

Panel Session I

How Do China, Korea and Japan See the Regional Integration?

How Does China See the Regional Integration?

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As China increasingly defines itself as a major regional power pursuing peaceful rise together with its East Asian partners, regionalism and community building have gradually become a major component of China's foreign policy and received wide support within China, even though there is no consensus among the elite over issues like approach, mode, trend of regional integration and the regional architecture building, especially over the roles played by the major powers outside the region. The contested opinions and ideas existed inside and outside China is one of reasons why the regional integration is currently stagnated, or to put it more accurately, balanced with multi-directed processes and driving forces. The phenomenon can be conceptualized as a balance of engagement, rather than a balance of power, since struggling for a better position in the region is mainly playing out through soft power of the regional strategies of each related country. The paper argues that the future progress will largely rely on positive interaction among benign strategies of leading powers, especially among China, the United States and ASEAN. The policies driven by the Cold War mentality would otherwise plunge the whole region into a fierce competition for power. This paper aims: firstly, to take a historic perspective to see what kind of regional views that China had in the 20th century, so that China's newly developed regionalism can be better understood; secondly, to put China into regional context to see how it has developed its own regional policies towards different processes of the regional integration, like 10+1, 10+3 and the East Asian Summit (EAS), and how it views the role played by other powers outside the region. Besides the official stance, the debates among scholars over East Asian regionalism would also be discussed; thirdly, to analyze new challenges China is currently facing, policies that China should adopt, and power structure that future regional order might be possibly underpinned with.

I

China was long been seen as “a regional power without a regional policy”¹, not to mention a grand strategy towards regional integration. But if the views concerning a regional order are to be considered as regional approaches, then China has a long history in expressing and practicing regional policies towards how to build a regional order. Before 1840, there was a tribute system with China as the Middle Kingdom at the center and various tributary states at the periphery. It had been a virtually self-contained system. Because of the political and cultural pre-eminence of the Middle Kingdom, the system had been operated in the way that peripheral states gave “deference and tribute, whilst receiving legitimizing investiture and gifts in return, but also being left pretty much under their own rule”.² It conducted a reciprocal relationship with outlying states by rewarding magnanimously to the tribute paid by vassal states.³ Obviously, this system was quite different from the Westphalian system. It was not governed by the norm of sovereignty with mechanism of balance of power or power politics, but by the idea of “Tianxia” (All under Heaven) and the management of “Guanxi” (relationships). The Chinese of that time, due to their long isolation from the rest of the world, believed that China was the only civilized state in the “world” and others were “barbarians”. China in this system “encompassed other units while leaving them considerable room for maneuver”.⁴ Doing “Guanxi” with “barbarians” was a sort of culturating others, “non-Chinese rulers participated in the Chinese world order by observing the appropriate forms and ceremonies (*li*) in

¹ Steven Levine, “China in Asia”, in Harry Harding ed., *China's Foreign Relations in the 1980s*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), 109-114

² David Scott, *China stands up: the PRC and the international system*, (London: Routledge, 2007), 8.

³ Chen Shangsheng, “Shilun Rujia Wenming Zhong de Shewai Linian (Ideas of handling foreign relations in the context of Confucian civilization)”, in Chen Shangsheng ed., *Rujia Wenming yu Zhongguo Chuantong Duiwai Guanxi (Confucian civilization and China's Traditional Foreign Relations)*, (Jinan: Shandong University Press, 2008), 20.

⁴ Peter Katzenstein, *A world of regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005), 91.

their contact with the Son of Heaven”.⁵ And the Son of Heaven chose to sacrifice profits for the sake of safety and security along its borders. It required the tributary states to pay periodic homage but exercised self-restraint in its use of power by giving autonomy to those junior states instead of conquering them and carried out “self-cultivation” to be a benign power by ordering its own kingdom well. As such, the tribute system, which combined “formal hierarchy and informal equality”, had brought peace and stability to East Asia.⁶ However, the kind of principal and subordinate relationship between imperial China and tributary states occasionally resulted in resistance, though political and military domination and resistance was not a distinctive feature of the tribute system⁷ compared with the European international system. The tribute system was also a closed one which confined the vision of the Chinese to the “world” they knew and made them self-conceited. Therefore, when imperial China actually began to fall from its strength and prosperity of the 18th century, it took a long time for it to recognize its decline, not to mention the great changes taking place in the western world.⁸

Things were changed with the outbreak of the Opium wars. The tribute system was gradually dismantled and replaced by the treaty system wherein a series of unequal treaties were imposed on China.⁹ The long-term peace and stability that imperial China provided for centuries was destroyed by the arrival of western imperialism.¹⁰ China’s traditional identity as the center of the tribute system was compelled to transform. From then on, China has become an inward-looking country with a bitter and tortuous quest for seeking its own

⁵ John K. Fairbank ed., *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1968), 10.

⁶ Peter Katzenstein, *A world of regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium*, 91.

⁷ Ibid, 92.

⁸ Chen Tingxiang and Zhou Ding, *TianXia, Shijie, Guojia: Jindai Zhongguo Duiwai Guannian Yanbian Shi (Tianxia, the World and State: Evolution of Ideas in Foreign Relations in Late Modern China)*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Sanlian Press, 2008), 5.

⁹ Zhang Yongjin, *China in International Society since 1949: Alienation and Beyond*, (Basingstoke: Macmillian, 1998), 9-10.

¹⁰ Zhao Tingyang, “Rethinking Empire from a Chinese Concept ‘All-under-Heaven’ (Tian-xia)”, *Social Identities*, 12, no.1(January), 2006, 36.

identity and adapting to the norms and rules governing the international system dominated by western powers. China was forced to redefine itself with a long journey of self-losing afflicted by the inferiority that China strongly felt in relation to its material life, political institution and even culture to those of foreign imperialist powers. As such, from 1840 to 1919, China’s position in the world had collapsed from an empire at the center of the tribute system to a marginal state of the western-led international society¹¹, a semi-colony with a status similar with the former tributes.

20th century was the period during which China made great efforts to fight for its independence and rightful place among nations. There were three advocates of regional approach periodically mentioned by Chinese leaders, some targeting the whole Asia, some reaching beyond Asia farther to Africa and Latin America, but China’s influence could not fully reach as far as what it expected.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen was one of them having a view of *Greater Asia, or Pan-Asianism* (“*Da Yaxiyazhuyi*”). He criticized European civilization, in a speech delivered in Kobe, Japan on November 28, 1924, of being “nothing but the rule of Might”, since European powers used force to invade Asian countries and turned them into colonies. He urged China, Japan and all the people in Asia “Unite together to restore the former status of Asia¹²”, in a way of not using the rule of Might, but the rule of Right, since “the rule of might has always been looked down by the Orient”.¹³ He insisted that Asia should be integrated in an Oriental way based on benevolence and virtue on the one hand, science to be learnt from Europe for Asian industrial development on the other hand. He believed “only by the unification of all the peoples in Asia on the foundation of benevolence and virtue can they become strong and powerful”.¹⁴ A greater

¹¹ Barry Buzan, “China and international Society: An unfolding story,” Presentation at “The 30th Anniversary of the Reform and Opening-up of China”, Dec. 16-17, 2008, Beijing.

¹² Sun Yat Sen, *China and Japan: Natural Friends, Unnatural Enemies*, Shanghai: 1941. also see Wikisource, “Sun Yat-sen’s speech on Pan-Asianism”, http://en.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Sun_Yat-sen%27s_speech_on_Pan_Asianism&oldid=2953303.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Asia, in his eyes, represented the cause of the oppressed and a way to end the suffering of Asian peoples. He became the first one who advocated for a united Asia, even though Dr. Sun's idea was criticized for being too much Sino-centric and utopian; and was dismissed without being taken seriously by either Chinese or Japanese or other Asian peoples at that time. The discourse of the Asian unification by Dr. Sun asked for the independence of Asia against European oppression and colonolization.

China in the first half of the century was besieged by civil wars among warlords and between the Kuomintang (KMT) and the communist party. The new China founded in 1949 was trapped in a fierce confrontation of the Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union. "By 1949, political, ideological and strategic clashes between the two superpowers had been crystallized after two years of intense Cold War and the division of Europe. World politics was highly dichotomized".¹⁵ China was first contained and encircled by the American-led Western alliance and later threatened by both the Soviet Union and the United States. This compelled China to develop its relations with the newly independent countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America by giving moral and material support to their national liberation movement and to their efforts in forming their independent policies. On 31 December 1953, Premier Zhou Enlai, when met with members of the Indian government delegation, put forward for the first time the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence, namely, mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty (changed to mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity at the Asian-African Conference), mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. The Asian-African Conference convened in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955 adopted Ten Principles for conducting international relations, which is a continuation and development of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence.¹⁶ China's active participation in the Bandung conference and consolidation of its efforts to unite with newly

¹⁵ Zhang Yongjin, *China in International Society since 1949: Alienation and Beyond*, 46-47.

¹⁶ MFA of China, "China's Initiation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence", <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ziliao/3604/t18053.htm>.

independent countries was seen as the first maneuver of regional approach that the new China had taken since 1949.

The Three Worlds theory of Mao Zedong was thought as something meaningful towards regions as well, even though it was obviously not exclusively dedicated to Asia or East Asia. In light of the adverse international environment featuring two superpowers’ hostility against China, Mao Zedong adopted a strategy of opposing both American imperialism and Soviet revisionism, “fighting with two fists” in a way of supporting revolutions in the Third World and making alliance with it, hoping the then international order dominated by the two superpowers could be overthrown. Given the imminence of threats from the Soviet Union, the fighting-with-two-fists strategy was proved to be disastrous for China’s national security, and was therefore abandoned in 1972 when American president Richard Nixon paid a high-profile state visit to China. The reception of Nixon’s visit was a signal of the birth of China’s “one line strategy.” During the period from 1972 to 1982, China had forged an “existential alliance”¹⁷ with the United States, aiming to balance the Soviet Union’s increasing military threat, so establishment of a united front through standing side by side with the third world countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America was never fully realized. Due to the great impact of the confrontation and conflict within the Cold War framework, economic development and prosperity viewed from regional perspective have never been established and developed in China’s foreign policy, especially during the period of 1960-1970’s.

All in all, China has not had strong sense or a modern concept of the region¹⁸ until regionalization quickly developed in East Asia in 1990’s. Due to a long-term historic experience of managing the tribute system featured as stable and peaceful but hierarchical, and bitter suffering of victimization by

¹⁷ Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge: China’s Grand Strategy and International Security*, (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008), p. 42.

¹⁸ About Chinese concept and narratives of East Asian region, a recent revealing analysis was made by Sun Ge in his book, *Women Weishenme Yao Tan Dongya (Why do we need to talk East Asia)*, Beijing: Sanlian Press, 2011. Also see an interview with Sun Ge, “Sun Ge: What Does ‘Asia’ Mean”, *21st Century Business Herald*, March, 21, 2012, 15.

Western power group's invasion, China had lost its identity as the center of the East Asia and had been quite puzzled about how to manage its relationship with the neighboring countries. Even though from time to time, there were proposals to advocated with a broader view reaching beyond China, like Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Pan-Asianism, or Mao's Three Worlds theory, they were either short-lived, or focusing not specifically on East Asia itself, but most importantly, they all expected an independent Asia or the Third World against hegemonism and colonialism. So it is obvious that China had a weak consciousness in terms of addressing East Asia as a region and a need to develop a regional identity. All of which became possible only after China transformed its policy before and after the end of the Cold War. Adoption of a fundamentally new policy of reform and opening-up at the beginning of 1980s changed China in almost every aspect, and a learning process was facilitated by being exposed to and involved in the international system. And China's international ideas thus began to change¹⁹ and its identity started to transform accordingly. With these new trends having developed since then, China began to form its regional policy and regionalism²⁰ in accordance with its grand strategy of peaceful rise (*Heping Jueqi*) which was concurrently taking shape in 1990's.

II

Since the reform and opening-up policy adopted, a fairly consistent and coherent grand strategy of peaceful rise has been forged, a foreign policy orientated toward peace, development and cooperation has been developed, and a good neighborly policy towards East Asia has been conducted. As a result of this change, China's relationship with East Asian countries, especially with ASEAN, began to experience some kind of transformation. By acting and

¹⁹ About this issue , see Zhu Liqun and Zhao Guangcheng, "Zhongguo Guoji Guannian de Bianhua yu Gonggu: Dongli yu Qushi (Transformation and Consolidation of China's International Ideas: Dynamics and trends)", *Waijiao Pinglun (Foreign Affairs Review)*, no.2, 2008.

²⁰ Regionalism is here defined from political perspective, referring to a common sense of identity and purpose with the creation and implementation of institutions, either formal or informal, that express a particular identity and shape collective action within a group of the sovereign states that are geographically adjacent.

practicing according to its good neighborly policy, “China is increasingly seen as a good neighbor, constructive partner, and careful listener”.²¹

Indeed, “few major international relationships have changed as much or as quickly in recent years as has the relationship between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations”.²² China and all the ASEAN countries established diplomatic relations in 1991. In July of that year, Qian Qichen, the then Chinese Foreign Minister was invited as a guest of the host country to attend the Post Ministerial Meeting (PMC) for the first time, and the status of China as a consultative dialogue partner of ASEAN was elevated to that of a full dialogue partner in 1996. And in the end of 1997, Chinese President Jiang Zemin and ASEAN leaders held their first ever summit and issued a joint statement, in which they announced the establishment of a 21st century-oriented partnership. China was the first big country to establish such kind of the strategic partnership for peace and prosperity with ASEAN. And China was the first big country outside ASEAN to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC). It was also the first country to launch the FTA negotiation with ASEAN, and has put in place the largest FTA among developing countries. Due to the great efforts being made for building good-neighborly relationship and creating an amicable, secure and prosperous neighborhood (*youlin anlin fulin*), over the past more than 20 years, China and ASEAN “have conducted fruitful economic cooperation and trade, completed the building of free trade area and registered rapid growth in trade and mutual investment. The two sides have established a full range of dialogue and cooperation mechanisms, identified 11 priority areas for cooperation, carried out practical cooperation in some 20 fields, and scored remarkable achievements in their friendly exchanges and cooperation in various fields.”²³

²¹ David Shambaugh, “Return to the Middle Kingdom? —China and Asia in the Early Twenty-First Century”, in David Shambaugh ed. *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press 2005), 24-25.

²² Bruce Vaughn and Wayne M. Morrison, “China-Southeast Asia Relations: Trends, issues, and implications for the United States”, CRS Report for Congress, April 2006, CRS-1, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL32688.pdf>.

²³ The Chinese Foreign Ministry released report, “China-ASEAN Cooperation: 1991-2011”, *China Daily*, Nov. 16, 2011, 9.

Chinese government reiterates that “no matter how the international situation changes, China will unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development, unswervingly pursue the foreign policy of building friendship and partnership with neighboring countries”, and “be ASEAN's good neighbor, good friend and good partner for ever”.²⁴ China vows to work with ASEAN to fully implement the second five-year Plan of Action, to expand cooperation in various fields such as connectivity, agriculture, science and technology, public health, environmental protection, energy, and finance, to support the implementation of the "ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity", "China-ASEAN Strategic Plan on Transportation Cooperation" and other important documents. From the very beginning, China has been strongly supporting ASEAN's leadership in the regional integration efforts, not only because that ASEAN was the pioneer in the process, and being “inject[ing] vigor and vitality into East Asian cooperation” by constantly deepening cooperation within itself, but also due to the reason that ASEAN has been playing “an excellent coordinating role in balancing the interests of different parties”.²⁵ So “upholding ASEAN's leading role contributes to the smooth development of East Asian cooperation”.²⁶ And China, as a later comer of the process and one of the major powers in the region, needs to have self-restraint, a necessary condition for the community building. China is also aware that only with ASEAN sitting in the driver's seat, could fierce competition for the leadership between China and Japan be possibly avoided.

Based on better functioning of the 10+1 mechanism and a leading role played by ASEAN, a larger regional grouping like ASEAN Plus Three (APT) and East Asian Summit (EAS) have been brought into being. APT did not really start to develop until the mid-1990s, when APEC and other international organizations failed to effectively make a rescue to the 1997 Asian financial crisis, from which ASEAN countries suffered greatly. China's refusal of

²⁴ The Chinese Foreign Ministry released report, “China-ASEAN Cooperation: 1991-2011”, *China Daily*, Nov. 16, 2011, 9.

²⁵ Speech by Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing at the 10+3 Ministerial Meeting, Vientiane, Laos, 27 July 2005, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/yzs/dqzzywt/t206079.htm>.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

devaluating RMB was well received and considered as a big contribution to regional responses to the crisis. As a result, ASEAN took a lead to expand to include 10 Southeast Asian countries and set up the ASEAN plus China, Japan and ROK cooperation framework. From kicking off exactly this process, East Asian countries began their own integrating process aiming at establishing an East Asian community (EAc) with three pillars included. An initial concrete joint measure taken in tackling the financial crisis and a community building was to start the Chiang Mai Initiative to manage regional short-term liquidity problems and to facilitate financial cooperation with an objective of avoiding future recurrence of such crisis. In 2002, China and ASEAN signed the comprehensive economic cooperation framework agreement and set the goal of establishing FTA within ten years, which accelerated ASEAN FTA negotiations with Japan, and ROK, and also quickened the pace of economic cooperation between East Asia countries and beyond. China’s participation in TAC has also exerted positive impact on the regional integration process, attracted a great deal of attention from all over the world, and the United States and Russia in particular. With the APT framework, China has been a proactive member, considering it as the main vehicle or primary platform to promote cooperation in East Asia²⁷, expecting to see the cooperation to be broadened and deepened. With all efforts being made by APT countries, the area of cooperation has really been greatly expanded with mechanisms to be added up to 65 of them in different levels coordinating APT cooperation.²⁸

As other powers outside of East Asia wanted to join the process of the regional integration and ASEAN feared of being overtaken by the Three due to their rapidly growing economic weight and influence, another ASEAN-led process of regional cooperation, the East Asian Summit (EAS), was proposed and first convened in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur with 16 participating countries including APT 13 members plus Australia, New Zealand, and India. It became a kind of leaders’ forum for “dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political and economic issue of common interest and concern with

²⁷ Speech by Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing at the 10+3 Ministerial Meeting, Vientiane, Laos, 27 July 2005, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/yzs/dqzzywt/t206079.htm>.

²⁸ ASEAN, “ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation”, <http://www.aseansec.org/16580.htm>.

the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity".²⁹ In October 2010, Russia and the United States joined the process and in the following year they became the full members of the EAS. China believed the platform of the EAS could be made full use of "to enhance dialogue, boost mutual trust, expand exchanges, and deepen cooperation so as to promote peace, development and prosperity of the region".³⁰ So China has been advocating an inclusive regional process of integration. As Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao expressed in a speech to the first EAS that "China supports East Asian cooperation to be transparent and open. China is opposed to self-enclosed or exclusive East Asian cooperation or cooperation targeted to any particular party. China insists on keeping open-minded and advocating open regionalism in the process of regional cooperation in a bid to promote common progress and development of the various countries."³¹ With open regionalism in mind, China welcomed the participation of Russia and the US in the EAS, expecting that both could play positive roles in promoting the regional integration.

China's official stance on the regional integration has been quite clear, consistent, and can be generally synthesized as follows: a, supports ASEAN's leading role in the processes; b, identifies with others that East Asia community building is a long-term goal, which needs to take gradual steps and to conduct practical cooperation based on consensus, informality, comfort level, which is so called an ASEAN way³²; c, "bring[s] into full play the role of the

²⁹ "ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations", "Chairman's Statement of the East Asian Summit (EAS) Foreign Minister's Consultation", Bali, Indonesia, 22 July, 2011, <http://www.asean.org/documents/44thAMM-PMC-18thARF/EAS-CS.pdf>

³⁰ "Wen Jiabao Delivers a Speech at the East Asia Summit", Dec.14, 2005, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/zyjh/t226715.htm>

³¹ "Wen Jiabao Delivers a Speech at the East Asia Summit", Dec.14, 2005, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/zyjh/t226715.htm>

³² A ASEAN way refers to a distinctive way that ASEAN takes to move forward the process of the regional integration " 'based on discreteness, informality, consensus building and non-confrontational bargaining styles' that contrasts with 'the adversarial posturing, majority vote and other legalistic decision-making procedures in Western multilateral organizations'", see Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in South East Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*, London: Routledge, 2001, 63.

existing cooperation frameworks, including 10+1, 10+3, and China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, and at the same time exploring other cooperation models consistent with the characteristics of the region”³³; d, committed to an open regionalism, believing inclusiveness of the regional integration can draw each other’s strength. And above all, China takes regionalist and multilateral approach in East Asia and links it closely to its grand strategy, which aims “to secure and shape a security, economic, and political environment that is conducive to China concentrating on its economic, social, and political development”.³⁴

As the core of the grand strategy, China’s corresponding East Asian regional strategy was mainly conceived and developed based on four factors: “great power (*da guo*)” identity, existence of security dilemma, a doctrine of self-restraint (*buyao dangtou*), and a “responsible great power (*fuzeren de daguo*)”.³⁵ The “great power” identity drove China to pursue an on-going reform and opening-up policy so that China could revitalize and develop itself and return to the rightful place in the world. China’s great power status was deeply damaged by the Cultural Revolution, left domestic political chaos and stagnant economy, and widened the gap between China’s economic and technologic strength and international advanced levels. Even smaller countries around China like Thailand and South Korea surpassed China’s overall GDP in 1980’s. Chinese leaders were fully aware of China’s backwardness which was “far from being commensurate with the standing of a great nation such as ours.”³⁶ and gave top priority to the creation of a favorable external

³³ “Full text of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao’s Speech at Balai Kartini of Indonesia”, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-05/01/c_13853424.htm.

³⁴ Zhang Yunling and Tang Shiping, “China’s Regional Strategy”, in David Shambaugh ed. *Power Shift: China and Asia’s New Dynamics*, 48.

³⁵ Zhang and Tang stated that China’s grand strategy was formed based on these four factors. The author of this paper argues these four were also the most relevant ones that directly impacted and led to China’s East Asian strategy. About the four factors, see Zhang Yunling and Tang Shiping, “China’s Regional Strategy”, in David Shambaugh ed. *Power Shift: China and Asia’s New Dynamics*, 48-51.

³⁶ Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, Vol. 3, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1993, 311.

environment for its economic development. So turning China into a great power and winning others' respect needs to follow the path of reform and opening-up and "unequivocally continue to do so".³⁷

Awareness of the existence of security dilemma facilitated invention of China's new security concept, advocating mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation among nations, which became a guiding principle for China to promote peaceful transition in East Asia. After 1949, the successive U.S. and Soviet hostility toward China made East Asia one of the Cold War's most turbulent and conflict-ridden regions. Most of the wars and other conflicts in the region were related to China or occurred in China's immediate neighborhood. "During the thirty-nine years from 1949 to 1988, the longest interval between the nine military conflicts China was involved in amounted to less than five years".³⁸ Once China adopted the new security concept and took the turn toward regionalism and multilateralism, the tense situation in East Asia eased off rapidly. There were no wars among nations there after the Cambodian war ended in 1990.³⁹ China successively established partnerships with Japan, the ROK, and ASEAN, practice of self-restraint earned it more trust from neighbors. Through regionalism and multilateralism driven by the new thinking on security, China wanted to "present to its smaller neighbors a less threatening and more cooperative face of its power"⁴⁰, and more responsible of its image.

Identifying itself as a responsible power in East Asia, China was driven to enrich its good-neighborly policy by chanting more than ever about rising together with the whole Asia. President Hu Jintao pointed out at the opening

³⁷ Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, Vol. 3, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1993, 311.

³⁸ Yan Xuetong "Anquan de Xingzhi yu Zhanzheng Zhouqi" (On the Nature of Security and Cycle of War Occurrence), in Yan Xuetong, *Guoji Zhengzhi yu Zhongguo (International Politics and China)*, (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2005), 120-122.

³⁹ See Yan Xuetong, "Dongya Heping de Jichu" (The Foundations of Peace in East Asia), in Yan Xuetong, *Guoji Zhengzhi yu Zhongguo*, 125-126.

⁴⁰ Wu Guoguang, "Multiple levels of multilateralism: The rising China in the turbulent world", in Wu Guoguang and Helen Lansdowne eds., *China turns to multilateralism: Foreign policy and regional security*, London: Routledge, 2008, 270.

ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia in April 2004, "China's development cannot be achieved in isolation of Asia, and Asia's prosperity also needs China".⁴¹ A peaceful and prosperous neighborhood was thought as the key and precondition for China to achieving its national goals of economic, political and social development and of well management of its external relations, especially with the United States. And China's development needs to be regarded by its neighbors, first and foremost, as a great opportunity of getting benefits from it. So as a responsible power, it is not enough to say that China's rise is one part of the rise of Asia, it has to be involved into the regionalism and to be restrained by multilateral frameworks.

Generally speaking, the adoption of regionalism and participation in the processes of regional integration has been widely and positively received among Chinese people, especially supported by the elite. But since the very beginning, there has been no consensus over many issues like approach, mode, trend of the regional integration and the regional architecture building, especially over the roles played by the United States and other major powers outside the region. It is quite understandable that an extensive debate has emerged concerning China's status, role, and its regional strategy, since all aspects of China's national interest are present in East Asia.

As far as China's status in the regional integration is concerned, views are widely divided. Some hold that China is likely to become the most important center of power in Asia-Pacific and to play a bridging role in communicating with and bonding actors in the region. With the increase of its overall strength, China's central status in the region cannot be replaced by any other country, including Russia, Japan, India, or the USA.⁴² The evaluation of China's status began to tilt to more positive side since China quickly recovered from 2008 global financial crisis. Some believed that China has gradually

⁴¹ Hu Jintao, "China's Development Is an Opportunity for Asia," Speech at the opening ceremony of the BFA 2004 Annual Conference, April 24, 2004, in *China Foreign Affairs*, Beijing: World Affairs, 2005, 506-11.

⁴² Zhu Tingchang, "Lun Zhongguo zai Yatai Diqu de Quyu Zhongxin Diwei" (China's Central Role in Asia-Pacific Region), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi Luntan (Forum of World Economy and Politics)*, No. 1, 2010, 76.

developed from a regional power into a new world power"⁴³, and "extensive global links are gradually turning China into a global state".⁴⁴ Even though more confidence showed in calculating China's power status, these scholars still argued that it is still unknown whether China is able to succeed in its efforts of modernization. They pointed out that taking into account the current problems facing China, "rise in power does not necessarily result in the increase in both status and influence"⁴⁵, because in China's national strength, hard power and soft power are extremely imbalanced, with the latter apparently taking on the typical feature of being "small in quantity and weak in quality". Strengthening soft power has become a central issue for China in the process of modernization⁴⁶, and China's rise into a world major power will be a long and tortuous process. For China, being still a big developing country, a learning process should be maintained, and keeping a low profile should continue to be a guiding principle, which implied that China should be navigating along the "middle course", and seek no leadership in East Asia.⁴⁷

Regarding inclusive or exclusive regionalism, there are also different opinions among Chinese scholars. Some strongly oppose open regionalism, arguing that it is the fundamental reason why "it is so difficult to define objectives, make clear subjects and achieve substantive progress in the construction of East Asian community building".⁴⁸ The lack of consensus over

⁴³ Zhang Youwen, Huang Renwei, et al., *2009 Zhongguo Guoji Diwei Baogao (China's International Status Report 2009)*, Beijing: People's Press, 2009, 23.

⁴⁴ Su Changhe, "Zhongguo Waijiao de Quanqiuhua ji Qishi" (Globalization of China's Diplomacy and Its Revelations), *Dangdai Yatai (Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies)*, no. 1, 2009, 24. Also see Wang Yiwei, "Tanxun Zhongguo de Xin Shenfen: Guanyu Minzu Zhuyi de Shenhua" (Seeking China's New Identity: The Myth of Chinese Nationalism), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi (World Economics and Politics)*, No. 2, 2006, 20.

⁴⁵ Xu Bu, et al., "Ruhe Kan Zhongguo Guoji Diwei Xinbianhua" (How to View New Changes in China's International Status), *Shishi Baogao (Current Affairs Report)*, no. 1, 2009, 64.

⁴⁶ Zhang Youwen, Huang Renwei et al, *2009 Zhongguo Guoji Diwei Baogao (China's International Status Report 2009)*, Beijing: People's Press, 2009, 323-327.

⁴⁷ Zhu Liqun, "Zhongguo Waijiao de Chongyong Tese(The Feature of Golden Mean in China's Diplomacy)", *Waijiao Pinglun(Foreign Affairs Review)*, no.3, 2009, 20.

⁴⁸ Xiao Huanrong, "Fanhua de Diqu Zhuyi yu Dongya Gongtongti de Weilai" (Pan-

this issue in East Asia “provides opportunities for American engagement”.⁴⁹ And American role in the regional integration is generally negative rather than positive. The process of European integration was strongly supported by the United States, since it was a necessary step for it to take to facilitate consolidation of Europe against the former Soviet Union. But its attitude has been just the opposite when it was facing East Asian community building, especially increasing independence of the US allies growing out of regional integrative efforts. American military alliances and presence, and its initiatives against East Asian regional integration lay in the heart of the problems leading to each going its own way in Asia-Pacific region.⁵⁰ So the key for East Asian regional integration is how to achieve consensus and to nurture common identity among major East Asian powers, especially that between China and Japan, not between East Asian countries and the United States.⁵¹ Therefore, “East Asian regionalism”⁵² rather than an open regionalism⁵³ should be pursued. Others hold that it is of great significance for East Asian countries to uphold the principle of “open regionalism”, which allows countries outside the region such as the USA, Australia, New Zealand and India to engage in the processes of East Asia integration. China has accepted open regionalism in

regionalism and the Future of East Asian Community), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi (World Economics and Politics)*, No. 10, 2008, 34.

⁴⁹ Dai Fan and Zhou Jiner, “Dongya Diqu Zhixu de Weilai: Dongya Haishi Yatai?” (Future of East Asian Order: East Asia or Asia-Pacific?), *Nanyang Wenti Yanjiu (South Asian Affairs)*, No. 1, 2006, 27.

⁵⁰ “Continent versus Ocean and Regionalization in Asia: An Interview with Wang Hui, Professor from College of Humanity Studies at Tsinghua University”, *21st Century Business Herald*, March, 21, 2012, 14.

⁵¹ Xiao Huanrong, “Fanhua de Diqu Zhuyi yu Dongya Gongtongti de Weilai” (Pan-regionalism and the Future of East Asian Community), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi (World Economics and Politics)*, No. 10, 2008, 35-36.

⁵² Liu Zhenye, “Dongya Gongtongti Bu Keneng Shi Kaifang de Diqu Zhuyi” (East Asian Community Can't Be an Open Regionalism), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi (World Economics and Politics)*, No. 10, 2008, 39.

⁵³ Zheng Xianwu, “Dongya Gongtongti Yuanjing de Xuhuanxing Xilun” (East Asian Community: Reality or Illusion?), *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi (Contemporary World and Socialism)*, No. 4, 2007, 56.

order to avoid a conflict with the United States by keeping the United States out of the region, for which China has no capacity to do it. So China has given a tacit consent to the concept of overlapping regions instead of a clear concept of region. China has adopted modest attitudes toward various co-existing processes of regional integration, encouraging inclusiveness and diversification and being cautious about exclusive regional cooperation. All these policies have reduced American concerns and its resistance to East Asian community building.⁵⁴ At the same time, open regionalism can foster political cooperation and security coordination in the region, thus easing soft strategic encircling of China. It can also attract more powers outside East Asia to form a strategic constraint on the U.S.-Japan alliance.⁵⁵

Some even go farther to question if East Asian community or regional integration is a pragmatic goal worthy of making great efforts to pursue. For some scholars, the so-called "ASEAN-led" regional community with open regionalism is essentially a misleading "illusion".⁵⁶ They articulate that reality shows East Asia is not yet equipped with the soil for building a "regional community" since it is badly lack of a psychological basis for a community building.⁵⁷ So the pragmatic way for China is to strengthen mechanisms of "fostering trust and security" and actively nurture mutual understanding and mutual trust among East Asia countries.⁵⁸ Opposite opinions hold that the identity pattern in East Asia is undergoing a fundamental transformation from

⁵⁴ Sun Xuefeng and Chen Haixi, "Zhongguo Diqu Zhuyi Zhengce de Zhanlue Xiaoying" (China's Regional Policy and Its Strategic Consequences), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi (World Economics and Politics)*, No. 5, 2006, 28.

⁵⁵ Men Honghua, "Zhongguo Dongya Zhanlue de Zhankai" (The Evolvement of China's East Asian Strategy), *Dangdai Yatai(Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies)*, No. 1, 2009, 65.

⁵⁶ Liu Aming and Zhu Mingquan, "Guanyu Jianli Dongya Gongtongti de Jidian Sikao" (Some Thoughts on Establishing East Asian Community), *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu (International Studies)*, No. 1, 2006, 53.

⁵⁷ Zhou Fangyin, "Gongtongti yu Dongya Hezuo" (Community and East Asian Cooperation), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi (World Economics and Politics)*, No. 1, 2009, 62.

⁵⁸ Zheng Xianwu, "Dongya Gongtongti Yuanjing de Xuhuanxing Xilun" (East Asian Community: Reality or Illusion?), *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi (Contemporary International Relations)*, No. 4, 2007, 60.

animosity to community. There are many favorable elements for the construction of East Asia community such as deepening inter-dependence, strengthened sense of common destiny and gradually emerging and universalized common norms among East Asian countries. A kind of regional political culture is coming into being in the process of building East Asia community.⁵⁹

To sum up, China's policy toward the regional integration has never been as positive and proactive as today. Even though different opinions exist among scholars in terms of the scope of region, the mode of regionalism and the role played by the United States, the policy towards the regional integration adopted by the Chinese government has not changed, with the core principles of inclusiveness, gradualism, pragmatism, and ASEAN centrality.

III

In recent years, East Asian community building has encountered many challenges, and three of them might be the most difficult ones holding the processes stagnated.

The first challenge is how to reconcile different processes running in the region and prevent them from becoming a divergent force to pull apart the integration. It is quite obvious that the fast-paced expansion of the 10 plus model with a result of multi-directed propelling forces playing out in the region has made the regional integration lack of focus and sagged ASEAN's spirit and leadership. The ASEAN 10 plus 1 and 10 plus 3 channels are regarded as the most effective mechanisms to move forward the community building, and they have brought about unprecedented dynamism and development. But currently, East Asian countries have found two main modes to approach community building. One mode is the expansion of ASEAN communities, which is preferred by ASEAN, by which ASEAN centrality could be maximally maintained. But the fundamental problem with this mode, as Professor Zhang Yunling wrote, is that the major powers like China and Japan are too big to be absorbed, since that would have fundamentally changed

⁵⁹ Qin Yaqing, "Dongya Gongtongti Jianshe Jincheng he Meiguo de Zuoyong" (The Process of East Asia Community Building and American Role), *Waijiao Pinglun (Foreign Affairs Review)*, No. 6, 2005, 28..

the current mode of ASEAN's operation.⁶⁰ The other is the mode of ASEAN plus three (APT), which has ever made a great progress in promoting concrete cooperation among the members, especially in monetary and financial areas. It is, however, challenged by Japan who, instead, is more interested in pushing for a broader framework of 10 plus six and now 10 plus 8, the EAS. More powers involved, more confused where to go. The development of regional integration has gradually lost its direction and its momentum, since countries within and outside the region proposed their own approaches toward the issue how to and where to lead the community building. Australia came up with an "Asia-Pacific community"⁶¹, with which it expected to "manage major power relations, particularly in the context of the rise of China and India".⁶² Japan has been swinging back and forth between more East Asian and more Pacific. The ROK seems more interested in signing FTAs with other regional powers like the EU and the United States. "In India, the official documents and academic essays seldom use the term 'East Asian' cooperation, but 'Asian' cooperation".⁶³ The US is, in favor of strengthening APEC, hoping to expand its functions from economic to political and security issues. And an elaborated initiative fulfilling the objectives is the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership (TPP). Within such a context, ASEAN is becoming more inward-looking, obsessed with its self-construction, and struggling for maintaining ASEAN's central role with more or less skills of balance of power. This development of regional integration raises a fundamental question: where is East Asian regionalism going? Zhang Yunling, a leading specialist and former Director of the Institute of Asian-Pacific Studies at China Academy of Social Sciences, goes even further in his recent article by raising the question of (Do)

⁶⁰ Zhang Yunling, "East Asian Cooperation, Where to Go Next", *Foreign Affairs Review*, 2009(yearly), 126.

⁶¹ Kevin Rudd, "Address to the Asian Society AustralAsia Center, Sydney: It is time to build an Asia-Pacific community", June 4, 2008, <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/5763>.

⁶² Peter Drysdale, "Rudd in Singapore on the Asia Pacific Community idea", May 31, 2009, East Asia Forum, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2009/05/31/rudd-in-singapore-on-the-asia-pacific-community-idea/>

⁶³ Zhang Yunling, "East Asian Cooperation, Where to Go Next", *Foreign Affairs Review*, 2009(yearly), 132.

East Asian countries have the motivation to build a community? Tough though, it is really targeting the key challenge facing East Asian countries. China has to be adaptive to these differently-oriented approaches and try to digest and manage this newly developed multi-layered regional framework with extended participants going into diversified pathways. With the regional integration becoming more diverging instead of converging, the Chinese government needs to conceive and develop a more subtle and flexible strategy and live with these different approaches, since all of which conform to China's interests"⁶⁴, and accommodating big powers including China itself through more channels and mechanisms is naturally understandable and acceptable to China.

The second one is how to enhance trust and reduce security dilemma which is increasingly besieging East Asian region. Especially for China itself the task is how to constructively cope with the problems concerning China's neighboring countries and how to win back support from the neighbors for China's peaceful rise. As it was mentioned earlier, China's new security concept formed in 1990's with an emphasis on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation and China's reiteration of rising together with other Asian countries have been welcome and positively received among ASEAN neighbors. The fact that China's foreign policy is clear enough in words does not mean that China can well achieve it in deeds. As China's national power is growing and its GDP surpassed Japan as the second largest economy in the world, asymmetry of power structure in East Asia is going to be conspicuous, at least in a psychological perspective.⁶⁵ Driven by anxieties, some leaders in neighboring countries have begun to express their suspicions about China's rise, hoping that a third party can play a balancing role in East Asia. Mr. Lee Kuan-Yew, Minister Mentor of Singapore, spoke during his visit to Washington that "whatever the challenges, U.S. core interest requires that it remains the superior power on the Pacific. To give up this position would

⁶⁴ Zhang Yunling, "East Asian Cooperation, Where to Go Next", *Foreign Affairs Review*, 2009(yearly), 136.

⁶⁵ Zhu Liqun, "Challenges for the Future" in Allen Carlson and Ren Xiao eds., *New Frontiers in China's Foreign Relations*, Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2011, 198.

diminish America's role throughout the world".⁶⁶ This was interpreted by some Chinese media as advocating for counterbalancing a rising China in the East Asia. Despite the great efforts that have been made by China since the end of the Cold War, border disputes, especially those in some contentious areas like the South China Sea and the East China Sea, constitute another big challenge to China. China's policy of "shelving disputes and engaging in joint exploitation" is being badly challenged by some countries in favor of internationalizing the disputes on the one hand and gaining benefit single-handed on the other hand. North Korean nuclear issue has remained unsolved and expects more twists and turns, and causes more military exercises between Japan and the US as well as the ROK and the US in the name of North Korean provocative activities, while Sino-North Korean relations is experiencing great transformation. Sino-Japanese relationship is still fragile even though it has been improved to some extent since Mr. Yasuo Fukuda took office. But there are still some doubts and troubles concerning territorial disputes, competing for material resources, historic issues, not only because of the existence of deep-rooted suspicions about each other both in China and Japan, but also because of the fragility and instability of Japanese domestic politics and shuttle changes of cabinet in office. In terms of India, another big neighboring country who holds a negative perception of China due to China's faster economic growth and legacy of the border conflict in 1962, China might expect more troubles if both sides handle their relations irresponsibly. All these challenges indicate that there is still a long way to go for trust building in East Asia, especially between China and Japan, China and the ROK, China and India, even China and the ASEAN. All countries in this region should do more in turning current economic gain into a security asset to help facilitate trust building in the region, which can lay a political foundation for the regional integration.

The third challenge closely linked with the second one is how to manage

⁶⁶ Speech by Mr. Lee Kuan-Yew at US-ASEAN Business Council's 25th Anniversary at Washington DC, 27 October, 2009,
http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sgpc/en/media_releases/agencies/mica/speech/S-20091027-1.html

the relationship between China and the United States, and to prevent it from practicing a confrontational-oriented interaction and as a result deteriorating security situation in the region. The US has a long historical presence in East Asia with its hub and spoke military system established after the end of the Second World War, so China reiterates many times that it acknowledges American interests and welcome its positive role in East Asia. But there are always suspicious views from both sides to look at each other. For example, when China's Position Paper on the New Security Concept issued in 2002, it was perceived by some Americans as a statement of China's opposition to American unipolarity, America's alliance system and also American policies of supplying Taiwan with arms as well as developing an anti-ballistic missile system in East Asia.⁶⁷ And when China-ASEAN FTA advanced and China accession into ASEAN's TAC in 2004, they were perceived as evidences of China's "de facto strategy for restraining the United States".⁶⁸ On the Chinese side, while an increasing number of Chinese scholars hold that the United States plays a stabilizing role in East Asia, especially in constraining Japan through its alliance with Japan, the preponderant opinion still argues that the US strategy in Asia is to achieve and benefit from facilitating mutual balancing among Asian powers.⁶⁹ So it is impossible for China and Japan to realize fundamental reconciliation in their bilateral relations.⁷⁰ Nor will the United States support the integration progress in East Asia. The power and

⁶⁷ Denny Roy, "China's Pitch for a Multipolar World: the New Security Concept," <http://www.apcss.org/Publications/APSSS/Chinas%20Pitch%20for%20a%20Multipolar%20World.pdf>.

⁶⁸ Yong Deng and Thomas Moore, "China Views Globalization: Toward New Great-Power Politics?", *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2004.

⁶⁹ Zhang Wenmu, "Daguo Jueqi de Lishi Jingyan yu Zhongguo de Xuanze" (Historical Lessons of the Rise of Major Powers and China's Choice), *Zhanglue yu Guanli (Strategy and Management)*, No. 2, 2004, 70-84; Wu Zhengyu, "Baquan, Tongmeng Jiqi Dui Zhongguo de Qishi" (Hegemony, Alliance and Revelations on China), *Dangdai Shijie yu Shehui Zhuyi (Contemporary World and Socialism)*, no. 4, 2008, 90.

⁷⁰ Pan Zhongqi, "Baquan Ganshe, Daguo Duikang yu Dongya Diqu Anquan de Goujian" (Hegemonic Interference, Great Power Rivalry and Regional Security Building in East Asia), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi (World Economics and Politics)*, no. 6, 2006, 40.

institutional structures of American hegemony lead to unfavorable and negative policies toward East Asian integration.⁷¹

Recent shift of American strategic concentration from the Middle East onto Asia-Pacific is mainly seen as “an obstacle or diverging force for Asian region, which has been proceeding to a more détente and integrated direction since 1990’s”.⁷² The view has its reasons to question American policies toward the region in which it has clear inclination to hedging and balancing China. The consolidation and expansion of American military alliances, exercising more military drills, and meddling in the South China Sea dispute cannot be denied as troubling activities to divide the region, reflecting a Cold War mentality still functioning in East Asia. Since there has long been lack of common sense of security nurtured in the region, every move from Chinese side or American side might be deciphered in a negative perspective. The TPP, as a high-qualified economic grouping and FTA, is also perceived to have double faces. On the one hand, it can facilitate and elevate Asia-Pacific economic development through hammering out new norms and rules of trade and investment, but on the other hand it might be gaining a momentum dividing ASEAN and APT members, and diverting attention and direction from the East Asian community building, since diversification is the nature of East Asian countries in terms of political, economic, social and cultural differences and each positioning in different development stage. The latter will be harmful to the regional integration, and hence damage American leadership in this regard. As things have changed in all directions in the region, East Asian community building as an objective of the regional integration seems having no feasibility and possibility in near future.⁷³

Confronting these three challenges, the questions might be asked like

⁷¹ Song Wei, “Meiguo Baquan he Dongya Yitihua—Yizhong Xin Xianshi Zhuyi de Jieshi” (The US Hegemony and East Asian Integration: A Neo-realist Perspective), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi* (World Economics and Politics), no. 2, 2009, 61.

⁷² “Continent versus Ocean and Regionalization in Asia: An Interview with Wang Hui, Professor from College of Humanity Studies at Tsinghua University”, *21st Century Business Herald*, March, 21, 2012, 14.

⁷³ Zhang Yunling, “Xunzhao Tuijin Dongya Hezuo de Lujing(Seeking Pathway to promote East Asian Cooperation)”, *Waijiao Pinglun*(*Foreign Affairs Review*), no.6, 2011, 11.

what the other way is instead of community building? Or what kind of regional architecture is going to emerge? The regional integration cannot be decided by or dependent on a sole element of Sino-American relations in Asia. And the current situation of different propelling forces pulling away for different directions should not be defined as a balance of power structure, but instead a structure of balance of engagement⁷⁴, since the main feature evolving in East Asia is not only a play of power politics, but mainly cooperative, sometimes competitive interaction among multi-players. Soft power with smart strategies and new ideas is the basic content what each power is competing and struggling for, and the final architecture will be played out by power of soft side, not hard side.

Considering the fact that diversity is an essential feature of East Asia and multi-polar system is well under way in the region, regional architecture may experience a long process of mixed and complicated structurization. The region may see a result of a multi-layered regional framework with multiple participants, since “we have several propelling forces and parallel pathways, which might not join together into a unified process or a single regional organization”, like the EU today.⁷⁵ This is reality we are facing. In other words, facing different processes, no set model is perfectly sure that will lead us to a regional community. This is what the term of “balance” used is all about. So keeping every process moving forward is more meaningful than arguing which way we should take. Community building is a community of practice. And this practice should be based on local reality, using pragmatism as a guiding principle, and making leaning, communication, consultation and dialogue first priority. This is what the term of “engagement” used is all about. East Asian

⁷⁴ The author first used this concept to grasp the very essence of East Asia regional structure at the International Conference on changing global landscape and its Implications to Regional Architecture, Bangkok, Thailand, March, 5, 2010, and then the paper presented at the conference was published at Asialink. See Zhu Liqun et.al. “Regionalism: An Asian Conversation”, Asialink Essays, Volume 2, Number 4, 2010. http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/30489/Regionalism_An_Asian_Conversation29-6-2010.pdf

⁷⁵ Zhang Yunling, “East Asian Cooperation, Where to Go Next”, *Foreign Affairs Review*, 2009(yearly), 131.

regional community may not be attained by showing hard power and unilateralism, but by continuing constructive engagement among powers, and by strategy that can win support of all East Asian countries. Broader support a regional strategy gets, more possible of being a leading power it will be. So leadership is still a key for the regional integration and for shaping a stable East Asian regional order. No leadership will lead the region to a process of twists and turns with more confusion and competition.

In conclusion, China's regional strategy did not really start to develop until 1990's, with ASEAN playing a driving force to the regional integration. Pushed by the internal reform and opening-up, China's East Asian regional policy is closely corresponding with its grand strategy of peaceful rise, emphasizing on creating an favorable environment in East Asia for China's economic development and modernization building. China adopted a good neighborly policy and a new security concept, participating actively in the regional integration, supporting ASEAN's leading role in East Asia community building, holding an open and inclusive regionalism. More than 20 years has passed since the beginning of 1990's, a great progress has been made in the each process of regional cooperation, and many concrete results through different mechanisms have been achieved. A great deal of challenges, of course, is also facing the regional counties along with power shift, diversified ideas and politicization of the regional integration. Tackling these challenges needs patience, leadership and political will of cooperation with pragmatism as a way of practicing regional integration. And the regional future of peace, security and prosperity will largely depend on consensus building on new norms and rules of interaction, especially on the issue if China and the United States can creatively develop into a new-style of major powers relationship, for which ASEAN can play a key role.