economy" — implicitly rejects non-Western (and other) criteria that define value. What, besides a self-fulfilling "consolidated vision" (to use Edward Said's term) is therefore possible? Finally, the assumption that democracy, individualism, human rights, and the market economy are universal, completes the tautology. What alternative explanations of the cosmos are left?

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Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order. **By Amitav Acharya.** London: Routledge, 2001. 256pp.

Among scholars writing on the interface between international relations theory and Asian security, one of the most prolific is Amitav Acharya whose work on Asian regional security institutions is highly regarded. *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia* continues to burnish his reputation for applying theoretical constructs to explain policy outcomes.

In this volume, Acharya examines realist, neo-liberal and constructivist (ideational) perspectives to assess how ASEAN has evolved since its 1967 inception as a device for Southeast Asia to cope with Indochinese, Chinese, and Russian communist challenges and the prospect of American and British withdrawal from the region. Particularly intrigued by constructivist attention to norm creation, Acharya asks whether and how ASEAN has become a "security community", confident that dialogue can resolve or at least inhibit interstate conflict from escalating to war? He emphasizes, however, that security communities are not alliances, that they do not necessarily co-ordinate foreign and defence policies towards third countries, and that member states may, in fact, be allied with different outsiders. A constructivist approach to ASEAN as a security community de-emphasizes the international system (neo-realist) explanation and looks instead at how ASEAN, the institution, creates an identity for itself and how that collective identity, in turn, affects the identities of its members.

Among the norms Acharya explores is the "ASEAN Way", one of the Association's central concepts which provides a method by which

decisions can be reached multilaterally without voting, via the creation of consensus through discussion. The concept itself has evolved over time to incorporate dissenters who would agree not to object to ASEAN policies so long as it was understood that the dissenters could refrain from following their precepts. While this arrangement permitted ostensible agreements to be reached, it also weakened their impact depending on the number who chose to abstain. ASEAN's impact on Asia-Pacific security multilateralism is also revealed by the manner in which the "ASEAN Way's" consensus rule was incorporated into the much larger ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

One of this volume's many strengths is that it addresses how security communities may unravel as the conditions in its environment change. In ASEAN's case, the most recent challenges have come from its expansion to include communist and militarist regimes and the contagion effect of the Asian economic crisis. Both developments challenge ASEAN's traditional notion of sovereignty and its doctrine of non-interference in members' internal affairs. If irresponsible economic policies in one country impact its neighbours' credit-worthiness — such as forest fires from one state affecting the region's public health — then becoming involved in the offending state's domestic affairs may be essential for the restoration of regional prosperity. Acharya asks whether these new tensions are undermining the "we" feeling of ASEAN? If so, then what had been a security community might well come undone. One need only think of the current tensions between Thailand and Myanmar, which have led to skirmishes along their land border, to see that the ASEAN norm against the use of force among members does not always prevail.

Moreover, Acharya discusses ASEAN objections to the 1997 Hun Sen coup in Cambodia against Prince Ranariddh, resulting in the Association's postponement of Cambodia's admission to ASEAN. In effect, the Association was extending the norm against the use of force from interstate conflicts to an intrastate conflict and, at the same time, delegitimizing the use of *coup d'etat* to change governments.

Other challenges to ASEAN solidarity and the Association's viability as a security community are treated by Acharya, including separatist movements in Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, and Cambodia. The exodus of refugees and arms smuggling have strained relations between Malaysia and the Philippines, and Malaysia and Thailand. Territorial conflicts are equally troubling because they frequently involve rich fishing waters and offshore resource zones. Arrests of Filipino and Thai fishermen have led to maritime clashes and the loss of life. Even the Spratly Islands conflict with China, towards which ASEAN had evinced

solidarity behind the Philippines in the mid-1990s, revealed weakness in the Association's united front by 2000. With individual ASEAN members fearful of antagonizing China as an economic competitor, especially in the wake of the Asian economic crisis, ASEAN solidarity was trumped by the need for cordial relations with the People's Republic, much to Manila's dismay.

Continued uncertainty about neighbours' intentions has also resulted in reticence towards defence multilateralism. Joint exercises remain predominantly bilateral, with multilateral activities usually confined to collaboration with outsiders such as the United States in Cobra Gold (Singapore joining in 2001) or the longstanding Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA). Moreover, as Acharya observes, there is little incentive for the relatively weak ASEAN armed forces to exercise jointly; nor is there significant capability to do so since their arms originate from a variety of sources with little interoperability. Additionally, reliance on the United States is problematic since local conflicts or even confrontation with China in the South China Sea are not seen as sufficiently threatening to U.S. interests to justify Washington's intervention. Nevertheless, it is important to keep the United States engaged. Balance of power may be a weak reed for regional security, but it is better than no insurance policy at all.

Finally, from a constructivist perspective, Acharya explores how effectively the "ASEAN Way" has been juxtaposed on the ARF. ASEAN hoped to be able to transfer a consensus norm to a highly disparate security discussion organization. Unsurprisingly, the ARF has not been a source of security innovation, although it has achieved some modest successes in agreeing on transparency measures, including the voluntary publication of defence White Papers and a definition of "preventive diplomacy" (PD), and the good offices of the ARF Chair and the appointment of an "Eminent Persons Group" to help mediate disputes. Even these modest proposals are viewed with suspicion by some states, especially China, which believes PD may be too intrusive. Thus, China has not permitted the ARF to become involved in the South China Sea dispute.

As Acharya notes, from ASEAN's point of view, one of the ARF's most useful roles has been to keep China and the United States inside a large regional security context, presumably softening the edges of their bilateral differences over Taiwan's future, China's arms modernization, and American missile defence plans. Whether the ARF has produced this salutary effect is, however, problematic. The result is that the ARF demonstrates that ASEAN has abandoned its Cold War aspirations of Southeast Asian autonomy from the great powers, embodied in the Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality, for a new policy of inclusion

whereby all Asia-Pacific actors (minus Taiwan) as well as the European Union develop a stake in the peaceful resolution of regional disputes. This is certainly a worthy, if over-ambitious, goal.

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***The Political and Economic Transition in East Asia: Strong Market, Weakening State*. Edited by Xiaoming Huang.** Richmond, Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 2001. 281pp.

The vicissitudes of the Asian financial crisis, which over the past four years has seen many countries in the Asia-Pacific region passing through dramatic decline, partial recovery, and now into worries about renewed slowdowns, has spawned a new "growth industry" in publication. Authors and publishers have invariably been running behind trying to keep up with the rapidly changing situation. At the same time, the crisis has also stimulated significantly a more fundamental debate, which was admittedly already under way in the 1990s, about the nature and lessons of the Asian developmental model. This, in turn, has fed into a still wider debate about the relationship between the state and markets, and the role of globalization. Xiaoming Huang, the editor of this interesting volume, while clearly aware of the impact of the Asian financial crisis, eschews keeping up with the day-to-day twists and turns of Asian economic fortunes and instead focuses on the broader underlying issues.

Huang has brought together an international and interdisciplinary group of scholars to debate this issue, with particular focus on Japan, China, South Korea, and Taiwan. Hong Kong, which has had its own peculiar form of colonial statehood, and the Southeast Asian countries are excluded, apart from Christopher Lingle's chapter, which takes on a much broader geographic definition to consider trends in Southeast Asia as well.

As Huang argues, the four economies of the East Asian region have been going through — and, indeed, have yet to complete — two significant transitions in recent years. The first is political: the democratization of South Korea and Taiwan, the end of one-party dominance in Japan, and the generational change of leadership in China. The other is economic: primarily, the growing liberalization of many of these economies and, of course, subsequently — though not