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The EU – A Model for Regional Integration in Asia?

The EU as a Model of Regional Integration

Self-Image of EU as a Model of Regional Integration

- effective and legitimate governance beyond the nation-state
 - effective regional economic and political cooperation to meet challenges of globalization
 - managing social and political conflict, fostering the wealth of society and ensuring peace and stability
- Promote regional cooperation as part of governance package the EU seeks to export

The EU as a Model of Regional Integration

European Integration

- Comprehensive: more than (free) trade and investment economic and social (market-correcting) regulation
- Legalized: more than intergovernmental cooperation
 - obligation: EU Law as the law of the land (supremacy and direct effect)
 - precision: > 10.000 EU laws regulating on drinking water, milk quotas, parental leave etc.
 - delegation: European Court of Justice an independent dispute settlement authority

The EU and the Promotion of Regional Integration

EU uses different mechanisms of diffusion, such as

- Positive and negative incentives:
 - Conditionality: regional integration as ticket to the Single Market
- Persuasion:
 - Political Dialogue: ASEM, Asia-Europe Foundation
- Capacity building:
 - Assistance: EU Asia Strategy 2007-2013: 155 Mio €

So, the EU tries to export its model of regional integration...

BUT...

What happens on the receiving end?

Is regional integration on the rise?

Is anything „lost in the translation“?

Something is diffusing: New Regionalism

New Regionalism – what's new?

- „explosion“ of regional trade accords after 1989
 - RTA proliferate (2010 more than 400 registered with WTO)
 - 5 new common markets (out of 6)
 - 11 new custom unions
 - Deepening of region-building
 - European Union (Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice, Lisbon)
 - Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
 - West African Economic and Monetary Union
- ➔ Regions as the building-blocs of the global architecture in the 21 century

New Regionalism in Asia

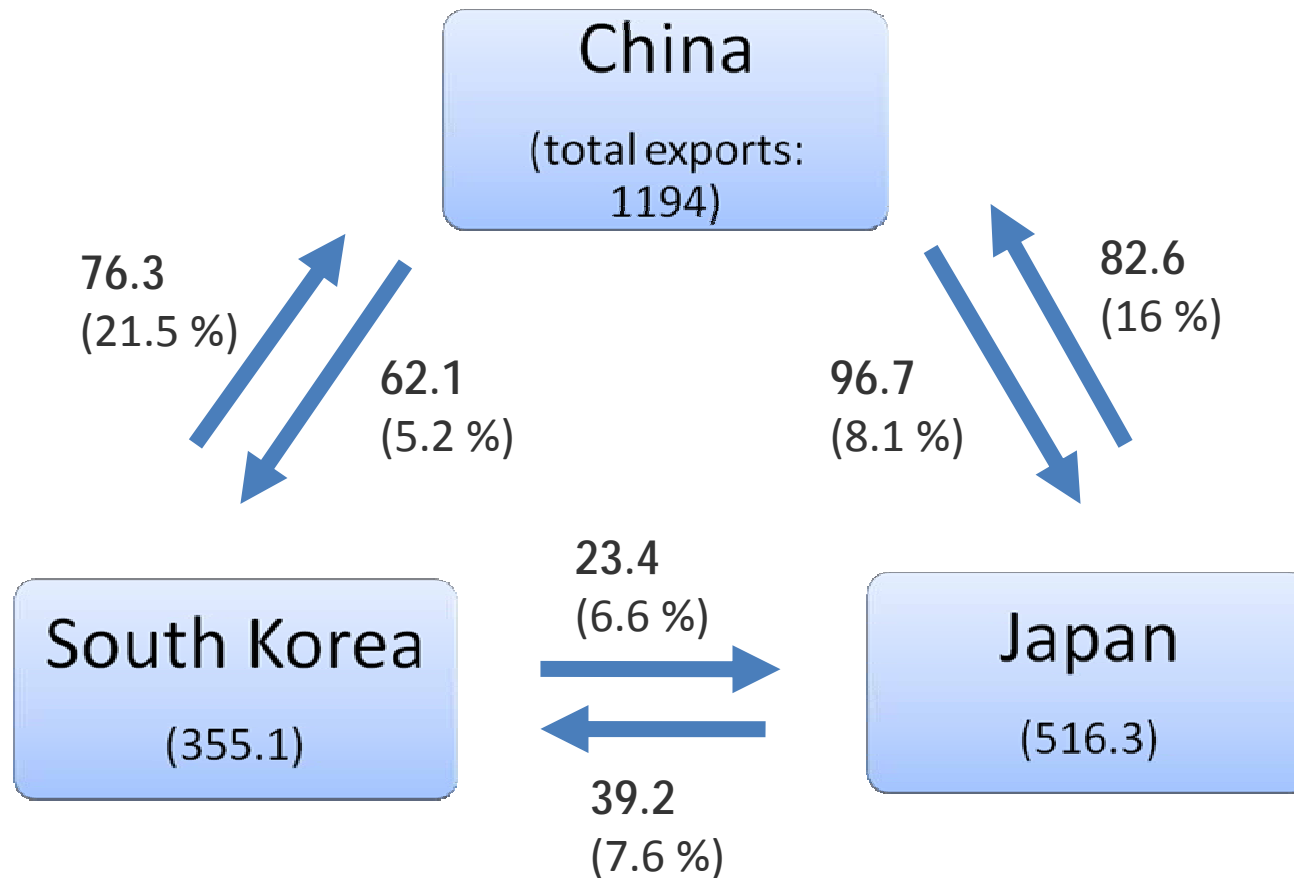
- new forms
 - ASEAN+3 (1997)
 - East Asian Summit (2005)

Modest increase in region-building

- deepening
 - SAARC (1985) → SAPTA (1995)
 - ASEAN Free Trade Area (1992) → ASEAN Economic Community
 - ASEAN Charter (2008)

low degree of legalization, no supranational institutions

➔ Why so little and why so modest?



Merchandise trade in bln US \$; Source: CIA – World Factbook;
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>

Functionalism: demand for integration

- economic interdependence → cooperation → integration
- globalization: counterbalancing EU and NAFTA

Realism: geopolitical concerns and security

- China (balancing or engaging?)
- hegemonic powers as fostering integration: US? Japan? China?

Cultural explanations

- global script vs. „Asian way“
(informal networks vs. legalized institutions?)