caveat, rather than a debilitating constraint, on analyzing Asian international relations with the help of an admittedly Western theoretical literature. To be sure, theoretical paradigms developed from the Western experience do not adequately capture the full range of ideas and relationships that drive international relations in Asia. But IR theories—Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism, and critical IR theories—are relevant and useful in analyzing Asian IR provided they do not encourage a selection bias in favor of those phenomena (ideas, events, trends, and relationships) that fit with them and against that which does not. IR scholars should feel free to identify and study phenomena that are either ignored or given scarce attention by these perspectives. They should also develop concepts and insights from the Asian context and experience, not just to study Asian developments and dynamics, but also other parts of the world. In other words, Western IR theory, despite its ethnocentrism, is not to be dismissed or expunged from Asian classrooms or seminars, but universalized with the infusion of Asian histories, personalities, philosophies, trajectories, and practices.

To do so, one must look beyond the contributions of those who write in an overtly theoretical fashion, explicitly employing theoretical jargon and making references to the theoretical literature of IR. A good deal of empirical or policy-relevant work may be regarded as theoretical for analytical purposes because it, like the speeches and writings of policymakers, reflects mental or social constructs that side with different paradigms of international relations.<sup>7</sup> To ignore these in any discussion of theory would be to miss out on a large and important dimension of the debate on, and analysis of, Asian IR. In the sections that follow, I examine three major perspectives on Asian international relations: Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism.<sup>8</sup>

None of these theories are coherent, singular entities. Each contains a range of perspectives and variations, some of which overlap with those of the others, although this complexity is seldom acknowledged in academic debates. And using even these broad categories is not that simple because a

good deal of writings on Asian IR are generated by area specialists, who are unlikely to pigeonhole themselves into Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist slots. So theorizing Asian IR necessarily involves generalizing from a thin conceptual base and making arbitrary judgments about who and what belongs where.

Table 3.1. Three Perspectives on International Relations

	<i>Realism</i>	<i>Liberalism</i>	<i>Constructivism</i>
Main Actors	States	States, multinational corporations, international organizations	States, transnational knowledge communities, and moral entrepreneurs
Primary Goals of States	Pursuit of national interest; Power maximization (offensive Realism); Survival and security (defensive Realism)	Cooperation and coordination to achieve collective goals; World peace	Community building through interactions and shared normative frameworks
Preferred International Order	A balance-of-power system underpinned by self-help and alliances to maintain international order	A collective security system underpinned by free trade, liberal democracy, and institutions	Global and regional security communities forged through shared norms and collective identity
Primary Mode of Interaction between Units	Strategic interaction backed by causal ideas and military and economic power	Two-level (domestic and international) bargaining backed by causal ideas; Trade and other forms of functional institutionalization	Socialization through principled ideas and institutions
A Major Variation	Neo-Realism: distribution of power decides outcome	Neo-Liberal Institutionalism: international system anarchic, but institutions created by states in their self-interest do constrain anarchy	Critical Constructivism: challenges the state-centric Constructivism of Wendt

Although theories of IR are built around a set of assumptions and arguments that are broad in scope and supposed to apply to every region, in reality, theoretical debates about the international relations of regions often develop around issues and arguments peculiar to the region. Asia is no exception. Hence in discussing the three theoretical perspectives in the context of Asia, I identify and discuss those arguments and metaphors that have dominated both academic and policy debates (table 3.2).

This chapter looks primarily at international relations and regional order, rather than the foreign policy of Asian states. It is not intended as a survey of the literature on Asian international relations. Furthermore, I am interested in exploring the relationship between theoretical constructs and empirical developments in Asian international relations. Theory does not exist in a vacuum. Both at the global level and in the region, theoretical work responds to major events and changes occurring within and outside (at the global level) the region. In the last section of this chapter I make some general observations about the prospects for developing an Asian universalism in international relations theory, as a counter to both Western dominance and Asian exceptionalism. A final aspect of this chapter is that it is oriented more toward security studies than international political economy. This to some extent reflects the state of the study of Asian international relations, in which the work on security studies exceeds that on international political economy (IPE).

## REALISM

Realists take the international system to be in anarchy (no authority above the state), in which states, as the main actors in international relations, are guided mainly by consideration of power and the national interest. International relations is a zero-sum game in which states are more concerned with their relative gains rather than absolute gains (how much one gains vis-à-vis another is more important than the fact that everybody may gain something). The relentless competition for power and influence makes conflict inevitable and cooperation rare and superficial; international institutions operate on the margins of great power whims and caprice. International order, never permanent, is maintained by manipulating the balance of power, with power defined primarily in economic and military terms. A later version of Realism, developed by Kenneth Waltz and called "neo-Realism," stresses the importance of the structural properties of the international system, especially the distribution of power, in shaping conflict and order, thereby downplaying the impact of human nature (emphasized by classical Realists) or domestic politics in international relations. More recently, intra-Realist debates have revealed differences between "offensive

Table 3.2. Theoretical Perspectives on Asia's International Relations

	Classical Realism (Defensive Realism)	Neo-Realism (Offensive Realism)	Liberalism and Neo-Liberal Institutionalism	Constructivism (English School)
What kept order in Asia during the Cold War	U.S. military presence	Bipolarity	Interdependence induced by rapid economic growth	Norms diffused through ASEAN
Likely impact of the end of the Cold War and the rise of China	Multipolar rivalry	Chinese expansionism	Multipolar stability due to expansion of capitalism and commerce	I. Multipolar stability through socialization of Cold War rivals (e.g., Acharya) II. Benign hierarchy (Kang)
The role and impact of regional institutions	Adjuncts to balance of power (effective only if there is a prior balance of power)	Instruments of Chinese sphere of influence	Building economic and security regimes to promote free trade and manage disputes arising from growing interdependence <sup>a</sup>	Norm-setting and community building through habits of dialogue and informal institutions
Asia's future will resemble:	Europe's past (late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries)—Friedberg	America's past (nineteenth century)—Mearsheimer	(no available argument)	Asia's past (pre-colonial benign hierarchy)—Kang <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>A conflict avoidance regime within a capitalist mode of development.

<sup>b</sup>Not all Constructivists agree with this (see, for example, Amitav Acharya, "Will Asia's Past Be Its Future?" *International Security* 28, no. 3 [Winter 2003–2004]).

Realists" and "defensive Realists." Offensive Realists such as Mearsheimer argue that states are power maximizers: going for "all they can get" with "hegemony as their ultimate goal." Defensive Realists, such as Robert Jervis or Jack Snyder, maintain that states are generally satisfied with the status quo if their own security is not challenged, and thus they concentrate on maintaining the balance of power.

Whether academic or policy-oriented, Realists view the balance of power as the key force shaping Asia's postwar international relations, with the United States as chief regional balancer.<sup>9</sup> A major proponent of this view is Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's senior statesman. Lee ascribes not only Asian stability, but also its robust economic growth during the "miracle years," to the U.S. military presence in the region.<sup>10</sup> In his view, the U.S. presence and intervention in Indochina secured the region against Chinese and Soviet expansion and gave the Asian states time to develop their economies.<sup>11</sup> In the wake of the communist takeover of South Vietnam in 1975, Seni Pramoj, the leader of Thailand's Democrat Party, described the U.S. role as the regional balancer in somewhat different terms: "We have cock fights in Thailand, but sometimes we put a sheet of glass between the fighting cocks. They can peck at each other without hurting each other. In the cold war between Moscow and Peking, the glass between the antagonists can be Washington."<sup>12</sup>

Until the end of the Cold War, Realist arguments about Asian IR were closer to classical Realism, rather than the neo-Realism developed by Kenneth Waltz, which stresses the causal impact of the distribution of power. This has changed with the end of the Cold War, which spelled the end of bipolarity. Thus, a new Realist argument about Asian international relations is the view that the end of bipolarity spells disorder and even doom for the region. For neo-Realists, bipolarity is a more stable international system than multipolarity, both in terms of the durability of the system itself and the balance between conflict and order that prevails within the system.<sup>13</sup> The end of the Cold War would witness the "decompression" of conflicts held under check under bipolar management.<sup>14</sup> Hence, Realism paints a dark picture of Asia's post-Cold War order. In policy debates, the favorite Realist cliché in the initial post-Cold War years was the "power vacuum" created by superpower retrenchment, as could be foreseen from the withdrawal of Soviet naval facilities in Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, and the dismantling of the U.S. naval and air bases in the Philippines.

Questions about a vacuum of power inevitably beg the question of who is to fill it. Initially, Realist prognosis favored a multipolar contest featuring a rising China, a remilitarized (thanks partly to U.S. retrenchment) Japan, and India (whose potential as an emerging power was yet to be recognized). But with the persistence of China's double-digit economic growth matched by double-digit annual increases in its defense spending, it was the rise of

China that became the focal point of Realist anxieties (delight?) about Asian insecurity.

From a "power transition theory" perspective, Realists foresaw an inevitable confrontation between the status quo power (United States) and its rising power challenger (China). But paving the way for such a confrontation was the logic of offensive Realism, which sees an inevitable tendency in rising powers toward regional expansionism. John Mearsheimer likened the rise of China to that of the United States in the nineteenth century, where the aspiring hegemon went on a spree of acquiring adjacent territories and imposed a sphere of influence (Monroe Doctrine) in the wider neighborhood.<sup>15</sup> Expansionism occurs not because rising powers are hard-wired into an expansionist mode, but because anarchy induces a concern for survival even among the most powerful actors. In other words, great powers suffer from survival anxieties no less than weak states, and it is this concern for survival that drives them toward regional hegemony. The result is the paradoxical logic of "expand to survive."

Since a balance of power is likely to be either unstable (if multipolarity emerges) or absent (if Chinese hegemony materializes), is there a role for multilateral institutions as alternative sources of stability? During the Cold War, Realists paid little attention to Asian regional institutions or dialogues, of which there were but a few: an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) preoccupied with the Cambodia conflict, a severely anemic South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and some loose economic frameworks such as the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC). But with the end of the Cold War accompanied by a refocusing of ASEAN toward wider regional security issues and the emergence of new regional institutions such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (1989) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARE, 1994), Realism came under challenge from "institutionalist" perspectives, that is, those who argued that regional norms and institutions, rather than just the balance of power system, have helped to keep the peace in Cold War Asia and would play a more important role in the region's post-Cold War order. Realists responded to this challenge by targeting Asian regional institutions. Their main preoccupation is no longer just to highlight the crucial need for a stable balance of power system, but also to expose the limitations of regional institutions.

Realists dismiss the capacity of regional institutions in Asia to act as a force for peace. For them, regional order rests on bilateralism (especially the U.S. hub-and-spoke system), rather than multilateralism. During the Cold War, Realist scholar Michael Leifer famously described Asian regional security institutions as "adjuncts" to the balance of power.<sup>16</sup> While institutions may be effective where great powers drive them (e.g., NATO), Asian institutions are fatally flawed because they are created and maintained by weak powers. One concession made to Asian institutions by their Realist critics is

to accord them a role in smoothing the rough edges of balance of power geopolitics, an argument consistent with the English School perspective. Since weak powers are structurally incapable for maintaining order and achieving security and prosperity on their own terms and within their own means (there can be no such thing as a "regional solution to regional problems"), the best way to manage the security dilemma is to keep all the relevant great powers involved in the regional arena so that they can balance each other's influence.

Such involvement cannot be automatic, however; it has to be contrived, and this is where regional institutions play their useful role as arenas for strategic engagement. Instead of great powers creating institutions and setting their agenda, as would be normal in a Realist world, weak powers may sometimes create and employ institutions with a view to engage those powers that are crucial to equilibrium of power.<sup>17</sup>

But this limited role of regional institutions notwithstanding, Realists generally find Asia's international relations to be fraught with uncertainty and danger of conflict due to the absence of conditions in Asia that ensure a multipolar peace in Europe. In a famous essay, Aaron Friedberg argued that the factors that might mitigate anarchy in Europe resulting from the disappearance of bipolar stability are noticeably absent in Asia, thereby rendering the region "ripe for rivalry."<sup>18</sup> These mitigating factors include not only strong regional institutions like the EU, but also economic interdependence and shared democratic political systems. Some Realists, like Friedberg, have found Asian economic interdependence to be thin relative to what exists in Europe and the interdependence between Asia and the West. Others, like Buzan and Segal and Gilpin, argue that economic interdependence cannot keep peace and may even cause more strife than order.<sup>19</sup> Ironically, Realists have somehow found economic interdependence within Asia to be either scarce or destabilizing, or both at the same time.

In terms of its contributions, Realism can take credit for an analytical and policy consistency in highlighting the role of the balance of power in regional order. This view has been maintained both during the heydays of U.S. hegemony in the 1950s and '60s, through the course of its relative decline in the post-Vietnam years, and in the post-Cold War "unipolar moment." In China, Realism was the one Western theory of IR that broke the monopoly of Marxist-Leninist and Maoist thought. This would later pave the way for other perspectives on international relations, including Liberalism and Constructivism. Realism also gave a certain underlying conceptual coherence to a great deal of atheoretical or policy writings on Asian international relations.

During the Cold War, Realism was arguably the dominant perspective on the international relations of Asia. This was true not just of the academic realm, but also in the policy world. Although it is difficult to find evidence

for the cliché that Asians are instinctively wedded to a Realist worldview and approach, Asian policymakers, with the exception of some of those who fought against colonial rule (India's Jawaharlal Nehru in particular), tended to be Realist (even Nehru claimed not to have been a "starry-eyed idealist").<sup>20</sup> Even in communist China, Hans Morgenthau's *Politics among Nations* enjoyed a huge popularity in classrooms, matching or exceeding the appeal of Marx or Mao. The same was true of Nehruvian India, where the indigenous idealism Gandhi and Nehru inspired scarcely formed part of IR teaching and learning.

But, more recently, Realist perspectives on Asian IR have come under attack. The predictions of Realists about Asia's post-Cold War insecurity have yet to materialize.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Realism's causal emphasis on U.S. military presence as the chief factor behind Asia's stability and prosperity ignores the role of other forces, including Asian regional norms and institutions, economic growth, and domestic politics. In a similar vein, Realism's argument that the Cold War bipolarity generated regional stability can be questioned. China's preeminent Realist scholar of international relations, Yan Xuetong of Tsinghua University, argues that while Cold War bipolarity might have prevented war between the superpowers, it permitted numerous regional conflicts causing massive death and destruction:

The history of East Asia does not support the argument that the balanced strengths between China and the United States can prevent limited conventional wars in East Asia. During the Cold War, the balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union did prevent them from attacking each other directly in this region, but it failed to prevent wars between their allies or wars between one of them and the allies of the other, such as the Korean War in the 1950s. Hence, even if a balance of power existed between China and the United States after the Cold War, we would still not be sure it had the function of preventing limited conventional wars in this region.<sup>22</sup>

The Realist explanation of Asia's Cold War stability, while having the virtue of consistency, actually contradicts a key element of its foundational logic, which sees power balancing as a universal and unexceptionable law of international politics (even if Realists disagree whether it is an automatic law of nature, or has to be contrived). The notion of balance of power in Asia as understood from a Realist perspective is actually a fig leaf for U.S. primacy, or even preponderance. Hence, what should be anathema for a classical Realist<sup>23</sup>—the discernable absence of balancing against a hegemonic power—has acquired the status of an almost normative argument about Asian regional order in Realist writings on Asia. This contradiction cannot be explained by simply viewing the United States as a benign power, which can escape the logic of balancing. If Realism is true to one of its foundational logics, then any power (benign or otherwise) seeking hegemony

should have invited a countervailing coalition. The fact that the United States has not triggered such a coalition is a puzzle that has not been adequately explained. Adding a qualifier to their causal logic (benign powers are less likely to be balanced against than malign ones) only lends itself to the charge, raised powerfully by John Vasquez, of Realism as a "degenerative" theoretical paradigm.<sup>24</sup>

## LIBERALISM

Classical Liberalism rests on three pillars:

1. Commercial Liberalism, or the view that economic interdependence, especially free trade, reduces prospect of war by increasing its costs to the parties;
2. Republican Liberalism, or the "democratic peace" argument which assumes that Liberal democracies are more peaceful than autocracies, or at least seldom fight one another;
3. Liberal institutionalism, which focuses on the contribution of international organizations in fostering collective security, managing conflict, and promoting cooperation.

A modern variant of Liberal institutionalism is neo-Liberal institutionalism. Unlike classical Liberalism, which took a benign view of human nature, neo-Liberal institutionalism accepts the Realist premise that the international system is anarchic and that states are the primary, if not the only, actors in international relations. But it disagrees with neo-Realism's dismissal of international institutions. Neo-Liberals maintain that international institutions, broadly defined—including regimes and formal organizations—can regulate state behavior and promote cooperation by reducing transaction costs, facilitating information-sharing, preventing cheating, and providing avenues for peaceful resolution of conflicts.

While Realism as a theory of international relations is preoccupied with issues of security and order, Liberalism is more concerned with the nature and dynamics of the international political economy. Liberal perspectives on Asia's international relations are no exception. For Liberals, the foundations of the postwar international relations of Asia were laid not by the region's distinctive geography or culture, or by security threats facing the region, but rather by the post-World War II international economic system under American hegemony. The United States was central to the creation of international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which played a crucial role in diffusing the norms of economic Liberalism.

In Asia, the United States served as a benign hegemon providing the collective goods of security against communist expansion and free access to its vast market to Asia's early industrializers, even at a cost to itself (in terms of incurring huge deficits). The outcome was rapid economic growth in a number of Asian economies, which created a "performance legitimacy" for the region's autocratic rulers, thereby stabilizing their domestic politics. At the same time, the region witnessed a growing interdependence resulting from the pursuit of market-driven and market-friendly economic growth strategies, which furthered the prospects for regional stability and security.

Liberal conceptions of the international relations of Asia have particularly stressed the role of expanding interdependence as a force for peace.<sup>25</sup> The interdependence argument was advanced with ever more vigor with the end of the Cold War and the rise of Chinese economic power. Liberals, both Western and Asian (including many of them within China itself), came to view it as a crucial factor in making China's rise peaceful. Yet, the argument also invited much criticism, especially, as noted earlier, from Realists, who often take the failure of European economic interdependence to prevent the First World War as a severe indictment of the "if goods do not cross borders, soldiers will" logic. Defending against such charges, Liberals stress differences between nineteenth-century and contemporary patterns of economic interdependence. The former was based on trade and exchange, while the latter is rooted in transnational production, which is more "costly to break" and which has a deeper and more durable impact on national political and security autonomy.

The second strand of Liberalism—democratic peace theory—has found very little expression in writings on Asian IR. This need not be surprising since historically Asia has had few democracies to test the claims of this theory meaningfully. Moreover, Asia's democracies tend to be of the "illiberal variety," making it more plausible for us to speak of an "illiberal peace" in the region (especially in Southeast Asia), whereby a group of authoritarian and semi-authoritarian states avoid conflict by focusing on economic growth, performance legitimacy, and sovereignty-preserving regional institutions. Critics of democratic peace in the West, such as Jack Snyder and Ed Mansfield, have also questioned the normative claims of democratic peace by highlighting the danger of war associated with democratic transitions. In Asia, the Liberal/democratic peace argument has found more critics than adherents, but in general it has not been an important part of the debate over the region's international relations.

The neglect is as unfortunate as the criticism of democratic peace is misplaced. Contrary to a popular perception, democratic transitions in Asia have never led to interstate war and only occasionally to serious domestic instability. The case of Indonesia post-Suharto might be an exception to the latter, but didn't more people die in the transition to authoritarian rule in

that country in the 1960s than from it? In South Korea, Taiwan, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Thailand, democratic transitions have not caused serious internal strife or interstate conflict. On the contrary, it might be argued that such transitions have often yielded a "cooperative peace dividend," whereby the new democratic governments have pursued cooperative strategies toward their traditional rivals. Examples include Thailand's "battlefields to marketplaces" policy in the late 1980s that helped to break the stalemate in the Cambodia conflict, Kim Dae Jung's Sunshine Policy, and Indonesia's ASEAN Security Community initiative. Pakistan's democratic breakdown under Musharraf might have led to improved prospects for peace with India, but this was induced by a strong external element, the 9/11 attacks, and the U.S.-led war on terror. Democratization fueled demands for Taiwanese independence, thereby challenging East Asian stability, but democratization has also created populist countervailing pressures on Taiwan's pro-independence governments from going over the brink in inviting a Chinese military response. At the very least, there is not much evidence from Asia to support the critics' view that democratic transitions intensify the danger of war, or even domestic strife.

3 The impact of the third element of the Liberal paradigm, Liberal institutionalism, on Asian IR discourses is both easier and harder to establish. On the one hand, the growth of regional institutions in Asia allows greater space to Liberal conceptions of order-building through institutions. But the Liberal understanding of how institutions come about and preserve order overlaps considerably with social Constructivist approaches. Indeed, institutionalism (the study of the role of international institutions) is no longer a purely Liberal preserve; in Asia at least, it has been appropriated by Constructivists who have both deepened and broadened the understandings of what institutions are and how they impact on Asia's international relations.

✓ Classical Liberal institutionalism was identified with both collective security and, to a lesser extent, regional integration theory, which was closely derived from early West European integration during the 1950s and '60s. But neither type of Liberal institutionalism has had a regional application in Asia, where there have been no collective security (even if one stretches the term to include collective defense) or supranational institutions. The newest Liberal institutionalism, neo-Liberal institutionalism, narrowed the scope of investigation into institutional dynamics (how institutions affect state behavior) considerably. It shared the Realist conception of anarchy while disagreeing with Realism on the importance of institutions as agents of cooperation and change. But it gave an overly utilitarian slant to the performance of institutions. Institutions may (but not always or necessarily) induce cooperation because they can increase information flows, reduce transaction costs, and prevent cheating. But institutions are not really transformative; their end-product may be an international regime rather than a

security community where the prospect of war is unthinkable. In Asia, APEC has been the one regime/institution that neo-Liberals have been most attracted to. But even there, and certainly in the case of the more ASEAN-centric institutions (e.g., ASEAN, ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN + 3, and East Asian Summit), Constructivism (with its stress on the culture- and identity-derived notion of the "ASEAN Way") has been a more popular mode of analysis than neo-Liberalism or classical Liberalism (collective security and regional integration).

In general then, Liberal perspectives have made little impact on the study of Asia's international relations. This need not have been, or will remain, the case. Liberalism is more notable as a causal theory of peace, just as Realism focuses on the causes of war. In a traditionally Realist-dominated field of Asian international relations, and with the region's domestic politics landscape marked by a durable (if changing) authoritarian pattern, Liberal conceptions of peace and democracy have found few adherents. But as noted above, the criticisms of Liberal notions of interdependence and democracy on the one hand and peace and stability on the other are often rooted in misplaced historical analogies and selective empirical evidence. Liberalism has a brighter future in the analysis of Asia's international relations as the region's historical (post-World War II) combination of economic nationalism, security bilateralism, and political authoritarianism unravels and gives way to a more complex picture where economic Liberalism, security multilateralism, and democratic politics acquire force as determinants of regional order and form the basis of an "Asian universalism" in IR theory.

## CONSTRUCTIVISM ✓

For Constructivists, international relations is shaped not just by material forces such as power and wealth, but also by subjective and inter-subjective factors, including ideas, norms, history, culture, and identity. Constructivism takes a sociological, rather than "strategic interaction," view of international relations. The interests and identities of states are not pre-ordained, or a given, but emerge and change through a process of mutual interactions and socialization. Conditions such as anarchy and power politics are not permanent or "organic" features of international relations, but are socially constructed. State interests and identities are in important part constituted by these social structures rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics. Norms, once established, have a life of their own; they create and redefine state interests and approaches. For Constructivists, international institutions exert a deep impact on the behavior of states; they not only regulate state behavior, but

also constitute state identities. Through interaction and socialization, states may develop a "collective identity" that would enable them to overcome power politics and the security dilemma.

Constructivism is struggling to acquire the status of a "theory" of international relations comparable to Realism or Liberalism. Some critics view it as social theory that has no basis in IR. Constructivists are also accused of lacking middle-range theory and not pursuing serious empirical research (although this criticism would be increasingly hard to sustain as more empirical studies emerge employing a Constructivist framework); some Constructivists themselves acknowledge that like rational choice, it is more of a method than a theory per se.<sup>26</sup>

But Constructivism has helped to answer a number of key puzzles about Asian security order. While Constructivism is essentially a post-Cold War theory, it has been employed to explain key puzzles of Asian international relations during the Cold War period. Constructivists stress the role of collective identities in the foundation of Asia's postwar international relations. In an important contribution, Chris Hemmer and Peter Katzenstein explain the puzzle of "why there is no NATO in Asia" by examining the differing perceptions of collective identity held by U.S. policymakers in relation to Europe and Asia.<sup>27</sup> American policymakers in the early postwar period "saw their potential Asian allies . . . as part of an alien and, in important ways, inferior community."<sup>28</sup> This was in marked contrast to their perception of "their potential European allies [who were seen] as relatively equal members of a shared community." Because the United States recognized a greater sense of a transatlantic community than a transpacific one, Europe rather than Asia was seen as a more desirable arena for multilateral engagement: hence there was no Asian NATO. While this explanation stresses the collective identity of an external actor, another Constructivist perspective highlights the normative concerns of Asian actors themselves, especially Asia's nationalist leaders, who delegitimized collective defense by viewing it as a form of great power intervention through their interactions in the early postwar period, culminating in the Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung in 1955.<sup>29</sup>

Constructivism also explains why a different form of regionalism was possible in Asia, one that was more reflective of the normative and cultural beliefs of the Asian states and their collective identities as newly independent states seeking national and regional autonomy. This explains the origins and evolution of ASEAN, Asia's first viable regional grouping. ASEAN's establishment in 1967, Constructivists argue, cannot be explained from a Realist perspective, in the absence of a common external threat perception, or from a Liberal one, which would assume substantial interdependence among its members. Neither of these conditions marked the relationship among ASEAN's founding members at its birth. Instead, regionalism in

Southeast Asia was a product of ideational forces, such as shared norms, and socialization in search of a common identity. Shared norms, including non-intervention, equality of states, and avoidance of membership in great power military pacts were influential in shaping a deliberately weak and relatively non-institutionalized form of regionalism that came to be known as the "ASEAN Way."

Regional institutions have thus been at the core of Constructivist understanding of Asia's postwar international relations. It is through Asian institutions that Constructivists have attempted to project and test their notions about the role of ideas (for example, common and cooperative security), identity ("Asian Way," "ASEAN Way," "Asia-Pacific Way"), and socialization.<sup>30</sup> The influence of Constructivism is especially visible in attempts to differentiate between European and Asian regionalism, stressing the formal, legalistic, and bureaucratic nature of the former with the informal, consensual, and process-centric conception of the latter. That the European-derived criteria should not be used to judge the performance and effectiveness of Asian institutions has been a key element in Constructivist arguments about Asian regionalism.<sup>31</sup>

Apart from conceptualizing the distinctive nature and performance of Asian regional institutions, which are either dismissed (by Realists) or inadequately captured (by neo-Liberal or rationalist institutionalism), Constructivists have also stepped into the debate over Asia's emerging and future security order by frontally challenging the "ripe for rivalry" scenario proposed famously and controversially by Aaron Friedberg.<sup>32</sup> David Kang, noting that Realist scenarios such as Friedberg's have failed to materialize, calls for examining Asian security from the perspective of Asia's own history and culture. He raises the notion of a hierarchical regional system in Asia at the time of China's imperial dominance and the tributary system. Asia was peaceful when China was powerful; now with the (re-)emergence of China as a regional and global power, Asia could acquire stability through bandwagoning with China (which in his view is occurring).<sup>33</sup> While for Mearsheimer, Europe's "back to the future" means heightened disorder of the type that accompanied the rise of Germany in the late nineteenth century, for Kang, Asia's "back to the future" implies a return to hierarchy and stability under Chinese preeminence.

Kang's thesis presents one of the most powerful Constructivist challenges to the Realist orthodoxy in Asian IR. But his argument has been controversial, even among Constructivists,<sup>34</sup> who have questioned its claim about the peaceful nature of the old tributary system, whether China's neighbors are actually "bandwagoning" with China, and the structural differences between Asian regional systems during the tributary system, especially the absence of other contenders for hegemony that can now be found in the United States, Russia, Japan, and India, and the continuing importance of

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sovereignty to both China and its neighbors that militate against hierarchy (see Samuel Kim's chapter in this volume).

Constructivism has acquired a substantial following among not only Western but also Asian scholars on Asian IR.<sup>35</sup> A key factor behind this is the growing interest in the study of Asian regionalism, with the proliferation of regional institutions and dialogues in Asia in the post-Cold War period. In China, aside from regional institutions, local discourses about China's "peaceful rise" play an important role behind the emergence of Constructivism as the most popular IR theory among the younger generation academics. Constructivism has given an alternative theoretical platform to Chinese scholars wary of Realist (power transition) perspectives from the West (as well as other parts of Asia), which see the rise of China as a major threat to international stability.

Constructivism has advanced the understanding of Asia's international relations in important ways. Their focus on the role of ideational forces, such as culture, norms, and identity, enriches our understanding of the sources and determinants of Asian regional order not compared to a purely materialistic perspective. Second, Constructivists have challenged the uncritical acceptance of the balance of power system posited by Realist and neo-Realist scholars as the basis of Asian regional order by giving greater play to the possibility of change and transformation driven by socialization. Third, Constructivist writings have introduced greater theoretical diversity and opened the space for debate in the field and helped to link the insights of the traditional area studies approach to Southeast Asia to the larger domain of international relations theory.<sup>36</sup>

But the growing visibility of Constructivism in Asian IR has invited criticisms of the "new Constructivist orthodoxy." Despite having begun as a dissenting view, side by side with other critical perspectives on international relations, Constructivism is now bracketed as a "mainstream" perspective. This is ironic, because Constructivism is also dismissed by some as a fad, a passing fancy of a handful of intellectuals, which will fade into obscurity as the optimism generated by the end of the Cold War dissipates. Equally unconvincing are accusations leveled against Constructivism of uncritically emulating their rationalist foes, of normative determinism (too much emphasis on norms at the expense of material forces), and unreformed state-centrism (ignoring the role of civil society actors). While critics see the degree of Constructivist optimism about Asia's future to be as misconceived as Realist pessimism, in reality, Constructivist optimism has been more guarded than what the critics portray. More serious are the criticisms of Constructivism's tendency to ignore domestic politics (how domestic interactions change identity and interests) and its self-serving moral cosmopolitanism (bias toward "universal" ideas and global norm entrepreneurs at the

expense of pre-existing local beliefs and local agents). These criticisms mirror complaints about Constructivism.

It is quite obvious that the line separating the three theoretical perspectives on Asian international relations have never been neat. This brings us to the question of what Katzenstein and associates have called the need for "analytic eclecticism" in the study of international relations.<sup>37</sup> I would add that such eclecticism is needed not just between theoretical paradigms but also within them (intra-paradigm and inter-paradigm). Prospects for Asia's future cannot be ascertained from tightly held paradigmatic frameworks, but synthesis between and within them. This chapter has suggested a considerable overlap between Liberalism and Constructivism (which in turn has significant English School foundations), especially when it comes to the study of Asian regional institutions and in countering Realist pessimism about Asia's future international order. But the Realist-favored notion of balance of power can also be seen as having its basis in normative and social foundations, as evident in notions such as "soft balancing" or "institutional balancing."

While the debate between Realist "pessimism" and Liberal/Constructivist "optimism" about the future of Asia's security order remains far from settled, recent contributions to Asian security discussions have been intra-paradigmatic (such as the Kang-Acharya debate) and even within the Realist camp, between offensive and defensive Realists (e.g., Mearsheimer and Christensen, respectively). Moreover, the debate over Asia's future security order is less about whether it will feature some type of cooperative mechanism (rather than approximating a pure Hobbesian anarchy), than which type of cooperation/accommodation (concert, community, soft balancing, hierarchy) will be feasible. And in this context, while traditional conceptions of regional order in Asia revolved around the relationship of competition and accommodation among the great powers, how the great powers relate to weaker states has become especially crucial for a region in which the weaker states drive regional cooperation and institution-building.

## CONCLUSION: FROM EXCEPTIONALISM TO UNIVERSALISM

IR theory is increasingly used in the classrooms and writings on Asian IR in Japan, Korea, China, and Taiwan and to a lesser extent Southeast and South Asia. It should be noted that a good deal of "theory" that might be helpful in broadening the scope of IR remains "hidden" due to language barriers, lack of resources in Asian institutions, and the dominance of Western scholarly and policy outlets. But this is changing with the infusion of new scholarship and the broadening intellectual parameters of theoretical discourses.

As elsewhere and in other points of history, theoretical arguments and claims about Asian IR closely approximate shifts in global and regional international relations. The growing popularity of Liberalism and Constructivism in Asian IR is thus closely related to the end of the Cold War and the emergence of new regional institutions in Asia. While events drive theoretical shifts, to some extent, theories have offered rationalization of event-driven policy perspectives and approaches. Thus, Sino-U.S. tensions over Taiwan and other East Asian security issues have given a fresh impetus for Realist pessimism, while the end of the Cambodia conflict, the South China Sea Code of Conduct, and the emergence of the ARF and East Asia Summit (EAS) have given a fillip to Liberal and Constructivist optimism.

What next in the theoretical evolution of Asian IR studies? Realism retains a dominant, if no longer hegemonic, position. Realist arguments such as "power transition," "back to the future," "ripe for rivalry," and "offensive Realism" have often provided the starting point of debate over Asia's emerging and future international order. But newer approaches, especially Liberal and Constructivist perspectives, are enriching academic and policy debates on Asian IR. Realism, especially empirical Realism (i.e., academic and policy writings that reflect the philosophical assumptions of Realism without being self-consciously framed in theoretical jargon), will remain important, but so will Constructivism. While Constructivism has been criticized as a fad, it is likely to retain a central place in writings on Asian IR, because its focus on issues of culture and identity resonate well with Asian thinkers and writers. And Liberal perspectives, such as democratic peace and institutions, which have been neglected thus far, will assume greater prominence, at least insidiously.

More importantly, with the growing interest in theorizing Asia's international relations, the debate over the relevance of Western theory to analyze Asia has intensified. Perspectives that view IR theory as a fundamentally ethnocentric enterprise that does a poor job of analyzing Asian IR are becoming commonplace in Asian writings on the region's IR. And this view is shared by a number of leading Western scholars. This debate has also led to a search for an "Asian IR theory," akin to the English School or the Copenhagen School. But there is little movement in the direction of an Asian IR theory in the regional sense. This is not surprising, given Asia's subregional and national differences.<sup>38</sup> There is a great scope for national perspectives, even in a highly contested manner.<sup>39</sup> For example, some Chinese scholars are attempting to develop a Chinese School of IR, derived either from Chinese historical practices, such as the warring states period and the tributary system, or from the metaphysical Chinese worldview.<sup>40</sup>

An equally vocal group of Chinese scholars rejects this approach, insisting that IR theory must have a universal frame. According to this group, at-

tempts to develop IR theory should be guided by "scientific" universalism, rather than cultural specificity.<sup>41</sup> Going by this immensely helpful and exciting debate, the challenge, then, is to broaden the horizons of existing IR theory by including the Asian experience, rather than either to reject IR theory or to develop a Chinese or Asian School that will better capture and explain China's or Asia's unique historical experience, but have little relevance elsewhere, even though such universalism would still require deeper investigations into Asian history.

There is thus a growing space for an Asian universalism in IR theory. I use the term "Asian universalism" since it is in direct juxtaposition to the Asian exceptionalism found in the extreme form in the notion of Asian values, Asian conception of human rights, Asian democracy, or in a more moderate strain in claims about an Asian form of capitalism, or an Asian mode of globalization. Asian exceptionalism, especially in its extreme form, refers to the tendency to view Asia as a unique and relatively homogenous entity that rejects ideas, such as human rights and democracy, which lay a claim to universality, but which are in reality constructed and exported by the West. Such ideas are to be contested because of their lack of fit with local cultural, historical, and political realities in Asia. Asian universalism by contrast refers to the fit, often constructed by local idea entrepreneurs, between external and Asian ideas and practices with a view to give a wider dissemination to the latter. This involves the simultaneous reconstruction of outside ideas in accordance with local beliefs and practices and the transmission and diffusion of the preexisting and localized forms of knowledge beyond the region. Whereas Asian exceptionalism is relevant only in analyzing and explaining local patterns of IR, Asian universalism would use local knowledge to understand and explain both local and foreign IR.

The impetus for Asian universalism comes from several sources. The first is a historical shift from economic nationalism, security bilateralism, and authoritarian politics in the postwar period to economic interdependence, security multilateralism, and democratic politics of the post-Cold War era. This shift is far from linear, but it is occurring and having a substantial impact on studies of Asian IR. And this need not be seen as a purely or mainly Liberal trend, as it would be mediated by local historical, cultural, and ideational frameworks that have their roots in local conceptions of power politics, utilitarianism, and normative transformation. This shift challenges the distinction between Asian and universal knowledge claims and expands the scope for grafting outside theoretical concepts onto Asian local discourses.

The region also abounds in historical forms of local knowledge with a universal reach. Examples include the ideas of Asian thinkers such as Rabindranath Tagore's critique of nationalism, Nehru's neutralism and non-alignment, and Gandhi's *satyagraha*.<sup>42</sup> There are many Japanese writings

that were developed either in association with, or in reaction against, Western concepts of nationalism, internationalism, and international order.<sup>43</sup> Although some of these Indian and Japanese contributions were either critiques of Western ideas (like nationalism) or were borrowed forms of Western ideas (such as Gandhi's borrowing of passive resistance), they were sufficiently infused with a local content to be deemed a form of local knowledge. Moreover, the outcome of this interaction between Western and Asian ideas was "constitutive" in the sense that it redefined both the Western ideas and the local identities. And while the localization of Western ideas might have been originally intended for domestic or regional audiences, the resulting concepts and practices did possess a wider conceptual frame to have relevance beyond Asia. Such ideas deserve a place alongside existing theories of IR. Historical patterns of interstate and intercivilizational relations in Asia, including the tributary system, also have their place, if they can be conceptualized in a manner that would extend their analytical utility and normative purpose (present in any theory) beyond China or East Asia.<sup>44</sup>

Asian practices of international relations are another rich source of Asian universalism in IR theory.<sup>45</sup> Asian regionalism, which manages the balance of power and expands the potential for a regional community, also provides a good potential avenue for such universalism. Instead of drawing a sharp distinction between what is European and what is Asian, theoretical perspectives on Asian regionalism should explore commonalities that are quite substantial and would constitute the core of a universal corpus of knowledge about regionalism in world politics.<sup>46</sup>

While the distinctive aspects of Asia's history, ideas, and approaches will condition the way Western theoretical ideas are understood and make their impact, elements of the former will find their way into a wider arena influencing global discourses about international order in the twenty-first century. The challenge for theoretical writings on Asian IR is to reflect on and conceptualize this dynamic, whereby scholars do not stop at testing Western concepts and theories in the Asian context, but generalize from the latter in order to enrich an hitherto Western-centric IR theory.<sup>47</sup>

## NOTES

I wish to thank Muthiah Alagappa, David Shambaugh, and Michael Yahuda for their helpful suggestions for this chapter.

1. In this chapter, I use the term "theory" broadly, focusing on grand theories that have paradigmatic status, such as Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism. The term "theory" has many different meanings. The American understanding of theory tends

to have a social-scientific bias, whereby the general assumptions of a theory must be translated into causal propositions that can be rigorously tested and yield some measure of prediction. Europeans view theory more loosely as any attempt to systematically organize data, structure questions, and establish a coherent and rigorous set of interrelated concepts and categories. Writings on Asian IR remain atheoretical in either sense, but more so in terms of the American understanding than the European one. For further discussion, see Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, "Why Is There No Non-Western IR Theory: An Introduction," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7 (October 2007): 287–312. The special issue also explores the reasons for the lack of interest in theory in the Asian IR literature, one of the main factors being the dominance of area specialists in the field.

2. In a recent visit to China, the author found widespread evidence of the major growth of interest in theory among Chinese scholars of international relations. This is true not only of universities such as Beijing, Tsinghua, and Fudan, but also think tanks such as the Institute of World Economics and Politics of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, which publishes the leading IR journal of China: *World Economics and Politics*. It is published in Chinese. Tsinghua University's Institute of International Studies has launched an English-language journal published by Oxford University Press, entitled *Chinese Journal of International Relations*.

3. Stanley Hoffmann, "An American Social Science: International Relations," *Daedalus* 106, no. 3 (1977): 41–60; Ole Wæver, "The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 687–727; Robert A. Crawford and Darryl S. L. Jarvis, eds., *International Relations—Still an American Social Science? Toward Diversity in International Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).

4. David C. Kang, "Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytical Frameworks," *International Security* 27, no. 4 (Spring 2003): 57–85.

5. Peter J. Katzenstein, "Introduction: Asian Regionalism in Comparative Perspective," in *Network Power: Japan and Asia*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein and Takashi Shirashi (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997), 5.

6. G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno, "The United States and Stability in East Asia," in *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific*, ed. G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 421–422.

7. Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy* 110 (Spring 1998): 29–46.

8. This leaves out critical IR theories, such as Marxism, post-modern/post-structural, post-colonial, and feminist perspectives. Some argue that critical theories have been concerned mostly with critiquing their "mainstream" rivals, especially Realism and Liberalism, and have made little attempt to offer an alternative conception or trajectory of regional order. But the insights of critical perspectives are especially crucial in understanding and analyzing the impact of globalization on Asian IR, the limitations and abuses of sovereign state-system and the national security paradigm, and Asia's uneven and unjust development trajectory. An important recent book applying critical theories of IR to Asia is Anthony Burke and Mat Macdonald, eds., *Critical Asia-Pacific Security* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007). Critical

IR theory includes, among others, post-modernism, post-structuralism, Marxism/neo-Marxism, Gramscian approaches, feminism, and post-colonialism, often in some combination (e.g., post-colonial feminism).

9. For two well-known perspectives, see Paul Dibb, *Towards a New Balance of Power in Asia*, Adelphi Paper 295 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1995); Michael Leifer, *The ASEAN Regional Forum*, Adelphi Paper 302 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996).

10. Lee has repeatedly asserted his faith in the balance of power, a typical example being his comments in Canberra in 2007 that "the golden strand [in Australia-Singapore relations] is our common strategic view that the present strategic balance in the Asia-Pacific, with the U.S. as the preeminent power, provides stability and security that enables all to develop and grow in peace." "S'pore and Australia Share Common Strategic View: MM," *Straits Times*, March 29, 2007, app.mfa.gov.sg/pr/read\_content.asp?View,6860 (accessed January 25, 2008). "MM" refers to "Minister Mentor."

11. For a theoretical discussion of Lee's views, see Amitav Acharya and See Seng Tan, "Betwixt Balance and Community: America, ASEAN, and the Security of Southeast Asia," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 5, no. 2 (2005). For a recent re-statement of Lee's position, see "Excerpts from an Interview with Lee Kuan Yew," *International Herald Tribune*, August 29, 2007, www.iht.com/articles/2007/08/29/asia/lee-excerpts.php?page=1 (accessed September 23, 2007).

12. "Toward a New Balance of Power," *Time*, September 22, 1975, www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,917875,00.html (accessed September 23, 2007).

13. Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of the Bipolar World," *Daedalus* 93 (Summer 1964): 907; Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 171; John Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 1 (Summer 1990): 5-55. A contrary view that stresses the stabilizing potential of multipolarity is Karl W. Deutsch and J. David Singer, "Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability," *World Politics* 16, no. 3 (April 1964): 390-406.

14. For a discussion and rebuttal of this view in the context of the Third World, see Amitav Acharya, "Beyond Anarchy: Third World Instability and International Order after the Cold War," in *International Relations Theory and the Third World*, ed. Stephanie Neumann (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 159-211.

15. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 41.

16. Leifer, *The ASEAN Regional Forum*, 53-54. For a critique of Leifer's view, see Amitav Acharya, "Do Norms and Identity Matter? Community and Power in Southeast Asia's Regional Order," *Pacific Review* 18, no. 1 (March 2005): 95-118.

17. This shows that Realism is not a homogenous theory as its critics sometimes portray and that important differences exist among Realists insofar as the nature and purpose of international institutions are concerned. It also shows a disjuncture between disciplinary neo-Realist theory and Realist perspectives on Asian institutions. Mearsheimer, a neo-Realist (but not an Asian specialist), viewed international institutions as pawns in the hands of great powers. John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994-1995): 5-49. Michael Leifer took a more nuanced view. While institutions

were not able to take care of the fundamental security of nations, great power intervention in Asia was not inevitable, but only occurred when there was a conjunction between great power interests and disputes between or within ASEAN states. Institutions could play a role in the management of regional order if regional actors purposefully used institutions to engage different great powers so that none acquired overriding influence. For example, following the end of the Cold War, Leifer saw the ARF as the means for locking China into a network of constraining multilateral arrangements that would in turn "serve the purpose of the balance of power by means other than alliance." See Michael Leifer, "The Truth about the Balance of Power," in *The Evolving Pacific Power Structure*, ed. Derek DaCunha (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996), 51. I am grateful to Michael Yahuda for pointing to this aspect of Leifer's writings. This acceptance that multilateral arrangements can be "constraining" has much in common with institutionalist scholars like Keohane and Martin. Robert O. Keohane and Lisa Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory," *International Security* 20, no. 1 (1995): 42; Ralf Emmers, *Cooperative Security and the Balance of Power in ASEAN and ARF* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

18. Aaron Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia," *International Security* 18, no. 3 (Winter 1993/1994): 5-33; Aaron L. Friedberg, *Europe's Past, Asia's Future?* SAIS Policy Forum Series 3 (Washington, D.C.: Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, 1998).

19. Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal, "Rethinking East Asian Security," *Survival* 36, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 3-21; Robert Gilpin, "Sources of American-Japanese Economic Conflict," in *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific*, ed. G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 299-322.

20. See Amitav Acharya, "Why Is There No NATO in Asia? The Normative Origins of Asian Multilateralism," Working Paper 05-05 (Cambridge, Mass.: Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 2005).

21. Muthiah Alagappa, "Introduction," in *Asian Security Order: Normative and Instrumental Features*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003).

22. Xuetong Yan, "Decade of Peace in East Asia," *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 31. This view sets limits to Realist optimism found in Robert Ross's "The Geography of the Peace: East Asia in the Twenty-First Century," *International Security* 23, no. 4 (Spring 1999): 81-118. Ross argues that a geopolitical balance between the United States as the dominant maritime power and China as the leading continental power would preserve stability in post-Cold War East Asia.

23. Although not for Gilpin and others who would attribute international stability to the role of a hegemonic power and consider the absence of balancing against such a power as an indicator of stability. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

24. John Vasquez, "Realism and the Study of Peace and War," in *Realism and Institutionalism in International Studies*, ed. Michael Breecher and Frank P. Harvey (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 79-94; John Vasquez and Collin Elman, eds., *Realism and the Balancing of Power: A New Debate* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003).

25. Ming Wan, "Economic Interdependence and Economic Cooperation," in *Asian Security Order: Normative and Instrumental Features*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003); Benjamin E. Goldsmith, "A Liberal Peace in Asia?" *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 1 (2007): 5–27. Goldsmith finds weak empirical support for the pacific effects of democracy and international institutions, but evidence for the pacific effects of interdependence is "robust." For further Asian case studies, see Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills, eds., *Strategic Asia, 2006–07: Trade, Interdependence, and Security* (Seattle, Wash.: National Bureau of Asia Research, 2006).

26. Jeffrey Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (January 1998): 324–348.

27. Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Why Is There No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism," *International Organization* 56, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 575–607. They reject not only the power disparity explanation, but also neo-liberal explanations that would see alliance design as a function of differing calculations about what would be the most efficient institutional response to the threat at hand. Europe and Asia differed in this respect: the threat in Europe was a massive cross-border Soviet invasion, while the threat in Asia was insurgency and internal conflict. For other explanations (Realist, Liberal, and mixed) of this puzzle see Donald Crone, "Does Hegemony Matter? The Reorganization of the Pacific Political Economy," *World Politics* 45, no. 4 (July 1993): 501–525; John S. Duffield, "Why Is There No APTO? Why Is There No OS-CAP: Asia Pacific Security Institutions in Comparative Perspective," *Contemporary Security Policy* 22, no. 2 (August 2001): 69–95; Galia Press-Barnathan, *Organizing the World: The United States and Regional Cooperation in Asia and Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

28. Hemmer and Katzenstein, "Why Is There No NATO in Asia?" 575.

29. Acharya, "Why Is There No NATO in Asia?"

30. Amitav Acharya, "Ideas, Identity and Institution-Building: From the 'ASEAN Way' to the 'Asia-Pacific Way'?" *Pacific Review* 10, no. 3 (1997): 319–346. Amitav Acharya, "How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism," *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 239–275; Tobias Ingo Nischalke, "Insights from ASEAN's Foreign Policy Cooperation: The 'ASEAN Way,' a Real Spirit or a Phantom?" *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 22, no. 1 (April 2000): 89–112; Jürgen Haacke, *ASEAN's Diplomatic and Security Culture: Origins, Developments and Prospects* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); Nikolas Busse, "Constructivism and Southeast Asian Security," *Pacific Review* 12, no. 1 (1999): 39–60; Kamarulzaman Askandar, "ASEAN and Conflict Management: The Formative Years of 1967–1976," *Pacific Review* (Melbourne) 6, no. 2 (1994): 57–69; Amitav Acharya, "Regional Institutions and Asian Security Order: Norms, Power and Prospects for Peaceful Change," in *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003), 210–240.

31. Katzenstein, "Introduction: Asian Regionalism in Comparative Perspective"; Amitav Acharya and Alastair Iain Johnston, eds., *Crafting Cooperation: Regional International Institutions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

32. Thomas C. Berger, "Set for Stability? Prospects for Conflict and Cooperation in East Asia," *Review of International Studies* 26, no. 3 (July 2000): 405–428; Thomas C. Berger, "Power and Purpose in Pacific East Asia: A Constructivist Interpretation," in *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific*, ed. G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 387–420.

33. Kang, "Getting Asia Wrong"; David Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

34. Acharya, "Will Asia's Past Be Its Future?" These criticisms from Constructivist scholars suggest that the latter are not a homogenous orthodoxy as some critics allege.

35. In the words of a Malaysian scholar, "Thinking in the constructivist vein has been about the best gift made available to scholars and leaders in the region." See Azhari Karim, "ASEAN: Association to Community: Constructed in the Image of Malaysia's Global Diplomacy," in *Malaysia's Foreign Policy: Continuity and Change*, ed. Abdul Razak Baginda (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2007), 113.

36. Acharya, "Do Norms and Identity Matter?"; Amitav Acharya and Richard Stubbs, "Theorising Southeast Asian Relations: An Introduction," in "Theorising Southeast Asian Relations: Emerging Debates," ed. Acharya and Stubbs, special issue, *Pacific Review* 19, no. 2 (June 2006): 125–134.

37. Peter J. Katzenstein and Rudra Sil, "Rethinking Asian Security: A Case for Analytical Eclecticism," in *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power and Efficiency*, ed. J. J. Suh, Peter J. Katzenstein, and Allen Carlson (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004), 1–33.

38. Acharya and Buzan, "Why Is There No Non-Western IR Theory: An Introduction."

39. Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, "Conclusion: On the Possibility of a Non-Western IR Theory in Asia," in "Why Is There No Non-Western IR Theory: Reflections On and From Asia," 427–428.

40. Qin Yaqing, "Why Is There No Chinese International Relations Theory?" in "Why Is There No Non-Western IR Theory?" 313–340.

41. Interviews with Chinese scholars: Tang Shiping, formerly of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, September 8, 2007; Qin Yaqing, vice president of China Foreign Affairs University; Yan Xuetong, director of Institute of International Relations at Tsinghua University; Chu Sulong, director of the Institute of Security Studies at Tsinghua University; and Wang Zhengyi, professor of International Political Economy, Beijing University, all during September 10–13, 2007.

42. For a review of Indian ideas that might be of theoretical significance, see Navnita Chadha Behera, "Re-Imagining IR in India," in "Why Is There No Non-Western IR Theory?" See also, George Modelski, "Foreign Policy and International System in the Ancient Hindu World," *American Political Science Review* 58, no. 3 (September 1964): 549–560.

43. Takashi Inoguchi, "Why Are There No Non-Western Theories of International Relations? The Case of Japan," in "Why Is There No Non-Western IR Theory? Reflections On and From Asia." In this essay, Inoguchi highlights the theoretical work of three pre-1945 Japanese writers: Nishida Kitaro, a "constructivist with Japanese characteristics"; Tabata Shigejiro, a normative international law theorist placing popular sovereignty (as with Samuel von Pufendorf) before Grotian state sovereignty; and Hirano Yoshitaro, a social democratic internationalist.

44. One notable such attempt is Victoria Hui, "Towards a Dynamic Theory of International Politics: Insights from Comparing Ancient China and Early Modern Europe," *International Organization* 58 (Winter 2004): 174–205.

45. Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998).

46. Amitav Acharya, *Whose Ideas Matter: Norms, Power and Institutions in Asian Regionalism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2008).

47. In his study of cultural globalization, Arjun Appadurai calls this process "repatriation" of knowledge. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

### III

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## THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL POWERS