

## East Asian Soft Power and East Asian Governance

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*The purpose of this paper is to critically review the current discourses on “global governance” and to suggest an East Asian view of alternative governance mechanism from the perspective of “soft power.” This paper argues that many countries in the East Asian region have been either reluctantly or unknowingly following the global governance building, led by the “Western” countries, and therefore have failed to build a safety net for themselves in the form of a “region” or regional cooperation. Global governance is connected to the realm of soft power as it affects the preferences and behaviors of the actors while regarding the actual use of physical coercive forces as a last resort. Therefore, it is necessary to expand the discourse of global governance to include the discussion of soft power, and the East Asian region may need to develop its safety net by creating its own soft power and regional governance mechanism. Here, speech acts and standard setting are the prerequisites in developing East Asian soft power. Therefore this paper argues that East Asian actors use the concepts like the “East Asian Governance,” “East Asian Standard,” “East Asian Consensus” more frequently and intensely than before even if those terms still do not have concrete substances and contents to be inter-subjectively taken by the actors in the region. As people use and speak of the terms more often and intensely, there will be more concrete efforts by the East Asian actors to substantiate the concepts, and the contents of East Asian governance will gradually evolve.*

**Keywords:** *Global Governance, Soft Power, East Asian Governance, East Asian Standard, East Asian Consensus, National Safety Net.*

The purpose of this paper is to critically review the current discourses on “global governance” and to suggest an East Asian view of alternative governance mechanism from the perspective of “soft power.” This paper will argue that the current global governance structure is “global politics by other means” connoting “network oriented global value allocation processes” that favor certain countries and actors at the expense of others. I will suggest that many countries in the East Asian region have been either reluctantly or unknowingly following the global governance building led by the “Western” countries, and therefore have failed to build a safety net for themselves in the form of a “region” or regional cooperation.

Global governance pertains to the realm of soft power as it affects the preferences and behaviors of the actors while regarding the actual use of physical coercive forces as a last resort. Therefore, it is necessary to expand the discourse of global governance to the discussion of soft power, and the East Asian region may need to develop its safety net by creating its own soft power and regional governance mechanism. Here, speech acts and standard setting are the prerequisites in developing East Asian soft power, and therefore I will argue that East Asian actors use the concepts like the “East Asian Governance,” “East Asian Standard,” “East Asian Consensus” more frequently and intensely than before even if those terms still do not have concrete substances and contents to be inter-subjectively taken by the actors in the region. As people use and speak of the terms more often and intensely, more concrete efforts by the East Asian actors to substantiate the concepts will follow, and the contents of East Asian governance will gradually evolve accordingly.

## 1. GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

With the end of the cold war and the expansion of globalization, the usage of the concept, “global governance” began to increase in the 1990s (Hewson and Sinclair 1999; Rosenau and Czempeli 1992; Rosenau 1990; Prakash and Jeffrey 1999; Young 1997). However, to the students of international relations, the concept is not revolutionary or even intuitive, because international relations have always been characterized by “governance without world government” or the absence of “world government,” namely, anarchy. The concept of governance was initially introduced to comprehensively replace the concept of government in domestic politics as societies and politics increasingly became too complex for the government alone to govern. In the world of anarchy, or international relations, therefore, importing the concept of governance to the discipline of international relations was not a great eye opener.

Yet, the increasing number and frequency of people and journals using the concept indicates that the concept, “global governance” is gaining a significant influence in terms of sociology of knowledge and also in terms of speech act. Particularly, the increasing frequency and acceptance of the concept in the Asian region, which is geographically distant from the place of the origin of the concept tells us that the concept is globalizing extremely rapidly, and widely expanding its sphere of influence. Accordingly, it is worthwhile to critically review the conceptual connotations of global governance.

### 1.1. The Meaning of Governance: Maintaining the Stable Process of Value Allocation

#### *(1) Governance within the State*

The phenomenon of politics generally pertains to the process of allocation of values among diverse actors. As people residing within the same nation-state pursue different kinds and amounts of limited values, there always occurs the problem of allocation of values. Simply speaking, domestic politics is an “authoritative allocation of values” or is about “who gets what, when, and how.”<sup>1</sup> In a stable domestic society, the allocation process is supposed to be very authoritative, and therefore, the government, which is regarded as the highest authoritative entity, is mainly and largely in charge of allocating limited amount of values to diverse people and groups of people. In other words, the government is supposed to be the major instrument of allocating values in a stable domestic society since the government monopolizes legitimate use of violence, legitimate capability to mobilize economic resources, and legitimate rights to make state institutions including markets and other economic institutions.<sup>2</sup>

Consequently, the political forces that capture the government will try to take advantage and use the government to allocate values in their favor, based upon their interests, identities, or philosophies (Moraviscik 1997). When the favorable allocation structure is constructed, the political forces that capture the government will again try to institutionalize the structure,

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<sup>1</sup> David Easton defines politics as “authoritative allocation of values.” On David Easton’s definition, see Easton (1965); Similarly, Harold Lasswell defines politics as “who gets what when and how.” See Lasswell (1958).

<sup>2</sup> According to Max Weber, the modern state monopolizes the means of legitimate physical violence over a well-defined territory. See Max Weber (1994).

enforce the rules and laws that support the structure, disseminate norms, ideas, and theories that justify the structure, and co-opt the competing political forces through financial and other means, or coerce the resisting political forces through “legitimate” violence. The government, therefore, can be seen as a major instrument for the ruling political forces to maintain and strengthen the stable and favorable process of domestic value allocation. Of course, when different political forces capture the government either through legitimate electoral processes or through unlawful takeover, the government will again be used by the new political forces to change the existing allocation processes, patterns and structure in their favor (Moraviscik 1997). Then a new set of institutions, rules, laws, norms, ideas, theories, cooptation and coercion will follow.

Within a complex modern democratic society, the above functions of maintaining and strengthening certain value allocation process cannot be done solely by the government. At the same time, since the cost of coercion and electoral loss is too heavy, the consent of the people becomes increasingly important. The political forces that capture the power therefore will not only look at the governmental instruments but will also look to the supporting groups in the civil society, and the vast networks of resources, information, norms and ideas to “govern” the state and the people. The collective set of all these resources and instruments has been neutrally conceptualized as “governance.” But as argued above, the concept of governance cannot be value-free and neutral, because it reflects the interests of the ruling power. In fact, “governance” and “ruling” may be interchangeable concepts though the latter sounds more authoritarian.<sup>3</sup>

One of the reasons that the concept of governance has become a new fad may be that the dominant roles and functions of the government seem to be decreasing as the society gets more complex, interconnected, and open than before. The network of various actors including the government, and cooperation among them seem to be replacing and penetrating many of the traditional functions and roles of the government. That does not mean that the government has become just one among equals in the governance network. Rather, the relative importance of other actors has increased. Against this backdrop, the concept of governance emerged as a new encompassing concept replacing the concept of government or “ruling,” which connotes basically uni-directional processes. But again, the concept of governance can be understood as a synonym of politics in the sense that it involves stable ways and patterns to allocate values in domestic society.

## *(2) Governance Across the State*

The process of value allocation does not take place only within a domestic society. It also takes place across states. Again, within these processes of value allocation across states, diverse actors and political forces compete to create a pattern or structure of value allocation that favors them. This is what we call “international politics or relations.” In this realm, not unlike domestic politics, the national government emerges as the most significant instrument for the national actors to construct an international order that favors them. Realists argue that

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<sup>3</sup> This definition of governance is obviously not a conventional one which emphasizes upon empowering non-governmental actors. However, I do not fully take the conventional definition of governance because empowering non-governmental actors is also done in very biased ways so that the dominant groups of a society can “rule” more effectively in a complex world. Therefore, in the world of governance or global governance, the main actors are still dominant political groups of a society that capture the state. On similar understanding of domestic politics, see Moraviscik (1997).

materially powerful countries will dominantly construct the international order in their favor by exerting their power, while institutionalists or neoliberal institutionalists argue that international institutions can constrain the behavior of the state so that the states can cooperate each other when there exist common interests among them.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, constructivists argue that ideas, inter-subjective construction of reality do matter in building a peculiar type of international order.<sup>5</sup>

The only difference between domestic value allocation processes and international processes is that there is no world government comparable to national governments in the international processes. But except that, the instruments to be employed to allocate values among diverse actors are basically the same: the government, institutions, rules, laws, norms, ideas, co-optation, coercion, etc. Those who capture the government of individual state, as in the domestic politics, use the government, institutions, and ideas or standards to construct, strengthen or change the structure and pattern of global value allocation processes in their favor. The collective set of all these instruments and network of resources that affect allocation processes across the state is again neutrally conceptualized as “global governance.”

Recently the concept of global governance has become the new buzzword as the interdependence among states increased with the development of globalization, and also as the global interactions become extremely complex with the increased density and speed of interactions among increased number of actors. Again, not unlike domestic politics, people tend to think that the roles and the functions of the government are fading away while other actors and resources such as multinational corporations (MNC), non-governmental organizations (NGO), and international institutions and norms are increasingly taking up the center stage (Mathew 1997). Actors can directly contact the actors in other countries without the permission of the government, and oftentimes civic groups of a country can influence the domestic politics of other countries (Keck and Sikkink 1998).

James Rosenau terms this complex process as “governance without government.” But that conceptualization is not accurate because the government has always been one of many diverse instruments for value allocation across the states. The relative importance of each instrument has varied in accordance with either changed balance of capabilities among the states, or the density of interdependence. Yet, the government is still actively used and employed by the dominant political forces to influence the global value allocation processes, though other instruments such as international institutions, ideas, norms, and standards have become quite conspicuous as well. Therefore, it would be much more accurate to describe the current pattern or structure of global value allocation processes as “governance with less government.” In fact, if the global governance is to be governance without government, then it will be very likely that the weak states or the people of the weak states will lose the most effective shields for them, namely the government, in the face of growing global threats and pressures (although there are many cases in which the governments of the weak states themselves are the threats to the people). It is completely unnecessary to disarm herself when other countries still make use of their governments to maintain or strengthening the existing global value allocation structure.

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<sup>4</sup> On discussion and debates between Realists, Neorealists, and Neoliberal Institutionalists, see Keohane (1986).

<sup>5</sup> On constructivist discussions on international relations, see Wendt (1999,1992,1995:71-81); Ruggie (1998: 855-885)

Compared with domestic politics, it may be much more difficult to change the previous allocation order in global politics, because global politics do not allow global elections and the establishment of the global government to be captured by the people. Therefore, the global structure of value allocation naturally reflects the interests of the powerful political forces of the advanced industrialized countries, be they capitalists, specific industries, or NGOs. Unless those powerful groups or transnational coalitions of those powerful groups are replaced by other powerful groups or coalitions, the international order or global governance structure can hardly change. Recently, there increasingly appear some new ways to change or rearrange the global governance structure, and one major example of them is the so called “regional responses.” European Union is a typical example, and NAFTA, ASEAN, ASEAN + 3, EAS, MERCOSUR, etc. are other examples.

These regional responses have been initiated for various reasons, but one major function of these regional responses is to rearrange the global governance structure by creating individual, but inter-connected regional governance structures.<sup>6</sup> As is well known, some are successful, and some are not. But having these regional governance structure brings about a big benefit, and that is what I call “national safety net.” In the following sections, I will critically review the current discussion and patterns of global governance from a soft power perspective, and suggest why we need East Asian Governance, East Asian Standard, and East Asian Consensus to build a national safety net in the region.

## 2. GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND SOFT POWER

### 2.1. Different Categories of Soft Power

The concept of soft power was first introduced by Joseph Nye in his book, “Bound to Lead,” to explain and predict the persistence of the US hegemony during the days of American national decline in the 1980s (Nye 1990). In its original conception, soft power was defined as co-optive behavioral power, meaning “getting others to want what you want” (Nye 1990:188). But as the concept itself has become very much in fashion, it expanded its meaning to include “attractive power” “persuasive power” or anything using culture or images.<sup>7</sup>

Generally speaking, soft power that uses soft resources such as culture or images can be roughly categorized into five categories in accordance with the policy goals to achieve.<sup>8</sup> They are: (1) soft power to improve external security environment by projecting peaceful and attractive images of a country; (2) soft power to mobilize other countries’ supports for one’s foreign and security policies; (3) soft power to manipulate other countries’ way of thinking and preferences; (4) soft power to maintain unity of a community or community of countries; (5) soft power to increase approval ratings of a leader or domestic support of a government.

(1) Examples of the first category of soft power are China’s recent emphasis on “peaceful

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<sup>6</sup> On very well studied theoretical discussions on regionalism, see Mansfield and Helen (1997); on recent trends of regionalism in East Asia, see Yoshimatsu (2008).

<sup>7</sup> The author has a different definition and a theory of soft power from those of Joseph Nye. See Geun Lee (June, Forthcoming).

<sup>8</sup> The following discussion on different categories and strategies of soft power is mainly taken from my previous article. See Geun Lee (June, Forthcoming).

rising or development” and “harmonious world” (Cho and Jeong 2008), and Japan’s post-War efforts to project peaceful image of itself through the Peace Constitution, 3 Non-nuclear Principles, self-restraint of Self Defense Forces, and 1% GDP limit on defense spending (Pharr 1993). The soft power strategy of this category contains combination of “soft resources” such as national slogans, policy proposals, and public diplomacy to minimize threatening images while projecting a peace-loving image of a country when a country is either entering the international society as a new or transformed member, or is rapidly rising in terms of its hard power. The case of China pertains to both aspects as China has been rising extremely rapidly in terms of its hard power capabilities while it tries to enter the international society as a normal responsible country leaving behind the past history of communist legacies. Unless the increase of China’s hard power capabilities is balanced with soft power capabilities, it is very probable that China will face a formidable coalition of antagonistic countries that may be threatened by China’s increased hard power. The debate on the “Rise of China” is evidence of this threatening perception about China’s increased hard power by other countries, particularly the US (Saunders 2001).

(2) The second category of soft power is necessary for an effective leadership in mobilizing collective actions among countries. Unless an action by a leading country is justified by reasonable rationales or causes, the leading country cannot form an effective coalition of countries. Recent criticisms against the lack of US soft power in its global war on terrorism or the war in Iraq all pertain to this category of soft power (Nye 2004). General examples of the second category of soft power are justification of economic sanctions or foreign invasions through the UN procedures such as General Assembly resolutions or Security Council resolutions. Theories of Just War or manipulation of images of enemies by news media also belong to this second category. This category of soft power is important in saving costs of hard power because burden sharing can be done among coalition partners.

(3) The third category of soft power aims at more direct consequence of changing preferences and behaviors of others by using ideational resources. Examples of the third category are spreading standards, theories, concepts, or discourses to other countries so that they adopt specific ways of thinking. “Washington Consensus,” “Neoliberalism,” “Global Standard or Governance” discourses are some of the examples of the theories and discourses developed and spread by Anglo-American powers (Harvey 2005; Chang 2002; Faux 2006). Japan also had similar soft power in the past when it developed and spread “flying geese model,” “Toyotaism,” “Just-in-time system” or “soft authoritarianism” (Deyo 1987; Yamamura and Yasukichi 1987; Dore 1988; Friedman 1988). International celebrities can play important roles in spreading theories, and discourses. Books, lectures, comments of international celebrities such as Nobel laureates, famous entrepreneurs like Bill Gates, or star politicians are very influential in exerting this category of soft power. Therefore, possession of internationally famous celebrities contributes greatly to the soft power potential of a country.

(4) Maintaining a large size of political economic entities such as an empire, a nation, or a community demands soft power at the center of the entities because coercive, violent suppression of defectors are too costly and too short-term. Natural identification or loyalty by the members of such entities pertains to this area of soft power. Examples of the fourth category are an empire’s efforts to maintain its unity over a vast imperial territory through imperial museum, imperial rituals, common languages, invention of traditions, and common

life styles.<sup>9</sup> The EU's efforts to establish common European Constitution and other institutions, and symbols are a similar example.

(5) Examples of the fifth category are creating national heroes, invoking patriotism by international sports competition, or showing a leader's outstanding performances in international summits or conferences so as to increase domestic popularity of a leader or a government. In most cases, the fifth category of soft power is geared toward domestic audience rather than international audience. However, without international dimension, this fifth category of soft power cannot exist either.

## 2.2. Soft Power Strategies

Among many soft power strategies to achieve the soft power goals mentioned above, some practical ones that have been proven feasible are as follows:<sup>10</sup>

- (1) Manipulation or creation of self-images to improve security environments: A typical example of this strategy is Germany's and Japan's post World War II efforts to repent on its imperial atrocities and consequent institutionalization and repeated rituals relating to the repentance. Peace constitution and self-restraint on defense spending and remilitarization in Japan helped preventing hostile coalitions against Japan from forming in the Asian region which were of course complemented by the presence of the US-Japan alliance. Germany's peaceful coexistence with the surrounding European countries has been made possible by sincere repentance and attitude by German leaders and politicians regarding the behaviors of Nazis (which was again complemented by the presence of NATO, and other multilateral institutions in Europe). On the other hand, when images of a country reflect better capabilities, attractiveness, the individual level security (human security) of foreign residents of the country will improve as they will face less discrimination or more respect in the country of their residence.
- (2) Manipulation of others' images to mobilize supports for collective actions: the US has been particularly adroit in manipulating or creating others' negative images to mobilize international supports for collective actions under the US leadership. Identifying the Soviet Union as an "Evil Empire," or pinpointing Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as "Axis of Evil" are typical examples. On the other hand, the UN can create an image or theories of global warming (sense of fear and urgency) so that nations in the world can collectively act under the UN leadership to reduce the so-called green house gases.<sup>11</sup> When the leader country has an image of representing universal values such as liberty, freedom, democracy, poverty eradication, it will be easier to mobilize supports for collective actions.
- (3) Network Effect Strategy: Spreading certain standards, behavioral codes, and common reference point is the central element of this strategy. The goal of this strategy is to form an external environment which favors the countries, companies, or interest groups that are already accustomed to the standards, norms, rules, or institutions.<sup>12</sup> Spread of global

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<sup>9</sup> On the relationship between the Roman Empire and its Soft Power, see Kim (2005). On theoretical insights relating to this category of soft power, see McNeill (1995).

<sup>10</sup> On more detailed discussion on soft power strategies, see Geun Lee (2004:1-18).

<sup>11</sup> On the agenda setting power of international organizations, see Barnett and Finnemore (1999).

<sup>12</sup> On this, see Geun Lee (2006).

standards, Washington Consensus, international language of English, certain development models such as neoliberalism or the Japanese model in the past all created certain networks that favor particular countries, companies and other actors by changing the ways of thinking in the recipient countries.

- (4) **Heroes and Celebrities:** Heroes and celebrities can exert soft power in two ways. One is by their role model functions, and comments or charities for certain universal values, and the other is by manufacturing a sense of pride within their own countries. The former can set an international agenda to achieve certain national or international goals, while the latter provokes nationalistic cohesion or wide supports for their governments. Here, heroes or celebrities can act independently or in cooperation (or cooptation) with their governments.

### 2.3. Soft Power and Global Governance

As shown above, global governance of constructing a particular structure or pattern of value allocation processes pertains to the area of soft power because global governance discourses tend to emphasize non-violent ways of governing the global affairs. For example, global governance which emphasizes upon theories and discourses on climate change tends to change the ideas and preferences of both governmental and non-governmental actors such as civic groups, companies, and consumers in general. This change will affect both global and domestic value allocation processes because people become gradually reluctant to consume fossil fuels, because energy producers start to worry about market restructuring, and domestic and global rules, norms, and principles start to change. Those who are benefiting from this changed value allocation process may be environmental groups, companies with strong competitive edge in alternative energy technologies, and countries that have already taken reforms in energy sectors, to name a few. On the other hand, fossil fuel dependent companies, consumers, and countries will suffer greatly if strong regulation on previous pattern of energy consumption is to be enforced. This is a typical pattern of global governance relying upon new ideas, theories, or discourses which ultimately leads to introduction of new governmental regulations. In other words, soft power of the groups that support and promote new ideas and theories of global warming is clearly visible, and the discussion of “epistemic community” shows how non-governmental groups exercise soft power to shape the new way of global governance in many areas surrounded by uncertainty.<sup>13</sup>

The third and fourth categories of soft power described above, therefore, are particularly relevant to the discussion of global governance in this paper. In addition, the third strategy, namely network effect strategy is the main instrument of global governance in that it is a non-violent and indirect way of settling a particular structure or pattern of global value allocation processes. Especially, the global governance instruments such as “global standard” and “Washington Consensus” or a theory like “neoliberalism” are typical cases of soft power projection by a group of people who are dominantly benefiting from the global standard, namely Washington Consensus or neoliberalism, when those instruments become the main elements of global governance. In other words, global standards including Washington Consensus, or neoliberalism, if adopted by most of the countries in the world will create a global value allocation structure within which a peculiar group of political economic forces,

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<sup>13</sup> On epistemic community see, Haas (1992); Adler and Haas (2005).

such as globally mobile capital, big conglomerates which have been constrained by market regulations, and big asset holders, will mainly benefit. On the other hand, beneficiaries of social welfare system, less competitive sectors and market players, labors in general will suffer from the neoliberal value allocation structure particularly for the countries without well developed social safety net. Adoption of global standard and Washington Consensus by a country will create a network effect in that country, which will be accompanied by path dependency in its later stage of development that tends to favor particular segments of a society while excluding others. In this sense, governance or global governance cannot be seen as a neutral way of empowering non-governmental actors in general.

One important aspect of this kind of global governance is that in fact, global standard is a standard usually originated from a very unique group of countries in which the capitalist market institutions are generally referred as “Liberal Market Economy.”<sup>14</sup> Therefore, contrary to the term “global standard,” the standard itself is not really global. As the researchers in the “variety of capitalism school” argue, the countries that have different types of market economy will have to pay high political, social, and economic costs if they are to adopt such “global standard” (Pontusson 2005; Iverson 2005). Moreover, adoption of global standards does not always produce better results than other standards as national system of innovation and institutional settings are not identical all over the world (Berger and Dore 1996; Kozo and Wolfgang 2003).

### 3. EAST ASIAN GOVERNANCE, EAST ASIAN STANDARD, AND EAST ASIAN CONSENSUS

Unconditional acceptance and import of the so-called global standard and global governance instruments to countries that have very different institutional settings and path dependency from the countries of origin of the global standard will create huge political, economic, and social adjustment costs. Moreover, as there is the so-called first mover advantage accompanied by path dependency in this world of networks, those countries that are unnaturally nested within these networks will have hard time catching up with the early movers. Therefore, countries having different institutional and cultural characteristics need to have different governance mechanism particularly to protect themselves from the high tides of global standard in the name of global governance. Regional blocs or regional cooperation is one such mechanism.

East Asia is still an emerging concept and an emerging region. It does not have a regional identity and has not constituted a “cognitive region.”<sup>15</sup> However, East Asia is already being constructed in the sense that it is a region that can be distinguished from Europe, America, or Africa. Moreover, East Asia shares somewhat unique common characteristics in its developmental path which is the extensive and active roles of the government or the high degree of “stateness” in its economic and political life worlds.<sup>16</sup> The East Asian NICs and the second generation NICs and Japan all share quite high degree of stateness. This characteristic is certainly vastly different from the current but fragile global standard originated from the liberal market economies.

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<sup>14</sup> On the categorization of varieties of capitalism, see Pontusson (2005); Swank (2002).

<sup>15</sup> On the concept of a cognitive region, see Adler (2005).

<sup>16</sup> On the concept of “stateness,” see J.P. Nettle (1968).

Of course, global governance is indeed necessary in this age of globalization, because without certain mechanisms to govern the globalization, the so-called global village will become very unstable and full of uncertainty. Uncertainty and instability create high risks, and high risks hinder positive globalization. However, global governance is not an even process and the individual countries need to make every effort to build a level playing field. One way of producing a shield or umbrella against unfair tides of globalization is having a regional governance structure that favors the regional actors at the time of global crisis, or in the face of fierce global or inter-regional competitions. The European Union, the adoption of the euro, and many common practices, norms and standards within the EU are typical examples of such regional governance structure against the global crisis and competition.

Regional common markets provide scale economy to the countries in the region (Mansfield and Milner 1997), and regional cooperation system provides what I call “national safety net” which is an equivalent of social safety net at the international level. In times of global financial crisis, regional cooperation will provide financial aids in the form of currency swaps or a regional fund, for example, and in times of fierce global competition, regional cooperation can arrange a smooth restructuring transition together.

In order to build such an umbrella in East Asia, now it is necessary to talk about East Asian governance, East Asian Standard, and East Asian Consensus so that East Asia can find itself, and also share genuine East Asian governance structure perhaps reflecting positive roles of the government as high stateness is the common characteristics of the countries in the region. Many people are still skeptical about East Asian regional cooperation and governance seeing very shallow cultural, historical, and institutional commonalities in the region. However, as we practice more speech acts by searching for East Asian governance and standards, such East Asian governance structure will eventually emerge and evolve.

One can think of some soft power strategies to develop such East Asian governance structure or standards. For example, as China has been doing through Boao Forum, East Asian countries can create an influential forum or a network of existing forums to construct and diffuse East Asian standards which are distinguished from seemingly failing neoliberal global standards.<sup>17</sup> Such a strategy will be much more effective if East Asian countries can come up with a self image which emphasizes upon community values, social trust, social kindness in terms of paying sympathy to others, and life-time employment practices that may be relatively absent in the liberal market economies. Perhaps East Asian countries can suggest an alternative vision such as “survival of the kindest” instead of “survival of the fittest.” East Asian universities can develop common curricula developing and emphasizing such vision and ideas, and also can come up with good social science textbooks containing core elements of East Asian standards. East Asian experts can also think about building epistemic community of their own in diverse areas covering economic, social, political and cultural issues. Although all these concepts, ideas and slogans are still underdeveloped and vague concepts, by creating influential forums in East Asia and also by publishing influential East Asian journals or setting up media, East Asian opinion leaders, scholars may be able to improve and develop such underdeveloped East Asian standards and ideas. Perhaps, when such ideas, discourses, and theories are developed to a certain extent, Asian heroes and celebrities such as internationally renowned CEOs and politicians can play a major role in attracting attention of East Asian people and others.

In sum, global governance is a reflection of global politics, and it reflects a particular

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<sup>17</sup> On Boao Forum and China’s soft power see, Cho and Jeong (2008: 453-472)

structure and pattern of global value allocation processes that favor early developers in the West. East Asian countries are not the leaders of such governance structure, and have been passive actors in managing the global order. Therefore, it is highly recommended that the countries and many diverse actors in this region participate in building a regional umbrella actively at the regional level, and eventually construct an East Asia and East Asian Governance and Standards.

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