INTERNATIONAL & DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Higher Education Regionalization in Asia Pacific

Implications for Governance, Citizenship and University Transformation

EDITED BY
JOHN N. HAWKINS, KA-HO MOK
AND DEANE E. NEUBAUER

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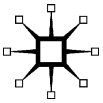

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Series Editors' Preface

One of the increasingly important trends in higher education in this era of global interdependence is the role of regionalization. Asia has been at the forefront of this trend as regions that historically emerged in human consciousness through the facts of geographic proximity and economic advantage are, through the dynamics of contemporary globalization, themselves being transformed as virtual portals to the increasingly relevant global commons and marketplace. This process of "new regionalization" is given form and substance for traditional regions within these global dynamics that have both push and pull factors. We are very pleased to be able to add to our series with the East West Center, this new volume on regionalization in Asia Pacific higher education offering both theoretical and applied studies of this phenomenon. From issues related to governance and citizenship to case studies of specific organizations, this volume offers new insights to both the potential and limits of regionalization and regionalism. Regionalization will continue to play a critical and at times controversial role in higher education development in the Asia Pacific region for both the public and private sectors.

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Part I

Conceptual Issues

Chapter 1

Introduction: Some Dynamics of Regionalization in Asia-Pacific Higher Education

Deane E. Neubauer

As the past three decades in particular have demonstrated, the phenomenon we conventionally term contemporary globalization is complexly constituted out of a series of dynamics that interact to produce outcomes that are themselves complex, intensely interactive, and in many instances productive of unexpected (and some would suggest unpredictable) outcomes (Hershock 2011). It is increasingly difficult to identify areas of contemporary society that are not profoundly affected by these dynamics; so it is unsurprising to include education in general and higher education in specific within generalization. The essays that constitute this volume are part of a continuing effort on the part of the East–West Center to focus on various aspects of these higher education changes through a series of annual scholarly meetings organized through a program called the International Forum for Education 2020 (IFE 2020).[1] The problematic of this effort is both simple and profound: It is asserted that many aspects of the world—as a direct consequence of the changes being wrought by contemporary globalization—are changing more rapidly than higher education. The purpose of these scholarly activities is to assist in the mapping and articulation of these changes with the focus of this particular collection being the emergent form that regionalization is taking throughout Asia and the Pacific and its relevance to higher education. Across the many dimensions of regional transformation that are touched upon, those affecting governance issues and elements of institutional change are emphasized.

The host of factors associated with this stage of globalization, to name just a few including production, consumption, resource acquisition and movement, transportation, human resource development and education, communication, knowledge production, and finance, have forced a recalibration of what regionalization means in this current and dynamic context. Perhaps foremost among the macro factors that continue to define this particular age are emergent trends in population movements (between and within countries) and the progressive distribution and redistribution of service-based economic activities across the world. Cross-cutting these trends has been the rise and fall over time of various concepts of *regionalism*, the normative and sometimes ideological articulation of how regional entities *should* be conceptualized or drawn together in presumptive common purposes.

In contrast, the concerns of this chapter (and this volume) focus primarily on past, present, and emergent dynamics of *regionalization*, a distinction focused on the presumption that it (in contrast to regionalism) can be supported more usefully by the identification and engagement of various empirical dimensions of interaction among the units presumed to constitute the regional focus. (For an extended discussion of this distinction, see Jane Knight's contribution to this volume, Chapter 2, and John Hawkins, Chapter 11.) Critical vectors within these patterns of movement and activity associated with the regionalization of higher education have been the aggregation and social expression of the whole range of activities that we find convenient to bundle together under the label of "the knowledge society" and the social activities that have led to broad patterns of migration and mobility as delineated patterns of contemporary society (Kuroda and Neubauer 2012). As an activity, higher education within the Asia-Pacific region has exhibited distinctive new forms as it is aggregated along multiple dimensions.

Transformations within Regionalization

Like most such explorations, this one can profitably begin with an exercise in concept clarification.

Regionalization has traditionally been viewed within the dual frames of proximity and patterns of exchange, dimensions that in turn have been conceptualized and actualized along prevailing norms of time and space. Historically, as an organizational form within Asia, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been an exemplar. These frames have been useful for capturing various differentiated senses of both regionalism

and regionalization historically within countries or nation states, as well as to identify and demark multinational aggregations characteristic of regionalization, particularized either by relative geographical affinity or by a specific pattern of exchange (e.g., currency, trade in goods, among others). One might also generalize and see exchange in many aspects as synonymous with "interactions" or patterns of interaction, thereby following the original work several decades ago of Karl Deutsch, which proved so useful in tracking and empirically examining the process toward European nationalism and subsequent regionalization and integration (Deutsch 1966). In a sense, we might refer to this as the "old notion" of regionalization, by which we would mean commonly proffered and accepted references to both proximity and patterns of exchange, with geographic locations and nation-state centralities predominating.

The dramatic reordering of time and space wrought by contemporary globalization over the past five decades has recast many of these more familiar ideas of regionalization and brought novel forms into play. For example, if notions of proximity are linked to those of time, as Harvey would argue (Harvey 1989), it is clear that important aspects of the world have entered a stage of simultaneity wherein for vast numbers of discrete exchanges and engagements across time and space, all are equally proximate. (To take just one example, the software development world is now termed the 24-hour digital workshop, representing the ways by which a code can be developed in one geographic part of the world during portions of the day and debugged and refined in another during other hours. This phenomenon represents as well the growth of a "singular language" of software development, marking yet another transformation in customary notions of regionalization [Jalote and Jain 2006].) Within this revised frame, the notion of geographic proximity as the primary marker for regionalism lessens in relative importance. Something similar begins to happen with concepts of exchange, both large and small. "Old" regionalization, demarked by geographic determination within and among nations, tended to focus on exchange in part as a result of the historical relevance and limitation of transportation and communication systems (including language).

In contemporary regionalization—"new regionalization" if you will—much exchange operates almost irrespective of older separation entities and their physical, social, and national borders. Rather, exchange enables nation states to expand, contract, and change direction as economic entities as a result of interactions that are initiated from afar and often effectuated within national settings in novel ways. Within policy discourse, for example, it has been an accepted proposition for well over three decades that important elements of a national policy agenda would be established and provided their particular dynamics by the placement of that nation

with these various networks of economic, social, technical, communicative engagement, what Sakia Sassen has featured in her analyses as circuits of exchange (Sassen 2004). The essential point in this observation is that what is regional in many areas of the lived life of a national society and economy may owe more to its placement within the circuits of exchange than its historical placement in some geographically based scheme of classification.

Viewed from this perspective, "old regionalization" and the things that may have characterized it persist as a form of legacy association, continuing to link former dominant patterns of proximity and exchange as one "fraction" of the current overall pattern of interaction with which given "locales" are associated (or as Castells would have it, they are situated along many multiple dimensions through a vast variety of nodes within the networks they both constitute and share. See Castells 2009). These are supplemented in multiple ways, some more obvious and observable than others, by more novel patterns of association and interaction. It is in this sense that we are asserting the emergence of new forms of regionalization. But as the foregoing suggests, it would be a mistake to view these "new" forms as somehow totally replacing former ones. Rather, the newer forms grow and emerge out of the legacy forms, carrying forward some aspects while leaving others behind.

One dramatic illustration of this process in contemporary Asia can be found in the underlying dynamics of the political economies of those countries and societies located in this historical geographic space. In the period of the 1970s and through to the mid-1990s, several countries of the geographic region of Southeast Asia and surroundings had emerged as early suppliers to the global technology and electronics industries (including health care, communications, etc.). In several notable instances, they had become prime examples of an increasing ability to combine offshore direct investment with technology, bundled with relatively low labor costs and novel production designs—in other words, early adopters of what would become the dominant pattern of offshoring for more developed economies. In many instances, several of these countries—Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, and Taiwan, to name four in particular—had managed to develop specific market niches for finished products for export, thereby leveraging themselves to a most desirable place in the overall profit structure. Within ten years however of the opening of China to the global economy, China had largely replaced these economies as end-use producers and relegated them primarily to the status of prominent part producers, thereby reducing their relative status on the profit ladder of production (a condition from which Singapore and Taiwan have in large part successfully recovered). China has of course come to dominate the whole of the regional political economy, thereby significantly changing what "it is" within any regional frame (Weiss 2005).

In general, we can suggest that old regionalization (and in this case, regionalism as well, e.g., ASEAN) was most clearly characterized by "similar" countries banding together in familiar forms, most of these of governmental origin. In contrast, new regionalization tends to link legacy structures with newer interregional forms (e.g., Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, APEC). As suggested, largely as a result of the overall dynamics of globalization itself, this new regionalization has been given its rationale and supplied many of its mechanisms (e.g., World Trade Organization [WTO] and its various trade agreements, particularly the General Agreement on Trade and Services [GATS]) by subscribing to the tenets of neoliberalism while supplementing these widely by other mechanisms and agreements more characteristic of legacy forms, such as bilateral trade agreements, in which Asia now leads the world (Naya and Plummer 2005; Steger and Roy 2010). Elements of this form of regionalization are already in effect in an institutionalized form in such instances as the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), and ASEAN + 3. Indeed, we might see these and other similar developments, such as the evolving Greater China Region, elements of East Asia cooperation with the four Asian tigers, along with ASEAN + 3 as a new form of subregionalism(s) that is emerging within the new regionalization. (For an extended analysis of this argument and other related points, see Ka Ho Mok's Chapter 9 in this volume that focuses on the regulatory and governance dimensions of these transformations.)

Regionalization and Higher Education

When one turns to the emergent process of higher education regionalization within the Asia-Pacific region, it is clear that European examples have considerable appeal as discrete efforts to promote regional cooperation and more often are explicitly based on the features of both the Erasmus and Bologna processes. The South East Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) was an early manifestation of a regionally focused educational endeavor (albeit with strong legacy ties to older regionalization). Increasingly, it has evolved into a newer regional focus with an explicit emphasis on tying its member countries and their higher education institutions (HEIs) to a globalized problematic. In another quite different form, the current emphasis within China to realize the idea of "the Greater China" may also represent a newer form of regionalization, albeit with strong elements of older forms (i.e., ASEAN), but now with a strong cultural overlay.

This globalization problematic in turn gives rise to various ideas of governance that may emerge from this "new" regionalization.