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1

Introducing Asia, Europe and the Challenges of Globalization

Richard Balme and Brian Bridges

The theme of this volume, contemporary Asia–Europe relations, addresses interactions between what international relations theorists call regions, delineated along geographical lines of continents. Regions are neither territories placed under the sovereignty of political institutions, nor supranational or transnational actors in the strict sense of the term. They consist of wide and complex interactions based on territorial contiguity or relative proximity, established through economic, cultural and political interdependencies, historically developed over time and geographically located across space. They can jointly be understood as patterns of territorial relations encompassing neighbouring states, and as sub-systems of international relations at the global level. Europe and Asia qualify immediately under this definition.

Countries from Europe, for which the enlarged European Union (EU) embodies the more general densification of relations, on one hand, and Asia, which is taken as covering Northeast, Southeast and South Asia on the other hand, share some common cultural and historical heritage, noticeably religious influences, quite proximate values and ways of living, and the legacy of multi-secular territorial conflicts and invasions. They are also engaged not just in raising their own living standards but also in growing economic interdependencies, and increasingly in establishing common institutions such as the EU and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to develop cooperative policy dialogue and joint policy making. Although both regions display a high degree of internal diversity, economic and political integration is clearly much more advanced in the European than in the Asian case. Nevertheless, both of them exemplify how regional cooperation and integration may develop and, with the help of economic growth and convergence, may possibly contribute to establishing a multipolar world,

better equipped to face the challenges of globalization. These are the general perspectives orientating the analysis in this volume. Both Europe and Asia have been praised as potential major actors in the international relations of the twenty-first century, for their potential role in diffusing development and in balancing US hegemony in world security and economic affairs. A decade after the establishment of the first Asia–Europe Meeting in 1996, what are the accomplishments of and prospects for these relations? What is their contribution to the state of international relations, and to the urgent need for governance at the global level? Are they likely to have a significant effect on the course of world affairs?

The chapters in this volume explore these issues in their recent – and in some cases still initial – development. This introduction provides the empirical and theoretical framing for these questions, surveys the findings developed in individual chapters, and proposes a general interpretation of the issues at stake in Asia–Europe relations at the beginning of this new century. We start with a brief historical perspective on Asia–Europe relations, before indicating the new expectations supported by their developments. We then specify how Asia–Europe relations can be approached within the alternative conceptions of international relations rooted in realism, idealism and constructivism. A specific analytical framework is further proposed to account for the political economy of inter-regional relations in the context of globalization, and for its variations according to regions, countries and policy sectors. Finally, the chapter summarizes the findings of the different chapters, and critically reviews the developments and limitations of regionalization and multilateralism in globalization.

A brief historical perspective on Asia–Europe relations

In a long-term perspective, Europe and Asia did not primarily interact as regions, but as states, missions, trade ventures and even individuals pursuing imperial and colonial projects (Godement, 1997; Gregory, 2003; Hobson, 2004). The Portuguese were the first to arrive Asia as traders and then colonizers, but they were by no means the last, as, driven by an amalgam of political, religious, strategic and economic motives, the major European powers competed across Asia. Ironically, it was Japan, which avoided direct colonization but tried to copy the Europeans' imperial ambitions, that helped to precipitate the end of that process of European formal and informal control. Relations between

Europe and Asia, initially established on European trade expansion and conquest, went through different stages of reflux with the decolonization of the British, French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese empires. After initially being a Spanish colony, the Philippines obtained independence from the United States (US) in 1946. The United Kingdom (UK) renounced sovereignty over Burma in 1947, India in 1948, Singapore in 1956, Malaysia in 1957, and Hong Kong in 1997. Western settlements in China were expelled when the communists took power in 1949. France officially left Southeast Asia ('Indochine') after the Geneva conference of 1954 following the battle of Dien Bien Phu. Indonesia obtained independence from the Netherlands in 1949, and Portugal left Timor in 1974 and Macao in 1999. The eclipse of the European presence in Asia was paralleled by the growing US engagement in the region as the Cold War deepened (in Taiwan, Korea, and Vietnam). After the People's Republic of China (PRC) joined the United Nations Security Council in 1971 and the end of the Vietnam war in 1975, East–West relations in Asia ceased to be dominated by direct inter-state confrontations, despite the existence of several communist regimes in the region.

At the same time, however, the apparent European 'withdrawal' from Asia was accompanied by a loosening of economic and commercial ties, which meant that the Europeans missed out on some of the new opportunities as, one by one, the Asian states followed the Japanese lead in heading for high-speed economic growth. With the rising development of the Asian economies and with the opening of China and its transition to a more marketized economy, relations between Asian and European countries steadily turned more business-oriented and more cooperative. The collapse of European communism between 1989 and 1991 definitely ended the ideological cycle and corresponding alliances opposing western capitalism to eastern communism. The progress of European integration and the rise of the EU as a major economic power in world affairs, as well as Asian economic development and regional integration have provided opportunities for designing a renewed context for more intense exchanges.

Rising expectations

Consequently, in the early 1990s the Europeans began to think about Asia in a more comprehensive and coherent manner. The realization of the importance of these Asian economies and the relative weakness of the European involvement in the region both economically and politically

was the driving force behind European efforts at re-evaluation, which culminated in the European Commission's landmark 'Asia strategy' document in mid-1994 (Camroux and Lechervy, 1996; Park and Kim in this volume). This argued the case for a higher priority to be given to Asia and for more proactive and better-coordinated strategies towards the region.

This shift in European perceptions and policies was reciprocated by an initiative from Singapore, acting on behalf of ASEAN, to establish the first-ever region-to-region dialogue through the Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM) process. The Asians wanted to reinforce the weakest leg of the Asia–Europe–North American triangle (not least to avoid overdependence on the United States). The first ASEM was held in Bangkok in February 1996 and such summit-level meetings have been held regularly every 18 months since, with various official-level meetings in between. ASEM has continued to focus on three main 'pillars' or areas of relations, namely economic, politico-strategic, and socio-cultural (Gilson, 2002; Yeo, 2004; as well as Chapter 2 in this volume). Although the discussions at the Summits are informal and non-binding, it is possible to see through this developing process a form of institutionalization of dialogue.

At the same time as ASEM was being established, the European Commission was engaged in a series of reviews of the EU's relations with a range of individual Asian states and with ASEAN. A common theme of this series of documents issued through the mid-1990s was the need to engage individual Asian states not just in a commercial sense but also in broader dialogue. The Asian financial crisis of 1997–98 brought temporary disruptions to the economic flows between the two regions and at least some re-evaluations of the 'Asian way' of doing things. But it was not to significantly undermine in the longer run either the European desire to be more engaged in Asia (particularly as China, which survived the financial crisis better than most of its neighbours, continued to grow in economic and political clout) or the Asian desire to have a counterbalance to the United States (particularly as the Bush administration's 'war on terror' provoked some mixed reactions across Asia). A survey conducted across 23 countries in December 2004 by GlobeScan shows that a majority of the respondents (58 per cent) see the possibility that Europe might in the future be more influential than the United States as positive. Asia is more divided on the issue between China (66 per cent as positive), Indonesia (56 per cent), South Korea (53 per cent) and more moderate appreciations in Japan, India and Philippines (35 per cent). The present influence of Europe in world affairs is seen as positive by

68 per cent. Again, Japan (39 per cent) and India (35 per cent) have more moderate appreciations than other Asian countries (77 per cent in China, 76 per cent in Philippines, 71 per cent in Indonesia and South Korea), but positive appreciations always outweigh negative ones. Although the survey does not estimate perceptions of Asia as a whole, available measures about the influence of China are also revealing. China's influence indeed appears more positive than any of the other major powers (48 per cent for China, 38 per cent for the United States and 35 per cent for Russia). Interestingly, European countries have rather contrasted appreciations of China, with a majority seeing it as positive in France (49 per cent), the UK (46 per cent), Italy (42 per cent) and Spain (37 per cent), against a majority as negative in Germany (47 per cent), Poland (33 per cent) and Turkey (36 per cent) (Kull, 2005). The overall increasingly positive images of Europe as well as China compared to the United States and Russia, especially among young generations, therefore coexist with important variations across countries of both regions, and we probably still stand at some distance from achieving common perceptions shared by public opinion at the regional level. Nevertheless mutual expectations seem to be on the rise according to these data.

Europe–Asia relations now face the challenges at the core of globalization, such as controlling the effects of trade liberalization in both regions, securing sustainable patterns of development, managing migration flux, containing global pandemics, and fighting terrorism. They also address the issues of the global power structure, the position and behaviour of the United States in international relations, and the access of developing countries to the global governance structure. Whether Europe and Asia will indeed be able to meet these challenges remains indeed uncertain. The developments of the last two decades, however, suggest a rapid evolution of their relations, which will be highly significant for the impact of globalization on international relations.

Multilateralism, regionalism and theory of international relations

Despite this long history of interactions between Europe and Asia, the diffuseness and distance in these relations may well help to account for the relative neglect of this inter-regional relationship in the academic literature. Nonetheless, as this volume will demonstrate, the contemporary relationship between the European Union and Asia provides ample evidence of the complex and multi-layered nature of the interactions

between the two regions, and more generally of the structure of contemporary international relations. At the same time, the patterns of interactions discussed in the following chapters also provide insights into the evolving parameters of the European Union's aspirations for a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the developing characteristics of regionalism within the Asian Pacific region, the degree of bilateralism still prevalent in the Europe–Asia relationship, and the extent to which common concerns and issues can act as a basis for cooperative agendas.

The study of international relations has expanded its boundaries over the past decades, now encompassing not just international security issues but also the international political economy, understood as the interaction between markets and institutions at the international level. Within the scope of international relations, however, as the various contributors to this volume demonstrate, it has become in most cases impossible to separate politics (and security) from economics. At the same time, and in part related to this intermingling of the political and economic dimensions, it is also clear that, while states remain the most important actors in international relations, non-state actors such as multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations, and inter-governmental organizations play a growing role. In this context, the role and ability of the EU to be a 'single' actor has come under particular scrutiny.

The development of international relations studies over the past few decades has highlighted a number of perspectives and theories, although it should be borne in mind, as Joshua Goldstein argues, that 'no single theory reliably explains the wide range of international interactions, both conflictual and cooperative' (Goldstein, 2004). If we adopt the approach of realism (and neo-realism) when thinking about Europe–Asia relations, then it implies that states (or governments), primarily power-maximizing and self-interested, remain the most important actors, which result in conflictual or at least competitive circumstances not just within Europe and Asia, but also between the two regions. Such a perspective suggests a weak capacity for foreign policy coordination by the EU, as member states would indeed compete rather than cooperate in external relations. Symmetrically, the prospect for regional integration in Asia would only be limited. It would also mean that Europe–Asia relations after decolonization are predominantly bilateral relations at the country level, without much significance as they do not touch upon the security issues left under the leadership of the United States in both regions. Europe and Asia would remain two loosely-organized areas without many direct relations.

By contrast, liberalism, neo-liberalism and interdependence theorists would see examples of cooperation within the EU and between the European states and their Asian counterparts as showing that international rules and institutions can bring mutual gains to all involved. In providing devices for cooperation and coordination, international organizations would transform politics in a positive-sum game among participants. In such a perspective, the EU potential for external policy is real and is only dependent on the pace of European integration and cultural adaptation of European leaders and citizens to this process. Regional integration in Asia is similarly a function of the intensification of exchanges among Asian countries and of the integration of Asian countries to the world economy. Significant exchanges can be developed at the inter-regional level through dialogue among regional organizations such as the ASEM, adding to bilateral relations at the country level and contributing to the development of multilateral relations at the global level.

Finally constructivism, drawing on sociological constructs, could take the case even further by arguing that EU–Asia contacts help to create norms and values beyond traditional conceptions of national interests. This would produce a significant effect on international relations in Asia, projecting them in a post-modern era where historical issues of state building and regional hegemony would lose significance, to the benefit of public good provisions at the transnational and global levels. In the current context, the EU and Asia would also, through these contacts, develop common visions and be able to promote a multilateral approach to global issues in international organizations, thus contesting the current US practices by promoting different conceptions and an alternative consensus.

Before engaging further in interpretation, it is worth reminding ourselves that Europe and Asia can be contrasted empirically in many aspects. Countries from Western Europe, the European Union and applicant countries have a population of 570 million, against 2,345 million in Asia. More than half the countries with a high human development index (29 out of 55) are European, against only four from Asia (Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea). The vast majority of Asian populations live under medium development conditions, with large internal and cross-country variations. The Human Development Index ranges in 2002 from .956 in Norway to .751 in Turkey, and from .938 in Japan to .431 in Timor-Leste (East Timor) (UNDP, 2004). Differences also relate to political dimensions. The overwhelming majority of European countries are consolidated democracies bound together by the institutional framework of the European Union, which acts as a

magnet in its own neighbourhood, and with little or no likelihood of resorting to force against each other. By contrast, most Asian countries host political economies in transition, often with competing or conflicting relationships over territory and security, such as in Korea, the Taiwan Strait and Kashmir, or over the past, as between Japan and some of its Asian neighbours. To a large extent, Europe epitomizes the case for post-modern international relations, with cooperative relations established through economic exchange, the development of supranational institutions securing peace among member states, and nascent political identifications beyond the nation-state. Asia, on the other hand, seems to exemplify the permanence of modernism, and sometimes pre-modernism, in international relations, with state and nation building in the making through international rivalries for leadership and conflicts over sovereignty.

Therefore, the EU presence and strategy in Asia provides a good test of the dynamics of international relations, and, as discussed by François Godement in Chapter 2, of the capacity of the 'soft power' of post-modern institutions to take over the classical inter-states rivalries of the Westphalian system. The influence of Europe on the development of Asian international relations will therefore be an important dimension considered in this volume, particularly in comparison with the one exerted by the United States. But, symmetrically, the presence of Asia in Europe, the way it is incorporated within European foreign policies and contributes to their integration should equally be placed under scrutiny. We may not find another United States in Asia, but the rebirth of Asia–Europe relations cleared of the colonial past and structured at a supra-national level may still provide a significant development in the global system of international relations.

Issues of multilateralism and multipolarity in international relations promptly come to mind when EU–Asia relations are considered. The EU portrays itself as a strong advocate of multilateralism, both in a critique of US policies on several issues which appear to undermine multilateral regimes or norms (the Kyoto Protocol or the war in Iraq) and as a defence of multilateral institutions such as the United Nations (UN) or the World Trade Organization (WTO) when they come under attack for policy failure. The idea of a multipolar world is understood equally as an alternative to US unilateralism or hegemony, but also to the concentration of economic and social resources among western countries. As such, multipolarity is part of the conceptual tools of many Asian countries, amongst which China, keen not only to counter-balance US power but also to cast itself as a leading representative of the 'developing

world', has become a particularly strong advocate in the post-Cold War era.

The end of the Cold War immediately raised concerns among commentators about the power structure of international relations. Indeed multipolarity, in ensuring a balance of power among competing states, is seen by most realists as a condition for the stability of international relations (Morgenthau, 1948; Aron, 1962; Waltz, 1979). Opponents of this conception argue for the idea of unipolarity, that is hegemony by one power over the others, as the key factor securing cycles of peaceful relations among nations (Gilpin, 1981; Organski and Kugler, 1980; Kugler and Lemke, 1996). The collapse of the Soviet Union may therefore alternatively be understood as the advent of a *Pax Americana* or as the opening of a time of turmoil due to strong imbalances of power. The intensification of relations between Europe and Asia is thus a test to evaluate if international relations are indeed changing towards more uni-polar or multi-polar modes, and if this is a factor of stability or insecurity.

An often-noted irony is that promoting multilateralism is now understood as an instrument to contain or influence US hegemony, while most international organizations and the practice of multilateralism itself were indeed established by the US after the Second World War as institutions to cope with decolonization and the Cold War. Multilateralism refers to behaviours and institutions by which state and non-state actors elaborate rules organizing their relations and define common policies at the international level. Multilateralism can be opposed to unilateralism (state behaviour ignoring or avoiding international rules), and to bilateralism, the traditional practice of inter-states diplomacy prevalent until the early twentieth century. Multilateralism involves a plurality of actors (states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and private firms), issues (security, trade, environment, and development) and arenas (international meetings such as ASEM, WTO, Group of Eight, and the UN General Assembly) (Muldoon, Fagot Aviel, Reitano, and Sullivan, 2005). Although under severe criticism for its failure to deliver its own promises of peace and development, and, more recently, for scandals internal to the UN, the system of multilateral institutions is crucial for the development of governance at the global level. It motivates renewed analysis and expectations for 'bottom-up' developments more inclusive of developing countries and civil societies (Cox, 1997).

The development of regional organizations and inter-regional relations definitely plays a part in this development of multilateralism. We will consider if Europe-Asia linkages take primarily bilateral or multilateral forms, and how these relations relate to the changing power structure of

the world order. Multilateralism combined to multipolarity may define a more polyarchic and consensual world order, while unilateralism and unipolarity would create a more authoritative structure. But multilateralism may also be combined with unipolarity under a legitimized hegemony, while we should not exclude that current trends sufficiently undermine international rules to establish a kind of multipolar anarchy.

Finally, we will also consider variations across actors and across issues. Countries obviously entertain different relations with multilateral institutions according to their size, wealth and power. Bilateral relations are more likely to prevail among big powerhouses than among others, where mutual gains of pooled cooperation are more apparent, while constraints on their own strategies are less sensitive. On the other hand, issues also present variations in their capacity to be apprehended by multilateral relations. We expect trade, due to the importance of the WTO on public agendas in the last decade and of regional integration in both regions, to offer more relevance to multilateral relations than security, which is still predominantly bilateral. But 'new' security issues, such as nuclear proliferation, migration, climate change, terrorism or pandemics, may also be subject to multilateral developments. Other issues, such as environment or human rights, may obey complementarities rather than competition between bilateral and multilateral arrangements.

As will be seen from the following chapters, the various authors are not wedded to a single theoretical paradigm in analysing the relations between Europe and Asia, but all are convinced that this relationship deserves greater study and explication as its development will be crucial in shaping the twenty-first-century world order. They also acknowledge that bilateral and multilateral relations, realism and liberalism, are not exclusive of each other, but rather are now combining their effects in different settings according to the issues and the actors considered.

Analytical framework: the political economy of Asia–Europe relations

The field of Europe–Asia relations has long been a comparatively understudied one. A number of scholars, in both Europe and Asia, have researched and written on specific bilateral relations between the European Union (or its constituent member countries) and various countries and regions in Asia; for example, there are well-established literatures on Europe's relations with China, Japan and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). But there have been fewer attempts to set these various bilateral relations into the broader context of Europe–Asia

relations. However, the upsurge in European governmental and business interest in Asia in the mid-1990s and the creation of ASEM seemed to act as a kind of trigger for these broader studies. Hans Maull, Gerald Segal and Jusuf Wanandi adopted an unconventional editing approach to give a sense of the complexity of the economic, security and political relationships; Brian Bridges and Georg Wiessala provided general surveys which encompassed most parts of Northeast and Southeast Asia; and Christopher Dent undertook a more detailed examination of the economic relationships between Europe and Asia, particularly the more advanced economies of the region (Maull, Segal, and Wanandi, 1998; Bridges, 1999; Dent, 1999; Wiessala, 2002).

More recent scholarship has focused specifically on the evolution and role of ASEM, and the dynamics of inter-regionalism as a separate phenomenon, such as, for example, the volumes by Julie Gilson and Yeo Lay Hwee (Gilson, 2002; Yeo, 2004). Other volumes have adopted more thematic approaches, such as Peter Preston and Julie Gilson's edited volume looking primarily at Europe–Northeast Asia linkages but within a broad political-cultural-economic discourse, and the most recent publication, edited by Zainal Mantaha and Toshiro Tanaka, which looks mainly at the lessons of the regional integration experiences in both regions (Preston and Gilson, 2001; Mantaha and Tanaka, 2005).

Aware of this background of past scholarship, this volume conceives of relationships, in the plural, since it is indeed inappropriate to describe Europe and Asia as entertaining one single relationship. There are, arguably, several levels of analysis: bilateral links between individual European and individual Asian states; links between the EU as an organization and individual Asian states or sub-regional organizations such as ASEAN; and links between the EU and Asia-wide regional organizations, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, or through the ASEM format. This complexity of levels of interaction, coupled with the various political, strategic, economic and sociocultural dimensions, do not make it easy to draw one simplified picture of the linkages, actors and processes involved in Europe–Asia relations. The following Table 1.1 however, does offer a framework for conceptualizing these relations as a matrix defined by the power of actors and by the scope of issues considered.

From a political economy perspective, the power of actors in international relations refers to the concentration of economic, political, strategic and knowledge resources and capacities (Strange, 1988). The present US hegemony in world affairs is based precisely on its leadership in all areas of the political economy structure. When Asia and Europe are considered, a number of other major powerhouses, such as the United

Table 1.1 Europe–Asia patterns of relations

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Political/security</i>	<i>Economic</i>
<i>Actors</i>		
Small powers (both European and Asian)	<p><i>Multilateralism prevalent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Diplomatic relations with each other (except Taiwan) – Apart from FPDA**, no direct security agreements – Reliance on multilateral organizations (UN), for security concerns – Reliance on inter-regional meetings for political dialogue 	<p><i>Inter-regionalism prevalent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reliance on regional organizations (EU and ASEAN) – Multilateral arrangements (WTO) – Inter-regional Dialogue (ASEM)
Major powers*	<p><i>Bilateralism prevalent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bilateral links (such as ‘strategic partnerships’) – Engagement in political and security fields 	<p><i>Joint multilateralism and bilateralism</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Regional asymmetries: For Asians, bilateral links more important than inter-regional; for Europeans, EU prevails over bilateral relations – Sectoral asymmetries: market access agreements established through multilateral relations; trade and investment promotion based on competitive bilateral relations.

Notes:

*Major powers are defined as China, India and Japan in Asia and France, Germany and the United Kingdom (UK) in Europe. All other states (and territories) fall under the small powers category.

**FPDA is the Five-Power Defence Arrangement linking the United Kingdom with Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.

Kingdom, France, Germany, China, Japan and India, also play key roles in structuring international relations at the global and at the regional levels. The European Union is now a direct economic competitor to the United States, and a key actor in trade relations, but without equivalent strategic and political capacities. The economic power of Japan and Germany tends to compensate for their lack of strategic resources to enhance their political status, while on the other hand, the nuclear power of India and China, coupled with economic growth, provides

them with a rising political influence. The power of actors matters, as regional and multilateral institutions primarily offer small powers the opportunity to voice their interests and to compensate for the asymmetries of resources in the international arena. On the other hand, major powers have less direct incentives to regionalism and multilateralism, as their interests are more likely to be constrained by binding agreements.

The scope and nature of issues is the second dimension to be considered to analyse international relations in the contemporary context. Domestic issues (e.g. taxation, welfare provision, national legislation), on the one hand, can be contrasted with the clearly global ones, such as climate change or the control of pandemics, on the other. Multilateralism is more likely to prevail for obvious transnational and global issues than for local or national ones. Many issues, such as migration, human rights, intellectual property rights, environment protection, competition policy and trade, are nevertheless cross-cutting borders, at the juncture of home affairs and international issues, and are therefore often subject to international controversies and conflicts of interests between international norms and state sovereignty. The emergence and consolidation of multilateralism requires not only that mutual gains are to be expected by most, if not all parties, but also that these gains are perceptible in a time-span able to motivate governments' action, and that they are not outweighed by concentrated losses on specific constituencies threatening governments' longevity. This is why trade, where the mutual benefit of sustained economic growth is quickly perceptible and shared by large segments of the governments' constituencies, has been an area of intense regional integration and multilateralism. Whereas environmental protection, indeed a more stringent issue, produces only concentrated costs in the short term and delayed benefits in the long run.

In short, multilateral arrangements are more likely among small powers for transnational issues with short- or mid-term positive effects. Considering economic exchanges, in the last three decades Europe–Asia relations have been deeply affected by economic development. European countries now face not only strong competitors in their export industries, but also considerable market opportunities in Asia. Incentives for economic cooperation are therefore on the rise, and states tend to cooperate to negotiate market access through agreements established at the global (WTO) or inter-regional level (ASEM). The EU, with its competencies over trade, nevertheless acts in a much more coordinated manner than Asia, and deals directly with major economic powers such as Japan, Korea, China or India. When trade promotion is considered, national interests and North–South rather than East–West cleavages still prevail.

For instance, Japan, France and Germany most often act as competitors in gaining industrial contracts in China. Inter-regionalism in the economic field is both selective and asymmetrical.

Turning to security and political issues, it should be noted that 'small' powers do not interact directly with each other at the inter-regional level, apart from the diplomatic relations necessary to ordinary consular activities. Taiwan presents an exceptional case of active diplomacy aimed at small European countries, but overall it proved unsuccessful as even the Vatican is expected to recognize the PRC in the near future. For small powers, security concerns and sovereignty issues in both regions (the Korean peninsula, the Taiwan Strait and Kashmir in Asia, the Balkans in Europe, Islamic terrorism in both) can only be addressed in international organizations and forums such as the UN and ASEM. Major powers, on the other hand, rely on more direct bilateral dialogue and tend to develop political relations such as a 'strategic partnership'. Interestingly, in line with the evolution of threats on international stability after the end of the Cold War, 'strategic' in the diplomatic language increasingly refers to a claim of cooperation in general political and security issues (terrorism, nuclear proliferation, human rights, and environment) rather than to specific security agreements and coalitions.

Through the following chapters, we endeavour to highlight some of the key features of these complex interactions between the two regions and their component countries and peoples.

Structure and content of the book

This volume consists of two main sections. The first section discusses some of the key issues in EU–Asia relations from a multilateral and inter-regional perspective, covering Europe's external relations mechanisms, European policies towards Asia and Asian regional organizations such as ASEAN (the Association of South-East Asian Nations), Asian responses and the broad economic, social and political dimensions of the relationship. The second section examines key 'bilateral' relationships between Europe and Greater China, Japan, the Korean peninsula, and India.

In Chapter 2 François Godement offers an overview of the EU–Asia relationship, particularly by comparing the context of EU–Asia relations today with the situation at the time of the first Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM) a decade earlier. After identifying four major trends – Europe's self-centred policy making, its greater external force projection, new regional architecture in Asia, and the return of US power – this chapter calls for a more creative adaptation of the EU's policies towards Asia,

by capitalizing on its 'soft power' capabilities. Following this, in Chapter 3 Karen E. Smith analyses the current institutional and decision-making framework for making EU foreign policy, including the interaction with First Pillar institutions and procedures in the external relations areas. She assesses the changes to that framework proposed in the draft constitutional treaty and discusses how these changes might affect policy coherence and flexibility. She particularly discusses how these various developments might impact on policy making towards Asia. In Chapter 4 Sung-Hoon Park and Heung-Chong Kim chart the changing landscape of EU's approach towards East Asia, analyse the background factors, and discuss new developments, primarily in terms of the economic relationship between the EU, its member countries and Asia. With a particular focus on the development of ASEM, the chapter discusses how Asian countries should respond to the challenges of trying to find a balanced approach between regionalism and multilateralism. The EU and ASEAN first developed their links for economic reasons, but the political elements have become stronger over time. Chapter 5, by Yeo Lay Hwee, discusses the development of this relationship and explores how the two regional actors have adapted their behaviour to meet these changes and each other's evolving expectations. Finally, Chapter 6 by Leo Douw contributes to an understanding of the human security aspects of Europe–Asia relations. By drawing on detailed examination of migration flows, this chapter argues that, from the vantage point of Europe, Asian migration has recently shifted from being a marginal phenomenon to one that has taken centre stage, not so much in terms of absolute numbers, but because migration has increasingly come to influence state building and policy formation at the regional and inter-regional levels, and thereby influences the quality of international relations and supranational governance.

Turning to patterns of bilateralism, the EU and China celebrated 30 years of official relations in 2005. While trade relations are booming, the established 'strategic partnership' seems now to characterize EU–China relations in the post-September 11 context, but how durable is this and what will be the implications of these developments? Chapter 7 by Richard Balme analyses the conditions under which a strategy towards China was able to be developed among EU member states and institutions, its impact upon Chinese authorities, and its implications beyond Sino-European relations, not least for the differences in EU and US approaches to China. It reviews issues such as the arms embargo, textile quotas and human rights dialogues to estimate prospective developments between Europe and China. While China endeavours to sustain

a favourable regional security environment in the post-Cold War world, Ting Wai argues in Chapter 8 that China is simultaneously looking to reach out beyond the Asian Pacific, in particular to Europe. By examining Chinese perspectives on the evolving economic and political-security relations with the EU, this chapter shows the ambivalence of China, which values its new-found relationship with Europe, not least because of shared concerns about the US role in global affairs, but is also wary of the EU's own ambitions. In Chapter 9 Czeslaw Tubilewicz examines Taiwan's political and economic relations with Europe, including both West and East Central Europe, arguing that primarily through the pursuit of economic diplomacy in the post-Cold War period, Taiwan has been able to expand relations with the older EU member states and win new friends amongst the reforming East European states. Chapter 10, by Machiko Hachiya, addresses the multifaceted nature of the EU–Japan relationship, both political and economic, and, by drawing on case studies, such as the Kyoto Protocol and the ITER project, demonstrates how the relationship is developing and deepening. The EU's relationship with South Korea has been well-established, though primarily driven by economic considerations, but in the course of the last decade North Korea has been an increasing focus of EU concern. In Chapter 11 Brian Bridges analyses the dynamics of the EU's relations with both Koreas and discusses the ways in which political and strategic issues have risen in importance. Finally, although a long-standing relationship, the EU's links with India have only become really active in the past decade. Chapter 12, by Ummu Salma Bava, analyses not only the substantial economic exchanges, which are at the heart of the relationship, but also the increasingly important political and strategic partnership. She also contrasts the EU–India relationship with the EU–China one.

Dynamics of globalization: fragmented multilateralism and the return of bilateral relations

This last section offers a survey of results to be drawn from the following chapters in light of the analytical framework presented above. They are reviewed according to the main questions we selected.

The integration of EU policy in Asia

The relationships between Europe and Asia, of course, relate specifically to the ongoing debates about the competence of the EU in terms of

external relations. Although the European Commission and the revolving EU 'troika' of three countries do act for the whole EU in many aspects of international affairs, in particular in the economic dimension, the member states continue to resist giving up their sovereignty in other aspects of external relations, particularly in the political and security fields. As Karen E. Smith demonstrates in Chapter 3, the CFSP, a unique concept in international relations, remains, for all its slow evolution towards greater consistency, an area of tension between the desire to act collectively and at the same time to retain a high degree of national control over foreign policy making.

The evolution of the EU's and the constituent member countries' policies towards Asia therefore provide an interesting and informative series of case studies allowing us to test how far it is possible to talk of implementing a 'European foreign policy'. The convergence of interests amongst the Europeans on economic policy issues, such as trade, aid, investment and technology, may not be as complete as some within the EU would hope, but undoubtedly such convergence does exist. Nevertheless, for the areas of political and strategic relations, the divergences of view still remain apparent. In the aftermath of the debacle in European policy making towards Iraq in 2002–03, when significant fissures between different European states were readily visible, policies towards Asia can be examined to test whether or not such differences were specific to that one issue or whether they represent more fundamental divergences over the conception and implementation of a CFSP for the EU. As several of the chapters demonstrate, there are still differences in the political and security policy sphere, although the divisions between EU member states do not cut in the same way as over the Iraq issue and differ from issue to issue. For example, on the issue of whether or not to recognize North Korea France finds itself out of line with other EU member countries (see Brian Bridges' chapter), whereas on the issue of whether or not to lift the ban on arms sales to China several EU members, led by France, are in favour but others led by Sweden are against (see the chapters by Ting Wai and Richard Balme). European diplomacies in Asia, therefore, do not always coincide and do not follow clear lines of cleavages since the end of the Cold War.

Regional integration in Asia

For Asia, of course, the level of integration is still different from that of the EU. The 'ASEAN model' of cooperation, consensus and dialogue is being slowly diffused throughout the Asian region, mostly notably through the multilateral regional organizations such as the ASEAN

Regional Forum, which has a security focus, and the ASEAN + 3 (which puts the ten ASEAN members together with China, Japan and South Korea to talk mostly about socioeconomic issues), but two problems remain. First, 'Asia' is much less clearly defined in institutional terms than 'Europe'. The ASEM process has institutionalized one definition of 'Asia', and, as has been argued by Julie Gilson, has helped to 'create a sense of identity among a group which previously had no such group formation' (Gilson, 2002, p. 64). But inclusion raises almost as many questions about exclusion, such as the membership of such a club of major South Asian states, such as India and Pakistan, or territories such as Taiwan and Hong Kong, which at the very least in the economic sense are important partners of European states. Both the first-ever 'East Asian Summit', held in Malaysia in mid-December 2005, and the second one, in Manila in January 2007, failed to fully resolve these membership issues. While believing in the virtues of regionalism and multilateral cooperation, the Europeans have tended to watch from the sidelines as these developments have occurred in the Asian region. Although the EU is now considered as the 'paramount' European regional organization, European integration itself also developed along a range of competing regional organizations with often-overlapping or cross-cutting memberships, such as the Council of Europe, the West European Union and the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (now the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) (Larat, 2003). So it is not surprising that Asia, with a much shorter history of regional multilateralist thinking, is still in a state of fluidity over its identity as expressed in terms of regional organizational limits.

Secondly, how far are ASEAN and other nascent Asian regional organizations willing or able to replicate the EU model of integration? Although the 1997–98 Asian financial crisis and other regional problems did prompt re-evaluations of the objectives and modalities of the Asian cooperation processes, as argued by François Godement in Chapter 2 and Yeo Lay Hwee in Chapter 5, neither ASEAN nor any other regional organizations are ready or prepared to follow the EU's path of regional integration, particularly as the socioeconomic and political differences within even regional organizations such as ASEAN constrain a common policy approach. In terms of both economic and political-security policy making, therefore, Asian states – or, at least, the smaller ones – prefer a process of consensus building to create a common position, but that lowest common denominator approach is, despite the well-noticed difficulties on the European side, far from the dynamics and aspirations of the EU's CFSP. As a result, Yeo suggests, the EU side has developed an

approach that aims at a 'coalition of the willing', working with those Asian states which are most open to closer partnership.

Patterns of bilateral relations

This limited regional identity and capacity for collective action on the Asian side means that, despite the EU–ASEAN dialogue and the ASEM process, bilateralism remains a strong component of European and Asian interactions with each other. Bilateralism can be examined at two levels: between individual European countries and individual Asian countries, and between individual Asian countries and the EU.

All of the EU member states have diplomatic relations with the states normally included in definitions of Asia, except for North Korea, which is not yet recognized by France, and, more importantly, for Taiwan, which, as Czeslaw Tubilewicz shows in Chapter 9, remains an anomaly, recognized only by one west European state (the Vatican) and relying instead on 'flexible', economic-based diplomacy to maintain and even slowly upgrade its *de facto* representation across the EU. However, although the smaller states on each side have developed trade and investment linkages with each other and with the larger powers on both sides to varying degrees, their formal security links remain almost non-existent. Malaysia and Singapore, through a vestige of past Commonwealth links, are involved in a consultative security arrangement with the United Kingdom, but this is an exception that proves the rule. The smaller Asian states have had mixed success in developing links with the EU; South Korea has a framework agreement with the EU, the ASEAN countries collectively (but not individually) have a regular dialogue, but Taiwan has failed to secure any substantive dialogue.

For the major Asian states the situation is clearly different. Japan has long been a point of EU interest and interaction. As Machiko Hachiya shows in Chapter 10, the EU–Japanese Joint Declaration of 1991 was intended to broaden the EU–Japanese relationship away from its strong, though at times contentious, economic dimension towards creating an equal partnership on global issues; indeed, on some specific issues there has been very intense interactions. While the shadow of the United States still falls deeply across Japanese policy making, the slow but steady progress in creating a thicker institutionalization of the relationship with the EU is an important component of Japan's greater self-assuredness in the international system. Nonetheless, it is tempting to argue that at the same time as it has been encouraging Japan to greater involvement in international affairs, the EU has also become increasingly interested

over the past decade, partly at the expense of Japan, in the two new rising powers of Asia: China and India.

As both Richard Balme and Ting Wai demonstrate in their chapters, the EU–China relationship has become multifaceted: a strong economic relationship, with growing trade and investment linkages (albeit some aspects such as Chinese textile exports to the EU are becoming as controversial as the much earlier Japanese export ‘surges’ to Europe), but also a political dialogue which is broadening to cover not just human rights but a whole range of issues of global importance. The EU approaches China in a mode of ‘constructive engagement’ with what it sees as a major strategic partner, while China also sees value in developing closer contacts with the EU, not least when the European approach to international affairs seems more favourable to China’s interests than the US approach.

India has risen rapidly in the EU’s perspective. As an emerging driver of the new economic globalization, India is developing a strong economic relationship with the EU, but, as Ummu Salma Bava demonstrates in Chapter 12, it was the launch of the EU–India strategic partnership in 2004 which attested to the new importance given to political and strategic issues in the relationship. Paradoxically, given the long historical linkage of one EU member country (the United Kingdom) with India, the EU–India relationship seems to be the ‘newest’ key Asian relationship for Europe, primarily because India itself has only recently become more active both economically and politically in the global arena. China now seems pre-eminent in EU–Asia relations, but potentially India could come to be a rival for European attention.

Policy variations and multilayered relations

Much of the interaction between the two regions has been dominated by commercial imperatives, as demonstrated in several of the chapters but mostly clearly in the contribution of Sung-Hoon Park and Heung-Chong Kim. Political and security dimensions have been relatively secondary and it should not be forgotten that there is another interface: the socio-cultural. This has always been seen as less central to the relationship, yet, arguably, it is the face-to-face contacts of students, tourists, businessmen and others that help to shape the relationship at the societal level and give reality to the rhetoric of politicians about better relations between countries and regions. Indeed, the importance of this dimension has been recognized specifically by the efforts of ASEM to promote this so-called third pillar. Historically, of course, it was Europeans who travelled to and often settled in Asia, but in more recent times the flows

of people from Asia to Europe have increased significantly. As Leo Douw argues in Chapter 6, using primarily the case of significant and recent increases in Chinese emigrating to Europe, Asian human flows to Europe can be beneficial to both the sending and the receiving countries. Migration, and more broadly human security, typify the new types of issues on the international agenda on which greater dialogue between Europeans and Asians can only be helpful. It is clear that issues such as nuclear non-proliferation, terrorism, global warming and pandemics cannot be solved by one country, or even one region, alone. In the increasingly globalized and interdependent world regional and inter-regional cooperation is essential.

Resisting unipolarity?

This brings us back to the relationship between multilateralism, regionalism and multipolarity. It is rather premature to draw definitive conclusions with regard to the dominant pattern of international relations in the early twenty-first century, as many of its features are still unstable. A number of characteristics highlighted by the chapters collected in this volume are nevertheless worth noticing. First, developing relations between Europe and Asia, in some cases referred to as a 'honeymoon', do not so far overshadow the importance of the United States to both regions. If these relations are conceived as triangular, it is clear that the Europe–US and Asia–US sides refer to more intense relations than along the Europe–Asia dimension. This fact demonstrates the US leadership in all major aspects of the international political economy, with the exception of trade, where the EU is a competitor of comparable importance. Consequently, the intensification of diplomacy between Europe and Asia is mainly reactive to this imbalance in world power. The current situation fits more with the idea of tempered unipolarity than of balanced multipolarity. Secondly, the general trend, however, supported by economic development in Asia, progress in regional integration, and growing criticism of US foreign policy, seems to favour the role of other poles like Europe and Asia in the medium term, and significant developments have occurred since the 1990s in this respect as reported in this volume.

Thirdly, the net effect in Asia of European proclaimed 'soft power' is indeed impossible to assess independently of other diplomacies and from the domestic or regional dynamics of political change. Significantly, however, what matters is that Asian and European countries, with the noticeable exceptions of North Korea and Myanmar, are engaged in economic agreements and political dialogues, are supportive of the same international institutions, and overall cooperate to deal with common

issues more than they compete in zero-sum games. Euro-Asian diplomacy has contributed to this achievement and to the advent of this new area of relations between the two regions.

Fourthly and finally, short-term prospects for further developments of indicated trends seem rather limited. A significant step forward in global multilateralism would require a significant change in the attitude of the United States, as well as real political dynamics within the UN. Trade liberalization, one of the engines of multilateralism through WTO, seems to miss the political consensus necessary to develop further, as exemplified by failure of the Cancun meeting in 2003 and the more than limited achievements in Hong Kong in December 2005. Finally, regionalism, despite substantial developments in Asia (as shown by the move to the East Asian Summit in Malaysia in 2005), entered into a crisis in Europe with the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by France and by the Netherlands in May and June 2005. Both the institutions and policies of the EU are indeed contested by large segments of public opinion, and government preferences are likely to be more protectionist and more domestic oriented, to the detriment of governance capacities at the transnational and global levels. History is not written in advance. But serious political and institutional challenges limit prospective developments for multilateralism and inter-regionalism in the short and medium term.

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