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Erstveröffentlichung / Primary Publication
Arbeitspapier / working paper

gesis
Leibniz-Institut
für Sozialwissenschaften

Mitglied der
Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

WORKING PAPER

KFG The Transformative Power of Europe

Collective Regional Image:

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No. 79 | April 2017

Freie Universität Berlin

KFG Working Paper Series

Edited by the *Kolleg-Forschergruppe* "The Transformative Power of Europe"

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COLLECTIVE REGIONAL IMAGE:

LOGICS OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND MODES OF MANAGEMENT IN POST-COLD WAR AFRICA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

Brooke Coe

Abstract

One distinguishing feature of the "new" regionalism is its outward orientation – the increased importance of the external dimension of regional cooperation. It makes sense, then, that efforts to manage external perceptions of a region, on the part of policy-relevant actors in that region, might contribute to important changes to regional norms and institutions. By and large, though, existing accounts of normative and institutional change at the regional level do not explicitly conceptualize and theorize collective image consciousness and management. This paper offers an initial attempt to address this conceptual gap, making use of two cases of regional image crisis (post-Cold War Africa and post-1997 Southeast Asia) in order to draw out logics of regional image consciousness and to distinguish among types of regional image management efforts. As regional communities of states, Africa and Southeast Asia promoted and adhered to a relatively strict interpretation of the principle of non-interference during the Cold War period. In the post-Cold War era, the non-interference norm has eroded in both regions. In each, these developments constituted – in part – a collective image management strategy, aimed at external audiences. Reforms to regional institutions were promoted in part as efforts to ameliorate negative international perceptions.

The Author

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Contents

1. Introduction[1]

One distinguishing feature of the "new" regionalism is its outward orientation – the increased importance of the external dimension of regional cooperation (Krapohl/Meissner/Muntschick 2014; Büthe/Milner 2008; Jaumotte 2004). It makes sense, then, that efforts to manage *external perceptions* of a region, on the part of policy-relevant actors in that region, might contribute to important changes to regional norms and institutions. By and large, though, existing accounts of normative and institutional change at the regional level do not explicitly conceptualize and theorize collective image consciousness and management.[2] This paper offers an initial attempt to address this conceptual gap. Making use of two cases of regional image crisis, it draws out logics of regional image consciousness and distinguishes among types of regional image management efforts. Section 3 unpacks two primary logics of regional image consciousness: the logic of influence and the logic of resources. A region's collective image with respect to (dys)function and norm (non) compliance matters to policy-relevant actors in the region because it affects the region's political influence in international arenas and because it affects the region's ability to attract resources from donors and investors. Because these policy-relevant actors are conscious of these potential consequences, they engage in a variety of regional image management strategies, discussed in Section 4. I make two key distinctions here; the first is between emulation and distinction strategies and the second is between cosmetic "branding" efforts and substantive policy changes.

The conceptual categories presented in this paper are based both on existing theory (developed for the state level) and on two cases of regional image crisis: post-1980s Africa and post-1997 Southeast Asia. As regional communities of states, Africa and Southeast Asia promoted and adhered to a relatively strict interpretation of the principle of non-interference during the Cold War period.[3] Domestic political and security problems, considered matters of exclusive domestic jurisdiction by these groups of postcolonial states, generally did not elicit regional interference aimed at their management. In the post-Cold War era, the norm of non-interference has eroded (albeit to different degrees) in both Africa and Southeast Asia through the introduction of regional institutions and/or practices that infringe on state sovereignty. In both cases, these developments constituted – in part – a *collective image management* strategy, aimed at external audiences. Reforms of regional institutions were promoted in part as strategies to ameliorate negative international perceptions. Section 2 presents overviews of these two cases in order to provide an empirical foundation for theory presented in Sections 3 and 4.

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2   For important exceptions, see Jetschke 2015 and Jetschke/Murray 2012.

3   This is even more so the case for Southeast Asia than for Africa, as the Organization of African Unity had already (1) deployed a peacekeeping mission (to Chad) and (2) adopted a human rights charter providing for a human rights commission with investigatory powers during the late Cold War period.

2. Case Overviews

2.1 The African Case

African states experienced a severe economic crisis in the 1980s (Africa's "Lost Decade"), bringing negative international attention to the continent and prompting state and other policy-relevant relevant actors in Africa to express alarm about Africa's increasingly negative international image. In speeches given by African leaders and regional bureaucrats at regional forums in the 1980s we find repeated lamentation of the region's problem of "bad publicity" (OAU 1984: 10) and similar complaints (e.g. Mengistu Haile-Mariam 1984: 14). By the end of this decade of severe economic crisis, regional reform-minded actors had begun discursively linking Africa's international image problem to the continent's actual and potential economic and political marginalization, making the case that the empowerment of regional institutions to manage domestic problems would help combat and compensate for this marginalization. One key reformer was Adebayo Adedeji, then-Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), who noted in conference addresses that the international community had increasingly come to see Africa as a lost cause. He called for African leaders to collectively address the continent's myriad problems in order to increase foreign aid flows (African Leadership Forum 1988: 39, 43).

The end of the Cold War only exacerbated Africa's vulnerabilities: it introduced rival recipients for international aid and investment (Central and Eastern European states); it ended superpower clientelism based on East-West competition; and it increased the attachment of (liberal) political conditionalities to Western loans and aid (OAU 1990a). One of the figures that joined Adedeji in his calls for reform was Olusegun Obasanjo, former president of Nigeria and founder of the African Leadership Forum, a civil society organization seeking "African solutions to African problems." Obasanjo urged African states to work to improve Africa's international image in response to overwhelmingly negative portrayals of it in the media. The reforms Obasanjo and African Leadership Forum supporters wanted to see would involve a "redefinition of security and sovereignty" in African international society and the development of the OAU's conflict management capabilities (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 260). These proposals were outlined in the Kampala Document, the product of the organization's high-profile 1991 Kampala Forum.

In collaboration with the UNECA's secretariat and the African Leadership Forum, Organization of African Unity's (OAU) Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim lobbied OAU member states in the early 1990s to reform regional institutions and to cede some of their sovereignty in order to more effectively respond – collectively – to governance and security problems on the continent. This reform campaign resulted in the initiation of processes[4] leading to the establishment of a conflict management mechanism in 1993 that was, for the first time, mandated to respond to intrastate conflict. The 1990-93 period saw the first dispatch of election observation missions, an important increase in regional mediation missions, and the deployment of two OAU military missions (in Burundi and Rwanda) (Coe 2015b). Reflecting in 1993 on the reforms taking place at the continental level, former Sudanese ambassador to the United Nations Francis Deng pointed to the role of image consciousness as a motivating factor:

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4 I provide more details about these processes in Section 3.2.

> *[...] the imperatives of global interdependence propel [Africans] to resist marginalization. Their aim is to put their houses in order through regional resolution to conflicts and improved economic performance, then return to participating in international affairs with a renewed sense of political and economic legitimacy (Deng 1993: 112).*

The regional reform agenda accelerated over the course of the 1990s, resulting in the establishment of a regional anti-coup regime (institutionalized regional responses to unconstitutional changes in government) and leading up to the replacement at the turn of the century of the OAU by the African Union, an organization with a much more intrusive mandate, including non-consensual military intervention in response to "grave circumstances" (OAU 2000: Article 4(h)). A key player in this institutional transformation in the late 1990s, South Africa's Thabo Mbeki, called for the establishment of a more intrusive organization – with its greater ability to promote human rights, democracy, and peace in member states – in part as a way to attract more foreign direct investment to the continent (Tieku 2004: 253).

2.2 The Southeast Asian Case

Unlike Africa, Southeast Asia experienced incredible economic growth in the 1980s, and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) states expressed satisfaction with their region's (and particularly their regional organization's) positive international image in the late 1980s and in the immediate post-Cold War period (Yukawa 2011). The region's image of success served to reaffirm and reinforce the ASEAN norm-set – including the norm of non-interference – rather than call it into question, and it empowered ASEAN to take a leadership role in the wider Asia-Pacific, exporting their norms through the establishment of ASEAN Regional Forum and other activities (Acharya 2014: 199; Jones 2009a: 2; Yukawa 2011: 266). But this golden period was not to last. The 1997 Asian financial crisis tarnished ASEAN's international image and called its distinctive norms into question. What began with currency collapse in Thailand developed into a serious economic crisis affecting many countries in the Asia Pacific and resulted in investor panic and the diversion of foreign funds out of the region (Narine 2002: 183). Growth rates plummeted, many firms were bankrupted, and several countries in the region were forced to request "costly and politically humiliating" International Monetary Fund-led bailouts (The Economist 2007). ASEAN states began articulating concerns about changing international perceptions and the threat of "marginalization," often using very similar language to their African counterparts (Jones 2010: 494). The economic crisis opened up the association (and its pro-sovereignty norm-set, the ASEAN Way[5]) to criticism for its ineffectiveness (Narine 2002: 184) and for its accommodation of illiberalism (Acharya 1999: 420). And, again, reform-minded actors (in this case, primarily state actors) proposed changes to regional norms and institutions – changes that would result in the circumscription of the norm of non-interference.

Beginning in 1997, Thai foreign minister Surin Pitsuwan initiated a debate within ASEAN about the continued utility and appropriateness of strict non-interference. In the lead-up to the July 1998 ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, he put forward a proposal for a revision of the non-interference policy: "flexible engagement."

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5   A set of sovereignty-promoting regulative and procedural norms practiced by ASEAN states since 1967.

Flexible engagement would permit ASEAN to collectively discuss and publicly comment on member states' domestic problems if these problems could be shown to have regional implications (Haacke 1999: 583). The proposal was aimed at both economic and political issues, as it would allow for peer review of economic policies as well as criticism of "unacceptable internal conduct" (related to violations of human rights and democracy norms) (Acharya 2003: 382). For Surin, flexible engagement was to shift emphasis from member state rights to member state responsibilities: "responsibilities for engagement, that is for contributing to the achievement of common regional goals" (quoted in Jones 2008: 275). Several (related) concerns motivated Thailand's proposed departure from the ASEAN Way. Like other members, it considered the financial crisis to be a threat to the association's international standing and relevance. The reasoning was that crisis exposed the need for liberal economic and political reforms in ASEAN states, and that these reforms would be necessary to regain the confidence and support of investors – and the international community more broadly – and to achieve economic recovery (Jones 2008: 275; Acharya 2003: 381, 383).

Although ASEAN rejected Surin's flexible engagement proposal (and instead agreed to a watered-down version – "enhanced interaction"), some erosion of the ASEAN Way (and therefore of the non-interference norm) is apparent and is arguably at least partially attributable to regional image management imperatives. Evidence of norm change includes ASEAN states' participation in the 1999 United Nations peacekeeping mission to East Timor (Dupont 2000); ASEAN's increased pressure on Myanmar to liberalize politically (Jones 2010); and the development of more formal regional institutions like the ASEAN Economic, Security, and Socio-Cultural Communities, the ASEAN Charter, and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission for Human Rights (Jones 2010: 494; Jetschke 2015). Since the mid-2000s, Indonesia has taken the lead in promoting these kinds of reforms in ASEAN (Sukma 2011).

3. Two Logics of Regional Image Consciousness

Why do state and other policy-relevant actors (i.e. regional bureaucrats) care about the image of their region and/or regional organization (RO) (in addition to that of their individual state)? In this section, I discuss two logics of image consciousness, the logic of influence and the logic of resources, drawing on theory developed for the state level and on the two cases of regional image crisis introduced above: post-1980s Africa and post-1997 Southeast Asia.

Before discussing these instrumental logics, I first acknowledge that an "emotive" logic may also be at play. As Steve Wood argues in his analysis of the role of prestige in international politics, "instrumental and emotive energies and purposes" are not so easy to pull apart empirically, since they are "interwoven" (Wood 2013: 389). According to an emotive logic of image consciousness, image matters for its own sake. This resonates with classical realists' notion of honor (Thucydides 1903; Joshi 2008) and Ned Lebow's assertion that the drive for esteem is one primary motivation underlying international relations – individuals, organizations, and states value it in "its own right" (Lebow 2006: 433). That is, states seek status or prestige not only for the potential attendant material benefits, but also because external perceptions and recognition are a source of pride or shame. Image matters because of its relationship to identity – it affects a state's self-esteem or confidence. If they identify with their region/RO, state actors and regional

bureaucrats will also intrinsically value – to some degree – their collective regional image. For these actors, external perceptions can be a cause for concern – and the improvement of the regional image a legitimate political project – again, for its own sake. For example, one analyst with ties to the South African regime reported in the late 1990s that Thabo Mbeki – a leader whose Africanist foreign policy contributed to the creation of the African Union – "takes Africa seriously and he is emotionally and intellectually committed to proving Afro-pessimism wrong" (quoted in Vale/Maseko 1998: 285).[6] In the Southeast Asian case, ASEAN member states at summits in the early 1990s expressed satisfaction with the Association's international image of success and linked external perceptions to collective self-esteem. For example, Malaysia's foreign minister remarked in 1997, on the eve of the Asian financial crisis, that, "I think we have grown used to the praises heaped upon ASEAN. We welcome that recognition and we can be justifiably proud of ASEAN's achievements over the past thirty years."[7] The financial crisis would soon tarnish ASEAN's international image and injure this pride.

In the two cases of regional image crisis under review here, however, those expressing alarm about their region's increasingly negative international image rarely articulate purely "emotive" or "esteem" concerns; these are linked to "instrumental" concerns, often framed with the language of "marginalization." In the following sections (2.1 and 2.2), then, I focus on these more important instrumental logics, distinguishing between the logic of influence (the loss of which constitutes political marginalization) and the logic of resources (the loss of which constitutes economic marginalization).

3.1 Image Matters because It Affects a Region's International Influence

States care about their image or reputation because it may afford them greater political influence in international arenas. Image is an important component of "soft power" (Nye 1990), or a state's ability to attract and persuade. Whether external perceptions are "positive" or "negative" is one way to categorize them, but image type can be classified in other ways, as different perceived attributes (components of image) translate into different kinds of influence or perhaps serve as different avenues to the same kind of influence. A state might prioritize the development and maintenance of military might, not just because of the security it provides, but because it translates into respect and therefore influence. Or, a state might cultivate attributes unrelated to hard power in order to be seen, for example, as a norm complier ("good international citizen") or norm leader. Wood argues that Canadian policymakers promote human rights in part to earn Canada recognition as a human rights leader. This kind of reputation "and accrued associated 'prestige capital'" is not just an end in itself; it affords Canada certain benefits, including "an enhanced capacity to set agendas" (Wood 2013: 397).

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6 Afro-pessimism refers of course to negative perceptions of the continent, often with respect to economic and political development.

7 30th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, 24-29 July 1997, in: http://www.asean.org/asean-political-security-community/asean-foreign-ministers-meeting-amm/asean-foreign-ministerial-meetings/the-30th-ammpmc/; 10 April 2017.

The logic of "influence via image" applies also to collective regional image, whether that be the image of the RO or the image of the region as a place/group of states. States and regional bureaucrats might care about the image of their RO, because they (desire to) utilize the RO as a means to gain influence in international politics (e.g. to set agendas in international forums, to "gate-keep" extraregional involvement in regional affairs, to export a particular set of norms, to have their needs and concerns taken seriously by powerful actors in the international system, et cetera).[8] They might also care about the image of the region/RO because it reflects on constituent states' images and thereby affects their soft power as individual actors. Based on evidence from Southeast Asia and (to a lesser extent) Africa, I present two broad categories of perceived attributes that constitute a region's image and afford it greater or lesser influence in international politics: perceptions about policy effectiveness (i.e. is the region/RO "successful" – especially with respect to the economic performance of its constituent states?) and perceptions about norm compliance (does the region/RO live up to the values of the international community?). Although it is analytically useful to establish these categories, they are interrelated in theory and practice. For example, effective policies may be required to achieve norm compliance. Furthermore, as I discuss below, an image of (economic) success may confer "performance legitimacy" on a region/RO and thereby shield it to some degree from international criticism about norm non-compliance (e.g. with respect to human rights and democracy).

3.1.1 Image of Success: Perceptions about Policy Effectiveness

As noted above, ASEAN emerged from the 1980s with an image of success – based primarily on its member states' economic performance in the 1980s but also to some degree on the Association's high-profile diplomacy on the Cambodian crisis and supposed contributions to inter-state peace in the region (Yukawa 2011). ASEAN states expressed satisfaction about the region's positive international image and conviction in Southeast Asia's distinctive set of domestic and regional norms (so-called "Asian Values"[9] and the ASEAN Way, respectively). In the face of the West's proclamation of the "unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism" (Fukuyama 1989: 3) and the rise of liberal internationalism in the wake of the Cold War's end, the ASEAN states were *empowered* by their performance legitimacy to insist upon an alternative—illiberal political systems protected by sovereignty-reinforcing regionalism—and they did. Lee Jones summarizes this development nicely:

> [I]n the years following the end of the Cold War, [ASEAN] was widely regarded as the world's most successful third-world regional institution, and as a model for wider cooperation. In a context where regional policymakers were announcing an 'Asian renaissance' and aggressively promoting 'Asian values' as a superior, contextualised alternative to the West's liberal triumphalism, analysts heralded the 'Pacific century' and singled out ASEAN in particular as offering a better route to cooperation than Western 'legalism' (Jones 2009a: 2).

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8   Most research on the link between the international perceptions of a RO and its international influence has pertained to the European Union (EU), i.e. whether or not the EU is seen (by states, organizations, and publics) to be a global leader (generally or in particular issue areas) or special normative power (because of its legitimacy and role in exporting norms) (see Chaban et al. 2013; Larsen 2014; Lucarelli/Fioramonti 2009).

9   A discourse that emphasizes collectivism over individualism and economic development over civil and political rights.

Indonesian President Suharto's address at the 23rd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (July 1990) speaks to the rise of ASEAN's international image: "Today, ASEAN has not only survived but has grown into a vigorous entity, with its presence, potentials and achievements appreciated, not only in our own region of East Asia but in the world at large" (Suharto 1990: 7). ASEAN's 1987 Manila Declaration points to the "achievements of ASEAN in the last two decades, particularly in creating a political environment conducive to the development of its members, and in carving out a distinct identity recognized and respected in the community of nations" (ASEAN 1987a). The 1987 Joint Press Statement of the Meeting of the ASEAN Heads of Government declares that "ASEAN has grown into a viable and dynamic organization fostering the spirit of regional co-operation and solidarity and strengthening national and regional resilience [...] ASEAN has also developed a distinct identity and has become an effective vehicle for joint approaches to regional and international issues" (ASEAN 1987b). In a 1992 speech, Prime Minister Ramos of the Philippines referred to ASEAN as the "most successful case of regionalization among developing countries" (quoted in Yukawa 2011: 264).

Economic success empowered ASEAN in the 1990s to expand its membership (by incorporating Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia), to assume a leadership position in East Asia through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and to promote the ASEAN Way by encouraging extra-ASEAN accession to the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in which ASEAN's distinct sovereignty-reinforcing norms are formalized. This has been referred to as "normative power ASEAN" (Goh 2011). Many ASEAN scholars suggest, for example, that the establishment of the ARF was made possible by ASEAN states' consciousness of their successful international image. The Regional Forum was established in 1993 as a formal dialogue group for political and security issues, whose membership now includes, in addition to the ASEAN states, several other Asian countries (including China) and extraregional members including the United States and the European Union (EU). According to Amitav Acharya, seizing a leadership role served to "underscor[e] the continued and broader relevance of ASEAN's norms" (Acharya 2014: 168). ASEAN's role in initiating the Forum "reflected its growing self-confidence about the relevance of its norms of regional cooperation" (Acharya 2014: 199). Yukawa Taku similarly argues that "[U]sing the image of success that it had attained in the 1980s as a platform, ASEAN greatly expanded its role in overseeing the regional order of the Indochina and Asia Pacific region in the 1990s, through the institutionalization of [...] the [ASEAN Regional Forum]" (Yukawa 2011: 266). Shaun Narine attributes ASEAN's international assertiveness to a "confidence born of economic success." That ASEAN would lead and set the agenda for the Forum, despite the small size of its states, was justified by the grouping's "collective economic potential and how that potential might translate into military clout in the future" (Narine 2002: 184).

Before the end of the decade, though, the Asian financial crisis – and ASEAN's "organizational disunity" in the face of this crisis – challenged the foundations of ASEAN's international influence (of its leadership role in the region) (Narine 2002: 184). The *loss* of this ability to influence international politics via ASEAN (ASEAN's diminished "relevance") then became a preoccupation for ASEAN states in the post-1997 financial crisis period. ASEAN states articulated concerns about changing international perceptions leading to the association's political and economic marginalization. For example, Singapore's foreign minister expressed concerns in 2000 that growing perceptions of ASEAN as an "ineffective [...] sunset organization [...] are political facts. Perceptions can define political reality – if we continue to be perceived as ineffective, we can be marginalized as our Dialogue Partners and international investors relegate us to sidelines" (quoted in Jones 2010: 494). This quote indicates concerns about both *influence* and *resources* (see Section 2.2).

Africa and the OAU never enjoyed the kind of successful image (and attendant soft power benefits) that ASEAN did during the Cold War period, so it had "less to lose" so to speak, but the continent nevertheless experienced a deterioration in the 1980s of its reputation with respect to policy effectiveness. Although African states initially experienced relatively high economic growth during the early post-decolonization period, by the end of the 1970s it was apparent that approaches to development taken since independence had not delivered positive results for these economies (UNECA 1989: 9). A world recession compounded existing problems and created new ones, resulting in a severe economic crisis on the continent beginning in the early 1980s. Prominent among the external adverse factors confronting Africa included a fall in primary commodities prices, ballooning external debt, and general decline in resource flows to the continent (UNECA 1989: i). Environmental conditions leading to drought in some countries exacerbated already severe socio-economic problems. The 1980s proved to be Africa's "Lost Decade": between 1980 and 1988, the region's average GDP per capita fell by 25 percent and income per capita by 30 percent (Ghai/Hewitt de Alcantara 1990: 26f). States and regional bureaucrats began frequently complaining about Africa's bad international reputation – "the image of Africa as a backward continent" (Mengistu Haile-Mariam 1984: 14). And, although these concerns were most often discursively linked to the problem of economic marginalization (the logic of resources, see Section 2.2), the problem of political marginalization appeared as well in regional speeches and documents.

Part of this anxiety was the threat of neglect – that Africa's problems (economic and otherwise) would be increasingly ignored by the international community. In April 1990, the newly-established African Leadership Forum convened a high-level experts meeting with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris "on the implications of the events in Eastern Europe," where these concerns about marginalization were discussed. As then-Prime Minister of Mozambique Mario Machungo recalls, the meeting participants "sensed that the end of the Cold War […] had ominous consequences for Africa. With the cessation of the Cold War now, would Africa now be left in the cold and be on its own?" (Machungo 2000: 4). The 1990 African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, a product of a UNECA conference, emphasizes the increasing seriousness of the marginalization problem – both with respect to influence and resources – stating that "Africa is becoming further marginalized in world affairs, both geopolitically and economically" (OAU 1990c). Echoing these concerns in 1991, General Obasanjo's speech at the 1991 Kampala Forum spelled out the connection between Africa's image of dysfunction and its political marginalization:

> The image of Africa portrayed by the outside media is one of endless disasters, diseases, senseless wars, corruption and mismanagement. It is essentially the image we presented. Our situation is now treated more by silence and neglect than by effective response […] We have to project positive thinking and a positive image of Africa (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 33).

Another Kampala Forum participant wrote of the problem of civil war in Africa, arguing that "the rest of the world has little interest, if any, to cooperate with a continent stricken by civil strife" (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 221).

3.1.2 Image of Virtue: Perceptions about Norm Compliance

In the cases under review here, policy-relevant actors also express concerns about external perceptions of their region's (non-)compliance with international norms (especially human rights and democracy) and the relationship between these perceptions and the region's political marginalization (the diminished international influence wielded by the RO and/or its member states).

For example, a democratic image is a soft power resource, and a democratic state that is a member of an organization with a reputation for being illiberal may suffer "guilt by association" and fear erosion of this soft power resource. Even before the 1997 financial crisis, ASEAN's more democratic member states voiced concerns about ASEAN's reputation as a "club of dictators." A "liberal-illiberal" divide developed in the mid-1990s over Myanmar's accession to the association, because it raised questions about whether the domestic politics of a candidate member state (e.g. its regime type and human rights record) should have bearing on ASEAN's decision to admit it. The most democratic ASEAN members at the time, Thailand and the Philippines, grew reluctant to admit Myanmar in part because of the harmful effect the latter's membership would have on the reputation of ASEAN and its member state. It is telling that the Philippines finally agreed to Myanmar's admission at the 1997 summit in part because the summit itself was hosted by Malaysia, in Kuala Lumpur. The next year's summit was to take place in Manila, and the Philippine government reasoned that, if the Myanmar question were postponed to the 1998 summit, Myanmar's accession would have been "more tightly and problematically linked" to Manila (Ba 2009: 120). One Philippine official indicated that having this event take place on Philippine soil would have been "a disaster, at least for the Philippines, as the 'champion of human rights'" (quoted in Ba 2009: 120). After the fact, a Thai parliamentarian criticized the decision to admit Myanmar in reference to ASEAN's international image, explaining that image and influence are linked:

> Because image is important, ASEAN's ability to maintain and enhance its **status as an influential diplomatic community** will be determined not by the number of members but by the perceived quality of membership, which in turn, is likely to be determined by the quality of new members…Many groups in the West believe ASEAN to be a 'club of dictators': it is an unjust label, but an early admission of Burma will simply give sustenance to this prejudice…Why should the ASEAN governments and peoples have to bear the costs of the [junta's] folly and intransigence? (quoted in Acharya 2014: 106, emphasis mine).

In the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the problem of ASEAN's illiberal image became more urgent. While ASEAN and the ASEAN Way had previously enjoyed a level of performance legitimacy based on an image of economic success – and had therefore been to some degree shielded from international criticism on human rights and democracy – the degradation of this image in the wake of the financial crisis opened the grouping up for criticism on non-economic issues. According to Amitav Acharya, because of its exceptional economic performance prior to 1997,

> Southeast Asia was spared the kind of vigorous democratization campaign directed by Western countries and financial institutions at the economically less vibrant African and Latin American states. Western opposition to authoritarian rule in Southeast Asia was balanced by a pragmatic recognition of trade and investment opportunities available in the region (Acharya 1999: 423f).

In the post-1997 period, human rights violations in some ASEAN states produced what Anja Jetschke terms an "indirect negative externality" in the form of a negative reputation for ASEAN – a social cost for the group (Jetschke 2015).

In his efforts to convince member states to reform the ASEAN Way in the late 1990s, Thai foreign minister Surin raised the problem of ASEAN's diminished influence in the world, insisting that, "we either reform ourselves to meet international standards, or we can resist and be overwhelmed in the end, with no control over the pace or direction of change." Echoing this, and making a more explicit connection between norm compliance and international influence, Surin's deputy minister argued that "States or groups of states which hope to play an influential role in the international political arena [...] cannot blatantly and cynically ignore or violate [international norms] on a sustained basis." Instead, they must "do their utmost to make themselves acceptable in the eyes of the international community." Furthermore, in affirmation of the "principle and practice of sovereign accountability," ASEAN member states should have the "right to encourage fellow members to become more accountable to the region and to the international community" (all quoted in Jones 2008: 275).

Although Surin did not succeed in convincing ASEAN to adopt his "flexible engagement" proposal, other members did take seriously the problem of the association's negative image, and this shaped ASEAN practices thereafter. For example, as noted above, ASEAN has increasingly put pressure on Myanmar to make political reforms. As Singapore's foreign minister stated in 2007, "we have to take issue with a member [Myanmar] who behaved badly and brought down the image of everyone" (quoted in Jetschke 2015: 122). According to Lee Jones, ASEAN's attempts to "discipline" Myanmar have been aimed at "regain[ing] international political and economic 'relevance' [...] in the wake of the financial crisis" (Jones 2009b: 388). In other words, both the logic of influence and resources were at play.

In the African case, regional actors' concerns about norm non-compliance are most often linked to problems of economic (rather than political) marginalization. Nonetheless, perceptions of norm non-compliance and related diminished international influence were not wholly irrelevant for policy-relevant actors on the continent. For example, former UNECA economist and then co-director of the African Leadership Forum, Felix Mosha, wrote at length in his background paper to the 1991 Kampala Forum about the image of Africa as "a crucial determination of Africa's standing in world affairs" (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 208). In order to give Africa "a greater moral standing and say in world affairs" (i.e. influence), Mosha called for African states to address, among other things, the problems of corruption, unequal treatment of citizens, non-compliance with labor standards, and overall disrespect for the "African person" (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 209f).

In the late 1990s, post-apartheid South African leaders were particularly interested in cultivating a democratic image of Africa, and some of their justifications were related to the need to enhance Africa's (but especially South Africa's) international influence. According to Thomas Kwasi Tieku, Thabo Mbeki sought pro-democracy reforms at the OAU in order that it shed its "dictators' club" image (which reflected back poorly on South Africa). This improved international image would in turn enable South Africa to "play its effective and rightful role on the global terrain" (Tieku 2004: 255).

3.2 Image Matters because It Impacts a Region's Ability to Attract Resources

In addition to diminishing soft power, negative perceptions of a region/RO can result in decreased resource flows to that region from investors and donors – this is the economic component of marginalization referenced above. Jetschke's concept of image as indirect externality is again useful here (Jetschke 2015). States in the same region are bound to one another because of that region's "brand." Simon Anholt, developer of the Anholt Nation Brands Index, writes that "places have images just as products and corporations have images, and [...] places depend to a similar extent on the power and appeal of those images for their progress and prosperity" (Anholt 2007: 11). Furthermore, "[...] the advance of globalization means that every country, city and region must compete with every other for its share of the world's commercial, political, social, and cultural transactions. In such an environment, as in any busy marketplace, brand image becomes a critical factor; the necessary short cut to an informed buying decision" (Anholt 2007: 4).

This section is organized according to the two primary relevant audiences: donors and investors. The two categories of perceived attributes established in Section 2.1, policy effectiveness and norm compliance, remain relevant, and, as before, they are interrelated.

3.2.1 Donor Perceptions

When it comes to foreign aid, a regional image of underdevelopment and dysfunction (ineffectiveness) is a double-edged sword; on the one hand, donors might prioritize the neediest recipients, but on the other hand, donors might come to perceive these recipients as "lost causes." In a statement at a 1988 conference organized by the African Leadership Forum titled "For Improving the Economic and Social Situation in Africa," UNECA Executive Secretary Adedeji emphasized this very point:

> There is a complete and cynical change in the attitude of the international community towards the development process, implying that since in any case developing countries will never make it, why should one bother about them? When I recently met two US Congressmen, both wondered why more American taxpayers' money should be devoted to the development of Africa [...] In 1986, the countries of the world agreed for the first time at a special session of the UN General Assembly that something had to be done to improve the situation of Africa. Yet, just three months later, the USA reduced its Official Development Assistance to Africa by 40 per cent in spite of all pleas [...] (African Leadership Forum 1988: 39).

Later in the session, he called for Africa to "get our house in order to attract the foreign aid we need to get ourselves out of the woods" (African Leadership Forum 1988: 39). UNECA's 1987 Abuja Statement on Economic Recovery and Long-Term Development in Africa makes a similar point about the problem of economic marginalization: "One of the major challenges that faces Africa is how to sustain international public interest on Africa's long-term development though continuous and effective communication that will reach all levels of society" (UNECA 1987).

One civil society participant in the African Leadership Forum's 1991 Kampala Forum rang similar alarms about perceptions of policy ineffectiveness, or what he called the "crisis of confidence in the continent in the closely related areas of economic and political management" (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 13). He quoted an article from *The Economist* of the same year that read in part "With cold-war interests gone, it is tempting to forget Africa […] Besides, aid to black Africa has a depressing record. In the 1980s, the region swallowed more than $100 billion of it and defiantly got poorer. Perhaps money for Eastern Europe would be money better spent."[10]

At the Kampala Forum, there was also discussion of the threat of this aid diversion in terms of regime type and the attractiveness of aiding new democracies in Eastern Europe (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 99) as well as donors' "increased pressure upon African governments for similar democratization and popular participation" (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 237). Donors' punishment of a region for its perceived illiberalism (norm non-compliance) is relevant to the Southeast Asian case as well. Writing in the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, Acharya observed that "[R]egional groupings of authoritarian states, or groupings that reluctantly tolerate authoritarianism out of deference to the principle of non-interference, are unlikely to find sympathy and support from international donors […] more aid is now available to regional groupings which promote democracy and human rights" (Acharya 2003: 378). Indeed, as suggested above, the West arguably used the 1997 financial crisis as an opportunity to hold ASEAN states accountable for illiberal practices. The crisis had weakened the Asian Values discourse sermonized by authoritarian leaders in the region by calling into question the supposed positive relationship between the kinds of illiberalism practiced by some Asian regimes and the incredible growth experienced by their economies in the pre-1997 years. Two democratic regimes – Thailand and South Korea – managed recovery better than did authoritarian Indonesia. Southeast Asian states became more vulnerable to international pressure – from the International Monetary Fund and Western donors – to liberalize (economically and politically) than they had been when their economies were strong (Acharya 1999: 419).

Western governments and international institutions pointed to "market-distorting connections between Asian governments and business" as responsible for the crisis (Narine 2002: 185) and, whereas earlier economic successes had been attributed to – and authoritarian rule justified by – Asian Values, the 1997 economic crisis was blamed in part on these same Asian Values (Acharya 1999: 419). In June 1998, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright delivered a speech attributing the relative success of Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand in managing the economic crisis to their democratic governance, specifically, that "their people were able to elect new governments, which started work in a climate of openness and trust, and with the moral legitimacy to call for shared sacrifice" (quoted in Acharya 1999: 421).

3.2.2 Investor Perceptions

Perceptions related to policy ineffectiveness and/or norm non-compliance can also dissuade *investors*. It is not just the reputation of the individual states that matters, but that of the region/RO itself. In her recent book "The Company States Keep: International Economic Organizations and Investor Perceptions," Julia

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10 *The Economist*, 2 February 1991, p. 17, quoted in Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 17f.

Gray finds that one "short cut" investors use (when evaluating political risk in a candidate country) is the reputation of other countries that "keep company" with the candidate country (through membership in a regional organization). In other words, states bear the costs or reap the rewards of the reputations of those states with whom they formally associate, because investors have incomplete information (Gray 2013).

Language from the outcome document of a 1990 conference convened by the African Leadership Forum tied concerns about economic marginalization to investors' perceptions about Africa:

> *Perceptions on political instability are perhaps the greatest impediments to FDI in Africa. [...] To a large measure, the present level of FDI in Africa is also a reflection of certain negative, but not necessarily correct perceptions of Africa by potential investors [...] The negative perceptions Western investors tend to have concerning Africa as a whole combine to create a rather unpromising situation. African Governments should therefore combat these negative perceptions concerning the overall investment climate on the continent. This may have to be done at the level of individual countries, the OAU and international organizations" (African Leadership Forum 1990: 8, 22).*

A Kampala Forum (1991) participant also stressed the relationship between perceptions of insecurity and instability in Africa and decreased investment, citing the "decapitalization or divestures from Africa arising from perceived or real risk assessments" and the compounding and generalization of the divestment problem due to the fact that investors decline to "seriously invest in regions from which foreign capital was fleeing" (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 222).

With respect to illiberalism (norm non-compliance), Thabo Mbeki, who was particularly enthusiastic about democracy and human rights promotion on the continent, justified his efforts primarily with reference to Africa's need to achieve a more liberal image in the world, in order to counter Afro-pessimism and attract foreign direct investment. He reasoned that firms are wary of investing in Africa, because its countries, as a group, have a reputation for not respecting rights, including property rights (Tieku 2004: 253). According to Thomas Kwasi Tieku, because the African continent's international reputation regarding the protection of rights – including property rights – was "tainted," the ruling party in South Africa was motivated to seek out ways to improve this collective image (Tieku 2004: 253). Early on in his term, Mbeki vehemently criticized one-party and personal rule on the continent, even encouraging citizens of African countries to "resist all tyranny," because "[i]n Africa, the people must govern" (quoted in Landsberg 2000: 108). Tieku further argues that South Africa's push for a new continental body (the African Union) had been, since Nelson Mandela's administration, "at the core" of post-apartheid South Africa's principal goal of "improv[ing] the image of Africa in order to attract foreign investment and make the new South Africa an important global trading nation" (Tieku 2004: 253).

In the Southeast Asian case, regional actors have made many public statements about the problem of investor perceptions in the wake of the 1997 financial crisis and beyond. These statements did not only come from those leading calls for reform, like Thailand in the late 1990s and Indonesia in the 2000s. As quoted above, in 2000, Singapore's foreign minister linked perceptions of ASEAN as an "ineffective [...] sunset organization" to the threat of economic marginalization and ASEAN's relegation "to the sidelines" by international investors (quoted in Jones 2010: 494). Later that decade, Singapore's prime minister

articulated concerns about the danger of ASEAN "fall[ing] off the radar screen of international companies and investors" if it turned a blind eye to human rights violations in Myanmar (quoted in Jetschke 2015: 122). Indeed, Jetschke and Murray attribute much of ASEAN's institutional development in the 2000s to its members' shared desire to recapture international relevance and legitimacy and "as a consequence a stream of urgently needed foreign direct investment" (Jetschke/Murray 2012: 181f). For its part, Indonesia, which established itself as a leader of human rights and democracy-promotion in ASEAN from the mid-2000s, was partially motivated by a desire to repair its international reputation with respect to political stability and economic dynamism and thereby "reinvigorate" its economy (Sukma 2011: 111f).

4. Collective Image Management Strategies

I have so far discussed why states and others care about collective image – I now turn to what they (might) do about it. In this section, I present two ways to categorize image management strategies (see Section 3.1. and 3.2.). First though, I will touch on the problem of actorness. A region is a less unitary actor than is a state. The process through which image management strategies are formulated and enacted is complicated by lack of consensus about the problem (Does the region have a bad image? How important a problem is this?) and the solution (Should we change our norms to change our image?) as well as collective action problems (Who will assume leadership?). In neither case under review was there total consensus about the nature of the region's negative image or the best course of action to take to address this problem. In the African case, regional bureaucrats (at the OAU and UNECA) took the lead in calling for OAU reforms, in part as an image management strategy. They launched this campaign in collaboration with likeminded state actors, but their role was very important. In the ASEAN case, regional bureaucrats seem to have less power, and state actors (e.g. Thailand's foreign minister in the late 1990s and Indonesia's in the 2000s) took the lead in calling for measures (involving some reforms to the ASEAN Way) to improve ASEAN's image.

Certain kinds of states may be more likely to take interest in managing certain kinds of negative perceptions and might therefore take a leadership role in image management efforts. As discussed above, regime type is consequential. States interested in telegraphing a democratic image are not always satisfied to promote their own domestic quality of democracy – they might also be keen to manage the democratic image of their region. Being a member of an organization with a reputation as a "dictators' club" – a term used to describe both the OAU and ASEAN at various points in their histories – might detract from the democratic image of that member state vis-à-vis the international community. That is, despite the domestic and foreign policies of any particular member state, it may suffer (by association) from the negative perception extraregional actors have of the region and/or regional organization based on its illiberalism.

In the end, because regions are made up of diverse actors, it is most fruitful to think of regional image *consciousness* as something that certain actors can exploit in their efforts to gain support within the region for particular regional policies. Reform proponents can frame their policy proposals as regional image *management* strategies in order to persuade. In the cases discussed here, those seeking to circumscribe the non-interference norm and create more intrusive regional institutions used the regional image management frame to make their case.

4.1 Emulation versus Distinction

In their piece "Status, Identity, and Rising Powers," Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shevchenko (2010) draw on Social Identity Theory to outline strategies that states use to "achieve a more positive, distinct identity" and improve their international standing (Larson/Shevchenko 2010: 8).[11] One strategy is to emulate the "institutions, values, or ideology of the dominant states" (Larson/Shevchenko 2010: 11). This will look familiar to scholars of international diffusion as the emulation mechanism (Simmons/Dobbin/Garrett 2006). Another strategy, which the authors argue is more appealing to emerging powers, is for states to distinguish themselves in a non-emulative way, reevaluating negative attributes as positive, promoting new norms or institutional models, and otherwise setting themselves apart, positively (Larson/ Shevchenko 2010: 15). The authors cite "normative power Europe" as an example of this strategy. Instead of competing with the United States on military might, Europe found a new dimension of superiority.

We might interpret ASEAN's international promotion of its ASEAN Way in the 1990s (see Section 2.1.1) as an instance of this second strategy. Relatedly, Singapore and Malaysia also promoted a set of domestic norms – the so-called "Asian values discourse" – as a successful alternative to "Western" norms, and ASEAN's inter-state norms were in part justified as an international complement to these domestic norms. The grouping was able to do this in part because of the region's image of (especially economic) success. According to Thomas Risse and Stephen Ropp, "The Asian values debate demonstrates that some states command sufficient international legitimacy to establish a counter-discourse to Western-led human rights arguments." Because Southeast Asian states "command powerful social resources which allow them to fight off external pressure," they are less "socially vulnerable" than they otherwise would be (Risse/Ropp 2013: 21).

When the ASEAN Way was called into question in the wake of the 1997 financial crisis, however, this strategy became less viable and pressure built for ASEAN to shift norms and conform more to Western liberal internationalism (Larson and Shevchenko's first strategy). ASEAN engaged in institution building in attempt to improve its image – its members established EU style institutions in the 2000s: the ASEAN Economic, Security, and Socio-Cultural Communities. The adoption of 2007 ASEAN Charter also indicates some emulation. Traditionally averse to legalistic regionalism, ASEAN did not adopt a charter at its founding in 1967. It finally did so forty years later, providing the association with a more formal legal status and institutional framework. As Anja Jetschke and Philomena Murray argue, this institution building can best be explained as emulation – ASEAN emulated EU institutions (albeit superficially, without sacrificing sovereignty in a meaningful way) because they faced a crisis of reputation in the 2000s (Jetschke/Murray 2012).

When the OAU began making reforms to regional institutions in the early 1990s, circumscribing the norm of non-interference in favor of a more intrusive form of regionalism, it may have been emulating European regionalism to some degree. One reform proponent, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, used the argument that "If the European countries can surrender some of their sovereignty for further development, African states can similarly surrender some sovereignty for greater security, both at the intra and inter-state levels [...]" (Obasanjo/Mosha 1993: 266). The nature of some African regional institutional developments

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11 Larson and Shevchenko use the term "identity" where I would use "image."

over the course of the 1990s suggests, though, that the enactment of regional policy changes was not simply, or even primarily, an emulation exercise. For example, the establishment in 1993 of a regional conflict mechanism mandated to manage intrastate disputes and the inclusion of a "Responsibility to Protect" provision in the African Union's 2000 Constitutive Act (Article 4h) were innovative rather than emulative. This does not mean that these developments were *not* part of an image management strategy – I argue they were. It suggests, though, that these reforms targeted the perceived *root causes* of Africa's negative image (e.g. civil conflict) rather than the perceptions directly.

4.2 Cosmetic "Branding" Efforts versus Substantive Policy Changes

One important way in which regional image management varies is the degree to which regional policies are changed – that is, are the management efforts more superficial or transformational? In the field of communications, "nation branding" is a concept that refers to "a compendium of discourses and practices aimed at reconstituting nationhood through marketing and branding paradigms" (Kaneva 2011: 118). At the regional level, this implies reconstitution of the region (a macro-nation) rather than the nation state. At the national level, branding may be more so cosmetic (e.g. logos and slogans) (Kaneva 2011: 118) or may in fact be "a component of national policy" incorporated into "planning, governance or economic development" (Anholt 2008: 23). Applied to the regional level, branding might also involve logos and slogans or may be a more transformational endeavor, incorporated into regional policy-making. Another way to think about this is whether image management strategies target perceptions *per se* or target the underlying problems that are understood to feed these perceptions.

The African case falls closer to the "real changes" end of the continuum with its so-called "shift from non-interference to non-indifference" that brought major reforms, including the establishment of the African Union, a much more interventionist organization than its predecessor (Coe 2015a). The Southeast Asian case falls closer to the "superficial branding" side, although some substantive changes to institutions and practices have taken place there. There are many possible reasons for this. First, it must be emphasized that the post-Cold War regional reform process that took place in Africa was not solely driven by image management imperatives, but also by longer-term processes at the OAU (Williams 2007), domestic pressures, and new international policy discourses linking security and development problems and solutions (Coe 2015b). Second, the norm of non-interference had long been more contested in African international society than among the ASEAN states, and it had already eroded somewhat over the course of the Cold War at the OAU while remaining relatively robust in Southeast Asia (Coe 2015b). Finally, Africa's economic crisis was much longer and deeper than the 1997 financial crisis.

4.2.1 The African Case

As partially discussed above, the secretariats of the OAU and UNECA launched a regional reform campaign in the early 1990s in collaboration with the African Leadership Forum. They appealed for changes

to sovereignty norms in Africa and for the development of regional institutions mandated to manage domestic-level governance and security problems. The logic of these proposals was this: in order to combat Africa's (and the OAU's) image of dysfunction, to attract international investment and resources, and to create the conditions for economic development, Africa must take collective responsibility for the problems of the continent and, through its regional institutions, promote peace and democracy. The African Leadership Forum presented a set of policy proposals to the OAU General Assembly in the early 1990s (the Kampala Document) and hoped that it would be integrated into OAU frameworks, but it was considered many times without adoption. The OAU did, however, adopt other declarations reflecting the ideas of the Kampala movement. At the 1990 summit, the heads of state adopted the Declaration on the Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes Taking Place in the World, directly responding to Secretary General's critical report published earlier that year. This declaration affirmed that the troubling concerns outlined by Salim "constitute major factors which should guide Africa's collective thinking about the challenges and options before her in the 1990s in view of the real threat of marginalization on the continent (OAU 1990b: 1)." The document focused on the precarious nature of Africa's "socio-economic situation," but then linked this situation to domestic governance and security problems. It was the first Assembly declaration to make an explicit connection between economic development and intrastate conflict management, concluding that "it is only through the creation of stable conditions" that Africa can achieve development, and vowing to "work together towards the peaceful and speedy resolution of all the conflicts on our continent" (OAU 1990b: 2).

According to former Nigerian Ambassador Sam Ibok, the 1990 Declaration "marked a decisive turning point" for African regionalism because the OAU for the first time recognized that internal conflicts demanded "a more dynamic approach, given the African preoccupations with [...] sovereignty and non-interference" (Ibok 2000: 5). The Declaration "provoked" a debate among African leaders about the relationship among governance, conflict and economic development, "set the stage for a review of past OAU approaches to conflict resolution," and brought about an "improved environment, which no doubt facilitated the extensive consultations" carried out between Secretary General Salim and member states about the creation of a permanent conflict management mechanism (Ibok 2000: 7).

Following the 1990 Declaration, Salim proceeded to consult with member states about operationalizing a regional conflict management role, and in 1992 generated a report providing recommendations for the specifics of a conflict management mechanism. In 1993, the heads of state adopted a declaration formally establishing a permanent Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution. This mechanism not only replaced the organization's defunct Mechanism for Mediation, Arbitration and Conciliation (provided for by the 1963 OAU Charter) but also expanded its competences to include intrastate (as well as interstate) conflict. "Rather remarkably for an organization that hitherto has avoided involvement in internal conflicts, the new OAU Mechanism has a clear mandate to concern itself with such conflicts" (Martin 2002: 197).

The 1990-93 period saw an important rise in regional interference in domestic political and security affairs: the OAU dispatched its first election observation mission, the African Commission for Human and People's Rights began publishing country reports, mediation became a prominent tool of the OAU, and two OAU military missions were deployed to civil conflicts. This trend in practices – along with the legalization of

these practices – accelerated over the course of the decade (Coe 2015a). Regional actors responded to six crises with military deployment during the decade, and three of these took place in the 1990-93 period. Two were OAU deployments, one to Rwanda (established in 1991) and one to Burundi (established in 1993). In the case of Rwanda, Secretary Salim "seized upon" the Rwandan Patriotic Front's rebellion in 1990 "as an important test case by which to test the preparedness of Organization to embark on a new, more interventionist path" (Berman/Sams 2000: 58).

The establishment in 1993 of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution was an important step towards "non-indifference," but the OAU had limitations, and these pushed Africa towards the creation of a new regional body, the African Union. The Rwandan genocide (1994), in which approximately 800,000 people were killed in 100 days, exposed the incapacity of the regional community (as well as the global community, for that matter) to prevent mass atrocity, even with the new conflict mechanism. The OAU had set up an African Peace Fund in 1993 to facilitate international donations (Martin 2000: 198), but money was not the only issue. By the late 1990s, analysts called for "serious reforms and reorganization" of the OAU, including a revised charter and a strengthened general secretariat (Packer/Rukare 2002: 367-369), in order to give regional institutions the tools needed to manage governance and security on the continent. The content of the African Union's mandate reflects proposals put forward by South Africa's second post-Apartheid President Thabo Mbeki and Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo (who led the African Leadership forum and won the Nigerian presidency in 1999). These proposals were based on similar regional policy platforms, the Kampala Document and the African Renaissance, respectively, which both aimed to broaden the OAU's mandate and capacity in its promotion of democracy, human rights, and intrastate security, employing a "comprehensive concept of security including 'human security'" (Moller 2009: 10).

4.2.2 The Southeast Asian Case

The institutional reforms that we see in the Southeast Asian case are generally more superficial. The establishment of the ASEAN Security and Socio-Cultural Communities and the ASEAN Charter were motivated in part by ASEAN states' desire to recapture the association's "economic and political relevance" and to "project a reformist, progressive image" of the region as a whole (Jones 2010: 494). However, these institutional developments did not in fact entail much modification to ASEAN's core norms. As Jetschke and Murray argue, the Communities and Charter were the result of "selective emulation" of EU institutions, but without the associated sovereignty sacrifice (Jetschke/Murray 2012: 176). The 2007 ASEAN Charter (which entered into force in 2008) was proposed in 2005, and an Eminent Persons Group[12] was formed to develop the document. Echoing Thailand's former foreign minister's "flexible engagement" proposal, Indonesia's representative to the group argued for "an agreed mechanism through which member states could work together to help a member country in addressing internal problems with clear external implications" and more broadly that, although "respect for sovereignty must remain a basic principle of ASEAN," a more

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12 A group of ten prominent individuals, one from each ASEAN member state, tasked with developing "bold and visionary ideas to strengthen ASEAN." See page 2 of the Report of the Eminent Persons Group on the ASEAN Charter (December 2006), accessed at http://www.asean.org/storage/images/archive/19247.pdf; 10 April 2017.

flexible interpretation of non-interference should be adopted ("we have to be non-doctrinaire in some of these things") (Sukma 2011: 113). In the end, though, the ASEAN Charter mostly codifies existing norms, and the working group's least conservative recommendations, including sanctions for member non-compliance with ASEAN rules and majority voting procedures (to replace consensus decision making), were not incorporated. The charter does contain several affirmations of ASEAN's commitment to democracy and human rights, but these are not accompanied by enforcement mechanisms.

Still, a modest norm shift can be detected in the years since 1997. Evidence of this can be found in high profile instances of public criticism by ASEAN member states against each other beginning in the late 1990s. For example, when the Malaysian prime minister dismissed and jailed the deputy prime minister in 1998, Indonesia and the Philippines publicly criticized Kuala Lumpur for violating the official's due process and other human rights. According to Acharya, this incidence "may have been the first time that the head of state of an ASEAN state had complained directly about human rights violations in a fellow member state" (Acharya 1999: 430).

Next, when the UN Security Council authorized a multinational peacekeeping force to be deployed in East Timor in 1999, ASEAN states initially held reservations about the force; they were wary of the decision to allow the mission to operate under a Chapter XII mandate, and they worried that it would set a precedent for future Western-initiated interventions (Dupont 2000: 164). Within ASEAN, democratic Thailand and the Philippines were "the most sympathetic" to humanitarian intervention in East Timor (Khong/Nesadurai 2007: 46). In the end, though, Malaysia and Singapore joined Thailand and the Philippines in contributing troops to the multinational force. According to Alan Dupont, since ASEAN's "initial low key response" to the violence in East Timor had "deepened skepticism in the West about the organization's usefulness," Southeast Asian states were concerned about their reputation, which was "on the line" because of ASEAN's "inability to respond effectively to the economic crisis or ameliorate the anti-democratic behavior of Burma" (Dupont 2000: 167f).

Furthermore, since the financial crisis, ASEAN has, as noted above, increasingly put pressure on Myanmar to make political reforms. ASEAN denied Myanmar its turn at the association's chairmanship in 2006 because it had not made sufficient progress on democratic reforms (this was considered a "minor defeat for the non-interference doctrine"). Malaysia even suggested that Myanmar might risk expulsion if it continued on its current path (although this harsh approach was never seriously considered by the group) (Acharya 2014: 223). Over the next several years, ASEAN increasingly issued critical statements and applied "mild pressure" on the repressive regime. This constitutes a change in its non-interference policy (but not a major change) (Acharya 2014: 223). Finally, as Anja Jetschke argues, the creation of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission for Human Rights in (2009) was aimed at improving human rights in the region (and particularly in Myanmar) in order to combat ASEAN's negative image with respect to human rights (Jetschke 2015).

5. Conclusion

States in the same region are bound together not just by shared borders, conflict spillover, and economic interdependence, but also by the ways in which the world imagines them as a collective. They reap the benefits or suffer the consequences of these associations, and they use regional cooperation, when possible, as a means to have a voice in global affairs and to manage globalization. Especially for states in the global South, the image or reputation of the region to which they belong can significantly impact their ability to influence international politics and attract resources, and so we should expect to – and do – see states and other policy-relevant regional actors seeking to manage this image, sometimes through emulation, and sometimes through distinction. Importantly for the study of comparative regional governance, these management efforts can contribute to significant changes in regional norms and institutions. Collective image management is of course not the only force driving normative and institutional change at the regional level; other material and non-material factors shape these developments and interact with image consciousness and management in complex ways. This paper simply seeks to draw attention to an important yet overlooked aspect of these causal processes – collective regional image – and to begin to unpack its logics and associated modes of collective action.

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