



TALKING POINTS

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Talking Points for: Gilbert Rozman, Musgrave Professor of Sociology, Princeton University

Economics no longer even appears to remain aloof from security and culture in the pursuit of regionalism. North Korea insists on close linkage, China uses economic dependency to realize other objectives, and, protestations aside, TPP is understood, in Japan above all, as a force shaping all-around regionalism. Idealist thinking about the prospects for East Asian regionalism, which I called “flawed regionalism” in 1997 and “stunted regionalism” in 2004, has no future. Agreement on FTAs can proceed, although the CJK FTA is doubtful given China’s national identity gap with Japan and its impact. The trust required for economic integration that causes countries to be more integrated with each other is fading as economic hedging increases. TPP will likely succeed, since failure would be understood as a blow to U.S. leadership and Japan’s seriousness about standing up rather than being pushed around. South Korea is in the crossroads, the most eager for the CJK FTA for economic and non-economic reasons; yet the most in need of a sustained U.S. commitment in the face of security threats and sinocentric economic and cultural aspiration. Achieving the EAFTA should remain a goal with new encouragement to China, but an Asia-Pacific dream must trump the “China dream” if hope is not to fade.

* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.