

## 歐洲統合：亞太區域合作之典範或例外

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### 摘要

歐洲聯盟及亞太經濟合作會議兩種截然不同之區域統合模式。在 1990 年代之前，歐洲統合提供地理位置相近國家藉由經濟合作促進區域安全穩定的發展模式。1990 年代之後，歐洲多元化統合模式成為其他區域合作模仿典範。但歐洲統合經驗是否可作為亞太區域整合之模式？有些學者抱持否定看法，認為亞太國家內部歧異性過大；但有些學者反而對亞太多元化發展持正面看法。

文章主要在比較歐洲聯盟與亞太區域經濟合作兩區域組織之異同。內文分為五部分：除前言外；第二部分定義區域主義之類型；第三在解析兩區域組織主要特色發展；第四從歐洲統合經驗檢驗亞太地區能從中學習之處；最後做出總結。

**關鍵詞：**歐洲聯盟、亞太經濟合作會、開放式區域主義、新區域主義

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## I. Introduction

Regionalism flourished in the 1950s and 1960s; however, outside Europe, there were few places where regional cooperation produced tangible results. Throughout the period of the Cold War, while regionalism remained on the international agenda, its scope was limited, partly as a consequence of the nature of the international bipolar system to which all regional arrangements were subordinate, and also because of the extreme tenacity with which states clung to their sovereignty in matters of *high politics* as well as *low politics*.

Following its decline both in theory and practice in the 1970s, regionalism revived and changed dramatically in the 1980s, and continued to gain strength in the 1990s. Today regionalism is emerging as a potent force in the global restructuring of power and production. The revival of the momentum of European integration in the 1980s, through the Single European Act, moved toward the common market program, and the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s touched upon issues at the heart of the idea of national sovereignty, such as citizenship, border control, domestic order, currency, foreign policy and domestic economic management.<sup>1</sup>

The successful European integration gave impetus to other regions considering following the same path. This wave of regionalism, also called New Regionalism, was marked by the signing of agreements of various types from various countries or regional or sub-regional areas involved in integration activities. For example, the revival or nativity of more ambitious agreements of regional integration, such as the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) in 1991, and the proliferation of preferential trading arrangements, such as the formation of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) beginning in 1989, and the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. Regionalism is emerging today as a force in restructuring the global order.<sup>2</sup>

The main objective of this paper was to review similarities and differences between the European Community/European Union (EC/EU) and the APEC from the perspective of comparative

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<sup>1</sup> J. A. Frankel et al., *Regional Trading Blocs in the World Economic System* (Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics, 1997), pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> William Wallace, *Regional Integration: the West European Experience* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1994), p. 201 and p. 225.



analysis. The first section of this paper discusses the varieties of regionalism and then focuses on the main determinants in the formation of regional blocks in Europe and Asia-Pacific. The third section explains some lessons that the process of the economic integration in the Asia-Pacific area could learn from the EU experiences. The final section concludes with debates on these issues.

## II. The Varieties of Regionalism

Regionalism can be understood as the promotion of cooperation, both in the economic and security fields among several states in a geographic area. However, most studies have focused on economic integration. According to the identification of several scholars, regionalism can be distinguished into four types:<sup>3</sup>

a. *Preferential trading arrangement* is the most common definition of economic regionalism. Such agreements are generally called trading blocs, defined as an association of countries with the aim of reducing interregional barriers in goods, services, investment and capital.<sup>4</sup> The most prominent are the EC/EU and the NAFTA, which are based on the conscious policy of states or groups of states (state-driven) evincing a particular discrimination in trade policies against non-member states.

b. *Open regionalism* is based on a cooperative initiative between national governments; their primary interest is intra-regional trade liberalization. Although open regionalism is seldom unaffected by government initiative, the driving forces for economic regionalization come from the market (market-based imperatives). APEC belongs to this type of regionalism. Its focus is regional economic cooperation among the Pacific Basin countries under the principle of non-discrimination, in order to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers.

c. *Growth triangles*: within the Asia-Pacific region, there are attempts now to form links between states in growth triangles.

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<sup>3</sup> H. W. Arndt, "Anatomy of Regionalism," in R. Garnaut y P. Drysdale eds., *Asia Pacific Regionalism* (Canberra: The Australian National University, 1994), pp. 89-101; J. H. Mittelman, "Rethinking the New Regionalism in the Context of Globalization," in B. Hettne, A. Inotai and O. Sunkel eds., *Globalism and the New Regionalism* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 27-28.

<sup>4</sup> Jaffrey Schott, "Trading Blocs and the World Trading System," *World Economy*, Vol. 14, No.1, 1991, pp. 1-2.



Sub-regional economic zones (SREZs) cross political boundaries but need not involve entire national economies; rather, they intersect only the border areas of national economies. The most famous SREZ is the economic zone in southern China. Progressive cooperation linking Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and the southern coastal provinces of China (Fujian and Guangdong) and the economic links between Singapore, Johor in Malaysia and Riau in Indonesia are notable examples.<sup>5</sup>

The most important driving forces of this type of regionalism come from the market (*market-driven*). We can say that it is a *de facto* economic integration in a transnational economic zone.

d. *Sub-national regionalism*: micro-regional patterns develop within the borders of sovereign states. For example, Catalonia and Lombardy are relatively autonomous entities within the political jurisdiction of states. Moreover, industrial districts form a mosaic of interdependent economic and technological forces, themselves embedded in a network of transactions.<sup>6</sup> In the case of the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, their republics demanded secession or at least local autonomy, which resulted in a tendency toward sub-national regionalism. This regional trend brought new impetus to the separatists, such as in Quebec, Canada and the Basque autonomous region of Spain.

Subject to globalizing tendencies, these processes intersect in a variety of ways, constituting regionalism. Within the four types of regionalism, the first three have the common characteristic of concerning a supranational regional economic integration. The fourth, in contrast, involves the sub-national disintegration, politically and probably economically. Despite their diverse emphases, it differs from the earlier wave of regional cooperation in several respects. Its essential features are discussed in the following section.

### **III. Main features and differences between the EU and APEC model**

The combination of two seemingly incompatible concepts: old

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<sup>5</sup> J. H. Mittelman, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.



regionalism (OR) and new regionalism (NR), has entered the debates. In debates focused on these two processes of regionalism in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, the question is how they actually relate. Are they distinct and homogeneous? We can distinguish them according to the following aspects by combining the inputs of several authors:

First of all, the OR was formed in and shaped by a bipolar cold-war context, whereas the new is taking shape in a multipolar world order; the collapse of the old bipolar system has greatly improved the prospects for international cooperation at all levels, while the transformation of US-Soviet relations and the demise of the USSR itself have also directly affected the fortunes of regionalism in a number of other ways.<sup>7</sup> In the first place, the superpowers, competing with other emerging regional powers, may seek to become actively involved in the construction of regional institutions. On the one hand, the core state is strong enough to provide effective leadership. On the other hand, this is balanced by the perception that declining power makes cooperation ever more necessary. From this perspective, for example, growing US interest in economic regionalism in the mid-1980s was both a response to its declining competitiveness and its relative loss of economic power vis-à-vis Europe and Japan: NAFTA was viewed as a stick to increase pressure on Japan to open its market, and APEC was seen as a means of applying pressure on the EU in the negotiations on the Uruguay Round of GATT. Secondly, the weaker states forming sub-regional groupings often develop as a means of improving the balance of power against a locally dominant or threatening state, i.e. ASEAN against Vietnam, the Rio Group and MERCOSUR against the USA. European Integration was externally motivated by the threat of the Soviet Union on the one side and by the hegemonic leadership of the USA on the other. Regionalism emerged as an attempt to restrict the free exercise of hegemonic power through the creation of regional institutions.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> L. Fawcett and A. Hurrell eds., *Regionalism in World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 17-20; Björn Hettne, "Globalization and the New Regionalism: The Second Great Transformation," in B. Hettne, A. Inotai and O. Sunkel eds., *Globalism and the New Regionalism* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Hurrell, "Regionalism in Theoretical Perspective," in L. Fawcett and A. Hurrell eds., *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organization and*



Secondly, the OR was created from above by regional power, and based on a cooperative initiative between national governments. This kind of regionalism, also called state-promoted regional cooperation, involves legal regime-setting, policy decisions by governments, in general, to remove barriers to trade and investment in order to realize a free trade area and set instrumental intergovernmental cooperation.<sup>9</sup> The NR is a more spontaneous process from within a region and also from below, although seldom unaffected by state policies. The most important driving forces for economic regionalization come from the market, private trade and investment flows, and the policies and decisions of companies. Such regionalization processes have become a particularly important feature of Asia-Pacific regionalism, driven by complex, market-based imperatives of international specialization and organized around transnational (especially Japanese) companies and regional business networks.<sup>10</sup>

Thirdly, the OR was inward-oriented and protectionist, but the new is often described as open or outward-oriented regionalism.<sup>11</sup> By the end of 1992, the EC established a single market; it is a type of trade bloc which is composed of a free trade area (for goods) with common policies on product regulation and freedom of movement in regard to the factors of production (capital and labor) as well as free movement of enterprises and services. To reach these goals, the physical (borders), technical (standards) and fiscal (taxes) barriers among the member states are removed to the maximum extent possible, along with other ways to create “non-tariff barriers”, a process involving the establishment of a self-contained entity and closing the door to outside suppliers. The scholars gave the EC a symbolic signification: “Fortress Europe”, since the products from non-integrated countries have difficulty entering the European market. With the spread of deregulation and privatization in the 1990s, the outward orientation of neoliberal regionalism has meant the diminution of the ability of both “states and interstate organizations” to control aspects of trade and monetary relations. It

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*International Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 46-53.

<sup>9</sup> Mario Telo, *European Union and New Regionalism* (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2007), p. 128.

<sup>10</sup> Björn Hettne, *op. cit.*, p. 7; and Andrew Hurrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>11</sup> P. Bowles, “ASEAN, AFTA and the New Regionalism,” *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 2, 1997, p. 224; L. Fawcett and A. Hurrell eds., *op. cit.*, p.25; Björn Hettne, *op. cit.*, p. 7.



entails liberalization, an opening to external market forces.<sup>12</sup>

From a neoliberal perspective, the formation in the Asia-Pacific region was meant to establish wider regionalism. All APEC governments have committed themselves to remove all obstacles to free and open trade as well as investment by 2020 (by 2010 for developed economies). The guiding principles for progressing towards these targets are based on APEC's founding concept of open regionalism. APEC economies will apply, or endeavor to apply, the principle of non-discrimination between and among them in the process of liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment. The outcome of trade and investment liberalization in the Asia Pacific region will be the actual reduction in barriers not only among APEC economies but also between APEC economies and non-APEC economies.

Fourth, the OR was specific with regard to objectives, some organizations being security-oriented and others, economically-oriented. Security divisions also imply economic divisions, as shown in the pattern of regional economic cooperation in Europe during the cold war. The NR is a more comprehensive multidimensional process, the most important aspects being: culture, security, economic policies and political regime.<sup>13</sup>

Fifth, whereas the OR only concerns relations between formal sovereign states, the NR forms part of a global structural transformation in which non-state actors are active and manifest themselves at several levels of the global system,<sup>14</sup> in the sense that the constituent states themselves, and increasingly also other actors, are the main proponents for regional integration.

If we adopt the definition of Joseph Nye of an international region as “a limited number of States linked together by a geographic and a degree of mutual interdependence”, regionalism can be defined as “the formation of several states on the basis of geographical region”.<sup>15</sup> The participants are neighbours European integration has come a long way from its original six members; it now includes 27 member states. According to Article 49 of the Maastricht Treaty, any

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<sup>12</sup> J. H. Mittelman, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>13</sup> Björn Hettne, *op. cit.*, p. 8 and pp. 11-12.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> L. Fawcett and A. Hurrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11; W. J. Ethier, “The New Regionalism,” *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 108, No. 449, 1998, p. 1152.



“European State” that respects the rule of law and the principles of liberty, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms can apply to become a member. The European Union has been the representative bloc on the continent from the Atlantic to the Baltic Sea, from the Western to Eastern Europe.

The NR is not based on the conscious policy of states or groups of states, nor does it presuppose any particular impact between the states of region, and the patterns of regionalization do not necessarily coincide with the borders of states. The basis of such economic regionalism can be like APEC's, dispersed from the southern hemisphere to the northern, from the East to the West. Great geographical distance could prevent an intensive economic relationship between the Oceania zone and East Asia. Here two points should be highlighted: First, the regionalization of APEC is not based on the conscious policy of states or groups of states, nor assumes any particular impact on relations among the countries of the region; and secondly, this model of regionalization does not necessarily coincide with the borders connecting countries. The basis of such economic regionalism can be the type of growth triangles, or can be constructed via in the interpenetration of human resources, for example, the transnational economy carried out by overseas Chinese in East Asia.<sup>16</sup>

Currently, the subjective sense of geographic distance has changed dramatically due to the revolution in information technology, called by some “the end of geography”.<sup>17</sup> In this sense, while it is often seen as the contiguous and regional cooperation within the geographic unit, it is no longer a prerequisite.<sup>18</sup>

#### IV. What we have learned

As discussed above, the EU and APEC are two significant, but quite different, multi-purpose economic blocks which have chosen very different approaches for dealing with the issue of promoting internal coherence to achieve closer economic integration.

What we have learned from comparative research is that the

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<sup>16</sup> Andrew Hurrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-40.

<sup>17</sup> Björn Hettne, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Dilip K. Das, *Regionalism in Global Trade* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2004), p. 2.





EU is not an exportable regional model for the Asia-Pacific regional cooperation. In other words, the EU is not a kind of counter-model either. On the one hand, since new regional associations of states are often still unclear and overlapping within the current transition of the multi-polar world system, there is no evidence at all that different regional models correspond to the “Balassian” model of PTAs where the path and the end are established from the very beginning.<sup>19</sup> The evolution of the EU is based on a reading of the Balassain process in which the EC abolished border barriers to trade in goods among its members in the 1960s, forming a customs union with uniform trade barriers against the rest of the world. The Single Market Program created free trade in services among members, followed by the euro convergence criteria for member states to enter the third stage of European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). In the Asia Pacific region, APEC was created in 1989. After over 20 years, APEC still is a forum for economic cooperation. There are several preferential trading arrangements, including: NAFTA, the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and Closer Economic Relations (CER) between Australia and New Zealand. In each case, CER and NAFTA provide for free internal trade in all goods, but NAFTA contains complex preferential rules of origin which are specifically designed to close off trade in textiles, clothing and motor vehicles from non-participants. AFTA includes many exemptions, although the list of exemptions is being progressively shortened.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, different models cannot be explained through the integration theory that was created and developed in relation to Western Europe, and on the basis of the political background of the European nation state. It would be a methodological mistake to isolate a single regional organization and underestimate the systemic trends and the common features within the partially globalized economy.<sup>21</sup>

In this sense, it is necessary to spell out the differences of regionalism in Europe and the Asia Pacific region. Europe was a region well developed over fifty years. In most of these integration processes, the EU model has been present to a greater or lesser extent. The Asia-Pacific region, in regard to economic and security aspects, presents some features that differentiate varieties of the

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<sup>19</sup> Mario Telo, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Elek, “Open Regionalism Going Global: APEC and the New Transatlantic Economic Partnership,” *Pacific Economic Paper*, No. 286, December 1998, pp. 13-18.

<sup>21</sup> Mario Telo, *op. cit.*, p. 128.



Euro-Atlantic region, where regionalism to date has achieved success recognized by the international community. It consists of three starting points:

In the first place, it should be noted that the growing sense of regional identity has been universal, although this has manifested itself in various ways. In a comparison with the experience of European integration, the Asia-Pacific countries in the nineties approximated that of the EC in the fifties and sixties when the Heads of the Member States agreed to economic unification, which was considered as a protection against regional conflict and a bridge to improve the political relations, especially between Germany and France. In contrast, neither NAFTA nor APEC has a comparative political agenda. The Asia-Pacific region is characterized by its diversity and asymmetry in regard to the historical enmity, along with the ideological, cultural and territorial disputes. For example, China had border conflicts with Russia in the northeast, with India in the southwest and with ASEAN countries in the South China Sea; the confrontations between the two Chinas and two Koreas; historical hatred between Japan and most countries in Asia since the Japanese invasions during World War II, as well as the enormous trade surplus of Japan with Asian countries, all raise concerns.

The balance of power and nationalism today are still major conflicts to resolve. In Asia, international relations are based largely on bilateralism without the commitment to regional institutions like the EU or NATO. As a result of these differences, the concepts of regionalism and community are relatively weak in the Asia-Pacific area compared with the undeniable political commitment that such terms elicit in Europe.<sup>22</sup>

The development of the EU was based on international law, as in the Treaty of Rome in 1958, the Single European Act in 1987 and the Treaty of Masstricht in 1993. The EU established a supranational organization based on these community laws. Members of the EU have agreed to adopt common or compatible norms for a very wide range of economic policies.

In contrast, APEC economies have adopted a much looser model of cooperation. Participants are expected to adhere to an evolving set

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<sup>22</sup> Amado Philip De Andrés, "Hacia una Comunidad del Pacífico o Asiática?" *Leviatán*, primavera, 1997, pp. 93-111.



of guiding principles which define the objectives and means of cooperation, including those set out in the Seoul APEC Declaration and the Osaka Action Agenda. On the other hand, these principles are not legally binding.<sup>23</sup>

Unlike the EU or other multilateral trade bodies, APEC does not enforce obligations among its members. APEC decisions are taken by consensus and commitments are voluntary. It leaves Member States to unilaterally announce plans or programs of liberalization and execute them under domestic rules. Until now, APEC has not signed any international treaty, nor maintained this obligation to its Member States.<sup>24</sup>

The model of European integration has always existed in the South Asian collective unconscious but, realistically, the institutional differences are marked so that it is difficult to propose such a model as the target in middle term. What the Asia-Pacific region needs, in order to copy the model of European integration, is a basis in law, and for that law to be effective, it must be both legitimate and respected. This character has been the EU's trademark and it does not exist in the integration processes in the Asia-Pacific region, which were characterized by drafting many laws which did not enter into force or were violated by the countries involved.

Secondly, in terms of doctrine and policy, an interesting debate has been generated between the groups about what exactly APEC should be. In general, there are two different versions of competing economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific area: The first version supports the idea of an "Asian Community", which would exclude the U.S. and Oceania from the process of integration. The proposal for the creation of the East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC), China-ASEAN or ASEAN+3,<sup>25</sup> conforms to this school of opinion. This group has defined APEC as a regional forum for soft cooperation and soft regionalism, favoring a gradual liberalization of international trade. The conclusion of the goal of integration is fixed at a late date, 2020, and the adopting of a "two speed" strategy: The industrialized nations must join the free trade area in 2010 and

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<sup>23</sup> Andrew Elek, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>24</sup> Rolf Langhammer, "Regional Integration APEC Style: Lessons from Regional Integration EU Style," *ASEAN Economic Bulletin*, Vol. 16. No. 1, 1999, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> ASEAN+3 includes the ten ASEAN countries with the three major nations of Northeast Asia, China, South Korea and Japan.



developing countries must join in 2020.<sup>26</sup> The other version might be called the “Pacific Community” of common interests and values, as perceived by the U.S., combining in this way the needs of East Asia, the Americas and the Pacific region to maintain strong ties in the fields of economics and security. The idea of this group is the need for APEC to become a project of economic integration leading to the formation of a free trade zone in the Pacific region.<sup>27</sup> In addition, APEC, under the principle of “open regionalism”, is accompanied by a rapid increase in the number of Member States. After twenty years since its establishment, the organization now comprises 21 countries and territories. This could present a challenge to the idea of regionalism in the Asia-Pacific region.

The EU case is clear. Europe adopted the principle of “deepening first, then widening”: completing the Common Agricultural Policy before accepting England; establishing the Common Market before admitting the entrance of more member states, and attempting to establish an economic and monetary union before expanding to Eastern Europe at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The new members have to fulfill the economic and political conditions, known as the “Copenhagen criteria”; candidate countries must have: a stable democracy, respect for human rights, law and the protection of minorities; a functioning market economy; the ability to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; as well as the power to adopt rules, standards and policies that constitute the body of EU law, named *acquis communautaire*. The EU’s enlargement is based on stringent conditions of accession in order to reduce heterogeneity. The preparation of candidate countries means meeting their obligations as member states after accession. Each country is treated individually according to its own progress, the motivation must be constant, and the transparency of the process is also necessary.

Despite periods of transition of the EU (which APEC lacks),

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<sup>26</sup> Pablo Bustelo, “Las relaciones económicas y el nuevo regionalismo en Asia oriental,” in S. Golden (comp.), *Multilateralismo versus unilateralismo en Asia: el peso internacional de los “valores asiáticos”* (Barcelona: CIDOB, 2004), pp. 139-140; Sergio Plaza Cerezo, “La APEC: Un Proyecto de Integraicón Económica en la Cuenca del Pacífico,” *Información Comercial Española*, No. 748, 1995, pp. 137-138; Amado Philip De Andrés, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>27</sup> Sergio Plaza Cerezo, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-138; Amado Philip De Andrés, *op. cit.*, p. 97.



the heterogeneity is increased in terms of income disparities, differences in economic structures and the orientation of the global market. In a similar situation, the heterogeneity increases during the expansion of ASEAN to Indochina. This leads to the question whether both groups can work well with the constant expansion. On the one side, a mixture of elements of the APEC process allows the fast entrance of new members and stimulating reforms between old and new Member States; on the other side, the EU process gives some candidates tasks of the pre-accession, which could be the best way to reduce some heterogeneities and to commit to policy reforms.<sup>28</sup> In other words, the EU faces the challenge of deepening and widening the process of integration while APEC tries to gain the momentum by encouraging Member States to subscribe to the ambitious goals of Bogor and to the actions of Manila. In the face of costs in terms of increased heterogeneity and commitment, the EU expects that the heterogeneity can be controlled. However, the various speeds of implementing political commitment for newcomers may cause greater heterogeneity than was the case with the old member states. In APEC, economic and political diversity is the main challenge from the outset to emphasize the concerted unilateralism.

Thirdly, the EU and APEC have also adopted very different approaches to the rest of the world's economies. The EU is affected mainly by government action; this constitutes discrimination in trade policies against non-member states. The EU exercises its trade policy in the wider context of external relations which were replaced by a common foreign and security policy. The internal liberalization of EU, except for agriculture and few manufactures (cars, textiles), is based on the principle of "across borders", signifying a liberalizing of all sectors along a common formula. This principle also appears to be the starting point of the EU's proposal for multilateral trade negotiations.<sup>29</sup> In addition, trade barriers were all eliminated between the EU and the new countries which were incorporated. Two thirds of the candidate countries' trade was with the EU in 2003. After the entry of twelve new accession economies, low labor cost in the new member states was becoming an attractive factor for FDI to the older EU Member

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<sup>28</sup> Rolf Langhammer, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.



States.<sup>30</sup>

APEC is based on a cooperative initiative between national governments; its focus is regional economic cooperation among countries of the Pacific Basin under the principle of non-discrimination, in order to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. APEC makes no difference to the policies between internal and external trade since the trade facilitation and liberalization are not restricted to members of APEC. In the region, the range of tariff levels is wide: very high in Thailand, with an average tariff from 30% to 40%, and virtually nonexistent in Hong Kong, Singapore and New Zealand. Taking into account investment, the U.S. is relatively liberal, while the major East Asian countries maintain restrictions on foreign investment. Nevertheless, the liberalization has led to a reduction in tariffs.<sup>31</sup> In the process of economic integration, APEC will encounter more difficulty than the EC/EU since the purpose of a regional economic union remains distant.

## V. Conclusion

The idea of Europe, as the most successful region in the global system, will spark similar models. Western Europe before 1990, offered an attractive model of formal economic integration among countries within a geographically well-defined security and stability. Europe, after 1990, offered a more expanded example for other regions to learn from. It was clear from the beginning that the integration process, despite being initially based on an economic cooperation, could not neglect the political and cultural aspects. The current crisis within the EU is caused not only by national interests (between federalists and nationalists), but also by a split between the state and civil society (manifested as the discussion on "democratic deficit" and constitutional tensions between the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament). The Asia-Pacific region, by contrast, has sometimes superimposed political purposes upon economic and cultural ones, proceeding without creating financial viability, and has privileged economic and commercial agreements, without a stable political and institutional basis.

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<sup>30</sup> Amado Philip De Andrés, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>31</sup> APEC, *Asia Pacific at a Glance*, 2007.

<[http://www.apec.org/etc/medialib/apec\\_media\\_library/downloads/sec/pubs/2007.Par.0008.File.tmp/06\\_sec\\_Apec\\_glance.pdf](http://www.apec.org/etc/medialib/apec_media_library/downloads/sec/pubs/2007.Par.0008.File.tmp/06_sec_Apec_glance.pdf)>.



Some arguments deny the possibility of regionalism in the Asia-Pacific region, as contrasted with the EU, due to its diversity. Some scholars positively evaluate its diversity in the Asia-Pacific area's specific value.<sup>32</sup>

In terms of diversity, Asia-Pacific can find an alternative regionalism. Thus, there are indeed two divergent imperatives in the development of the Asia-Pacific region. On the one hand, in terms of the political imperative, the Asia-Pacific area tends to nationalism, balance of power and the concept of national sovereignty. On the other hand, it tends toward the interdependence of economies and open regionalism. In comparative terms, the first is led by government action, while the latter is guided by the impetus of the market.<sup>33</sup>

Is the model of European integration an applicable experience for Asia Pacific? One of the problems making it difficult to replicate the European model in the Asia-Pacific region is the lack of willingness of countries in the region to yield any form of sovereignty to a supranational institution. Furthermore, there is no consensus among the major governments of the region with regard to the way forward since they have great differences in the face of the opportunities and challenges presented by globalization and the need for appropriate strategies related to international insertion, which weaken the integration process. The EU can offer integration experiences for consideration by the Asia-Pacific area but cannot serve as a model; it needs to find its own means of integration. The European and Asian models are going to be distinct but the tendency of regionalism will move things in the direction of a cooperative region, beyond discussion and debates.

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<sup>32</sup> Please see Kjelle A. Eliassen and C. B. Arnesen, "Comparison of European and Southeast Asian Integration," in M. Telo, *op. cit.*, p. 203-221; M. Telo, "Between Trade Regionalization and Various Paths towards Deeper Cooperation," in M. Telo ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 127-152.

<sup>33</sup> Amado Philip De Andrés, *op. cit.*, p. 96.



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# **The European Integration: Model or Exception for Asia-Pacific Regional Cooperation**

Chung-hung Cho\*

## **Abstract**

The EU and APEC are often described as two very different approaches to regional integration. The idea of Europe, as a most successful region in the global system, would have a similar model. Western Europe before 1990, offered an attractive model of formal economic integration among countries within a geographically well-defined security and stability. And Europe, after 1990, offered a more multiple example for that other regions could learn. However, is the model of European integration an applicable experience to Asia Pacific? Some arguments denied the possibility of regionalism in Asia-Pacific, as contrasted with the EU, in its diversity. Some scholars positively evaluate its diversity in Asia-Pacific specific value.

This paper focuses mainly on the similarities and differences between the EU and APEC from the perspectives of comparative analysis. The content is divided into five sections: the introduction; a second section defining the varieties of regionalism; an explanation of the main determinants on the formation of regional block in Europe and Asia-Pacific; the fourth section tries to explain some lessons that economic integration in the Asia-Pacific could learn from the EU experiences; and the final section concludes the debates.

**Keywords:** EU, APEC, Open Regionalism, New Regionalism.

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