

Introduction

The ASEAN states have only three things in common:
karaoke, durian,¹ and golf.

Popular ASEAN saying

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has long posed a puzzle for the study of international relations. On the one hand, states are often divided among themselves; economic interests are more competitive than complementary; unilateralism, as often as not, seems to trump multilateralism. In fact, the open-endedness of past initiatives and the often frustratingly slow pace of ASEAN cooperation have given rise to a common characterization of ASEAN as a “talk shop”—all talk, no action. ASEAN’s difficulties and challenges in responding to recent crises—most notably, the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the 2003 SARS crisis, Myanmar, and the recurring environmental haze caused by yearly fires in Indonesia—not to mention recent difficulties in approving a new ASEAN charter seem to further confirm the particular problems of intra-ASEAN coordination.

On the other hand, ASEAN is associated with the transformation of the once volatile and fragmented region that was Southeast Asia. If ASEAN is viewed by many as a “weak” case of regional cooperation, ASEAN’s creation in 1967 may be just as widely viewed by others as marking an important turning point in the international relations of Southeast Asia. By this view, with ASEAN’s creation, an era marked by highly confrontational politics gave way to a new one characterized by more stable relations and growing cooperation.

In fact, Southeast Asia’s economic dynamism, relative stability, and regional initiatives make it easy to forget just how fragile both region and its relations were forty years ago. At the time of ASEAN’s founding, conflict and division plagued practically every level of politics. The newness of most states and the legacies of arbitrarily drawn colonial borders practically assured that domestic development in Southeast Asia would be a volatile process. Nor were Southeast Asia’s international politics any more stable. At the global level, states found themselves the targets and tools of major power interventions and Cold War designs. At the regional level,

conflict and intervention were no less the norm among ASEAN's founding states (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand), as illustrated by the state of relations at ASEAN's founding in 1967: Indonesia and Malaysia had yet to normalize relations following Indonesia's violent campaign to "crush Malaysia"; Singapore had just been kicked out of the Malaysian Federation due to irreconcilable Malay-Chinese tensions; and four of ASEAN's five members had at least one dispute with another member, with Malaysia and the Philippines having ended relations already once before over their competing claims to Sabah/North Borneo.

Such territorial disputes, regional rivalries, and major power interventions were considered tremendous, even insurmountable, obstacles to regional organization. Yet, not only has ASEAN cooperation grown and deepened, but ASEAN has proven unexpectedly resilient in the face of geopolitical and domestic change. Most important, its regional processes and so-called weak cooperation appear to have stabilized intra-ASEAN relations in important ways. Even in "hard" cases of territorial sovereignty, ASEAN has seen territorial disputes go to international adjudication without incident. Intra-ASEAN relations (among founding members) are so changed that some even characterize ASEAN states as having achieved the depth of relations characteristic of a security community defined by dependable expectations of peaceful change.² To be sure, intra-ASEAN regional coordination is still often fraught with difficulty and tension, but the region is also a more cooperative and stable one than the one that existed forty years ago. What has never been quite clear, however, is why and how?

While traditional approaches to international relations offer various explanations for why ASEAN cooperation has been challenged and why it should not work "better," much less is said about how exactly ASEAN has stabilized regional politics or indeed why ASEAN should work at all. In fact, the usual preconditions and mechanisms identified by approaches as necessary for cooperation have mostly been weak or missing, making ASEAN an especially challenging, even "least likely" case for regional organization for most approaches: Realists find few common material interests; liberal approaches find few democracies (and problematic ones at best); comparativists find in Southeast Asia's human diversity a weak cultural foundation for unity; institutionalists find in ASEAN few of the consequentialist rules and arrangements that, to them, are key to facilitating cooperation between competitive and divergent states. Again, all of the above are reasons that ASEAN cooperation is challenged, but they do not explain what ASEAN does, how rela-

tions have stabilized and cooperation expanded and deepened, or what states get out of the ASEAN process.

No less puzzling, especially for approaches that privilege material power, is how this Southeast Asian organization of lesser states came to play a defining role in the creation and development of regional arrangements that now include much larger powers than they. Among the more notable of these arrangements are the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Plus Three meetings (APT), and most recently, the East Asia Summit (EAS). In fact, ASEAN's influence is such that some refer to the "ASEAN-ization"³ of East Asian and Asian Pacific arrangements. ASEAN-style processes also appear to have facilitated the improvement of states' security and relations vis-à-vis larger Northeast Asian powers, especially and most notably China, a focal point of earlier regional conflict scenarios. Particularly remarkable is the fact that an ASEAN treaty—the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC)—has today become the most widely accepted and acceded-to regional, indigenous political-security treaty in East Asia and the Asia Pacific.

These are remarkable and dramatic developments for an organization of lesser states for which conflict, not cooperation, had once dominated so many levels of their politics. How did these divergent and competitive states manage to stabilize relations, to expand and deepen areas of cooperation, and become "One Southeast Asia"? How did this organization, self-defined as "Southeast Asian" and as one of lesser powers, come to form the gravitational center of a growing web of post-Cold War East Asian and Asia-Pacific regionalisms? What do these new expanded regionalisms mean for ASEAN as a Southeast Asian organization? And how do we reconcile these transformative changes with the ongoing challenges of intra-ASEAN coordination and collective action?

Regionalism as Ideas and Cumulative Process

These questions drive this study of ASEAN and its evolution. Unlike more traditional approaches, however, my explanation begins not with the material incentives and disincentives of cooperation but instead with ideas—specifically, ideas about Southeast Asia as a distinct but also divided region and for which division at various levels is understood to be a primary source of insecurity and vulnerability. Compared to approaches that stress more material considerations, a consideration of ideas can offer a more complete explanation, one that explains not just the challenges of intra-ASEAN coordination and its continued resistance to more formal, legal mechanisms of cooperation

but also its unexpected unity and resilience. Ideas can help us answer the questions left unanswered by more traditional approaches: What ties these diverse states together if not common interests, common threats, or common people? What are the specific ways that the ASEAN process has contributed to the stabilization of relations within ASEAN? What moves regionalism in Southeast Asia and now ASEAN's role in expanded East Asian regionalisms?

Until relatively recently, the study of international relations tended to minimize the role of ideas. But, as various studies now show, ideas can play powerful roles in shaping expectations, behavior, and the world as we know it. In the case of ASEAN, founding ideas about Southeast Asian division as a source of insecurity and opportunity for intervention provide justification for Southeast Asian organization in the absence of other material incentives. At the same time, the same ideas that provided justification for organization also would create normative obstacles in the way of more formal cooperation and centralized coordination.

In addition, I argue for a different conception of cooperation than is usually highlighted by traditional, especially more material, approaches. This is because their view of cooperation as an expression of material gains and constraints tends to be overly narrow, obscuring our ability to see the full range of exchanges taking place between actors. Drawing on constructivist approaches and especially the respective works of Kaye and Barnett, I argue instead that cooperation must be seen more broadly as a social process involving interactive and cumulative social negotiations.⁴ While such a conception is inclusive of the bargaining processes and material exchanges emphasized by traditional approaches, its emphasis is nevertheless different, with a primary focus on the exchange of ideas and on how such exchanges reflect, inform, and transform the social content of relationships. By stressing social process, this conception of cooperation also emphasizes that cooperation is not just a discrete bargaining moment or collective action problem but instead a series of cumulative and successive social exchanges. Taken together, these exchanges can transform social contexts and relationships that then make possible (or not) certain kinds of collective and cooperative outcomes. In the ASEAN case, this conception of cooperation as a cumulative and interactive social exchange is further underscored by regional elites who have explicitly conceived regional cooperation as a relationship-building process. In short, the process of cooperation involves not just the negotiation of specific material interests but also social relations, social practices, and indeed social identities.

Talking about Diversity, Divergence, and Unity

How do ideas come to shape politics? And how are social contexts, expectations, and relations shaped and altered? One way is through talking—dialoguing, arguing, framing, affirming, negating. It is through talking that ASEAN's diverse and divergent states have identified, maintained, and pursued points of consensus and agreement on relations and various issues of common concern. It is through talking that ASEAN states have developed new thinking about relations and practices based on a culture of restraint, respect, and responsibility⁵ that is dramatically different from 1960s conflict-torn Southeast Asia. It is through talking that states have come to view Southeast Asian regionalism as an appropriate and indeed necessary response to particular problems that might otherwise be better addressed via other means given their different economic and security interests and preferences.

In this sense, traditional and conventional approaches to ASEAN are quite correct. As a dialogue-driven process, ASEAN regionalism is in fact a lot of talk; however, it is not talk without substantive, material effects. ASEAN's talk shop has produced new social norms, a new culture of regional dialogue, as well as new social and institutional practices that stress respect (manifested most notably in a consensus-based regionalism) and nonconfrontational, inclusive engagement. The practical effect of such changes is a regional system based on the nonviolent resolution of problems and the normative belief that states *should* work toward regional solutions. One can criticize ASEAN's norms and practices on a variety of grounds—they are too state centric, undemocratic, and time inefficient—but they are also why interstate conflicts have not escalated to breaking points the way that they did before ASEAN. At very least, if one considers regional stability a precondition of economic growth, then these norms and ideas provide an important foundation on which ASEAN's new economies have been allowed to grow.

Talking, however, has to have a starting point. And my explanation of ASEAN and its dialogue-driven process begins where many explanations do; that is, it begins with the idea of Southeast Asian diversity and division. In fact, if there is one point that most observers of Southeast Asia—Southeast Asianists, international relations scholars of various stripes, comparativists of specific Southeast Asian countries, practitioners—would seem to agree on, it is Southeast Asia's diversity. While the degree of human diversity may vary across different parts of Southeast Asia, there is no denying that this is a place of diverse peoples and influences. That diversity can be seen in Southeast Asia's peoples, geography, and colonial experiences, as well

as in national perspectives and geographic orientations. For the Southeast Asianist, for example, the tremendous ethnic complexity of the area means that it is practically impossible to classify or talk about Southeast Asia as one coherent place. These observers are further united by their common conclusion that diversity must mean divergence, if not conflict.

Such themes are especially prominent in discussions of Southeast Asia's international relations, where realist themes of competition and conflict tend to predominate.⁶ Here, the realist concept of "national interest" provides the stand-in for "diversity" and "divergence." As the realist argument goes, diversity (different national interests) is the source of political tensions between states, regional rivalries, the problems of regional cooperation, as well as the intergroup conflicts that have been important features of so much of Southeast Asia's post-World War II politics.

Diversity and divergence—these ideas have formed the dominant leitmotif in our understandings and explanations of Southeast Asia's domestic and international politics. And as the dominant leitmotif, these ideas affect both politics and scholarship alike. Indeed, even with ASEAN's expanded membership and the changes that have taken place in Southeast Asia, the very idea of "One Southeast Asia" remains a radical concept. As one longtime scholar of Southeast Asia continued to protest, "I see ten Southeast Asias, not one."

In this sense, diversity's association with division and disunity is more than a theme. It is a strong belief—and it is in treating diversity and its association with division as a belief and a set of ideas about Southeast Asia as a region that I depart from other approaches. In other words, while my argument begins, as others do, with diversity, I argue that diversity's association with disunity and division is at very least as much ideological as it is empirical. Objectively speaking, Southeast Asia *is* an extremely diverse place, but the political significance of that diversity is also the product of social interpretations reinforced by social practice. Some societies interpret diversity as a source of strength and dynamism; others see it as a problem. In the ASEAN case, historical experiences and especially patterned interactions with major powers have contributed mostly to a view of diversity as a source of vulnerability. And that view of diversity affects how ASEAN elites conceive, approach, and practice regional cooperation.

The understood problems of diversity/division provided an important starting point for the intra-ASEAN dialogue on regionalism. Here, states' recent colonial and Cold War experiences provided critical points of reference. Division facilitated various interventions—interventions that, in turn, created additional division.⁷ In particular, colonial powers not only drew

borders irrespective of geography and peoples, thus creating an important internal diversity, but policies also often exploited and fomented intergroup competition and prevented interactions between Southeast Asian units. Those policies subsequently helped facilitate later Cold War instabilities and interventions. From these experiences emerged not only a commonly held belief and interpretation about the dangers of division but also a correlating conclusion about the need for greater unity. Put another way, if the “problem” of diversity in ASEAN is understood as weak national integration and regional division, then the solution lies in national integration and regional unity.

In this way, I thus depart from past approaches to ASEAN not just in my argument that diversity (and its implications) is also a belief system but also in a second way. Specifically, I argue that alongside beliefs about the dangers of Southeast Asia’s diversity and fragility, ASEAN politics are also guided by an important concern for regional unity. As discussed above, ASEAN has been at the center of some remarkable developments—developments that challenge the dominant realist narrative and developments that tell us that diversity and division, while important, are only parts of the ASEAN story.

In short, regionalism is the pursuit of regional unity as a response to the understood problems of division. At the same time, precisely because regionalism begins with the premise of Southeast Asia’s diversity, fragility, and predilection toward division, a concern for unity has contrary effects on ASEAN regionalism. Specifically, the understood importance of regional unity, combined with shared understandings about the tenuousness of regional relations, means that even while states are compelled to look to regionalism (unity) as an answer to important security challenges, they are also bound—even morally bound—not to push regionalism too hard or too far, lest the whole project fall apart. In this way, concern for regional unity—even regional unity norm—becomes both driver and constraint on ASEAN regionalism and specific ASEAN initiatives. Given these dynamics, it is perhaps also no surprise that some ASEAN initiatives have been decades-long projects.

A Big-Picture View of ASEAN and Asia’s Post-Cold War Regionalisms

In addition to explaining ASEAN itself, this study also seeks to explain the evolving shape of other, later-developing regionalisms in post-Cold War Asia—APEC, ARF, APT, most notably—and ASEAN’s role in their development. Most studies tend to treat each of these regionalisms and regional configurations as relatively distinct phenomena or distinct problems of

cooperation; however, I highlight here how they are related, interactive, and even parts of the same process and dialogue.

Specifically, the organizing thesis of this book is that regions and regionalisms in Asia—ASEAN-Southeast Asia, APEC, ARF, APT, “East Asia”—are best understood as parts of a cumulative dialogue or series of social negotiations on the material and normative foundations of regional order—the nature of intraregional ties and obligations, the relationship between major and minor powers, the appropriateness of great power guarantees and intervention.⁸ Again, they are cumulative because recent regional expressions and arrangements, as in the case of intra-ASEAN cooperation over time, are all in some way informed by past debates and previous areas of agreement about regional relations and organization. They are also interactive: Regionalisms “talk” to one another in the sense that regionalisms represent not only different geographies but also different and competing ideological conceptions. Thus, unlike some accounts that see these regional arrangements as products of similar functional imperatives, this book treats regionalisms as different and varied in the ideas they represent and consequently what they are supposed to do. And in that these regional processes are both interactive and cumulative, it is difficult to explain something like APT without relating it to other regional ideas and configurations—APEC or ASEAN, for example.

Taking a big picture view also reveals important patterns and rhythms of regionalism in Southeast Asia—in particular, the sensitivity of regionalism to extra-ASEAN changes, especially as regards larger and major powers. My argument draws special attention to the sensitivity of ASEAN and its subsequent regionalism to perceived changes in U.S.–Asia policy, on which so many Southeast Asian interests depend. The sensitivity of ASEAN-Southeast Asia to shifts in U.S. policy have as much to do with U.S. ability to intervene (military and otherwise) as it does states’ particular dependence on the United States for economic and political-security goods. Consequently, while ASEAN states are sensitive to shifts in the policies of other larger powers, the United States nevertheless has been the actor with the greatest potential to destabilize the economic and political well-being of Southeast Asian states. No surprise, then, that U.S. policy changes (real and perceived) have proven to provide the most regular catalyst for intra-ASEAN reflection and reevaluation about both intra- and extraregional relations—in short, the ideational opening for change and new directions.

Indeed, as the following chapters detail, how the region should relate to larger, especially major, powers and how ASEAN states can maintain a distinct Southeast Asian space and voice in regions and worlds of larger pow-

ers are two facets of an ongoing, even driving dialogue underlying ASEAN regionalism. More to the point, the evolution of ASEAN regionalism must be seen in terms of not one, but two interdependent and intertwined stories—the first, a story about the renegotiation of ASEAN’s intraregional relations; the second, a story about collective ASEAN’s renegotiations of Southeast Asia’s relations with larger powers, especially Northeast Asian powers and the United States. Together, the two stories of ASEAN states’ relations with one another and of their relations with major powers thus tell the story of power and ideas and of the ways that the material and ideational interact to produce (and reproduce) the politics and regionalisms we see.

The Plan of This Book

This study proceeds in two parts: Theory and Origins of ASEAN and ASEAN’s Post-Cold War Regionalisms. Empirical chapters are organized mostly chronologically so as to highlight the ongoing, interactive, and cumulative dialogues about Southeast Asia’s intra- and extraregional relations. Tracing debates over time helps do a number of things. It helps us identify persistent themes and preoccupations; it reveals the rhythms of ASEAN regionalism; it shows us how ideas about region and regionalism have changed over time. Taken together, chapters detail a series of decision-making junctures that have directed the development and course of ASEAN regionalism over time.

Individual chapters are then organized around key debates about intra- and extra-ASEAN relations and the effects of these debates on the shape and content of regionalisms. Taking a process-tracing approach, chapters trace the ways that ideas and arguments connect stimuli and initial conditions into collective regional outcomes. In particular, each chapter highlights the interactions among different ideas and how material changes or perceived changes in states’ major power relations serve to destabilize ASEAN’s world and catalyze reevaluation about old ideas and practices. That ideational instability opens the door to possible change—modifications and/or new regional expressions—though it may also result in the reaffirmation of old ideas and existing practices.

It should be underscored that the aim of each chapter is not to be comprehensive—for example, there are more comprehensive discussions of the ARF⁹ and APEC¹⁰ than what is provided here—but instead to situate and explain their emergence and development in relation to evolving ideas and debates in ASEAN about regions and regionalisms and how they, in turn, feed back into

ongoing dialogues. While each chapter can be read more or less independently, each chapter must also be considered as part of a larger narrative about the evolution of first Southeast Asian regionalism and then Asian Pacific and East Asian regionalisms. Treating ASEAN and Asia's new regionalisms as related processes and as parts of a cumulative dialogue over time allows us to better identify patterns, rhythms, and persistent themes, as well as important change and evolution that is often overlooked in studies that focus on each arrangement or development as distinct and discrete phenomena. It is this combination of continuity and dynamism that recent treatments (theoretical and practical) of Asia's various regionalisms have not always captured well.

Theory and Origins: Argument in Brief

Chapter 1 fills in different and additional pieces of my theoretical framework. These include the roles played by interacting material-ideational interactions, a nationalist-bounded regional idea, and the contrary effects of a regional unity norm premised on the assumed fragility of relations. In addition, it gives attention to key social processes that have moved, reinforced, changed, and reproduced ASEAN and its regionalisms—argumentation that makes critical causal linkages, consensus seeking in pursuit and in support of unity, and talking and practice as means of social reinforcement. Again, ideas are not in and of themselves meaningful or powerful, but these various processes can help make them so.

Picking up dialogues in the late 1950s, Chapter 2 shows how the politics and beliefs of the period contribute to a particular physical and normative conception of Southeast Asia. In addition, it gives attention to the politics and forces behind ASEAN's creation in 1967. While the details of ASEAN's founding will be familiar to many, the chapter serves a number of important purposes. First, to explain change and evolution, we have to know where ASEAN has been. Founding ideas, debates, and circumstances provide an important baseline for comparison and contrast to contemporary developments in the region. Second, it is not enough to focus on whether ideas "matter" and ignore "where ideas come from" as some scholars¹¹ have argued. Rather, the sociohistorical origins of ideas are critical to explaining not only whether and why certain ideas have effect but also, I argue, what effect they have.¹²

In particular, I argue that the particular politics and social context of 1960s Southeast Asia made nationalism an important, initial ideological boundary for regional ideas and arguments. Indeed, in 1960s Southeast Asia, where nationalism was the dominant ideology and politics of the day, a nationalist-regarding regionalism would ultimately be the only kind of regionalism to

have any persuasive power. Forty years later, that original nationalist content continues to inform and bound ASEAN's regionalism(s).

While some may view the use of the term *nationalism* problematic for Southeast Asia given the ways that state borders have often been drawn irrespective of local geographies and populations, *nationalism* is also a most appropriate term because it may best capture the most pressing preoccupations of leaders, as well as the activities going on within state borders. This is especially the case if we understand nationalism not in the sense of the nation-state but instead as an ideological and material process of self-determination and collective construction.

Finally, the chapter fills a need for a systematic and theoretical discussion of the conditions and processes that made this particular idea of region and this particular organization—ASEAN—possible at this particular time, something that is often missing from even very good discussions. In fact, as will be very clear, the idea of Southeast Asia as an organizing principle was a particularly contested concept among Southeast Asian states in the 1960s. Not only did it compete with other geographic conceptions of region, but there was also little clarity about the very contours of Southeast Asia itself. Thus, in Southeast Asia, where organization along these particular Southeast Asian lines has not been supported by history,¹³ geography, or efficiency, we need to ask, as Dirlik argues, not only “what” is this region but also “why” this particular region.¹⁴ Why *should* these states attach significance or devote scarce resources to this particular idea of Southeast Asia defined as these ten states, many of which are themselves contested, postcolonial entities? Why not a different idea of region, given “Southeast Asia’s” clear material limitations and political obstacles?

Chapter 2 thus highlights how arguments for regional organization give rise to a founding narrative that gives purpose and meaning to the regional idea and project. That founding narrative draws on and brings together a number of key ideas: regional unity as a response to the dangers of national and regional fragmentation, the relationship between fragmentation and intervention, self-determination, and the primacy of the national project, but also the interdependence of national and regional projects. At the heart of this founding narrative is a narrative about Southeast Asia’s historical divisions, comprehensive insecurities associated with fragmentation, and the importance of unity as a guiding and normative principle.

This founding narrative about the fragility of nation and region, their relationship to intervention, and the need for unity furthermore has contrary effects on ASEAN’s regionalism: On the one hand, it points states toward regional, *Southeast Asian* solutions in response to insecurity; on the

other, it calls on member states to be cautious given the fragility of national and regional units. In the shadow of states' recent history of interstate conflict and the omnipresent challenges of state and nation building, actors would draw on that founding fragmentation-intervention narrative to argue that nation-building processes were too fragile and intraregional relations too tenuous to withstand a more demanding regionalism.

In short, ASEAN's founding narrative is most important to explaining not only "why ASEAN?" in the absence of conventional drivers of regionalism but also some of the peculiarities of ASEAN's organizational culture and brand of regionalism—its informal institutionalism, its process-driven regionalism, its eschewal of collective regional balancing strategies, the rituals of ASEAN solidarity. Again, this founding narrative of division and unity will constrain, as much as it will enable and legitimate, later regional efforts.

Chapter 3 then details elites' continued and active search for consensus on questions of regional security and economic cooperation. It showcases the continued weakness of regional ideas and arguments but also material-ideational interactions and their role in reviving a floundering regional dialogue and project. It draws special attention to processes of activist promotion, argument, and reinforcement over time. To illustrate ASEAN's ongoing consensus-seeking process, the chapter picks up on three debates: the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) as a function of intra-ASEAN debates about great power guarantees and self-determination; ASEAN's response to a reunified Vietnam as a function of regional resilience debates; and ASEAN's 1977 Preferential Trading Arrangements (PTAs) as a function of intra-ASEAN debates about the critical nation-region relationship. The three debates illustrate well, on the one hand, the divergent interests and preferences of ASEAN states and, on the other, the unifying role played by founding ideas. In particular, they show how regional resilience provided an important common interpretation of problems that then made regional unity an important coordinating principle in states' response to new developments and challenges. The three also provide illustrations of the rhetorical struggle between old ideas (nationalism) and new ones (regionalism), with ASEAN's particular brand of informal regionalism the product of that struggle. All three also draw attention to the rhetoric and rituals of ASEAN in the representation of Southeast Asia as "one."

ASEAN's Post-Cold War Regionalisms

Part Two addresses the post-Cold War period of ASEAN regionalism and the expansion of ASEAN processes beyond Southeast Asia. The 1990s were

a dynamic period of new ideas, new material challenges, and institutional adaptation. Focusing again on the intra-ASEAN debate, Chapters 4, 5, and 6 turn our attention to how post-Cold War developments destabilize old ideas and open a window of opportunity for new regional initiatives. Chapter 4 details ASEAN's decision to extend membership first to Vietnam (1995) and especially the decisions to extend membership to Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar (Burma) (1997–1999) despite unclear benefits and other concerns. It highlights intra- and extraregional developments and their challenges to both ASEAN and its regional ideal. By tracing intra-ASEAN debates about expansion, I show how the process of argumentation makes even more explicit the story of “one Southeast Asia” as a struggle for regional ownership vis-à-vis larger, extraregional powers, as well as how that narrative boxes states into a corner, compelling them to go through with membership expansion in 1997 despite strong and publicly expressed reservations by many ASEAN elites.

Chapters 5 and 6 give particular attention to ASEAN's ongoing struggles to manage and define itself in relation to major powers, as well as the ways that more established ASEAN ideas continue to frame regionalist discussions in a post-Cold War context. In particular, chapters highlight how new U.S. economic and political-security priorities introduce both new concerns and new incentives, especially as regards Southeast Asia's relationship with Northeast Asian states, as well as new ideological challenges to both ASEAN and Southeast Asia as a region. These concerns and incentives open the door to new regional thinking and arguments, as states find themselves having to rethink and reconsider how they as Southeast Asian states should relate to other “regional” economies—China and Japan, but also Korea, Australia, and the United States.

Chapter 5 first highlights how questions about U.S. trade policies (regionally and globally) trigger both new initiative in intra-ASEAN trade cooperation (the ASEAN Free Trade Area) and also a search for different regional solutions—notably, in the form of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the East Asia Economic Group (EAEG).

Chapter 6 then turns our attention to security. The chapter highlights how uncertain Chinese and U.S. policies compel a reassessment of Southeast Asia as an organizing principle and how ideas once again direct states to particular regional solutions—only in this case, it will be an expanded regional arrangement based on the ASEAN model, namely, the ARF. Also in Chapter 6, I discuss how the ideology of ASEAN regionalism—especially ideas about the importance of reassurance through inclusive, nonconfrontational engagement—are extended from the narrower ASEAN context to the larger East

Asia, but at the same time how it comes into conflict with major powers who conceive regionalism in more legalistic and utilitarian terms. As a political-security arrangement, the ARF draws attention to ASEAN's ongoing structural predicament vis-à-vis larger powers (in this case, China and the United States especially), its evolving dialogue on the value of regional autonomy, and how interactions with a wider region actually solidify members' ideas and identification with a particular diplomatic and institutional culture.

Chapter 7 then draws attention to the effects of the 1997–1998 Asian financial crisis on ASEAN's ongoing debate about how best to negotiate Southeast Asia's relationship with global powers and the global system. The Asian financial crisis proves to be an especially critical turning point in what appears to be an emergent East Asian regionalism in the form of the APT process.

The concluding chapter then reviews the central arguments made in the book and offers some reflections about ASEAN and the prospects for, and significance of, "East Asia" for ASEAN "Southeast Asia." It also considers regional developments in relation to current and ongoing global discussions about the United States and U.S. leadership. While discussions on the changing role of the United States have become *de rigueur*, these chapters show that in ASEAN, at least, such reevaluations and critical reflections of the United States are not completely new, nor did they emerge suddenly. In fact, current reevaluations have in fact been thirty to forty years in the making.

Most of all, perhaps, the growth and expansion of East Asian economic, political, and institutional activities raise important questions about ASEAN and Southeast Asia as a meaningful entity. While ASEAN ideas about region and regionalism today are also institutionalized in newer East Asian arrangements like APT and the East Asia Summit and consequently will continue to inform the shape and content of East Asia, there is also little doubt that the challenges are great for this coalition of lesser Southeast Asian powers. East Asian developments raise questions not only about ASEAN's thus far privileged place in Asia's post-Cold War regionalisms but also about ASEAN's ability to define and assert Southeast Asian interests and voice within the large arrangements made up of both large and small powers. ASEAN's future role and influence will also depend on how the organization itself is able to adapt and adjust to the challenges emanating from expanded membership and domestic changes within members themselves, as much as shifting great power relations and intensified global challenges. Of course, as these chapters detail, this was also not the first existential crossroads ASEAN has faced. How ASEAN has navigated past survival challenges can provide insight into the organization's future.