

Developmental Affinities and PE Spaces

A framework to understand Asia-
Pacific regionalism

Developmental Affinities

- The original concept: affinities between countries that facilitate interaction among its populations and pave the way for them to work together in pursuit of development goals
- The classic example: the European Union
- Other examples: NAFTA, W. Hemisphere

Expanded conceptual framework

Three premises

- The formation of political-economic (PE) spaces is a continuous process
- The “political” and the “economic” are but convenient distinctions of an otherwise inseparable process
- *PE spatial dynamics* responds to an evolving complex of local, regional and global factors

Variety and depth

- *Variety* of a PE space corresponds to the sets of issues it emphasizes (e.g. trade issues, political issues, security issues)
- *Depth* corresponds to the degree of coverage and institutionalization
- Variety and depth allow in principle for a *typology* of PE spaces

Complex dynamics

- PE spaces interact among themselves, in what might be considered a second order dynamics
- Alternatively, the structure of global PE spatial dynamics needs to be understood
- In global dynamics all factors become important

Theory and action

- DAs and PE spaces provide framework for understanding current dynamics of regional integration
- APEC and RIAs within have different rationales
- The “C” in APEC can steer richer integration trends within Asia-Pacific
- Lessons for an APEC charter?