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The EU Approach towards Regional Integration in Asia –
State of the Art

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The EU approach towards regional integration in Asia- state of the art¹

There are several reasons for an EU commitment towards the promotion of regional integration in Asia. Murray identifies various key factors guiding the EU engagement in the region. Among these ranges the fact that Asia as a region is responsible for one third of EU trade flows (Murray 2010, p. 4). The author further refers to the importance of EU crisis management in several Asian countries, its political relationship with important Asian partners in addressing global challenges, and finally, the standing of the EU as the main donor of ‘development assistance and humanitarian aid’ in the region (Murray 2010, p. 4). Rüländ further emphasizes the importance of the interregional relationship between the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): The EU has been the first of ASEAN’s ‘interregional partners’ with ASEAN-EU relations starting in the 1970s (Rüländ 2006). It therefore does not come as a surprise that the majority of the literature dealing with the EU’s approach on fostering regional integration in Asia concentrates on the EU-ASEAN relationship.

Central to the promotion of regional integration in Asia is the intention of the EU to influence the architecture of regional institutions; the EU wants to ‘influence events in the region’ and to ‘carry out its soft power aspirations’ and finally to counter the role of the US for the ‘Asian region’ (Murray 2010, p. 5). In the following section of this paper, I will further elaborate on EU-Asia trade relations and how they are presented in the literature as a central concern of the EU guiding its promotion of regional integration in Asia.

1. Trade as the motor for regional integration

Van Dijck argues that in relation to trade the ‘EU New Asia Strategy’ (COM(94)314) cannot be compared to other strategies put forward by the EU towards other world regions (van Dijck 2002, p. 88). The author sees the difference in the fact that the EU does not seek ‘preferential

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access' to Asian markets but rather follows a common effort towards more liberalization in a multilateral trade regime. Free trade in goods and services has thus been envisaged for the year 2025 for all members of the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) (van Dijck 2002, p. 89).

A different view is expressed by Garelli from the European Institute for Asian Studies. According to her, the EU's approach clearly shows the ambition to secure its market access to ASEAN states (Garelli 2011). This approach, she argues, fits perfectly with the 'Global Europe Strategy' of 2006 and its aim to strengthen competitiveness via 'deep and comprehensive FTAs' (Garelli 2011, p. 2). While a regional FTA (Free Trade Agreement) with ASEAN has not yet been finalized, the EU engages in the establishment of bilateral FTAs hoping that the latter will be regionalized some day in the future (Garelli 2012). However, Morada (2012), drawing on a study of Robles, points to the fact that concluding a regional FTA with the EU would have negative effects for the ASEAN states since this would lead to a trade deficit on the Asian side and undermine 'local industries' (Morada 2012, p. 95). Furthermore, as the author acknowledges, a comprehensive FTA including all ASEAN states will also be difficult to reach, because some political goals of the EU might contrast with its trade aspirations. One challenge in this context is the EU's active promotion of human rights in the region (see Myanmar case)² (Garelli 2011).

Morada (2012), drawing on a study of Robles, points to a different issue. He underlines the negative effects on ASEAN states in concluding a potential FTA with the EU, since this would lead to a trade deficit of ASEAN states and undermine "local industries" (Morada 2012, p. 95). Like Morada (and Robles), Garelli also sees a problem in the inclusion of *trade* issues in what she sees as an otherwise political (integration oriented) framework of the EU. She refers to the fact that only those ASEAN states which have before concluded a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the EU have also been agreed to receive the possibility to negotiate an FTA with the EU (Garelli 2012, pp. 19f.). She notes that while the EU in the beginning wanted to negotiate an FTA following its model of 'highly liberalized single market' (Garelli 2012, p. 19), this has clashed with the kind of liberalization ASEAN states were looking for (Garelli 2012, p. 19). As a consequence, the EU has decided to increasingly engage in bilateral trade negotiations after the difficult negotiations of 2008/2009 (Garelli 2012, p. 19).

In terms of the promotion of economic integration, Murray sees the recognition of EU standards by ASEAN states as a success. The author values this as an 'alignment' of ASEAN

² On human rights promotion see section 3 of this paper

states 'with EU regulatory trade norms' (Murray 2010, p. 8). In opposition to this, however, she notes that there are hardly any 'formal agreements on common values and objectives' between the two regions (Murray 2010:8). Allison makes a similar point by saying that in fact economic aims prevail over political goals in the EU approach: The EU has tried to engage Southeast Asia in a regional FTA although the region did not match the EU's demands for trade regulations and human rights improvement in a first place (Allison 2012). Allison infers from this that the EU does not insist on ASEAN to 'share its values' since it has nevertheless started bilateral agreements with single ASEAN states in order to achieve the EU's economic aspirations (Allison 2012, p. 19).

Jetschke and Murray draw on another interesting aspect related to the failure of the conclusion of a comprehensive FTA with ASEAN. They argue that since the EU is interested in the attractive ASEAN market, it has not been possible for the EU to apply direct incentives and to possibly employ coercion via formal agreements (Jetschke, Murray 2012, p. 178): The EU thus needed to recur to softer forms of incentives and to persuasion in order to reach its economic goals (Jetschke, Murray 2012).

As this short overview on the EU's approach on trade integration in Southeast Asia has shown, the literature expresses major concerns about a possible clash between the political goals and trade aspirations of the EU in negotiating an FTA with the region.

2. Model setting

Another central concern of the existing literature is the role of the EU as a model of integration for ASEAN.

Several authors refer to the similarities in the structure of institutions between ASEAN and the EU. A clear example of this is seen in the establishment of the Permanent Representatives of ASEAN following the example of the European Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) (Garelli 2011, 2012). Furthermore the ASEAN Charter (cf. Lisbon Treaty, Charter of fundamental rights of the EU) and the ASEAN Economic Community (cf. EU single market concept) bear clear similarities to the EU (Garelli 2011; Jetschke 2010; Jetschke, Murray 2012). The members of the ASEAN Eminent Persons Group (EPG), who had been in charge of the creation of the ASEAN Charter, have even been to Brussels in order to learn from the EU experience, a clear instance of socialization and example setting in Garelli's estimation (Garelli 2012, p. 12). Garelli characterizes the whole process of the adoption of the ASEAN Charter as an instance of 'unintentional diffusion through contagion' (Garelli 2012, p. 14), in which the EU Constitutional Treaty has influenced the ASEAN

Charter. In accordance to the ‘declaration on the future of Europe’, the aim of the ASEAN Charter was a deepening of the ASEAN Community by adhering to Asian principles (non-interference, sovereignty and consensus) (Garelli 2012, p. 15).

Jetschke equally qualifies the adoption of the ASEAN Charter as an instance of diffusion from the EU Charter (Jetschke 2010). However, the report of the ASEAN EPG on human rights shows that the Group was neither particularly interested nor influenced by the EU’s human rights approach (Allison 18/07/2012, p. 21). In the author’s view, there has not been a search for guidance of ASEAN members concerning human rights protection in the European fashion (Allison 18/07/2012, p. 29). Allison thus concludes her study on the export of EU human rights norms to ASEAN as follows: ‘the way in which ASEAN has decided to incorporate this norm, at least at this stage, reflects and bolsters the pre-existing normative framework of ASEAN rather than any external approach towards human rights, such as the EU’ (Allison 18/07/2012, p. 27).

Similarly, Garelli argues that although the set-up of certain EU concepts and institutions is imitated by ASEAN, at the same time this adoption of the EU experience goes along with a reference to the ‘Asian way’ of doing things and the acknowledgement of the incompatibility of the Asian context with the EU setting (Garelli 2011). Wong takes this skeptical view of the EU as a model for ASEAN even further by employing a rather critical assessment of the character of norm diffusion by the EU. Also, referring to the example of the ASEAN Charter, he argues that the EU cannot be seen as a model power but merely a ‘passive reference point’ for ASEAN (Wong 2012, p. 671). This point is also raised by Maull in the more general context of East Asia, for which he claims that the *reference* to EU models of problem solving is most important (Maull 2010, p. 204).

In terms of the adoption of single EU policies (e.g. ASEAN legislation similar to the EU cosmetics directive), the implementation cannot be supervised by ASEAN, since ASEAN lacks a supranational control authority. In this case, the EU directly intervenes by providing technical assistance (e.g. to the ASEAN Secretariat) and by managing development programs to enhance regional integration in ASEAN countries (Garelli 2011, p. 2).³

There is thus no clear statement in the literature in favor of a possible model character of the EU. Most authors rather stick to a middle ground position, stating that ‘European

³ This recent focus goes back to the EU’s financial perspectives for 2007-2013, which includes money for programs focusing on the “support for regional integration, standards assessment and intellectual property rights” Garelli 2011, p. 2.

institutionalized regionalism (...) will never be taken as a blueprint for Asia's integration' but at the same time arguing that 'some general lessons from Europe can be considered' (Langhammer 2007, p. 20).

A similar evaluation also shows in the literature's assessment of the Asia Economic Community (AEC). On the one hand, its similarities to the EU single market project (customs initiatives, completion of common market envisaged by 2015) are highlighted, on the other hand, authors claim that a main difference remains in the fact that the free movement of people within the AEC is only applicable for skilled labor (Garelli 2011, p. 16).

The EU thus serves as an obvious reference point, but Asian states follow the EU example in their own way (Garelli 2011, p. 16).

Morada further argues that the position of the EU as a model especially stems from the EU's donor position and the view of the EU as an economic power which could foster the development of ASEAN member countries (Morada 2012, p. 97).

Von Hofmann however sees a clear abandonment of the European model in the Asia Regional Forum (ARF) of which the EU is a member (Hofmann 2007, p. 189). He qualifies ARF as a form of rejection of existing organizations like the 'Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe' (OSCE) or the 'North Atlantic Treaty Organization' (NATO) (Hofmann 2007, p. 189). The author claims that this stems from the prevailing view in Asia, qualifying Asia as 'more heterogeneous, more diverse and more difficult to organize than Europe' (Hofmann 2007, p. 189). However, the author acknowledges that some EU practices have been taken up in the ARF system (such as the EU Troika system and other control mechanisms) (Hofmann 2007, p. 191).

Jetschke and Murray's (2012) research on *the kind* of model setting of the EU for ASEAN and the motivations of ASEAN's adoption of EU features identifies an initially very functional call of ASEAN states for problem-solving and EU lesson-drawing in order to reach the envisaged institutionalization of ASEAN in the light of the ASEAN financial crisis in the mid-1990s (Jetschke, Murray 2012, p. 187). This has to be distinguished from a later period of *emulation* when suddenly the international reputation and the standing of ASEAN was at play (in 2005). Since ASEAN at that time was undergoing a political crisis, further economic integration seemed to be the condition sine qua non for the survival of the Association. This led to the ASEAN Charter being modeled after the European example (Jetschke/Murray: 2012: 184). One driving factor of this emulation was ASEAN's desire for 'external

acknowledgement or recognition as legitimate and relevant actor' (Jetschke, Murray 2012, p. 181). This is shared by Garelli, who theorizes that the ASEAN approach of 'legitimizing' reasoning follows 'well established schemes employed by what is considered the world's best example of regional integration' (Garelli 2011, p. 16).

From their study, Jetschke and Murray infer certain 'scope conditions' for the specific selective adoption process of the European model by ASEAN members (Jetschke, Murray 2012, pp. 186ff.). The authors conclude that although ASEAN states have adopted specific institutions and policies from the EU model, a transfer of sovereignty following the EU model has been unthinkable in the ASEAN context. This point is equally supported by Bersick (Bersick 2004, p. 19) who underlines the unwillingness of ASEAN members to transfer sovereignty to a supranational institution. Jetschke and Murray argue that the scope conditions for this limited adoption process of ASEAN members are based on the fact that both regions are depending economically on each other and that therefore both actors interact in terms of a certain 'symmetry of power' (Jetschke, Murray 2012, p. 189), which gives ASEAN the freedom of choice on a possible adoption of EU institutions. For the EU, this kind of (economic) symmetry has caused the employment of more indirect forms of EU influence on ASEAN. The EU thereby acknowledges and respects the particularity of the ASEAN model. On the other hand, the authors also mention some factors, which have encouraged the Asian side to adopt the EU model. One of them is the ASEAN policy crisis, which made Southeast Asian Nations call for a suitable example for a solution to their cooperation problems. Furthermore, the institutional capacity and expertise of the EU made it possible for the EU to directly support regional integration (through financial and technical support) in ASEAN. A final observation of the authors is that on the one hand more economically advanced ASEAN states were in favor of applying the EU model, but on the other the heterogeneity and the principle of non-interference among ASEAN states limited the actual adoption of the EU model (Jetschke, Murray 2012).

3. From trade promotion to political issues: norms, instruments and the role of development assistance

The precise analysis of the influence of the EU model of integration on ASEAN leads to another issue, which has attracted much attention in the literature. It is the question of whether the EU approach towards Asia in promoting regional integration has increasingly been concentrated on political issues and whether the EU acts as a normative power towards ASEAN.

In her article on the promotion of EU regional integration in Southeast Asia, Garelli gives a positive answer to the question of normative power (Garelli 2011). She stresses the spread of EU ideas through the political dialogue with ASEAN as well as in the development cooperation between the two regions and in the FTAs. However, as she acknowledges, European principles are adopted in the *Asian way* in order to fit the particular nature of ASEAN (Garelli 2011, p. 5). Moreover, Allison acknowledges that the recognition of EU norms among ASEAN members seems quite low. Besides, the norms which the EU tries to diffuse, seem universal in the Asian perspective and are not necessarily attributed to the EU (Allison 2012, p. 4). At a fundamental level, the author further questions whether political goals are really a priority in the EU's approach on regional integration towards Asia (Allison 2012, p. 18). Allison derives of this a general problem of the EU's regional integration approach; While the EU claims that 'development and trade are interlinked' (Allison 2012, p. 18) (and therefore that principles of good governance and the improvement of the human rights situation is a condition for deepening EU-ASEAN trade relations) nevertheless, human rights principles are not accorded the same importance in each policy area and with each EU partner (Allison 2012, p. 18; see also Morada 2012, p. 95). Referring to Reiterer (2006), Allison highlights this inconsistency in EU behavior and concludes that compared to other agreements, such as the Cotonou Agreement⁴, which focuses on human rights and democracy, the EU-ASEAN agreements do not emphasize such principles (Allison 2012, p. 18). Taking up an argument of Rüländ (2002), Allison qualifies such an approach of the EU towards ASEAN as 'opportunistic' leading to an unreliable and instable interregional relationship and endangering the EU credibility (Allison 18/07/2012, p. 20).

Beyond the question of the actual role of political goals in the EU's regional integration approach towards Asia, the question arises *how* these goals are pursued by the EU and *in which ways* the EU tries to promote regional integration processes in Asia.

Concerning these questions, Garelli sees an important element of the regionalizing effect of the EU approach in the EU's conceptualization of ASEAN as a region. This, she argues, has as a consequence led to a consolidation of the regional nature of ASEAN and has in turn created a positive view of the EU within the ASEAN region (Garelli 2012, p. 6). This is an argument which is also brought forward by Morada who states that the EU has contributed to identity formation in ASEAN via its support of interregional dialogue (Morada 2012, pp. 96,

⁴The Cotonou Agreement was concluded in 2000 as the EU's most comprehensive partnership agreement with African and Caribbean and Pacific countries (see: webpage European Commission; development and cooperation-Europaid European Commission 2010).

drawing on Manea 2008). This process of identity formation became visible and manifest not least in the ASEAN Charter (Morada 2012). Interestingly, Morada's text shows two different directions of EU influence on regional integration in ASEAN: on the one hand, the EU pressure on the Burmese/Myanmar human rights situation has been fiercely rejected among ASEAN members. This has led to an increased unity on the notion of Asian values. On the other hand, "strategic interaction" with the EU on human rights issues has also changed perceptions of ASEAN countries in terms of human rights, with the ASEAN charter now including human rights principles (Morada 2012, p. 97). Morada argues that the EU has been successful at least to some extent in making ASEAN members susceptible to 'people-centered norms and principles such as democracy, human security, and good governance' (Morada 2012, p. 97).

Concerning the concrete instruments of fostering regional integration abroad, Garelli mentions the capacity building approach of the EU directed at strengthening the ASEAN secretariat and the EU's support of regional programs which focus on regional integration among ASEAN members (Garelli 2012). The instrument of *political dialogue* has been equally important in order to persuade ASEAN partners of EU integration goals in presidential and ministerial-level meetings (Garelli 2012, p. 11). Although these political dialogues really started to flourish throughout the 1990s, regional integration has been mentioned in a Joint Declaration as early as in 1978 making the EU-ASEAN partnership one of the earliest examples of interregional cooperation (Garelli 2012, p. 12).

Murray sees the EU approach on regional integration from a more critical perspective. While she acknowledges the EU support of regional integration via several programs, she is nevertheless convinced that the EU 'cannot be regarded as a comprehensive or consistent norms entrepreneur within Southeast Asia', since it lacks a coherent policy approach towards East Asia (Murray 2010, p. 4). Murray shows that this lack of consistency is due to various factors. While the EU has been trying to get away from the traditional donor-recipient relationship towards a partnership at eyelevel via the establishment of Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, this has in turn created repugnancy among the ASEAN states. The latter remain skeptical towards the actual EU ambitions and reluctant to accept the EU's good governance principles and human rights clauses (Murray 2010, p. 5). Murray furthermore claims that the EU's strategy papers are directed towards rather strategic and declaratory development cooperation and lack any political basis (Murray 2010, p. 5). The inconsistency thus stems from the fact that the EU is not promoting one specific type of regional integration in East Asia, but rather a set of different goals at a time (Murray 2010, p. 6).

In the context of the precise implementation of the EU's promotion of regional integration in Asia, development cooperation stands out as one topic referred to by several authors. EU development cooperation with Asia is seen as the concretization of its regional integration aims and as the EU's ambition to increase regional stability over time (Morada 2012). Among ASEAN members the perception of the EU as significant supplier and motor of 'social and economic development' in the region is still in place. This however goes along with the perceived imbalance of the partnership in terms of a continuous donor-recipient relationship (Morada 2012, p. 96).

Taken as a whole, Garelli qualifies the development cooperation with ASEAN in a positive way and states that it is 'helpful' to diffuse EU ideas (Garelli 2012, p. 12). Via the management of development programs and technical assistance in shaping the ASEAN Secretariat or in 'transposing legislative acts' (Garelli 2012, p. 16), the EU can shape legislation in a European way. Jetschke and Murray see this technical assistance as a way of direct influence on ASEAN (Jetschke, Murray 2012, p. 186), however they do not qualify this assistance as a motivation for the adoption of EU institutions, but just as a way of fostering ASEAN as a region and community (Jetschke, Murray 2012). Another interesting aspect in this context is raised by Maull who points out that EU development aid for East Asia surpasses the aid of the US by large and is able to work as a way of preventive conflict management (in the case of humanitarian aid towards North Korea) (Maull 2010).

Literature which is assessing the normative impact of the EU towards ASEAN remains divided. The common view seems to be that the EU is deemed to be only partly successful in spreading its norms to a region which has its own normative perceptions. It is furthermore questioned whether the EU is actually serious about spreading its norms or whether it acts contradictory and inconsistently in terms of its political goals. Concerning ways of spreading the EU's regional integration approach, the EU programs including technical and development aid are seen as positive instruments which however foster the perception of an imbalance between the two regions (in contrast to the otherwise perceived equality in terms of economic struggle). Finally, the EU intentionally contributes to the formation of a regional identity among ASEAN members by addressing the latter as a 'region'" and is in this context perceived as an 'external federator' (Jetschke, Portela 2012).

4. Challenges for the EU approach towards Asia

In the literature dedicated to the problems and inconsistencies of the EU approach towards regional integration in Asia, the case of EU involvement in the Burma/Myanmar case stands

out. Several authors dismiss the employment of long-lasting sanctions by the EU, which are deemed ineffective and incoherent (Garelli 2011, 2012) and which have in the past undermined the original ASEAN approach of ‘constructive engagement’ and ‘non-interference’ (Allison 18/07/2012, pp. 15; 22). Some authors even state that this has had negative implications for the development of the Asian region. On the one hand, the reservations of the EU towards Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia have created imbalances among ASEAN states and thus hindered further regional integration among ASEAN states and have impeded a deepened dialogue between the EU as a region and all ASEAN members (Garelli 2012, p. 21). This has thus reinforced another problem which is ‘this limited regional identity and capacity for collective action on the Asian side’ and has led to a situation in which ‘ (...) despite the EU–ASEAN dialogue and the ASEM process, bilateralism remains a strong component of European and Asian interactions with each other’ (Balme, Bridges 2008, p. 19). Garelli furthermore sees a difficulty in the EU approach of making the human rights issue the ‘sine qua non’ condition for a comprehensive cooperation agreement with ASEAN (Garelli 2012, p. 21). The Burma/Myanmar problem and the EU approach have led to increased differences among ASEAN member states and thus to an approach by the EU, that strengthens bilateral relations with ASEAN countries (Garelli 2011).

However, some authors argue exactly the opposite way by saying that ASEAN’s ‘pluralist identity’ precisely emerged out of the common resistance towards the EU approach, which throughout the 1990s tried to link development assistance with the improvement of human rights in ASEAN states (Morada 2012, p. 91).

Concerning the contested human rights promotion of the EU, Allison states that the underlying goal of this EU policy was to support the EU identity rhetorically, but without engaging into a concrete implementation of this policy goal (Allison 2012, p. 2). She thus concludes that the ‘EU’s promotion of political norms as a component of regional integration lacks both substance and coherence’ (Allison 2012, p. 22) and that the EU approach rarely surpasses ‘declaratory encouragement’ towards ASEAN (Allison 2012, p. 22). Garelli on the other hand states that the EU has left behind its regional integration ambitions in favor of its promotion of human rights norms in Asia and has thus been inconsistent in its general goals (Garelli 2012, p. 21). This is an evaluation also shared by Murray, who claims that the EU always oscillates between economic integration, regional integration and human rights promotion as priorities in its approach towards Asia (Murray 2010, p. 6).

Finally, several authors generally see a problem in the ‘asymmetrical bilateralism’ (Camroux, 2008:32) between the EU as a regional entity on the one hand and major individual Asian countries on the other (Camroux 2008, p. 32; Morada 2012, p. 95).

There are several authors who point to the inconsistency in the EU approach towards East Asia, stressing differences in the treatment of EU relations with China and with ASEAN states (Murray 2010, p. 6; Garelli 2012, p. 21). This leads some authors to raise concerns about the lack of a comprehensive Asia policy of the EU. Camroux argues that this shortcoming can be explained by the general lack of knowledge on Asia and by the missing of historic or colonial ties and FDI interest of most of the new EU member states (after the 2004 EU enlargement) concerning Asia (Camroux 2008, p. 33). Inconsistency is an allegation which is also raised in relation to the EU approach towards other issues in Asia. Gao Ke (2012) points to the vagueness and stagnation (Gao 2012) of the EU concerning its approach towards the North Korean problem, whereas von Hofmann more generally criticizes the ‘modest’ EU involvement in security matters via the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), where the EU does not engage enough in order to share its experience as a soft power (Hofmann 2007, p. 189). While the author states that the ARF is grateful for the EU engagement in conflict resolution in Asia (Korean Peninsula, East Timor, Aceh) and appreciates the EU peace keeping missions in Asia and the ‘participation of the ‘EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy’ in the annual ARF meetings’ (Hofmann 2007, p. 189), the EU hardly appears in any official statements of the ARF (Hofmann 2007, p. 189).

This lack of EU presence in issues concerning East Asian security is also raised by Jetschke and Portela. Both argue that the EU’s original goal of promoting regional integration is endangered by new developments such as the rising role and importance of China for the region (Jetschke, Portela 2012). The authors focus on the South China Sea issue in order to make this explicit. In the vision of the authors the EU could take the challenge of raising its voice in the territorial dispute of the South Chinese Sea. However they explain that via the ARF this is not possible, since the Forum explicitly refuses to treat this issue (Jetschke, Portela 2012, p. 5). In addition, the EU has so far not been accepted by ASEAN members as a security relevant actor (Jetschke, Portela 2012, p. 5). One way of changing this could lie in a more active and pragmatic engagement in Asian security matters by the EU. With respect to the South Chinese Sea issue the EU could use the mechanisms of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) for this aim as the authors argue. The principles inscribed in this treaty could be used by the EU in order to stabilize the region. Jetschke and Portela argue however that in order to do so, the EU would need to transform the TAC into an

instrument of conflict resolution and that the EU must on this basis develop straightforward proposals on how to deal with the territorial dispute (e.g. by proposing ways of sharing resources in the Sea etc.) (Jetschke, Portela 2012, p. 5). Interestingly von Hofmann and Jetschke and Portela are among the very few texts who reflect the role of conflict transformation in the context of the regional integration approach of the EU (Jetschke, Portela 2012).

Finally, referring to the whole East Asian region, Maull claims that there is a lack of capacity for common action on the Asian side be it in ASEAN or within the ASEM (Maull 2010, pp. 204f.). A number of authors see the ASEM as rather superficial or problematic, since although meeting approximately fifty times a year (Murray 2010, p. 8), it does not produce any concrete outcomes (see: Murray 2010, p. 8 and Maull 2010, p. 200 et seqq.) and thus remains a mere dialogue forum (van Dijck 2002; Maull 2010, p. 200 et seqq.). Citing an interview with the executive director of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) dating already from 1999, Bersick mentions the danger of the degradation of the forum to a 'talk-shop' without 'essential results' (Bersick 2004, citing Koh: 2). ASEM furthermore leads to redundancy in the eyes of some authors, since it parallels the ASEAN-EU meetings (Kim 2003, p. 49).

In summary, it can be said that most of the difficulties addressed in the literature on the EU promotion of regional integration in Asia concern the inconsistency of the EU approach, especially in terms of its approach of spreading human rights and at the same time following its strategic interests in the region. The failure of achieving the imposition of certain EU ideas and regulations have created a tendency of the EU to engage in more bilateral relationships and thus has undermined its regional integration approach. The EU is furthermore seen to lack a concrete and consistent approach of regional integration for Asia.

In security matters, the EU is engaged in several ways in fostering stability in the region, but at the same time it seems not visible enough. The EU fails so far to use existing forums in order to develop approaches to actually engage in dispute settling e.g. concerning the South China Sea issue.

On the Asian side, a lack of unity is acknowledged among ASEAN members, and in terms of ASEM it seems that both regions are not doing enough in order to push ASEM to achieving concrete outcomes.

5. Mutual perceptions

Finally, a number of articles are concerned with the perception of the EU and its integration goals on the Asian side. Based on empirical work in Asia, the authors claim that the EU is seen as an important economic partner for the Asian region, although it is not as important as the US and China (Morada 2012, p. 94). The EU is also referred to as a stability factor for northeast Asia but not as a security provider (Hofmann 2007). The EU thus acts as a 'source of inspiration' for peace-keeping missions and might be considered important in terms of its antiterrorist experience (Hofmann 2007). Since in a survey of the ASEF on the perceptions of eight Asian countries only 20% said that political issues should play a role in bilateral relations with the EU (Morada 2012, p. 94), it does not surprise that the linking of trade and human rights issues was met with refusal by Asian states (Garelli 2011). The results of interviews undertaken by Allison with EEAS officials and officials of the ASEAN Secretariat further underline this. They show no readiness among ASEAN members for the adoption of the EU conceptions of human rights protection and imply that ASEAN in the end acts according to its own interests and capabilities (Allison 2012, p. 21). The standing of the EU in the Asian perspective is therefore nicely brought together by South Korea's President Moo-Hyun who sees the EU as a valuable 'source[s] of reference' for 'regional cooperation based on a community of law and a community of values' (Hofmann 2007, p. 190).

6. Conclusion

Although the EU's role in Asia is discussed controversially in the literature, this review allows us to derive several conclusions: First the EU seems to have been a motor for the formation of ASEAN identity both by treating ASEAN as a region and by creating a common reluctance towards the EU approach of linking development aid to the improvement of human rights issues. The EU has furthermore created a prospect for further economic integration among the region by negotiating similar FTAs with single ASEAN states which could possibly lead to a comprehensive FTA in the future. Since a certain interdependency of both regions (in terms of trade) can be acknowledged, the EU seems to be considerate of the "Asian way" of regional integration.

The EU's role as a model setter for ASEAN has worked in two directions. On the one hand, the EU model has been called on in times of practical need for problem solving among ASEAN states, the EU has on the other hand also served as a legitimizer and reference point for the ASEAN institutional set-up and the adoption of new norms.

However, more critical authors state that the EU approach suffers from a credibility problem. Several authors refer to a certain inconsistency of the EU in its promotion of regional integration in Asia. They do not see an elaborate regional concept for East Asia which is reflected in the EU approach. This is explained by the development of different, sometimes conflicting EU goals which include economic advantages and the spread of human rights. Furthermore, it is claimed that the EU's treatment of the human rights issues in East Asia differs decisively in relation to different Asian countries. ASEAN members are not approached in the same way as other countries in the Asian region (see e.g. China). Another concern in the literature is the lack of the EU's visibility as a normative power in fostering security cooperation. The EU has according to the judgment of some authors thus to concentrate on a more self-confident and united approach towards Asia and has to decide upon which kind of integration model it wants to promote in the region.

6.1. Implications for further research in the framework of the RegioConf project

- The conditioning on PCAs (political conditions) in order to negotiate FTAs with the EU has evoked different reactions in the literature. Has this kind of conditioning had a positive or rather negative effect on regional integration in Asia (ASEAN)? Has the EU included in any Agreement conditions related to security issues?
- Was the aim of negotiating a regional FTA with ASEAN members motivated by purely economic calculations? Why does the EU use more indirect ways of promoting ASEAN regional integration?
- How can the vagueness of the EU's positioning with regard to Asian security matters be explained? This restraint of EU engagement in the field of security is the more surprising as the EU would have the possibility to engage more via the ARF, the ASEM or the TAC.
- Has the interference of the EU in internal ASEAN matters (Myanmar) led to disintegration among ASEAN states?
- To what extent has the EU respected the "Asian way" in terms of promoting regional integration in Asia and why?
- Which role can development aid of the EU play for 'preventive conflict management' in the region (in North Korea)? Has the EU brought up the North Korea issue in any Asian regional forums?

- What has to change in order for the EU to be accepted as a relevant security actor for the region? Why does the EU shy back from any concrete statement on the South China Sea issue?

6.2. Role of Asian regional organizations and implications for further research
Summary on focus in reviewed literature regarding regional organizations

	core development	factor EU	local actors	external actors	role of conflicts
ASEAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful regional integration with Secretariat, Permanent Representatives of ASEAN, ASEAN Charter - but no highly liberalized single market' (in the EU sense) - principles of ASEAN: Asian way: non-interference, sovereignty, diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU negotiates with ASEAN as a region → Promotion of ASEAN identity - EU as an inspiration (not model) → adaptation of EU example in the 'Asian way' - EU promotes disintegration by negotiating bilateral FTAs? - EU negotiates PCAs with political conditions - EU's promotion of human rights, credible? - EU supports / funds programs on ASEAN regional integration, supports dialogue - Ministerial-level meetings with ASEAN officials. - still strong bilateral relations between EU and single ASEAN states 	<p>ASEAN members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - alignment with EU regulatory trade norms, but wish economic integration in the Asian way. - financial crisis of the 90's → functional call for EU problem-solving, - strikes for recognition as legitimate and relevant actor' - no sovereignty transfer to supranational organization - reluctant to accept EU's good governance principles and human rights clauses - limited regional identity and capacity for collective action 	<p>US</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> important for the whole region, gives much less development aid than EU - US more important trade partner for Asia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU engagement (sanctions) on Burma/Myanmar → effect: disintegration and divergence among ASEAN states or coherence for ASEAN community? - EU policy towards Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia creates imbalance among ASEAN countries, no deep dialogue with EU - Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, EU has signed it as member in 2012 → South China Sea conflict, EU could use mechanisms and principles of the Treaty for stabilization of the region
ARF (part of ASEAN plus other actors,		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU as model for: ARF troika system and some control mechanisms - modest' EU involvement in security matters via 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ARF Asian members: > ARF as rejection of existing organizations like the OSCE 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ARF forum refuses to deal with South China Sea issue - EU not seen/respected as relevant security

<p>including EU)</p>		<p>ARF - EU does not enough share its experience as a soft power - EU hardly appears in official statements of ARF</p>	<p>or NATO, since Asia more heterogeneous, diverse, difficult to organize - EU not accepted as security relevant actor</p>	<p>actor - however: ARF members grateful for the EU engagement in conflict resolution in Asia (Korean Peninsula, East Timor, Aceh) - appreciate the EU peace keeping missions in Asia and the 'participation of the 'EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy' in the annual ARF meetings</p>
<p>ASEM</p>	<p>- talk shop - many meetings, no visible results - superficial and problematic - no clear security orientation -redundancy since it parallels ASEAN-EU meetings? - Free trade in goods and services envisaged for 2025 for all members</p>	<p>- EU does not push the forum enough in order to achieve concrete, relevant outcomes</p>	<p>- ASEM members: lack capacity of common action within the forum</p>	<p>Not mentioned</p>
<p>AEC (part of ASEAN)</p>	<p>- purely economic form of integration</p>	<p>- similarities to the EU single market project (customs initiatives, completion of common market envisaged by 2015)</p>	<p>- free movement of people only accorded to skilled labour</p>	<p>Not mentioned</p>

The table accentuates again the ambivalent position of the EU as promoter for regional integration in Asia. While the EU model has inspired a number of elements and institutions of regional organizations in Asia, Asian states remain nevertheless reluctant to give up their Asian perception of regional integration. In terms of regional security promotion, there seem to be various paths via which the EU could get engaged. However the EU does not push security issues via these regional organizations either because it does not want to and because it is not accepted as a relevant security actor by the Asian countries. This will be the subject of further research in the frame of the RegioConf project. With the exception of the US, the revised texts have furthermore not made reference on other relevant actors for the region (and their cooperation with the EU on integration efforts in Asia). Tackling the role of these other actors (and their potential cooperation with the EU) will be necessary in order to fully understand the prospects of promoting regional integration by the EU.

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