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Introduction

Marc Frey and Nicola Spakowski

The history of Asia since the 19th century can be characterized as a process of parallel and contradictory trajectories of social, political, economic and cultural entanglements as well as differentiations of individual Asian societies. Until now, however, Asian history has been treated largely not as regional history but as the history of distinct national entities. This is true even for the history of international relations or for transnational history, which are concerned mainly with relations of individual countries with the “West”. This book is different. Its chapters look at Asia in its entirety; even better, the book traces constructions of Asia, be it in the form of Western concepts of Asia as a region or as a real historical space whose formation has been influenced by intra-regional interaction. It reconstructs regional constellations, intersections and relations in their national, transnational and global contexts. Its focus is on “Asianisms”, which we define as discursive constructs of Asia and their related political, cultural and social practices. In doing so we appropriate a concept that was first promulgated by Japanese and then by Chinese, Korean and Indian intellectuals. In search of common historical roots, traditions and visions of political-cultural integration, they understood Asianisms as an umbrella for all conceptions, imaginations and processes that emphasized commonalities or common interests among different Asian regions and nations.¹

As the discursive construction of Asia is a highly contested field, we feel a need to somewhat broaden the historical meaning of Asianisms. We refer to Asianisms as a concept that encompasses processes

of entanglement as well as differentiation, and we apply it to integration and fragmentation. We use the term in the plural in order to capture the whole spectrum of discursive constructs as well as practices. These discourses and their related practices may have originated in Asia, but they can also be traced back to Europe or North America. As several of the chapters reveal, Asianist discourses and practices were also invented in the West, where they circulated as distinct forms of knowledge about Asia. At times, these Western-produced Asianisms were imported to Asia or constituted themselves as products of the interaction of non-Asian and Asian actors.² Asianisms relate to pan-Asianism, but they go beyond the term and meaning, as they draw upon the plurality, diversity and inconsistency of intra-, trans- and extraregional conceptions of Asia. Asianisms can not only be detected in processes of integration; they can also relate to moments of rivalry, competition or exclusion within and between political entities.

The analysis of Asianisms is an evolving field of historical enquiry. Prasenjit Duara, for instance, not only sees a need to direct more attention to Asia as a region, but he also asserts that until now disciplinary boundaries within Asian Studies have inhibited transnational and transcultural research.³ Renewed interest in concepts of Asia has also enriched research on Asianisms.⁴ This interest in Asianisms has added to our understanding of pan-Asianism, which remains of primary concern to historians investigating forms of Asianisms. A case in point is the classical topic of Japanese pan-Asianism, whose roots have been located in a spectrum ranging from egalitarian to imperialist notions.⁵ But as transnational and global themes have gained in importance in the humanities and social sciences, historians have begun to look beyond particular nations and nationally conceived ideas of Asia.⁶ Processes and structures transcending national boundaries have received more interest from Asian scholars.⁷ In part, this research is conducted in transnational academic communities and institutionalized research associations.⁸ This trend is being promoted by a range of new forms of transnational interaction in the economy, politics and civil societies within Asia itself. Last but not least, researchers have become more mobile and “embody in their persons these continuous flows, as they move freely from an Asian country to another, and between the United States and Asia”.⁹

Concepts of Asia and its regions belong to the field of meta-geography and world history, both of which employ a decidedly transnational perspective. The term “Asia” itself goes back to ancient Greece, where the then known world was divided between Europe and Asia. Along with the widening spatial horizons of the Western world the territories defined as being part of Asia grew, and mental maps as well as real maps incorporated ever larger areas. As there are no natural geographic demarcations between Asia and Europe, definitions of what constitutes Asia continue to vary.¹⁰

While there is a long history of entanglements within Asia, a search for an explicit Asian identity began only in the late 19th century. However, numerous economic, political, cultural and religious relations and interactions within Asia can be traced back to antiquity. These entanglements and flows intensified in the modern era. The Silk Road, for instance, is only one example of long-distance interaction in the past.¹¹ Maritime history has identified the Indian Ocean as a space of interaction and communication.¹² Buddhism, Islam and Confucianism stretched over vast geographical areas and provided religious and cultural identification but oftentimes also conflicting spaces of belonging; they could thus not serve as a basis for an all-Asian cultural identity.¹³ In East Asia and in large parts of Southeast Asia, the Sino-centric world order and the Chinese tributary system provided norms and practices for entanglements and exchange.¹⁴ Since the late 19th century, anti-colonial, reform and revolutionary movements became platforms for inter-Asian interaction. There was cross-border support for political movements, political activists found asylum elsewhere, and in cities such as Tokyo and Paris political exiles and multicultural revolutionary circles met, though they did not necessarily promote explicit Asianist visions.¹⁵

The vision of Asia as a historical-geographic entity resonated within Asia only with the expansion of the West and with European colonialism and imperialism. Five features of this Asian “discovery of Asia” can be identified. First, constructions of Asia were embedded in a complex system of East-West and inter-Asian interaction.¹⁶ “Asia” or “the Orient” or “the (Far) East” figured as relational concepts that were invented and employed by Europeans in order to demonstrate the perceived superiority of Europe (or “the West”) and to legitimize aspirations to power vis-à-vis Asians (Orientalism).¹⁷ As Pekka Korhonen in his discussion of the changing meanings of the term

“Asia” explains: “While the narratives of progress and conquest were thus attached to the name of Europe, Asia began to resemble everything opposite, a place to be conquered and colonized.”¹⁸ In most Asian languages the term “Asia” is imported, and its varied meanings, charged with notions of the self and the “other”, are subject to change.¹⁹ East-West interaction played an important role beyond matters of identity and identification. In many cases, Western “knowledge” and Western concepts of modernization, the nation state and civilization served as points of departure for Asian emancipation and self-assertion in politics, the economy and culture.²⁰

Second, Asianisms have often been embedded in transnational movements or flows of ideas and ideologies. This volume breaks new ground in that the case studies trace Asianisms in a variety of different movements and circulations of ideas. Stefan Hübner locates the history of the Far Eastern Championship Games in the activities of the American Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). Maria Moritz sees the Theosophical Society, a transnational association in search of a vaguely defined Eastern spirituality, as an intermediate for the Buddhist Maha Bodhi Society. Tani Barlow looks at Asianisms in connection with mission and missiology and as a central component of contemporary feminist discourses. And Tessa Morris-Suzuki investigates civil society activities that are focused on Japan’s relations with Asia but take their inspiration from feminism, fair trade and similar progressive movements.

Third, Asianisms had varying significance in different Asian societies. Concepts of Asia served diverse functions. Asianisms were employed for truly transnational projects intended to promote solidarity, but they were also invoked in order to foster nationalist and even hegemonic claims. The latter variant is closely associated with Japanese imperialism during the 1930s and the vision of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in the early 1940s.²¹ However, at varying moments in time projects of domination legitimized by “Asianist” ideas can also be found in Sino-centric or India-centric visions of Asia or East Asia.²² It is equally important to note that nationalist or chauvinist projects were repudiated by anti-imperialist radical Asian intellectuals and politicians, who espoused ideas of a united Asia in order to fight against suppression, exploitation and paternalism.²³

Fourth, Asianisms draw on a variety of elements of an assumed Asian community. These can be ethnic, cultural or religious; but geographic proximity and shared historical experiences can also foster Asianisms. Closely associated with imperialism and colonialism, the latter usually transcended the region and linked up to the notion of deprived peoples worldwide. Here, regional or continental schemes conflicted with global socio-economic categories such as the North versus the South, or the Cold War concept of the “three worlds” (First, Second and Third Worlds).²⁴

Fifth, as Torsten Weber and Tessa Morris-Suzuki show in this volume, Asianisms are not always based on postulations of an Asian unity. In the cases they discuss, intellectuals and grassroots activists acknowledge the deep divisions within Asia. They identify ruptures, hierarchies, traumata and social inequality located in various parts of Asia in order to invoke a future united Asia.²⁵

This volume contributes to the growing field of Asianist studies in four ways. Its geographical scope transcends Northeast Asia; its approach is decidedly transnational. It introduces a transcultural perspective in that it discusses a variety of Western Asianist discourses. It problematizes issues that transcend the usual approach to Asianisms (the political). Instead, it offers insight into Asianisms in religion, sports, academics, popular science and business. Finally, it covers a long period of time ranging from the late 19th century to the present.

These themes are not static but have evolved over time. To trace their historicity is to explore the national, regional and global constellations in which Asianist discourses and practices emerged. The discussion begins in the 19th century, when colonialism and imperialism subjected large parts of what was then called the Far East to an imperialist regional order.²⁶ This order constrained opportunities for inter-Asian interaction. But it also promoted new political and cultural dynamics in which new political and discursive alliances and enmities could flourish. Concepts of “Asia” certainly competed with much more popular and widespread nationalist aspirations, but they became important references for processes of transfer, contradistinction and identity formation. Discourses of emancipation and modernization, emerging mainly in response to Western colonialism and imperialism, drew primarily on invented or re-invoked “national” traditions, but they also incorporated Japanese, Chinese, Indian and

Vietnamese visions of Asia. In this period, Western admirers of Asia, critical of European discourses on civilization, were quite often important mediators of regionally varied Asianist discourses in Asia.²⁷ Japan assumed a particularly important function in a double sense. On the one hand, through its stunning success as a modernizing nation and as victor over a Western power (Russia, 1905) it served as a role model. On the other hand, its aggressive foreign policies and its claim to regional hegemony provoked widespread criticism. However, from the late 19th century, Japan turned into a mediator of Western knowledge in Asia and became an attractive destination for Asian students, intellectuals and exiles. As such, it emerged as a pioneer of pan-Asian ideas.²⁸

After World War I Asianist discourses flourished, as European and Asian intellectuals in search of alternatives to the global crisis Europe had created promoted concepts of a spiritual and peaceful Eastern civilization.²⁹ But again, notions of a homogenous East fell apart. Chinese intellectuals emphasized fundamental differences between China and India, and the term “the East” frequently became synonymous with China.³⁰ Japanese politicians and intellectuals considered their country a class of its own, not even belonging to an Asia perceived as “backward”. In this climate, the efforts of the Indian author and philosopher Rabindranath Tagore to promote an all-Asian alliance on his visits to China and Japan fell on deaf ears. There is no doubt, though, that Asianist discourses provided fertile ground for a closer cooperation between Chinese and Japanese with the aim to rejuvenate manifestations of Asian culture such as traditional medicine, Buddhism and Confucianism.³¹ On a more general level, migrations within Asia increased sharply during the 1920s, as did people-to-people contacts across territories and nations.³²

Almost a century after the collapse of the Chinese world order, the Japanese expansion in China and Southeast Asia was the first manifest effort from within Asia to restructure Asia in regional terms. The ideology and the politics of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere proclaimed in 1940 were intended, as Duara puts it, as “a commitment to creating a common space akin to the nation that would extend the benefits and pains of creating a globally competitive region, but would extend them unevenly over the whole”.³³ Very few people in the occupied countries were attracted by this version

of pan-Asianism.³⁴ Rather, occupation, exploitation and mass starvation promoted nationalisms in Korea, China and large parts of South-east Asia.

The wounds inflicted by Japan would not have healed easily anyway. But they were exacerbated by Cold War tensions and the ideological and political split that manifested itself between and within Asian countries (China, Korea, Vietnam). Regional interaction and efforts at integration were not very high on anyone's agenda. Regional sports events and conferences (such as the Asian Relations Conference of 1947 and the Bandung Conference of 1955) reinforced national sovereignties rather than regional integration. Only with the founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (1967) did regional integration become a slowly evolving reality, albeit on a very limited scale. However, it was mainly developments in the 1970s that opened up possibilities for future regionalist projects: the rapprochement between China and the United States (1972), the end of the war in Vietnam (1975), and the introduction of reform policies under Deng Xiaoping in China (1978). India, which had promoted regional designs in the 1950s, was so taken aback by the 1962 conflict with China in the Himalayas that it took its intellectuals and politicians decades to contemplate regional projects.³⁵

Asia in the post-Cold War is marked by parallel and quite contradictory movements. On the one hand, there is much debate about a new regionalism. Because of its conceptual diversity, this regionalism needs to be conceived in the plural. The driving forces of current projects of regional integration are manifold. Increasing economic interdependence, labor migration, tourism and cultural flows that draw upon an "Asian" art, particularly the cross-border consumption of Asian popular culture, TV shows, films, food, etc., are indicative of this new regionalism. These factors open up spaces of interaction, communication and cooperation. It remains to be seen in which ways the various initiatives by states and civil societies draw on past Asianist discourses, and in which ways they produce new forms of Asianisms.³⁶ At the political level, Asia has witnessed a number of new regionalist initiatives, such as the cooperation between ASEAN and the three East Asian nations of China, Japan and South Korea (ASEAN plus three), established in 1997, or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) between China, Russia and four states of

Central Asia founded in 2001.³⁷ On the other hand, continuing territorial disputes thwart these efforts at integration and expose the strength of nationalisms and the persistence of ideas of national sovereignty and national interests. The ongoing dispute over the Senkaku or Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea shows how far Asia is from being an integrated political entity.³⁸

Maria Moritz and Stefan Hübner take us back to the early 20th century, when Western imperialism and colonialism were experienced by most Asian societies. They look at the fields of religion and sports in order to show how Asianisms evolved in the context of an imperialist regional order. Constructions of Asia offered a trajectory between imitation and emancipation, as well as between self-assertion and a global mission. In both fields, religion and sports, actors engaged with the Western “civilizing mission” in order to disentangle themselves from foreign rule and cultural oppression. Instead, they appropriated and transformed features of this Western civilizing mission in order to become subjects, rather than objects, of the mission. Hübner discusses the Far Eastern Championship Games (a precursor to the Asian Games of today), which were initiated by the American YMCA. Between 1913 and 1934 they featured athletes from the Philippines, Japan and China. The Western-imported basic idea of the Games was that sports had a civilizing effect, individually and collectively, and would liberate “backward” Asians and correct their perceived cultural and social deficits. This aim was not questioned by Asian national elites. On the contrary, Western sport was seen as an important instrument of empowerment against colonialism, imperialism and paternalism, and it was promoted as such. The history of the Far Eastern Championship Games also presents itself as a history of rising American influence in the region and its decline in the 1920s, when the organization of the Games was taken over by Asians. The increasingly Asian character of the Games serves as an example of liberation from foreign tutelage. At the same time, the Games serve as a telling example of an anticolonial alliance that dissolved under the impact of internal tensions and the hegemonic aspirations of one member, Japan. The increasing conflict between Japan and China made peaceful contests in sports arenas impossible. Asianisms and nationalisms went hand in hand and evolved into contradictory forces of a movement of emancipation that was held together not by intrinsic commonalities but by an external foe.

Within the Far Eastern Championship Games Asians felt united by their nationalisms.

The project of a Buddhist Asianism, promoted by the Ceylonese Anagarika Dharmapala since the 1890s both within and outside Asia, also evolved in the context of European colonialism and imperialism. As Maria Moritz shows, Dharmapala turned around the Western notion of a civilizing mission and substituted it with a mission that assigned Buddhism a global transformative role and would bring Asians equality vis-à-vis Europeans. Dharmapala connected well with European critics of the civilizing mission who were deeply sceptical of Western materialism and were eager to merge European culture with Eastern spirituality in order to create a new global civilization. The Theosophical Society, founded in 1875 in New York City, can best be understood as an institutionalization of this idea of a new global civilization. The society, which operated on a global scale, provided Dharmapala with inspiration and initial support. While staying in touch with the society, Dharmapala turned to his own project, the rejuvenation of Buddhism as a unifier of Asia and as a world religion with Asia as its centre and the Buddha as a global Messiah. He promoted Bodh Gaya, the supposed location of the Buddha's epiphany, as a pilgrimage site and wanted to turn it into a "Buddhist Jerusalem". As an endogenous civilizing mission, this rejuvenated Buddhism targeted India, a country that, according to Dharmapala, should have taken inspiration from a modern and Buddhist Japan to liberate itself from its backwardness. But Dharmapala's civilizing mission was also addressed to the West, which had to be liberated from a pervasive materialism. His project, fascinating as it is, was ridden by internal tensions. His construction of a universal Buddhist dogma conflicted with the many local doctrines and practices of Buddhism, and it failed because of the disinclination of the various Buddhist groups in Asian countries to subordinate themselves to a transnational Buddhist alliance.

Asianisms have often concerned themselves with geographical spaces and the proper location of Asia. For instance, the organizers of the Far Eastern Championship Games considered India to be part of West Asia—and thus excluded it from their Far Eastern Asian games. To Indian thinkers, this was not so clear. Mindful of the multicultural and multireligious character of Indian society, they constructed their own versions of Asia. As Carolien Stolte shows, these Asias took

surprisingly diverse forms, as they were conceived as mental maps and then reproduced as geographical visualizations. Different cartographies of Asia were based on different sets of assumptions about religion, culture or politics. At a time in which the Raj's future was first contested, then resolved, and eventually substituted by visions of an independent India, these cartographies of Asia reveal differing paths to reinventing traditions and constructing identities. They also display a clear break with an earlier past of Asianisms in India that had drawn their inspiration from religion and the transcendental. Stolte's chapter reminds us of the plurality of Asianisms.

Morris-Suzuki and Weber focus attention on the important theme of reconciliation in East Asia and, by implication, on Japanese pan-Asianism as the historically most concrete form of Asianist thought. What is new here is that both chapters place activities of civil society actors and network formation squarely at the centre of the debate. Morris-Suzuki calls these activities manifestations of a "micro-Asianism" and Weber "micro East-Asian communities". Asianisms by these civil society actors are based on critical thinking. They emphasize differences, tensions and distortions, and they oppose superficially defined proclamations of unity. They are critical of dominant economic and political interests who exploit notions of an Asian community for profit or, worse, for hegemonic purposes and exploitation. In this civil society perspective, Asia is "not one".

Morris-Suzuki looks at micro-Asianisms that have emerged from the post-war situation and the impulses of progressive global movements such as feminism, alternative development, fair trade and humanitarianism. Theirs is not an Asian unity based on constructed cultural commonalities. Rather, a sense of Asian unity is an outgrowth of shared experiences with and/or concerns about exploitation and suffering. Micro-Asianisms' roots may lie in the experiences of war, but the global progressive movements manifest themselves also in the present in different forms such as class, gender and North-South conflicts. In these conflicts, Japan is seen as an originator of new relations of exploitation. Asianisms assume a universal dimension, as civil society actors strive for solidarity with disadvantaged groups. At the same time, these micro-Asianisms have emerged in the context of relations between states and societies in which the politics of history and memory are highly important and contested. The term "Asianisms from below" points to the civil society component of these

transnational activities in Japan. Morris-Suzuki's notion of "invisible Asianisms" refers to the typically Japanese character of grassroots involvement that is locally organized, rather small, fragile and ephemeral. Activities encompass Tsurumi Yoshiyuki's public appeal to foster mutual understanding and empathy through people-to-people contacts; Matsui Yayori's solidarity project for women in Asia; the East Asia Collaborative Workshops, which are concerned with the fate of Korean and Chinese involuntary labourers in Japan and which promote the concept of "People's history"; and Kim Sun-yeoul's support for the rights of female textile workers in Thailand. This Asia of small-scale solidarity movements is an Asia beyond Japan as well as an Asia within Japan.

Torsten Weber investigates Asianist conceptions of contemporary Japanese and Chinese intellectuals. He places them in the context of well-established projects of reconciliation among Northeast Asian countries that are partly sponsored by governments and partly by semi-official networks. And he positions these Asianisms in an official regionalism aimed at establishing an East Asian Community in the future. Weber's actors are dedicated to reconciliation. At the same time, they acknowledge the pitfalls of official policies of reconciliation, which remain rather nationalist. These intellectuals are decidedly against regionalist invocations of some kind of unity, they are critical of capitalism, and they warn of an "Asia for the rich". Instead, they subscribe to the ideas of past Asianist thinkers such as Takeuchi Yoshimi, who in 1960 proposed the idea of "Asia as Method", or to Asianist conceptions dating back to the Meiji period. In China, Wang Hui and Sun Ge historicize past Japanese ideas of leaving Asia and glorifying the West. They explain these notions as appropriations of negative Western discourses on Asia, and in part they even excuse them. Finally, they engage in the more recent Chinese debate about Sun Yat-sen's Asianism and his call for a kingly way (*wang dao*) rather than a despotic way (*ba dao*) in the conduct of interstate relations.

Morris-Suzuki and Weber show that Asianisms are on the agenda within East Asian societies. Their focus on non-state actors points to alternatives to the official politics of historical contestation, and they highlight the diversity of opportunities and activities that are possible within the framework of Asianist discourses and practices.

Tani Barlow, Fabio Lanza and Nicola Spakowski turn their attention to Western Asianisms from the late 19th century to the present.

Regardless of changing world orders and specific global events, these Western Asianisms functionalize Asia for specific interests located on the national, subnational and supranational levels. They can be characterized as Orientalisms, as they have little to do with the complex realities of Asian countries and much to do with Western projections and stereotypes.³⁹ This knowledge of Asia, which circulates within Western societies, is in part deeply grounded in history. But it is also closely associated with ideologically charged conceptions of the world. Moreover, this kind of knowledge of Asia claims to be scientific. Academics are either producers of certain images of Asia, or certain Asianisms simply claim to be scientific in order to be credible.⁴⁰

Barlow's treatment of American Asianisms ranges from late 19th century missionaries to the 2011 agenda of a Pacific Century. Diverse topics and actors are analyzed, but they all follow one common rule. They are informed by erudition, or rather, fake erudition. Barlow exemplifies this fake erudition in the context of three specific Asianisms: the pagan Asia of missionaries and of missiology of the late 19th century; the capitalist projections of the hugely popular 1980s male interest fiction by James Clavell; and the patronizing attitude toward Asian women displayed by Hillary Clinton at the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women. Late 19th century missiology circulated knowledge of Asia for the purpose of training missionaries. At the time, these constructions of Asia were quite powerful, as American missions had made "pagan" Asia their primary focus. Geographically and culturally, this Asia was rather amorphous and could even include Africa. It postulated the degradation of Asian women, and, as with Hübner's sports officials, it rested on the assumption that deficits were the unifying element in Asia and its ultimate common denominator. Fast forwarding to the 1980s, Clavell's novels, among them the global bestsellers *Shogun*, *Taipan* and *Noble House*, deeply informed Western perceptions of Asia, including among Western decision makers. In these novels, Asia is portrayed as the stage for and epicentre of global capitalism. Curiously, these novels assumed the status of textbooks; heavily footnoted companion books purported scientific authority, and while scholars of Asia were quick to criticize details of Clavell's interpretation of Asia, they accepted his main arguments and overall picture. Finally, a third Asianism transpired in Clinton's assessment of Asian women as deprived of their rights and in dire need

of emancipation by human rights groups at the Beijing World Conference on Women in 1995.

Fabio Lanza is interested in the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS), a group formed in 1968 to protest the American War in Vietnam. In the group's first publication, titled *America's Asia*, these younger American scholars analyzed US relations with Asian countries in a most critical way. They condemned American chauvinism and American violence, and they accused their better-established colleagues in the field of Asian studies of collaboration in a hegemonic project. As with Suzuki-Morris' protagonists, these concerned Americans were deeply influenced by the progressive movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Members of the CCAS felt that Americans treated Asians as objects rather than subjects in their own right, they emphasized their humanity, and they considered Asia as a source of positive ideas. In light of the dominant theory of modernization, Asia appeared as "backward". CCAS scholars, instead, regarded Asia as a "geographically located utopia" (Fabio Lanza). This turn towards the revolutionary Asia was accompanied by a debate about the function and self-conception of American Asian studies. However, while these younger scholars were able to criticize US foreign policy, it was more difficult for them to universalize the revolutionary experiences of Asia and thus change the course of history. The failure of Asian revolutions and the integration of Asia into the capitalist world system eventually led to the demise of the CCAS, which dissolved in 1979.

Finally, Nicola Spakowski explores the Western notion of an "Asian Century", a notion prevalent in a dislocated ideology of economism and globalism. The Asia hype of the 1980s provided fertile ground for current notions of an Asian Century. On closer look, it becomes obvious that investment companies and investment funds, in particular, promote this idea. Spakowski shows how changes in terms—"East Asian miracle", "Chindia", "China's rise", etc.—mirror a shifting geography of growth that follows the economic cycles of global capitalism, whose driving force seems to have moved to Asia. As other chapters highlight as well, the interplay between academia and pseudo-science is important, particularly the cooperation between historians, business journalists and international institutions. Paradoxically, the future-oriented discourse of an Asian Century is informed by the writings of global historians and historians of Asia.

Past economic potentials of Asia seem to demonstrate that once Western influence over the world comes to its final end, a global equilibrium is re-established. In light of this simplifying history of rise and decline, the rise of Asia turns into a “restoration”, a “renaissance”, a “re-emergence”. The future becomes a range of predictable and certain options. Economic measurements such as gross national product are levelling factors that standardize diverse Asian economies and societies. They allow for comparisons, but they divest Asian countries of their diversity.

Notes

1. Nripendra Chandra Banerji, *Asianism and Other Essays* (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House, 1930); Prasenjit Duara, “The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism”, in *Nations under Siege: Globalization and Nationalism in Asia*, ed. Roy Starrs (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 63–101; Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).
2. See Cemil Aydin, “Beyond Civilization: Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asianism and the Revolt Against the West”, *Journal of Modern European History* 4, 2 (2006): 204–22; and the chapter by Maria Moritz in this volume.
3. Prasenjit Duara, “Asia Redux: Conceptualizing a Region for Our Time”, *Journal of Asian Studies* 68, 4 (2010): 963–83; as well as other articles in this issue.
4. Pekka Korhonen, “Changing Definitions of Asia”, *Asia Europe Journal* 10, 2 (2002): 99–112; Amitav Acharya, “Asia Is Not One: Regionalism and the Ideas of Asia”, ISEAS Working Paper: Politics and Security Series 1, 2011, pp. 1–24. See also Carolien Stolte and Harald Fischer-Tiné, “Imagining Asia in India: Nationalism and Internationalism (ca. 1905–1940)”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 54, 1 (2012): 65–92.
5. Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann, eds, *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders* (London, New York: Routledge, 2007).
6. See, in particular, Sven Saaler and Christopher W.A. Szpilman, eds, *Pan Asianism: A Documentary History*, 2 vols (Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011b). Interestingly, this trend can also be observed in research on China (both inside and outside China). Traditionally, there were two kinds of Asianisms: the imperialist Asianism of Japan and the “humanitarian” or “socialist” visions of Sun Yat-sen and Li Dazhao. Currently, Asianisms tend to be regarded in a much more nuanced and differentiated way. See in particular Huang Donglan, “‘Yazhou’ de yansheng—Jindai Zhongguo yujing li de ‘Yazhou’ gailun” [The Birth of “Asia”: On

- the Meaning of the Term “Asia” in Modern Chinese], *Xin Shixue* [New Historical Sciences] 2 (2008): 27–46. See also other contributions in this issue, as well as Yazhou xueshu, in *Scientific Asian Studies*, ed. Feng Jun (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2007, 2008).
7. See, for instance, publications by the Japanese Society for Political and Economic Studies of Asia (Ajia Seikei Gakkai) in the series *Gendai Ajia Kenkyū* [Contemporary Historical Research on Asia], ed. Ajia Seikei Gakkai (Tokyo: Keiō Gijyuku Daigaku Shuppankai, 2008). Volumes 1 and 2 of the series deal with “transnationality” and “civil society”. A similar perspective is taken in the four-volume publication *Higashi Ajia Kyōdōtai no kōchiku* [The Construction of an East Asian Community], ed. Mōri Kazuko et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), which includes chapters on transnational networks in society, politics, culture and the business world. In 2010, the International Association for Asia Pacific Studies was founded at the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Beppu. Its aim is to transcend research undertaken on a national basis. It also publishes the journal *Asia Pacific World*. Witness also the foundation of the Asian Association of World Historians (founded in Nanjing in 2008), which held its first congress in May 2009 in Osaka. It aims to develop the epistemological and organizational foundations for an “Asian global history”.
 8. See Nicola Spakowski, “Regionalismus und historische Identität—Transnationale Dialoge zur Geschichte Nord-/Ost-/Asiens seit den 1990er Jahren” [Regionalism and Historical Identity: Transnational Dialogues on the History of North/East Asia since the 1990s], in *Asianismen seit dem 19. Jahrhundert* [Asianisms since the 19th Century], ed. Marc Frey and Nicola Spakowski, special issue of the journal *Comparativ* 18, 6 (2008): 69–87. See also the chapter by Torsten Weber in this volume.
 9. Korhonen, “Changing Definitions of Asia”: 101.
 10. See Korhonen, “Changing Definitions of Asia”; Martin W. Lewis and Karen E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997); Jürgen Osterhammel, “‘Weltgeschichte’: Ein Propädeutikum” [World History: An Introduction], *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* [History in Academia and Teaching] 56 (2005b): 452–79.
 11. Richard C. Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road: Overland Trade and Cultural Exchange from Antiquity to the Fifteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).
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26. See also Duara, “Asia Redux”: 964–8.
27. That goes, for instance, for the French author Romain Rolland, the poet Paul Richard, the German philosopher Rudolph Eucken and the members of the Theosophical Society. See Sachsenmeier, “Searching for Alternatives”: 256–8; and Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia*, Chapter 3. See also the chapters by Maria Moritz and Stefan Hübner in this volume.

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39. Said, *Orientalism*.
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