THE STAGING OF APEC

by

LISE L. CHARTRAND

B.A., Carleton University, 1976

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Lise L Chartrand
Name of Author (please print)

April 7, 2004
Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

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Department of The Institute of Asian Research
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, BC Canada
Abstract

In 1993, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) held the first APEC Economic Leaders Meeting (AELM). Raising APEC interaction to the top track, the level of leaders, proved to be an effective and powerful dynamic; the AELM continues to meet annually and to shape APEC policy. The focus on the AELM as the source of vision and direction reinforces the pivotal importance of this political assemblage, reassures the populace that leaders do prevail and all is well: essential ingredients, according to Clifford Geertz, of political theater. The role of journalists, the contemporary scribes or critics, is to inform the audience of this political drama.

The objective of this research is to demonstrate that real political value exists in the ‘Staging of APEC’ in terms of effective economic and political integration of benefit to broad regional interests. The findings draw on the results of a content analysis of news reports covering the first six years of the AELM (1993-1998). Formally, the AELM is an opportunity for regional political leaders to engage in regional policy formation outlined by the pillars of APEC (trade liberalization, facilitation and cooperation) guided by the principals of open regionalism and concerted unilateralism. Activity on the formal, or main stage, also flows to the small stage where leaders merge in a neutral venue. On this stage, leaders are free to examine distinctly non-economic, yet intersecting interests including domestic agendas, human rights and pluri-lateral security concerns. Together, these dual stages, neither one complete without the other, form the political theatre of APEC and provide the value added for the leaders and ultimately for the Asia-Pacific region.
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Chapter 1 Introduction

In the new institutional ordering of Asia, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), a diverse group of Pacific Rim economies in Asia and the Americas, advances a mandate to further common economic interests. Central to the annual cycle of APEC is a structured, yet informal, meeting of leaders. Each APEC Economic Leaders Meeting (AELM) concludes with a Leaders’ Declaration that outlines policy directions and shared commitments. These statements, rather than a formal institutional framework direct policy and activity. This thesis examines APEC from the perspective of political theatre. The objective is to demonstrate that political value exists in this ‘Staging of APEC’ in terms of regional political and economic integration beneficial to the actors and the regional economies. This research reframes the utility of international fora through an examination of the ‘Theatre of APEC’ and the role of this entity in policy formation in the region.

Political theatre is an evocative term. ‘Political’ suggests purpose and power while ‘theatre’ implies drama with actors, sets and scripts. Together these words evoke strong images; perhaps the idea that politics is indeed theatre or that the stage may have artistic and political value.¹ Here, the intention is to explain the context of political events; the interplay of aspiration, action and result engaging real political actors, rotating sets and improvised scripts. Scholars of political theatre, such as Joseph Esherick and Jeffery Wasserstrom, state

¹ The term political theatre was also used by cartographers in 16th century Europe. Terrarum (Latin for Theatre) was commonly used when naming maps; for example, the first atlas, Theatrum Orbis Terrarum (Theatre of the World), was published in 1570 by Abraham Ortelius. The new geography of Gerard Mercator joined the terms theatre and political – political theater. Political stems from Mercator’s recognition of natural and political boundaries.
that institutional entities are "structures...of people" (italics in the original).² Alexander Wendt adds that "Institutions are fundamentally cognitive entities that do not exist apart from actors' ideas about how the world works" and "what actors collectively 'know'."³ The essence of APEC is people – the leaders and their perceptions – assembled on the center stage of this annual production of political theater.

From the outset, APEC shunned the creation of an institutional framework with the encroaching procedures of bureaucracy. In choosing to focus on the level of leaders rather than keepers, "APEC presents an anomaly..." according to Peter Katzenstein that defies definition "with categories distilled from the European experience."⁴ How is APEC to be conceptualized? Suzanne Rudolph, like Esherick, Wasserstrom and Katzenstein, turn to the work of Clifford Geertz and political theatre to explain the role of culture and society in statehood.⁵ Drawing from Geertz’s famous example of Negara, Katzenstein states that in the Asian context the political centre "was an all-encompassing sense of order, ritual sovereignty [and] the result was common social and cultural domains tenuously related to the formal

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control of a political centre.”⁶ These hierarchical structures, Rudolph notes, were “replicated” in China and Japan, well beyond Negara and South-East Asia.⁷

Esherick and Wasserstrom add that Geertz “demonstrated the value of interpreting politics in theatrical terms, that is, symbol-laden performances whose efficacy lies largely in their power to move specific audiences.”⁸ Thus APEC and the AELM may be better understood in terms of Asian political theatre than Western derivatives. If APEC is political theatre and the leader-actors are present at the political centre, where and who is the audience? Our spectators are the regional and, by extension, global public, informed by the “cross-cutting communication” of the media critics.⁹ Analysis of a sample of the press reports points to the dual nature of political theatre APEC-style. Predictably, the media details the top track leader-level interaction, the process of APEC and the products in the form of policy development and AELM outcomes (statements with commitments) – the main stage of APEC. What of the significant reporting dedicated to offstage or behind-the-scenes activity that records bilateral and pluri-lateral meetings, the interplay of personalities and the role of foreign relations? These seemingly separate interests, in close proximity to shared main stage concerns, are – the small stage of APEC. Protests, demonstrations and other forms of civil society involvement (Tracks Two and Three) are also associated with APEC, providing a separate fringe festival.

⁷ Rudolph, “State Formation,” 739-740. The author advises that such replication is more evocative than exact. The link to this discussion is the spread of ritualized hierarchical systems to other parts of Asia.
The time period under review, 1993-1998, begins with the first AELM meeting and encompasses the Asian financial crisis, the first regional APEC challenge. The second chapter describes the methodology used to scrutinize the AELM declarations and evaluate the content of the selected press reports.\textsuperscript{10} The third chapter outlines the AELM (early APEC) phase and develops a model of political theatre for APEC drawn from \textit{Negara}, Geertz's account of the Balinese court.\textsuperscript{11} The fourth chapter reviews the distinct architecture of APEC that melds a diversity of member traditions creating a mechanism that supports the processes and products of APEC. Chapter 5 highlights the findings of the news content of the main and small stages of APEC as they apply to the model of political theatre. The conclusion comments on the findings and suggests avenues for future research.

This analysis is pertinent to two potential groups of institutional readers. For those interested in international organizations, the discussion offers a perspective on APEC that scholars suggest is more wholly Asian; political theatre is distinct in approach and ends from European entities. The scope of this examination is limited to APEC and is not a comparative analysis of Western structures and formalized institutions with Asian counterparts that Rudolph finds limiting. An APEC member might learn to capitalize on the small-stage reporting as an opportunity to insert information promoting a national position (e.g., the Canadian three pillars of security, prosperity and values) or to call other members, including an AELM host, accountable for initiatives and commitments.

\textsuperscript{10} Fortunately, in this preliminary period, the AELM statements are more pragmatic and less expansive than later AELM statements. An example of a lengthy AELM statement is the declaration from the Shanghai meeting in 2001.

The insight that this analysis intends to provide is an awareness that political theatre applies to this regional cooperative group. Specific gains may be difficult to quantify and scholars do question the naturalness of APEC as a region; yet the development of this political theatre has generated outcomes (processes and products) enabling collective results and value added in terms of fostering integration and cooperation to the benefit of the member economies in the Asia-Pacific region.\footnote{Douglas Webber, "Two funerals and a Wedding? The ups and downs of regionalism in East Asia and Asia-Pacific after the Asian Crisis," \textit{The Pacific Review} 14, no. 3 (2001): 356. See also Ravenhill, McDuff, Krause, Gallant, Stubbs and Peng for comments on the characteristics and diversity of this region. Outside economics, value added is a popular, but nebulous term. In the context of this discussion, value added is a net positive gain, or enrichment that supplements, for example, AELM leader relations. This enhancement indirectly benefits political, economic and social interaction.}

The guiding questions over the rest of this thesis, thus, will be:

a. What model of political theatre may be successfully applied to the AELM to gain insight into the substance and processes of the AELM and to explain its connection to the region?

b. What elements are used to create an effective mechanism that enables the ensemble (the AELM as the Political Centre) to present convincing theatre to the region?

c. Guided by the parameters of the principles and pillars of APEC, what does the AELM, the political centre, express to the audience from the main and small stages?
Chapter 2  Methodology

The impetus for this review arose from two intersecting interests. The first was to examine the content of APEC press reports. The media represent the theatre reviewers of the AELM performances, conveying critical reports and information to the remote audience, or the public. Examination of the media coverage of Asia-Pacific regional groups is not new. Andrew Szende has written extensively on the presentation of ASEAN news, while Colin Browning has studied the Australian press reporting on APEC. Shin-Yan Lai also makes a direct connection between the leaders, the public and the press. The second interest was to use the media results to develop a conceptual model of APEC as political theatre. The challenge was to link the press content findings to the activity of the AELM as a demonstration of political theatre.

Survey Time Frame

The focus of this study was the first five years of the AELM (1993-1997 inclusive) when the forum meeting moved to the level of leaders. In November 1997, when the AELM met in Vancouver, the extent and impact of the Asian financial crisis were unknown. This

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1 Initial questions also included the frequency, content and nature of the APEC coverage in the print media.


3 Lai states that “forward momentum is driven by the active participation of Leaders: this participation requires public support; public support in turn depends on people’s awareness of APEC’s benefits; and this awareness is eventually shaped by a media that thrives on the dramatic and the sensational.” Shin-Yuan Lai, “APEC after Ten Years: Future Directions.” Paper presented at the APEC Centre Consortium Conference (APEC in Global and Regional Contexts), Auckland, New Zealand, 30 May - 2 June, 1999, 9. http://www2.auckland.ac.nz/apec/.

4 The use of news articles as unbiased reports and to address wide public interest has limitations. In *Manufacturing Consent*, Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky point to the dilemma of news sources. On the one hand, the “norm is a belief that freedom prevails” and news approaches the truth while on the other hand the action of successive filters ensures the news is “cleansed residue fit to print.” Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), 304, 2.
initial period was extended to 1998 to include the AELM response during the 1998 meeting in Malaysia. The research framework could, however, be extended to include later years and other challenges the APEC leaders have faced.\(^5\)

Data Sources

To compile the media or press report sample, the Lexis-Nexis database was selected as the sole news source. This data service has the qualities of being broad (geographic), deep (specific) and plentiful (quantity).\(^6\) To determine publication dates, media sources and regional patterns, the initial Lexis-Nexis search was a dragnet of any article responding to the term “APEC” at any time in the calendar year. The distribution of press reports indicated an APEC-AELM high season.\(^7\) During the preparatory phase to a meeting, the volume steadily increases to daily output during the meeting followed by a precipitous decline.\(^8\) To capture this intense reporting period, the database search period was narrowed to three months: October, November and December. This time frame overlaps with the annual AELM meetings scheduled in late November.\(^9\)

Using the search strings “APEC,” “APEC, Leaders” and “APEC, AELM,” the search netted 2615 press reports.\(^10\) Eliminating peripheral non-APEC news and duplicated reports

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\(^5\) For example, the Millennium issues of Y2K in 1999 and terrorism in 2001.

\(^6\) The Lexis-Nexis database is flexible and comprehensive. The database can be tailored to a specific event or words and features a regional (Asia, North America and Europe) search function. The database was consistent in producing comparable results each time the same search string was used (within 1% error).

\(^7\) See Appendix II: AELM Schedule and News Search Dates.

\(^8\) During the remainder of the year, media reports were sporadic.

\(^9\) See Appendix I: APEC Venues and Member Participation.

\(^10\) Multiple search strings for both title and text were used to amass the maximum body of results.
reduced the pool to 1866 articles. The next step was to determine the consistent reporting sources by region and news agency with particular attention to any disproportionate coverage, in order to balance the sample among APEC members and geographic regions. To select fifty representative articles per year, the final process involved reviewing each media report, sorting by Lexis-Nexis region, APEC membership and media source. Editorials and substantive news reports were retained. Articles relying extensively on partisan media or government sources (e.g., Xinhua News Agency or the US State Department) were eliminated to avoid skewing or obscuring the results due to the small sample size.

Lexis-Nexis is a comprehensive sole source for news reports; the results, however, are limited to publications in the database. Not included are press reports in other languages, or items targeted to local audiences, institutions or civil society groups. Future research might include print index resources, periodicals and newsletters to supplement the sample or provide a basis of comparison and the direct input of journalists to add context.

Print Media Themes and Analysis

Each AELM meeting concludes with the Leaders' Declaration or statement outlining policy and mutual commitments in a concise, announceable format. These official

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11 See Appendix III: Lexis-Nexis Sources by Year (modified). Wire services account for the duplication of press reports. For meetings outside Asia, the use of wire services by Asian newspapers to cover the APEC events was widespread and may reflect a reliance on external, cost-effective sources.

12 The structure avoids focusing on Lexis-Nexis results from a particular region, for example North America (US) or Asia (China and Japan). The most prolific and voluminous news reports on the Lexis-Nexis database originated from China, Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and the US. Selection was determined by breadth, length and date of the press report with the goal of striking a balance between Western and Asian reporting. In 1998, for example, the press reports, taken mainly from wire agencies, reflected the US and Malaysian positions with an equal amount of coverage.

13 The AELM statements do not follow a specific, prescribed APEC format and vary in style, length and, of course, content. From 1993-1996 inclusive, the statements share a similar construction. The 1997 AELM
documents, emanating directly from the political centre, are the set-piece script or control similar to an independent variable. The news articles are not dependent on the Leaders’ Declaration per se and are regarded as coexisting elements or variables. The AELM Statement Themes, or main stage activity, are the baseline for content analysis, an interface to assess the veracity of news articles (List 2.1). Other aspects of the AELM reported in the press, indication of the small stage, were sorted into three categories (List 2.2). The content of each article in the press sample was coded for mention of a main-stage AELM theme or small-stage category. The results (frequency of mention among the sample for the year) were tabulated as percentages. This methodology yielded a comprehensive overview of the public commentary or audience response based on the official Leaders’ Declaration.

List 2.1 AELM Statement Themes (Main Stage)

1. Principles and Mutuality of APEC (variously defined, affirmed and reaffirmed)
2. Trading Systems (global and regional trade liberalization)
3. Economic Endeavors (facilitation and cooperation activities)
4. Agents and Targets (specific partners and recipients)

List 2.2 AELM Auxiliary Categories (Small Stage)

1. Issues (economic, social, financial, Emerging Economies)
2. Actors (leader personalities, relationships)
3. Agendas (foreign policy, side meetings)

In addition to the AELM statements and the press content analysis, reports published by APEC and government officials, and a literature review including Asian and Western

statement is less precise, while the 1998 statement departs from the former collective, anonymous style to refer directly to specific members and initiatives undertaken.

14 Each mention of an identified AELM aspect of small-stage activity in a news report was assigned one point. An aspect repeated several times in the same article was counted once only.

15 Appendices V though X detail the distribution of reporting per year divided into the Pre-AELM (lead-up) and the AELM and Post-AELM phase.
perspectives, provide invaluable background regarding the rationale for the formation of APEC and the functioning of the AELM. From this commentary and the survey results, insights into the APEC process and the value of the AELM as a forum for addressing regional issues within and beyond the stated economic agenda are enhanced.
Chapter 3 APEC as Political Theatre

The Origin of APEC and the AELM

Prior to APEC, pan-Asian government groups such as ASEAN were exclusive, neighborhood associations. In *APEC and The Construction of Pacific Rim Regionalism*, John Ravenhill observes that the idea of a wider regional economic alliance was familiar to academics and government officials.\(^1\) Earlier attempts to form geographic associations had been discouraged by the US.\(^2\) By 1989, which Farhang Rajaee marks as the end of the Cold War and the rise of globalization, a Pacific Rim entity made economic sense and US opposition was tempered by the prospect of market opportunity.\(^3\) The impetus for the formation of APEC arose from within Asia (Japan) and without (Australia). Regional trade coordination could benefit Japan, the receiving market of the region. ASEAN membership (and its rewards) had remained closed to Australia.\(^4\) Prudence and proximity suggested that efforts to secure a strong economic foothold would reap long-term benefits.\(^5\) To this strong

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2. In Asia Pacific, the US pursued a policy of bilateral relations and discouraged multilateral formations. For example, the plan of Prime Minister Mahathir to initiate an East Asia Economic forum had faltered.

3. Rajaee provides a discussion of the impact of the events of the late 1980s, including the end of the Cold War that set the stage for change and globalization. The US was moving from the bilateral to a more multilateral approach to relations. Farhang Rajaee, *Globalization on trial: The human condition and the information civilization* (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 2000).


5. Discussion with trade officials, Embassy of Australia, Beijing, October 1983. If Asia was not a natural market by virtue of history and ethnic ties, Australians were unequivocal that Asia was their (i.e., not Canada’s) market area. See Soesastro for comments on the need for Australia to fuse with the region. William Bodde relates that the Australian government initiative to poll interest among the Pacific economies found interest and reticence plus evidence that the Japanese were also exploring a similar framework.
confluence of interests, the success of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), an informal system of non-governmental linkages, may have encouraged regional initiatives at the political level.⁶ Soesastro proposes that APEC was “created out of a need for more comprehensive regional dialogue than that afforded by PECC...guided by the same principles that have enabled the PECC to succeed in its objectives: openness, equality and gradual evolution.”⁷ Ali Alatas simply states that APEC, a hybrid of ASEAN and PECC, was “an idea whose time had come.”⁸

Scholars and APEC officials trace the first public evidence of APEC to a speech delivered by Australian Prime Minister Hawke in South Korea on 13 January 1989. The following November, twelve ministers gathered in Australia to discuss the formation of APEC.⁹ Represented were the six members of ASEAN plus Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and the US. Participants were known as member economies, rather than states.¹⁰ Rotating the annual responsibilities for APEC Chair between an ASEAN and non-ASEAN member, the ministers continued to flesh out the parameters of this new institution.¹¹ Following protracted political discussions concerning national status, the

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⁶ PECC was a loose regional grouping of academic, business and other interests developed to address common regional interests and concerns in trade, environment and associated areas. At the political level, policy would be driven by governments.

⁷ Hadi Soesastro, *Indonesian Perspectives on APEC and Regional Cooperation Asia Pacific* (Jakarta: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994), 16. These principles are critical to the architecture of APEC.


¹⁰ Soesastro, *Indonesian Perspectives on APEC*, 15. The members of ASEAN are Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

¹¹ This ASEAN and non-ASEAN member rotation is a hallmark of APEC. Subsequent meetings took place in Singapore (1990), Seoul (1991) and Bangkok (1992). For a complete schedule of meetings and member lists see Appendix I: APEC Venues and Member Participation. See also Ravenhill, *APEC*, 104.
China’s – China, Hong Kong and Taiwan (Chinese Taipei) – joined APEC in 1991. A low budget APEC secretariat was established in Singapore, relying on core staff and seconded officials and headed by William Bodde, an American. On the eve of the first AELM, a total of fourteen economies were APEC members. (Map 3.1)

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Map 3.1

APEC Members (AELM 1993)

- North Asia
  - Japan
  - Republic of Korea
- The China's
  - People's Republic of China
  - Hong Kong
  - Chinese Taipei
- North America
  - Canada
  - United States
- ASEAN
  - Brunei Darussalam
  - Indonesia
  - Malaysia
  - The Philippines
  - Singapore
  - Thailand
- Australasia
  - Australia
  - New Zealand

AELM Members
- Australia
- Brunei Darussalam
- Canada
- People's Republic of China
- Hong Kong
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Republic of Korea
- Malaysia
- New Zealand
- The Philippines
- Chinese Taipei
- Thailand
- United States
- New Members:
  - 1994: Chile, Mexico, Papua New Guinea
  - 1998: Russia, Peru, Vietnam

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12 Third APEC Ministerial Meeting, Joint Statement, 1991, para. 5. http://www.apecsec.org.sg/. Taiwan was to be called Chinese Taipei. Taiwan and Hong Kong could send representatives from lower levels (i.e., below the level of leader). This stipulation ensured the Premier of China and the President of Taiwan did not appear at the same venue. See also Roger Cliff, "Taiwan: In the Dragons Shadow," Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 306-308.


14 Members are neutrally deemed economies, rather than counties, thereby easing the participation of the Three China's – Mainland China, Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei (Taiwan) thereby precluding the event as a summit or meeting of Heads of State or Government. Each year a different member undertakes the APEC Chair and hosts the annual meeting.
In 1993 while the US was APEC Chair, William Bodde writes that Prime Minister Keating suggested to the newly elected President Clinton that the APEC leaders be included in an “informal summit meeting” to be held concurrently with the annual APEC Ministerial meeting scheduled for 20 November 1993.\(^{15}\) At the Group of Eight (G8) summit in July 1993, President Clinton announced the backing of the US administration for an AELM meeting.\(^{16}\) Thus the APEC Economic Leaders Meeting was formed. The AELM devotes at least one day to an informal, albeit highly orchestrated, discussion that includes all attending leaders, or an alternate, with no aides present or notes taken.

The “greatest importance” Krause notes of APEC and the AELM is the “top-level political support achieved by the meeting itself.”\(^ {17}\)

Leaders change and new issues arise from time to time among countries with intense economic interactions. Having an informal meeting to make personal connections, to explore issues, and to learn another perspective outside of negotiation is of immense importance and value to leaders who tend to get insulated and caught up in parochial concerns.\(^ {18}\)

Isolated and protected, the AELM provides a welcome opportunity for leaders to interact on neutral ground. The APEC forum blends a diverse membership of equals (at least in theory) in an annual event of short duration (several days) and neutral agendas (economic issues),

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\(^{15}\) William Bodde, “Managing APEC,” 213. This quote is an APEC oxymoron; the AELM was intended to be an informal meeting rather than a summit of leaders. Meeting and summit are used interchangeably in the literature and the press.

\(^{16}\) Soesastro, *Indonesian Perspectives on APEC*, 15. Given the status of the stalled Uruguay round, the prospect of a leaders venue signaled a probable regional initiative to address GATT.


\(^{18}\) Ibid.
where leaders maintain the image of leading on the main stage with the flexibility to address side issues (relations, security and human rights) on the small stage.

APEC in the International Relations Framework

APEC is a government-to-government entity with the stated purpose of furthering regional economic interests. To explain, in Constructivist terms, each APEC member economy brings their "social" identity to the realm of the international. According to Amitav Acharya, membership in a forum such as APEC has the potential to contain and, ultimately, reshape state-centered behavior. In the APEC dialogue process, member states with conflicting identities assume roles: as statesmen representing individual interests and as actors together. Thus, the theatre of APEC is a stage to develop a collective regional identity. Wendt adds that "a good part of the 'action' in real-world collective action lies in such symbolic work." Acharya concurs. APEC is "not just interest driven but identity driven."

The Neo-realists maintain that state-to-state interaction is more productive in maintaining the balance of power. International fora exist to present identities rather than offering an opportunity to re-define or amalgamate interests. A Neo-realist APEC might resemble a one ring circus of major powers with the other members off-stage. Liberalism bores deeply into the material benefits of economic interdependence as a foil to economic


\[^22\] Acharya, "Ideas," 343; and "International Relations Theory," 7. Acharya expresses optimism that the norms of peaceful conduct and stability will evolve.
disruption and expensive warfare. The potential for conflict persists, a situation unlikely to be undone by the sudden birth of a capitalist China or wide-spread liberal democracy. In part, the mandate of APEC is the promotion of liberal policies, however, the AELM leaders are outward looking and trading bloc adverse.23

The Political Theatre of APEC

This section addresses the first of the three questions that guide this thesis:

What model of political theatre may be successfully applied to the AELM to gain insight into the substance and processes of the AELM and to explain its connection to the region?

The political theatre described by Geertz in Negara parallels APEC as a framework for meaning and utility. As Rudolph maintains, the traditions of Asia point to vibrant and enduring cosmologies where political theatre is a fact.24 The argument for using Negara as an analytic tool to examine government-to-government interactions is fit; a model that aids in understanding the AELM and the political value added. Esherick and Wasserstrom successfully used the political theatre of Geertz to examine the 1989 student protests in China. Political theatre, they claim, “expresses beliefs about the proper distribution and disposition of power and other scarce resources.”25 Thus, political theatre is important to rationalizing the distribution of authority in a contextually appropriate manner to an identified audience.26 To interpret the performance, the audience leans on learned beliefs


26 Esherick and Wasserstrom state that “uncontrolled political theatre” presents a threat to leadership (ibid., 50).
and patterns, particularly when the theatre confronts underlying beliefs or affirms knowledge in a novel or inventive way.

In his discussion of *Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections of the Symbolics of Power*, Geertz draws on colorful, historic examples to illustrate two underlying points.\(^{27}\) The first concerns the enduring theme of power. Geertz explains that although “both the structure and the expressions of social life change, the inner necessities that animate it do not.”\(^{28}\) Dismissing suggestions of historical reinvention (the past is the present), Geertz states that, then as now, “political authority still requires a cultural frame in which to define itself and advance its claims.”\(^{29}\) Political theatre provides this cultural frame as a “conceptual entity, not a historic one.”\(^{30}\) The second point expands on the first. Geertz urges us to “begin with the centre and with the symbols and conceptions that prevail…”\(^{31}\) Moving from student protest to the AELM, the actors are drawn from countries as diverse as China, Japan and the US with equals as unlikely as Brunei and Singapore lifting us to the realm of ultimate leadership among modern powers connected by a common ocean.

What is theatre? From the Greek definition of drama “to do” and theatre “to see,” Fortier shows that theatre combines doing and seeing, concluding that theatre, drama and

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\(^{27}\) In this essay, Geertz uses Elizabethan pageantry, Indonesian cosmic ordering and the Moroccan “court-in-motion” to illustrate “the inherent sacredness of central power” and the means used to assert “symbolic possession” or, as he quotes Edward Shils, “being near the heart of things.” Other country examples of political theatre cited by scholars include France, Spain, China and the US. Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983), 137, 146, 125, 123.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., 143.

\(^{29}\) Ibid. Hurrell comments that “All human societies rely on historical stories about themselves to legitimate notions of where they are and where they might be going.” Andrew Hurrell, “Keeping history, law and political philosophy firmly within the English School,” *Review of International Studies* 27 (2001): 493.


\(^{31}\) Geertz, *Local Knowledge*, 143.
performance are related as “drama is a part of theatre and theatre is a part of performance.”

Performance is defined as any form of human activity. Drawing on Geertz, Esherick and Wasserstrom define theatre as a “cultural performance before a mass audience.” Theatre has, as do all performances, an audience or public and needs to be relevant (culturally specific) in order to connect.

Valuable insights into the fundamental importance of political theatre may be gained from an examination of Geertz’s work on traditional theatre in nineteenth century Balinese society. In Negara, the author presents the components of political theatre in Balinese society. Negara is the axis of this “doctrine of the exemplary centre,” representing the cosmos, where political power is situated – the Political Centre. To affirm that the centre is the centre requires the use of symbolic forms to signal beliefs that are culturally held and appropriate. On the perimeter is the – Complex Society – an audience well versed in

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32 Mark Fortier, Theory/Theatre (Routledge: London, 1997), 5-6. To see implies full comprehension (thinking and understanding) rather than mechanical looking or viewing. Theatre and drama are inter-related (ibid., 13).

33 Ibid., 12.


35 In a single sentence, Geertz explains the logic of this arrangement: “At the political centre of any complexly organized society (to narrow our focus to that) there are both a governing elite and a set of symbolic forms expressing the fact that it is in truth governing.” Clifford Geertz, “Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power,” in Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Politics since the Middle Ages, ed. Sean Wilentz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 14.

36 Geertz, Negara, 13. At the centre of political theater in Bali, Geertz places Negara, a cosmos or political centre of inherent sacredness. Borrowed from Sanskrit, Geertz explains that negara is the locus of control, the modern day Blue House, Capitol Hill or Great Hall of the People, which he contrasts to desa, the hinterland and the ruled. Geertz defines “palace, capital, state, realm and town” as negara, the very center of “the system of superordinate political authority” while desa is the “countryside, region, village, place, dependency and governed area” that includes both the people and the place over which power extends (ibid., 4). Desa, is the realm, or the Complex Society. This group, in APEC terms, is the citizens of the member economies.

37 Esherick and Wasserstrom provide numerous examples of the use of theatrical and political symbols during the Tiananmen protests including costumes, operatic inferences and funeral eulogies. Carried to extremes, the authors suggest that such theatre approaches “burlesque or farce rather than serious political drama.” Esherick and Wasserstrom, “Acting Out Democracy,” 48.
the reception and interpretation of symbolic messages. The Theatre State of Bali (Diagram 3.1) is a graphic representation of “the exemplary centre” of Negara from the “...centre, and with the symbols and conceptions...” directed to the receptive audience or the Complex Society; a concept of theatre that Rudolph concludes is quintessentially Asian.\(^{38}\)

If the theatre of authority is universal, each APEC member imports their respective brand of internal theatre – distinct perspectives, symbols, culture, tradition and history – to the single stage of the AELM. The stage may be crowded and the actors diverse, however, this newly-minted regional theatre has the potential to create unique symbols and rituals.

The modus operandi of APEC draws from Asian traditions. Evident is the consensual approach.\(^{39}\) Less conspicuous is the effort of the central vehicle of political theatre, to forward the “status quo.”\(^{40}\) From Bali to APEC, the methods and the results endure as

\(^{38}\) Clifford Geertz, “Centers,” 30.


the Political Theatre - APEC Equivalents diagram illustrates. (Diagram 3.2) The symbolic forms affirm governance (the centre is the centre) and provide ceremony demonstrating that the "measure of the king’s divinity" (status of APEC leaders) is "also a measure of the realm’s well-being" (regional cooperation) and "a demonstration that they were the same thing" (status and cooperation affirmed). 41 This activity is set within the realm of the complex society (the APEC region). 42 Esherick and Wasserstrom hold that deciphering political theatre calls for "more attention to its symbolism than to the literal meaning of its utterances." 43

The primary stage of APEC, the main stage, is the business of APEC communicated by the AELM statements or Leaders’ Declarations. The nearest absorbing APEC audience is

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41 Geertz, Negara, 129. Geertz explains that leaders use Symbolic Forms to “justify their existence and order their actions in terms of a collection of stories, ceremonies, insignia, formalities and appurtenances that they have either inherited or, in more revolutionary situations, invented.” Geertz, “Centers,” 14.

42 One could argue that APEC has an impact beyond the Asia-Pacific region. Indeed, coordination at this level also sets the stage for participation in the global marketplace. For the purposes of this model, the direct Complex Society is limited to the citizens of APEC member economies.

the press corps. This on-the-scene audience of convenience also chronicles the peripheral activity of the AEM on the small stage. This dual performance is essential to the whole theatre. (Diagram 3.3) Each stage has distinct agendas or scripts, collectively on the main stage and individually on the small stage.

Thus, APEC is a political, government-to-government entity with a unique framework that blends diverse cultural styles of authority on a shared central stage. This new political theatre is distinct from the highly structured political theatre of Europe.\textsuperscript{44} The value added to the region of this entity, from the perspective of the model, is the identification of common ground (a Political Centre) where the leaders meet as equals to consider mutual interests, thereby mitigating potential fallout among the larger players (China, the US and Japan) and falling away of less powerful. Together the centre is stronger. Equally the model extends our view of the Political Centre beyond the AELM into the Complex Society, the nexus of endorsement. Without the symbols to fix the attention of the audience and sustain their belief, the AELM is “full of sound and fury and signifying nothing.”\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{44} The design of APEC is deliberate and was not intended to grow into a variant of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) despite the stated interests of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) and some APEC members. See Bergsten, Bodde and Ravenhill for a discussion of the EPG and US and Australian interests.

\textsuperscript{45} Shakespeare, \textit{Macbeth}, Act V, Scene V.
Chapter 4   The Architecture of APEC

APEC, according to Alatas, embodies “both bright prospects and real constraints.”

To flourish in the multilateral environment of APEC, the Political Centre requires a framework that generates an aura of credibility, shares authority, facilitates internal interaction and projects, though the use of symbolic forms, glimpses that sustain audience interest and respect. This chapter addresses the second question of this thesis:

What elements are used to create an effective mechanism that enables the ensemble (the AELM as the Political Centre) to present convincing theatre to the region?

Soesastro states that the key aims of APEC “are to encourage regional institution-building (including Japan and the United States in this process), to avert sub-regional trade wars and protectionism, and to stimulate trade creation.” Failure to implement a pragmatic mechanism to steer beyond these cross-currents is costly in terms of time and resources, and threatens to forfeit authority, losing the attention (and necessary engagement) of the Complex Society.

The following table summarizes a number of the specific design elements of APEC: the choice of pillars and principles, the modus operandi featuring mobile venues and a lean Secretariat, and the primary AELM product, the Leaders’ Declaration. (Table 4.1) The purpose of outlining these elements is to point to the positive aspects of this construction and suggest how the drawbacks impact on the operation and effectiveness of the Political Centre.

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1 Ali Alatas, “Basic Principles,” 26. These comments refer to the conservative perspective of ASEAN members regarding APEC, however, the benefits and challenges also apply to APEC as an entity.


3 Soesastro, Indonesian Perspectives, 16.
This assessment, however brief, provides insights into the process, the products and the challenges of the AELM.

### Table 4.1 APEC Architecture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Pros/Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pillars</strong></td>
<td>Trade Liberalization</td>
<td>Plus - broad; reaches membership at differing stages of capacity and development, acknowledges diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitation and Cooperation</td>
<td>Minus - problematic to balance to satisfaction of all members moving forward, pillars may be incongruent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principles</strong></td>
<td>Open Regionalism</td>
<td>Plus - creative means to gain GATT/WTO consistent products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concerted Unilateralism</td>
<td>Minus - subject to member abuse (voluntarism), may revert to minimal GATT/WTO guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modus Operandi</strong> (Asian)</td>
<td>Consensus-driven</td>
<td>Plus - acceptable to Asian members, 360 degree viewpoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incremental</td>
<td>Minus - less well understood by non-Asian members, assumes the pace of slower or more reticent members, assumes trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory</strong></td>
<td>Eminent Persons Group</td>
<td>Plus - independent body with mandate provide APEC vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minus - status not assured, voice may be ignored, role can be misinterpreted and body dissolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobile Venues</strong></td>
<td>Court-in-motion</td>
<td>Plus - fair (all members have a turn), opportunity to inject new ideas and perspectives (reigning Chair of the Political Centre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minus - driven by host agendas and style, potential to realign pillars, lack of follow-up on previous commitments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secretariat</strong></td>
<td>Small, seconded staff from member governments</td>
<td>Plus - cost effective, role too minor to overtake or interfere in broad scheme of AELM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minus - impact of alternating host agendas, staff turnover, lack resources to undertake complex and long-term tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Products</strong></td>
<td>Leaders' Declaration</td>
<td>Plus - presents leaders as leading, opportunity to raise agendas, new pledges or commitments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Host and post-host legacy</td>
<td>Minus - dual pressure of new announceables and previous commitments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The APEC Secretariat was briefly mentioned in Chapter 3. The aspect important to this discussion is the plan to initiate a small (manageable) Secretariat supportive of the AELM interests. While the Secretariat might grow over time, the role would not dwarf the AELM as the principal policy source (and force).*

APEC, primarily a vehicle for economic coordination, provides “comprehensive coverage” in the form of three pillars: cooperation, facilitation and trade liberalization. The pillars appear innocuous and supportive of the ultimate objective of regional economic growth. In reality, the pillars are difficult to balance. Trade liberalization is desired by the

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developed economies while cooperation and facilitation is sought by the industrializing members. The diversity of members goes beyond the “stark disparities” of economic development, technology intensification and comparative advantage to uncover very distinct approaches to market behavior. Indeed, one might question how the pillars could fit together. Trade liberalization is long-term, goal-oriented. Cooperation and, to an extent, facilitation, are practical steps that ultimately support liberalization. Attempting to address these pillars simultaneously, without a comprehensive strategy runs a risk of achieving one, perhaps two, or none at all.

The pillars of APEC are the final goalposts; the principles guide the Political Centre to the end. Ravenhill explains that APEC has adopted “a unique approach to regional economic cooperation” using the two guiding principles of...open regionalism and concerted unilateralism.”

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\[5\] The industrialized members, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the US, sought tariff changes and labor access in the developing economies. The majority of ASEAN members were focused on the pillar of facilitation and cooperation to strengthen their economic base and to secure market access. Individually members also sought to maintain a comfort zone: none surrendering protected sectors (e.g., agriculture) or threatening infant industry protection and import substitution programs.

\[6\] Alatas, “Basic Principles,” 25. To be avoided are “heightened competition and friction instead of the desired harmony and greater mutual advantage” (ibid.,). Referring to Katzenstein in *Network Power*, Peng states that “Katzenstein argues that Asian Regionalism is characterized by market dynamism rather than by formal political institutions.” Peng describes the diversity of “informal integration” (i.e., non-treaty) as market driven, private sponsor, network based, non-institutional. Outsiders would encounter (or at least anticipate) barriers to entry. In the West, formal institutions serve to bolster markets. Peng also notes the unequal economic base and development in East Asia and presents a discussion of the three stages of economic development highlighted by technology intensification drawn from Kaname (1962). Dajin Peng, “The Changing Nature of East Asia as an Economic Region.” *Pacific Affairs* 73, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 173, 177.

\[7\] The roles of APEC are trade (the liberalization and facilitation pillars) and development (cooperation pillar) focused. The cooperation and facilitation pillars not only appeal to the developing members, they are the priority. Ultimately, through trade cooperation programs, the developed members pay. Michael Malley, *APEC Where do we go from here?* (Jakarta: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 43-44. These interests are reflected in the 1996 AELM statement when Ramos put sustainable and equitable development at the top the agenda. See Xinhua News Agency, “Results to be substantial, sustainable: Manila declaration,” 25 Nov. 1996; and Japan Economic Newswire, “Gist of APEC leaders’ joint declaration,” 25 Nov. 1996.

\[8\] Ravenhill stresses the distinctive nature of APEC’s open regionalism. Ravenhill, *APEC*, 6, 140.
preferences) among members (within a region) to non-members (on a Most Favored Nation basis). The second principle of APEC, concerted unilateralism, specifies that liberalization is self-determined (voluntary) and non-formal (e.g., non-treaty). These principals are classic APEC-ese describing the underlying values of consensus, constructive ambiguity, trust and peer pressure speaking volumes of the coordination of the political centre. For members not versed in ASEAN-style consensus and/or accustomed to rules-based interaction (or sufficiently powerful to circumvent rules), Political Centre participation requires stepping into an environment with distinct decision making norms and rationality.

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9 Ravenhill, *APEC*, 54. Ravenhill explains that regionalism is the step before globalization. The process does not discriminate (ibid., 140). Open regionalism is an expression used by the study group of Japanese Prime Minister Ohira in 1979 to differentiate from closed systems.

10 Yoichi Funabashi discusses the role of Tony Miller. Tony Miller, Trade Secretary in Hong Kong, coined the phrase concerted unilateralism to specify that members would voluntarily decide what was to be liberalized. The principle of concerted and voluntary efforts operates on the basis of mutual trust (negotiation) versus the rules-based (arbitration) process of GATT/WTO contrasting the non-discriminatory unilateral approach with processes grounded in reciprocity. Unlike GATT and the WTO, APEC has adopted the concerted unilateralism thereby circumventing legally binding agreements. The anathema of APEC for negotiated agreements explains why the push of the EPG in this direction met with minimal success. Snape adds that the process, in manner, is recognizably GATT/WTO consistent. When the Bogor Declaration was timetabled, the parameters were GATT/WTO consistent. Ravenhill points out that the US had nothing to offer to the AELM economies beyond the Uruguay Round commitments, thus liberalization would accrue to the US but would not be reciprocated. See Yoichi Funabashi, *Asia Pacific Fusion: Japan's Role in APEC*, Washington: Institute for International Economics, 1995; Richard H. Snape, *NAFTA, the Americas, AFTA and CER: Reinforcement or Competition for APEC?* Pacific Economic Paper 254, Australia-Japan Research Centre, Canberra, 1996; Ravenhill, *APEC*, 96; and Bonapace, “Multilateralsim and Regionalism,” UNESCAP.

11 Ravenhill suggests the controls work to encourage positive demonstration in order to waylay the fear of bypassing an opportunity. Thus the lack of definition, or constructive ambiguity, is workable when coupled with cohesive (or coercive) group socialization or pressure. However, Shin-Yuan Lai observes that APEC is frustrated by “the low level of trust among member economies.” See Ravenhill, *APEC*, 124, 160; and Shin-Yuan Lai, “APEC after Ten Years,” 5.

12 Coyle presents an elegant discussion linking culture to decision making. Acharya traces APEC decision-making norms to the ‘ASEAN way’ modeled on the inclusive, consensual and leader orchestrated mechanisms found in Javanese villages. Expanding on Caporaso’s basis of economic multilateralism as “non-discrimination” Acharya adds directness, reciprocity and compromise where outright agreement is not attainable. Abandoning the procedural frameworks that drive other multilateral bodies, the AELM sets cruise control at the pace of slower or more reticent members. See Dennis J. Coyle, “A Cultural Theory of Organizations,” in *Culture Matters: Essays in honor of Aaron Wildavsky*, eds. Richard J. Ellis and Michael Thompson, 59-79. Bolder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997; and Acharya, “Ideas,” 340, 325.
The demise of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) illustrates the consequences of a failure to heed the AELM norms and the will of the political centre to assert control and default to Asian comfort zones. Created in 1992, the EPG was charged with “the responsibility to ‘enunciate a vision for trade in the Asia Pacific Region’.”13 Focusing on the trade liberalization pillar of APEC, the group overshot the advisory role pushing fast and far beyond open regionalism in a consultative community environment to “negotiated reciprocity.”14 Ravenhill wryly notes that the EPG reports found favor with the “converted,” while the majority of the Asian members suspected the group was a handmaiden of US interests.15 Accordingly, during the Osaka AELM in 1996, the EPG was politely thanked and summarily dissolved. Thus, in the Theatre of APEC, the Political Centre cancelled a fringe play that conflicted with the main stage event.

Guided by principles of open regionalism and concerted unilateralism, the processes of APEC and the products are, as Kelsey outlines, interrelated.16 The approach feeds into the process producing the products that again invigorate the process. The principles serve to script the political centre imposing parameters that shape the final products (the AELM Statement) while the operating style directs the process. However, it is

13 Ravenhill, *APEC*, 166. The EPG was an Australian initiative borrowed from similar Commonwealth groups with members drawn from business and academia with one government official. The group was created at the 1992 meeting in Bangkok and headed by Fred Bergsten, an American.

14 Ravenhill, *APEC*, 130.

15 Ravenhill, *APEC*, 205. Certainly, the EPG was shortsighted to focus on explicit, rather than implicit, gains and to overlook real economic status and need. Two thirds of the APEC members were listed on the HDI ranking for developing countries in 1993. HDI Index 2002, http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2002.

16 Jane Kelsey, “Whither APEC?” in *Pepper in Our Eyes*, ed. Wesley W. Pue (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000) The processes include: the APEC forum, the AELM consultation process leading to the statement on the main stage and the activity on the margins of the small stage while the products are the AELM statements and implementation of the agenda and action items. From the text Kelsey explains that the method (process) and outcome (products) are closely interlinked stemming from the approach of APEC.
“the designated APEC host for a particular year’s summit who takes on the bulk of responsibility for the agenda, coordination of satellite workshops and meetings of ministers and officials.”

The annual meeting is a mobile venue enabling the AELM to (re)define the realm in a new location and to (re)affirm unity. The Moroccan “court-in-motion” fosters equal-opportunity-to-direct. The APEC Chair of the next year may elect to build on the previous agenda – a new scene in the same act – or replay a former act or write an entire new script. At best, the process encourages fresh ideas and innovative directions; at worst, the result is progressive regional surgery. Without a plan for cumulative gains and consistency, the cost is high: uncoordinated effort, ongoing realignment of the pillars, negligible accountability for previous commitments and, most serious of all, failure to lead. Balancing enthusiasm and expectations is a challenge. Krause warns that:

“...there is the danger in the decision-making summit conception because it may not be possible to pull a rabbit out of the hat every year because important issues may not be ripe for decision. This forces the bureaucracy that plans the meeting to make mountains from molehills, thereby losing credibility for the entire exercise. This dangerous tendency can be overcome by emphasizing the networking and personal chemistry aspects of the meeting.”


19 For example, Suharto was dedicated to creating a legacy meeting in 1994. The Bogor Declaration is a document with more emphasis on ends -- the time-frame of free and open trade liberalization -- than means. The long time frame of the 2010/20 declaration, sixteen years to twenty-six years, acknowledged the nascent AELM partnership and the diverse capacity among members.

20 An example when the court in motion failed is the proposition of MAPA from the 1996 meeting that was a retooled version of IAP from the year before.

21 Krause, “Progress to Date,” 244.
If the main stage is dependent on the collective cooperation of the Political Centre, the “networking” potential is the very stuff of the small stage, value added to APEC through the AELM process.22

To return to Alatas’s measured optimism; the value added of the structure of the AELM is the schedule of annual meetings and the opportunity to address issues and to move regional coordination ahead. The rotation of hosts provides structure and delegates responsibility. In an organization with out an established central authority, consensus is a powerful and unifying tool. Each leader has the right and the opportunity to voice a dissenting opinion and to be heard. Agreement is pooled and decisions made by the AELM as a group are upheld (at least in principle). Legitimacy obtains to the leaders as a group. Individually, the leaders gain personal experience and collective exposure.23

The result of this focus on process, the effort to balance initiative and products with comfort levels and will, may impede forward momentum. The agenda is sufficiently sanitized (economic) to skirt contentious areas (security or domestic affairs) on the main stage. The rules are few. The invisible processes behind the stage; the year of planning, leader consultation, drafting and finalization of the AELM Statement and the press releases enhance the smooth production. The product of the AELM, the statement, enables the leaders to communicate with their audience.

22 Ibid.

23 Information confirmed during discussion with a former Trudeau spokesperson (July 2003). While leaders know of each other, it cannot be assumed they actually know each other well or have experience working together.
Effective political theatre seeks to communicate. Reception of messages closes the loop and validates the performance. Earlier chapters set the AELM in the context of political theatre modeled from Geertz and reviewed specific aspects of the architecture of the AELM. This chapter examines the third question of this thesis:

Guided by the parameters of the principles and pillars of APEC, what does the AELM, the political centre, express to the audience from the main and small stages?

The media has proven to be an insightful audience-elect providing a wealth of commentary and detail. The survey findings indicate a joint focus on the business of the main stage and the adjacent interaction on the small stage.¹ (Graph 5.1) In addition, the press reports also include descriptions of the ceremonial aspects of this drama.² During the period under review, the main and small stages share approximately equal attention. The average, of all reporting collected in this sample, is 56.6 percent on the main stage and 45.4 percent on the

¹ The percentage distribution for main and small stages reporting respectively is: 1993 (59.8, 40.2), 1994 (49.3, 50.7), 1995 (66, 34), 1996 (67.4, 32.6), 1997 (49, 51) and 1998 (47.9, 52.1). The isolation of the leaders due to extreme congestion during the Subic Bay meeting in 1996 explains the lack of small stage details. The poor small stage coverage during the Osaka meeting in 1995 may have other explanations including composition of the media sample, press preference for the main stage or lack of accessible small stage information. These observations are noted later in this chapter.

² The details are briefly mentioned later in this chapter.
small stage. This clear division indicates audience interest in the complete spectrum of outcomes. The full drama is the sum of these stages, each contributing to the success of the political theatre.

Main Stage

The analysis of the main stage reporting is based on the content of the AELM Declarations. This document concludes each meeting and attempts to incorporate vision, goals and activities in order to provide policy guidance to APEC. A carefully crafted product of leader-level deliberation (and months of behind-the-scenes planning), the content is divisible into four theme areas: Entity, Trading Systems, Economic Endeavors, and Agents and Targets.3 The leaders may intend to convey an all-encompassing vision, however, the press choose to focus. (Table 5.1) Each and every year, the press select trading systems as the raison d'être or the main playbill. The spotlight is fixed on trade liberalization. Second billing goes to Economic Endeavors, the cooperation and facilitation pillars. Third, and defiantly last is the periodic affirmation and reaffirmation of APEC as an Entity through the AELM.4 The least coverage is given to Agents and Targets, the activity level of APEC.5

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3 These broad theme areas are itemized in Chapter 2, List 1. See also Appendices V to X for detailed results.
Failure to communicate all three pillars suggests a disconnect at the Political Centre intercepted by the Complex Society. Perhaps the press is predisposed to choose trading as the primary focus of the AELM, more interesting to report, or is prescient — trade liberalization is the true underlying interest. The pillars, in combination, are flawed. Trade liberalization is the long-term goal achieved after cooperation and technical assistance have brought all members to the same point of readiness. Have the cooperation and facilitation pillars been added to appease the Emerging Economies? The press coverage touches on this point indirectly. The developing economies cited a need for technical and cooperation enhancement before they could liberalize; the more developed countries focused on liberalization as the primary goal. This lack of integration is well played out in the press, amounting to a North-South issue. At the level of the audience, the AELM vision is one pillar and two camps.

The press results indicate the AELM charted a more consistent course in advancing general aims. Two examples occur when the AELM indicated the capacity to present a united front and advance regional interests: the Uruguay Round and the establishment of the Bogor 2010/20 goals. The purpose behind the Seattle meeting was the conclusion of the

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4 Given the nascent state of the AELM during the years under review, establishing and realigning broad objectives would be required as momentum built and membership expanded.

5 The agenda of the original Vancouver meeting was to address social issues and programs. Although the meeting agenda was hijacked by the financial crisis, pages of detail were included in the AELM statement, duly reported by the press.

6 The question is who pays. The developing countries sought cooperation in exchange for trade benefits. See Mitsuhiko Morimoto, “Osaka APEC made progress toward WTO trade goals,” Daily Yomiuri, 24 Nov. 1995. Morimoto writes of the “different stance between the United States...and the Asian developing countries” with the US “keen to hasten” liberalization while others are “reluctant to be forced.” Prime Minister Mahathir also expressed reservations concerning the route he believed APEC was taking. See Agence France Press, “Malaysia irks Indonesia and other friends over the v-word at APEC,” 17 Nov. 1995; United Press International, “Mahathir has reservations on APEC,” 23 Nov. 1996; and Deutsche Presse-Agentur, “Malaysia to raise concerns of small states over free trade at APEC,” 22 Nov. 1996.
1986-1994 Uruguay Round The Political Centre responded positively and decisively. The AELM sent a strong, fresh signal to Europe supporting an early conclusion. The Political Centre amply indicated that internal cooperation could be achieved when the result lay outside the region.

The second example is the success of the AELM in obtaining broad consensus within the organization with respect to the time frame for trade liberalization. The Bogor 2010/20 goals were spearheaded by Suharto in his determination to host a watershed meeting. Consensus prevailed over initial reserve leading to a diluted “17 plus one” agreement endorsing the trade liberalization time frame. Although support within the centre varied, the group achieved coordination. Within the political centre The AELM was successful in terms of communicating broad policy objectives.

Does the press express the same confidence that the AELM could declare and deliver? Does action follow statements demonstrating real results? Alas, press analysts do not track commitments throughout the year. AELM reporting is immediate, leaders are

7 According to President Clinton the American strategy was to combine the NAFTA and APEC vote. Progress would be stymied if government subsidies remained an issue and if France was successful in reopening the Blair House Agreement. See David Einstein, “Summit in Seattle – Clinton backed on trade,” San Francisco Chronicle, 20 Nov. 1993; and Mickey Kantor, “FT exporter,” Financial Times (London), 13 Oct. 1993.


10 Yang Razali Kassim, “Timetable achieved but many gaps remain,” Business Times (Singapore), 16 Nov. 1994. The holdout member was Malaysia. Japan expressed concerns prior to the AELM. Thailand and Malaysia submitted separate post-AELM observations.
either preparing to occupy or holding centre stage. Nor do the leaders make the subsequent AELM an opportunity for substantive follow-up on earlier commitments. Either the press is disinterested and/or there is little substance to report. Lai suggests that detailed responses and complex plans are not appropriate at the level of leader. Policy formation is a political process and implementation is administrative. The Political Centre delegates detail.

Given the lean design of the APEC Secretariat, the unique design along Asian norms and the new group dynamic of the AELM members, tackling an issue together could have sent a strong signal to the Complex Society — the Political Centre is visible and engaged. Customs harmonization is a prime example. Sticky border issues are neither elegant nor easy, but are essential to the facilitation of trade. Alternatively, the AELM could have taken up the issue of currency regulation, or any of the other financial issues mentioned in successive AELM statements. While it is unlikely that addressing an aspect of the financial sector would have mitigated the underlying need for structural adjustments, tackling a real issue could have built expertise, experience and familiarity in preparation for the unforeseen: the financial crisis and the events of 11 September 2001.

11 The data base search included all articles in a calendar year. The results were uneven. Geertz makes the point that the draw of the political centre tended to increase with proximity and decrease with distance: the vortex diminishing to a ripple as the political centre moved on.


13 Suharto was explicit that the specifics (details) and divining the 2010/20 framework were the responsibility of the next host (Japan). The 2010/20 goals were a message to the business community and a plan of action for government ministers. See Yang Razali Kassim, “Timetable achieved but many gaps remain,” Business Times (Singapore), 16 Nov. 1994; Keiji Urakami, “APEC leaders united behind 2020 free trade target date,” Japan Economic Newswire, 15 Nov. 1994; and Kwan Weng Kin, “Japan’s crucial task is to draw up ‘road map’,” Daily Yomiuri, 16 Nov. 1995.

14 Customs harmonization is a foundation for trade liberalization. The priority of customs harmonization was raised in the 1994 Leaders’ Declaration, incorporated into the 1995 document (with IAPs), mentioned again in 1996 with reference to a schedule effective 1998, and, in 1997, cited as a model of achievement with implementation in 2000. This was slow progress. The Emerging Economies sought support to fast-track and implement harmonization. Many of the developing members had existing aid commitments and were unwilling to commit more. The problem is Who pays?
The financial crisis is the first major regional challenge, presenting a genuine opening to the Political Centre to demonstrate strength and “restore confidence.”\(^{15}\) The press offer insights into the dynamics of the political centre: palatable dismay, resifting agendas and a scramble for damage control.\(^{16}\) Despite the proximity of the crisis, within the Complex Society, and threat to continued economic growth, the AELM did not rally as a region.\(^{17}\) The Asian Fund, suggested by the Japanese, was not promoted, nor was a regional initiative aligned with the International Financial Institutions (IFIs).\(^{18}\) Explanations include the objection of the US, a reticence to open domestic affairs to other AELM members and a preference to elect an external IFI (e.g., the International Monetary Fund) to push hard for significant and domestically unpopular structural adjustments.

At the level of member politics the reporting was fulsome.\(^{19}\) Press references to the sensitive sectors offer glimpses of the AELM in dress rehearsal. A good example is the dual dilemma Japan faced as host to the Osaka AELM. On the one hand, as the AELM host, the


\(^{16}\) The financial crisis eclipsed the original agenda. See David Israelson, “APEC leaders were too glib Asian turmoil cause for concern despite assurance analysis,” \textit{Toronto Star}, 26 Nov. 1997; David L. Marcus, “APEC leaders pledge economic rescue work; but annual meeting ends on grave note, with Asian markets plunging,” \textit{Boston Globe}, 26 Nov. 1997; and New Straits Times (Malaysia), “The week that was,” 1 Dec. 1997.


\(^{19}\) This result is not unexpected; the majority of press reports are drawn from member economies. See Appendix II and III.
Japanese were promoting the Individual Action Plans, an ingenious response to the Bogor 2010/20 plan. On the other hand, Japan represented national dissension in the domestic agricultural faction. This example amply illustrates the dual dilemma the Japanese faced as hosts of a regional entity and representatives of national interests.20

Press reporting on the main stage indicates a strong interest in the Political Centre. While the pillars vary in height, the leaders do use the AELM Statement to outline current policy and commitments. The Leaders’ Declarations are closely followed and extensively reported to the Complex Society. The APEC Chair assumes a significant role in determining direction, progressive or regressive.21 The audience is aware that members have different priorities, and have gained an increasing awareness of Emerging Economy issues. The AELM, distinct in design and predicated on Asian norms, is effective as a regional body. The audience perceives that the Political Centre works well when required to present a unified front or to make broad future-oriented decisions. The AELM is less effective in crisis mode, presenting a wavering image of leadership. While the press does not track commitments, they seek confirmation of results. The onus is on the Political Centre to provide this evidence. Failure to control and to animate commitments raises doubt and, more fatally, erodes credibility over time.


21 The 1996 Manila Plan of Action (MAPA) separated country responsibilities (IAPs) from regional endeavors. While adding perspective to the complexity of balancing a diverse membership, MAPA was a retooled version of the IAP. The press was lukewarm to skeptical, suggesting the “burden of proof” is tangible results. Agence France Presse, “Business panel lauds gains of APEC summit,” 26 Nov. 1996.
The Small Stage

Scholars and journalists propose that the value of the AELM should not be measured solely on the basis of processes and products.\(^{22}\) The AELM venue also provides a significant opportunity for leaders to meet informally on the margins, or the small stage, unfettered by the protocol and the parameters of a state visit.

"...[M]ore than anything else, the APEC meetings dramatized the organization’s advances in size and scope. At times the conference resembled a three-ring circus, and it became a forum for much more than just international trade issues....there were probably as many top level diplomatic meetings as usually take place in Asia in a year."\(^{23}\)

Why do the members of the political centre seek each other out? What is discussed? Over the six-year period of this press review, the media devoted considerable attention to this facet of the AELM.\(^{24}\) In contrast to the main stage of official agendas and scripts, the coexisting small stage reporting focuses on the distinct relationships and issues between members. The style here is improv. In tandem, these stages expand audience perspective of the AELM.

The value added is clear, a “much broader regional dynamic is involved in APEC than free trade. Problems can get solved at leaders’ meetings.”\(^{25}\) Such problems include gains between members attainable on the small stage that in turn strengthen the political centre. Small stage reporting is divisible into three categories: Issues, Personalities and

\(^{22}\) Ravenhill, Krause, Gallant and Stubbs. The play on the acronym of APEC -- A Perfect Excuse to Chat or Aging Politicians Expecting Cocktails -- is insightful. The truth may be more literal than the wits intend, the opportunity for exchange at the Political Centre where leaders are equals is significant value added.

\(^{23}\) Asiaweek, “Summits; and now; what?; APEC leaders get a good start,” 23 Nov. 1994.

\(^{24}\) The percentage of small stage reporting is 43.6%. See Chapter 5, Graph 1.

Agendas. On the small stage there are fewer constraints on the leaders and on the press. Thus, the leaders are free to act on personal agendas; interests that may parallel, or diverge, from the main stage. The media critics are equally free to interpret and critique these small plays as isolated acts or as separate scenes of the main performance. What does the press tell the audience? The primary focus is leader-to-leader interaction: the bilateral and pluri-lateral meetings. Second, the press target real events, for example, the financial crisis. The substantive nature of this coverage suggests that the press continue to seek evidence of leadership on the small stage. The leaders are still linked to the Political Centre.

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a Civil society participation reported in the press includes the People's Summit, Anti-APEC protest groups, Non-Government groups (NGOs) and specific activists.
b The divide between the developing and newly industrialized members is well noted in the press.

Categories raised on the small stage include bilateral relations, security and human rights; ostensibly issues outside the purview of the AELM and APEC. In 1993, the leaders did not hesitate: "[h]eads of state raced about downtown Seattle for brief one-on-one sessions." Bilateral interaction is not necessarily divorced from economics; this stage is

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26 These broad theme areas are itemized in Chapter 2, List 2. See also Appendices V to X for detailed results. Among the leaders that use the press to signal the Complex Society, other AELM members and Europe, the premier expert was Prime Minister Mahathir.

rife with main stage issues. For example, the reported purpose of the Chinese–US bilateral meeting in 1993 was to address “deteriorating relations.” By the next year, relations had sufficiently recovered for Premier Jiang Zemin to offer his support of the Bogor 2010/20 goals in exchange for a US bilateral alliance supporting China’s GATT application. A sub-current of trade issues runs through the small stage including Most Favored Nation status, agriculture (a very sensitive sector) and the admission of Taiwan to GATT. The value added of the small stage is the opportunity for leaders to flesh out AELM issues independently and in the presence of the Complex Society.

Regional security issues were strictly prohibited from the AELM agenda with opposition registered by Japan, China, and Australia plus the ASEAN members. Discussion of the security matters of absent, non-member countries is permissible. North Korea was the subject of pluri-lateral meetings in Seattle and Bogor. China, Japan, South Korea and the US met to review the formation of an international consortium to replace outdated reactors in North Korea, press for implementation of the October 8th Geneva

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28 Premier Jiang is reported to have focused on non-interference in internal affairs, a hallmark of ASEAN while the US raised the issue of human rights and MFN treatment, North Korea and technology sales. See British Broadcasting Corporation, “Wen Wei Po”, reviews ‘far-reaching significance’ of Clinton-Zemin meeting,” 23 Nov. 1993; and Leon Hadar, “APEC - what’s in it for Washington?” Business Times (Singapore), 13 Oct. 1993.

29 The application is concluded during the 1996 meeting when APEC foreign ministers sign joint statements of support. See Deutsche Presse-Agentur, “APEC leaders greeted by protesters before Philippine summit,” 24 Nov. 1996; and Straits Times (Singapore), “Ramos all for admitting China, Taiwan into WTO,” 14 Nov. 1996.

30 For comments on the “politically sensitive rice market” in Japan see Louise Lucas, “APEC leaders pledge to meet again next year,” South China Morning Post, 22 Nov. 1993; and Japan Economic Newswire, “Japan wants APEC to omit free trade area from statement,” 1 Nov. 1994.

31 China was at pains to point out that APEC has two the pillars of liberalization and cooperation, the implication being security is the third, unnecessary pillar. See Agence France-Presse, 17 November 1995; and China Radio International Online News, “APEC Senior Officials Reach Consensus on Key Issues,” October 2001. www.english.cri.com.cn/english/2001/Oct/32339.htm.
Framework, and determine payment arrangements. This example illustrates the merits of the proximity of leaders in a multilateral environment and the value added for the region in terms of enhanced security.

The principle of non-interference in the national affairs of other members is a hallmark of the AELM. APEC deftly handled the admission of China, Hong Kong and Taiwan by according almost equal status when they joined in 1991. The annual press speculation surrounding the level of Taiwan’s representation at an upcoming AELM invariably led to China’s strong reiteration of the One-China policy plus any other Straits issues at hand. For example, during the Osaka AELM, the Chinese complained in the press about the US facilitation of President Lee’s visit to his alma mater, while the Taiwanese responded with an appeal in support of the visit. The audience continues to be informed of regional political issues although such exchanges are not directly connected to the AELM and APEC.

Issues: Human Rights and Security

Non-interference in the domestic affairs of other members extends to the topic of human rights. From the media reports, the extent of small-stage human rights discussion beyond the bilateral briefing note, and another topic box to tick off during a meeting, is

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What is clear is that the AELM is not a venue to link trade issues to domestic human rights. Nonetheless, the subject has gained space adjacent to the AELM. By 1996, the People’s Summit that parallels the AELM was in full momentum with human rights central to the people’s agenda. The impact of thousands of protesters targeting specific leaders in a separate fringe festival also raises security concerns. For the AELM host, the status of the leaders as Internationally Protected Persons stipulates an established responsibility to ensure protection. This responsibility may lead to unintended consequences. For example, Canada’s policy of “constructive engagement” to guarantee the safety of Indonesian participants (counted among the specific targets) and the decision to host the meeting on a major university campus proved problematic. Attempts by police to disband the protestors ended in an extensive and expensive national inquiry on security abuse. While the AELM excludes human rights, the issue is unlikely to disappear. The rotating venue of the AELM ensures the “anti-APEC activists have a moveable tableau: the


36 President Suharto was very specific that Indonesian domestic politics (East Timor) and organized labor are not to be linked with trade issues or the main stage. See Jim Dalla-Giacoma, “Riot police, East Timorese in embassy standoff as APEC meets,” Agence France Presse, 12 Nov. 1994; and Jim Anderson, “US to raise human rights issues with Indonesia,” Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 3 Nov. 1994.


same carnival moving from Manila to Vancouver and now to Kuala Lumpur."  

To the leaders, the People’s Summit may be a bad play, however, it is audience response from a vocal segment of the Complex Society.

Personalities

The premier expert of media messaging is Prime Minister Mahathir. Although absent from the first AELM in Seattle, considerable press coverage detailed his suspicion of US dominance and wariness of APEC that culminated in the closely chronicled Keating-Mahathir exchange. On other occasions, the media was an outlet to speculate on his attendance, comment on the AELM outcomes, express the concerns of other members or respond to issues, including human rights, criticize Europe and to report on the parallel ASEAN mini-summits. These examples suggest the press was an outlet to speak, not only to the audience, but also to send signals to the other leaders. During the 1998 AELM, leader response to Vice-President Gore’s speech, delivered on behalf of the absent President Clinton, containing references to the bravery of Malaysians was swift. Plans to meet with Wan Azzizah Wan Ismail, the wife of detained Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim.

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41 Australian PM Keating’s comment that Mahathir was “recalcitrant” for boycotting the first AELM precipitated an immediate bilateral reaction. The matter was ultimately resolved with a letter of quasi-apology. This incident indicates that comments expressed to the national press may be inappropriate in an international context. See United Press International, “Australia welcomes restoration of good relations with Malaysia,” 12 Dec. 1993; Ian Stewart, “Keating in bid to heal Malaysian insult rift,” *South China Morning Post*, 3 Dec. 1993; and United Press International, “Demands for apology by Australia Prime Minister to Malaysian counterpart,” 29 Nov. 1993.

Anwar, were abruptly cancelled, as the leaders distanced themselves from any public semblance of interference in the domestic affairs of an APEC member.\textsuperscript{43}

Sets and Photo Opportunities

The roots of Geertz's model in the political theatre of Bali, an example of dramatic effect in the lavish extreme, speak to the rituals and sets associated with the AELM. Press reports indicate that costumes and sets, the trappings of political theater, are in evidence. The dress code for the "class picture" alternates between national dress and the tie-less look.\textsuperscript{44} This reserved occasion is not without touches of ironic humor. In 1997 while the region was in the throes of the financial crisis, the choice of bomber jackets suggested to one media observer that the leaders looked "as grim as a squadron of pilots getting ready for a mission from which some might not return."\textsuperscript{45}

In addition to costumes, props are mentioned in the press; the "[s]ymbolic gavel" a "varnished mallet" passed to the next host.\textsuperscript{46} The year 2010 will mark the opening of a time capsule containing messages from the leaders at the Subic Bay meeting.\textsuperscript{47} Over the years, increasingly elaborate sets have replaced the humble backdrop of the Seattle site, a rustic


\textsuperscript{44} In 1993, sweaters, jackets and APEC baseball caps were in order. In 1994, 1996 and 1998, the hosts opted for traditional shirts. Prime Minister Shipley wore a baju kebaya, the traditional dress for Muslim women. In 1995, Japan adopted an informal style with leaders appearing "a little stiff in their tie-less shirts." See Peter Kenny, "APEC leaders relax, sign key document," United Press International, 19 Nov. 1995.

\textsuperscript{45} Agence France Presse, "APEC leaders pilot economies over dangerous territory," 26 Nov. 1997.

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Asiaweek}, "Summits; and now; what?; APEC leaders get a good start," 23 Nov. 1994.

fishing lodge. In addition to constructing leader accommodation described as “18 Southforks all in a row,” the homeless were relocated, illegal housing demolished, protest outlawed, visas denied and security cordons kept the People’s Summit and reporters at a distance.

The foregoing discussion indicates the press, the Complex Society substitute, maintains an interest in the main and the small stages of the AELM. Focus on the main stage suggests that the Political Centre has credibility but lack of results over time could dampen attention and engagement. On the small stage, leaders appear to maximize opportunity to address issues with each other and to the audience. The gains presented by the press to the audience outweigh the paucity of results and retooled agenda items in the short term. Over the long term, the sustainability of the AELM may be challenged by an audience seeking confirmation of results and crisis coordination.

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49 The meetings are not held in capital cites. Conor O’Clery, “Homeless and shanties given boot as Manila cleans house for APEC,” Irish Times, 25 Nov. 1996.

Chapter 6  Conclusion

The guiding objective of this thesis is to demonstrate that political value exists in the ‘Staging of APEC’ in terms of regional political and economic integration that benefits the regional economies. The thesis was guided by three questions:

a. What model of political theatre may be applied to the AELM?
b. What is the architecture of the AELM, positive and negative?
c. What does the Political Centre (the AELM) communicate to the audience (Complex Society)?

The model of theatre successfully applied to APEC, a hybrid of PECC and ASEAN, is the political theatre of Bali, based on the work of Clifford Geertz. Rudolph, Esherick, Wasserstrom and Katzenstein also make the connection to this form of political theatre.\(^1\)

Geertz raises two fundamental elements to explain the functioning of this form of theatre.

First, “social organizations” such as APEC steered by the AELM seek an appropriate cultural outlet to establish and maintain political authority.\(^2\) The actors, props, era and rationale may change, but the force to build and hold authority is intangible and eternal.

Thus, in order to avert the regional economic chaos that Soesastro suggests is the alternative, the AELM through APEC unites the major players, Japan and the US, includes conflicting members (China and Taiwan), restructures power and redistributes effort and resources to productive ends.\(^3\) The AELM may be imperfect by design, a created, rather than natural region, combine excessive diversity, divergent interests and traditions and achieve slow to poor results.\(^4\) The alternative, no mechanism to organize and deflect the dominant power of

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1 To a lesser extent Acharya makes the connection to traditional Javanese decision making at the village level.


3 At the time Soesastro was writing, China was an emerging power.

4 Differences include the obvious historical, political, social, cultural, religious, linguistic and ethnic diversity. Spatial proximity in the Pacific Basin coupled with linkages gained by communication and air transport with
the US, the emerging strength of China within the region with the WTO as the primary trade recourse, is a firm second. The AELM is constructed on Asian norms that foster dialogue and listen to disparate perspectives.\textsuperscript{5}

Second, having established its authority, the political centre uses varied means (Symbolic Forms) to reinforce, influence and control. To understand this process, Geertz traces this dynamic from the centre, through the signals to the audience. In this thesis, the political centre is examined as an entity (Chapter 4) and from the messages intercepted by the audience (Chapter 5). We learn that the AELM has dual stages, a political centre of members together on the main stage and as individual agents on the small stage. The coexistence of these stages points to greater value added for the AELM, APEC and ultimately for the region.

Yet, critics dismiss the AELM as an example of top-track talk pointing to the paucity of measurable results. Is the value added sufficient to justify an annual meeting that has grown more elaborate with each passing year? Initially, yes. First, it is the opportunity for leaders to step out of their insular concerns into a shared and increasingly familiar environment where they may get to know each other, gain insights into respective issues and build a collective identity. Wendt intimates that “annual and essentially trivial meetings to discuss economic policy” are all “about redefining identity and interest” (italics in the original).\textsuperscript{6} The benefit of building relationships among leaders with the flow-through potential to deputies, ministers and bureaucrats (even as far as civil society) cannot be just-in-time delivery, diminished bilateral power relations and a heightened awareness of the Pacific Rim as a vibrant economic region challenge outdated arguments of non-naturalness.

\textsuperscript{5} Bernard Arogyaswamy referencing Francis Fukuyama adds that the US also has a “communitarian” tradition evident in church, service, school and neighborhood groups. Bernard Arogyaswamy, \textit{The Asian Miracle, Myth, and Mirage} (Westport: Quorum Books, 1998), 123.

\textsuperscript{6} Wendt, “Collective Identity,” 391. The author is referring to the G-7.
overstated. Being at the centre checks, although does not eliminate, behavior that might
damage or compromise regional political and economic stability. Despite a large
membership, the stage has sufficient space for all members as relative equals. Being
inclusive avoids difficult decisions: who is in, who is out, why and who decides? Thus the
extensive membership among Pacific Rim economies enables distant and medium-level
players such as Canada and Australia to have a role in Asia-Pacific.

The focus of the AELM on economic issues has put pressure on sensitive sectors such
as agriculture. The intense scrutiny that follows a formal exchange between Heads of State
and Governments is softened. The press content analysis indicates that member meetings are
openly held, flexible and plentiful. The small stage adds advantages to the main stage,
validating Acharya's "process" in maintaining forward momentum.\(^7\) The political centre has
shown prudence with regard to economies of scale, keeping the APEC Secretariat initially
small, supporting intellectual input from PECC and other research through committees while
closing the gap on the bad plays such as the EPG. After the first six years, the AELM
political and theatrical model reflects Alatas's careful confidence of utility, promise and
challenge.

The architecture of APEC provides a common set of norms for interaction. Despite
the strengths and weaknesses of the framework, the initial years have been positive.
Challenges remain and are indicated by the slow response to the financial crisis, the change
in dynamics as membership increases, and the cost of lost opportunities to demonstrate
leadership. Declaring without clear implementation at lower levels (e.g., customs
harmonization) raises the question: What do they do? Such questions from the press, the
near audience, could suggest engagement on the wane. As the ultimate authority, it is the

\(^7\) Acharya, "Ideas", 329.
AELM itself that must call for accountability and results. Announcing in a statement what the audience cannot see (and hence believe) is potentially lethal to the long-term prospects of the Political Centre.

This thesis has shown that value can be found in this staging of APEC. Geertz’s model of the political theatre of Bali is applicable to the AELM enabling the audience to view the inner workings of the Political Centre and for the leaders to understand the vital connection to the Complex Society. Knowledge of this two-way conduit enables leaders (and their representatives) to tailor messages to the audience. The methodology has contributed analysis that confirms the role of the press as representatives of the Complex Society. As interpreters of activity on the main and small stage, the media chooses to relay support or skepticism.

This examination of AEPC and the AELM is, however, cursory. Future research could extend the time frame and include a larger sample of news reports. The link between policy formation in the AELM and the autonomy of the Secretariat could be examined. Among the pillars, specific initiatives could be tracked. Understanding the processes that determine outcomes (and pose impediments) could also address the sustainability of the AELM and APEC over time. To establish credibility and authority over the long-term, the AELM must continue to communicate with the Complex Society, demonstrate gains and utilize opportunities to exhibit leadership. The dynamic of the ‘Theatre of APEC’ is powerful; the existence of the AELM has contributed value in political and economic terms that furthers regional integration and growth.
A number of questions remain. Is this examination of the Political Centre applicable to other international institutions? The temptation is to dismiss political theatre as inherently Asian and specific to APEC (and similar others, e.g., ASEAN and ASEAN Plus Three). The application of this model is straightforward: locate the context of the nexus of power and uncover the means (symbols) that fix authenticity. What are the fundamentals, mechanisms and commonalities to explain the ‘we’ in international entities and the premium of membership? Can we trace the substantive and the subtle symbolic forms that affirm legitimacy? This analysis, for example, suggests a function of the press corps, the near audience, is to confirm the leaders are leading. The content of the media reports, a wealth of information, anecdote and conjecture, also point to the dual stages of APEC: the official main stage and the venue neutral small stage. Future research could undertake similar content analysis of other international groups to view the dynamics within the centre and the messages sent to the audience.

Why would we do this? Rudolph proposes “that we too construct and act within cosmologies and that we only deny the myths we live by because we cannot see or articulate them.” As we come to understand our environment, the seen and the unseen, we may come to value our political theater.

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8 See Chapter 3, footnote 27, page 17.

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News Sample 1998


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Appendix I APEC Venues and Member Participation

Pre-AELM - APEC Ministerial Meetings, 1989-1992

1989 November 6-7 Canberra, Australia (12)

ASEAN members (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) plus Australia, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand and the United States

1990 July 29-31 Singapore (12)

ASEAN members (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) plus Australia, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand and the United States

Observers: The ASEAN Secretariat, the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC) and the South Pacific Forum (SPF)

1991 November 12-14 Seoul, Republic of Korea (12)

ASEAN members (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) plus Australia, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand and the United States

New Members: People's Republic of China, Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei

Observers: The ASEAN Secretariat, the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC) and the South Pacific Forum (SPF)

1992 September 10-11 Bangkok, Thailand (15)

ASEAN members (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) plus Australia, Canada, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Chinese Taipei, and the United States

Observers: The ASEAN Secretariat, the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) and the South Pacific Forum (SPF)

AELM, 1993-1998

1993 November 20 Blake Island, Seattle, US (14)

Australia (Prime Minister Paul Keating), Brunei Darussalam (Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah), Canada (Prime Minister Jean Chrétien), People's Republic of China (President Jiang Zemin), Hong Kong (Financial Secretary Hamish MacLeod), Indonesia (President Soeharto), Japan (Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa), Republic of Korea (President Kim Young Sam), New Zealand (Prime Minister Jim Bolger), The Philippines (President Fidel Ramos), Singapore (Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong), Chinese Taipei (Chairman for Economic Planning Development Vincent C Siew), Thailand (Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai) and the United States (President Bill Clinton)

Absent: Malaysia (Prime Minister Muhamad Mahathir)

1994 November 15 Bogor, Indonesia (18)

Australia (Prime Minister Paul Keating), Brunei Darussalam (Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah), Canada (Prime Minister Jean Chrétien), People's Republic of China (President Jiang Zemin), Hong Kong (Financial Secretary Hamish MacLeod), Indonesia (President Soeharto), Japan (Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama), Republic of Korea (President Kim Young Sam), Malaysia (Prime Minister Muhamad Mahathir), New Zealand (Prime Minister Jim Bolger), The Philippines (President Fidel Ramos), Singapore (Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong),
Chinese Taipei (Chairman for Economic Planning Development Vincent C Siew), Thailand (Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai) and the United States (President Bill Clinton)

New Members: Chile (President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle), Mexico (President Carlos Salinas de Gortari) and Papua New Guinea (Prime Minister Julius Chan)

1995 November 19 Osaka, Japan (18)

Australia (Prime Minister Paul Keating), Brunei Darussalam (Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah), Canada (Prime Minister Jean Chrétien), Chile (President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle), People’s Republic of China (President Jiang Zemin), Hong Kong (Financial Secretary Donald Tsang Yam-kuen), Indonesia (President Soeharto), Japan (Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama), Republic of Korea (President Kim Young Sam), Malaysia (Prime Minister Muhammad Mahathir), Mexico (President Ernesto Zedillo), New Zealand (Prime Minister Jim Bolger), Papua New Guinea (Prime Minister Julius Chan), The Philippines (President Fidel Ramos), Singapore (Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong), Chinese Taipei (Senior Advisor Koo Chen-fu), Thailand (Prime Minister Banharn Silpa-archa) and the United States (Vice-President Al Gore)

1996 November 25 Subic, The Philippines (18)

Australia (Prime Minister John Howard), Brunei Darussalam (Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah), Canada (Prime Minister Jean Chrétien), Chile (President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle), People’s Republic of China (President Jiang Zemin), Hong Kong (Financial Secretary Donald Tsang Yam-kuen), Indonesia (President Soeharto), Japan (Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto), Republic of Korea (President Kim Young Sam), Malaysia (Prime Minister Muhammad Mahathir), Mexico (President Ernesto Zedillo), New Zealand (Prime Minister Jim Bolger), Papua New Guinea (Prime Minister Julius Chan), The Philippines (President Fidel Ramos), Singapore (Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong), Chinese Taipei (Senior Advisor Koo Chen-fu), Thailand (Prime Minister Banharn Silpa-archa) and the United States (President Bill Clinton)

1997 November 25 Vancouver, Canada (18)

Australia (Prime Minister John Howard), Brunei Darussalam (Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah), Canada (Prime Minister Jean Chrétien), Chile (President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle), People’s Republic of China (President Jiang Zemin), Hong Kong (Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa), Indonesia (President Soeharto), Japan (Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto), Republic of Korea (President Kim Young Sam), Malaysia (Prime Minister Muhammad Mahathir), Mexico (President Ernesto Zedillo), New Zealand (Prime Minister Jim Bolger), Papua New Guinea (Prime Minister Bill Skate), The Philippines (President Fidel Ramos), Singapore (Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong), Chinese Taipei (Senior Advisor Koo Chen-fu), Thailand (Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai) and the United States (President Bill Clinton)

1998 November 19 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (21)

Australia (Prime Minister John Howard), Brunei Darussalam (Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah), Canada (Prime Minister Jean Chrétien), Chile (President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle), People’s Republic of China (President Jiang Zemin), Hong Kong (Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa), Indonesia (President B.J. Habibie), Japan (Prime Minister Kiizo Obuchi), Republic of Korea (President Kim Dae-Jung), Malaysia (Prime Minister Muhammad Mahathir), Mexico (President Ernesto Zedillo), New Zealand (Prime Minister Jenny Shipley), Papua New Guinea (Prime Minister Bill Skate), The Philippines (President Joseph Estrada), Singapore (Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong), Chinese Taipei (Chairman for Economic Planning Development Chiang Pin-kung), Thailand (Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai) and the United States (Vice-President Al Gore)

New Members: Russia (Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov), Peru (President Alberto Fujimori) and Vietnam (Prime Minister Phan Van Khai)

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<th>Host Economy</th>
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<td>1 October – 31 December 1993</td>
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Total News Items Identified (Lexis-Nexis Database) 2,615

Period of search dates is the full calendar month prior and also following the meeting (e.g., 1 October to 31 December) in order to cover meeting held in November of that year.

Search results accessing Lexis-Nexis database by regions on 28 March 2002 and 4, 5, 15-16 April 2002

Appendix III: Lexis-Nexis Sources by Year (modified)

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Total press reports retrieved was 2615 news items (see Appendix II).
Total news items retained in modified search was 1866 news reports.
## Appendix IV  Lexis-Nexis Sources by Year (selected for sample)

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Total of all articles in sample is 300, listed separately in Bibliography by year of publication.
### APEC Leaders Economic Vision Statement

*Blake Island, Seattle, US*

*20 November 1993*

#### Leaders’ Statement

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Appendix VI  AELM News Sample Reporting (%)

APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration of Common Resolve
Bogor, Indonesia
15 November 1994

Leaders' Statement

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Trading Systems

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Economic Endeavors Facilitation

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Total Distribution

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* The three pillars refer to sustainable growth, equitable development and national stability.
## APEC Economic Leaders’ Declaration for Action

Osaka, Japan  
November 19, 1995

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<sup>a</sup> The three pillars refer to sustainable growth, equitable development and national stability.

<sup>b</sup> Tariff, WTO, deregulation, Initial Action, voluntary liberalization.

<sup>c</sup> Items of the original Pillars now NIE/LDC, population, food, energy and environment slated as long-term goals of APEC (length of time not specified).
Appendix VII  AELM News Sample Reporting (%)

APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration: From Vision to Action
Subic, The Philippines
November 25, 1996

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* Central role, public and private sectors operate together
Appendix IX  AELM News Sample Reporting (%)

APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration: Connecting the APEC Community
Vancouver, Canada
November 25, 1997

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<sup>a</sup> Early Volunteer Sector Liberalization (EVSL) Year of Action: Key Results: IAPs, early voluntary liberalization (9 of 15 sectors), facilitation, GATT, WTO, 1996 Framework, Partnership, SME

<sup>b</sup> Vision 21st Century Connection

<sup>c</sup> Vancouver Framework for Enhanced Public/Private Partnerships in Infrastructure Development
APEC Economic Leaders’ Declaration: Strengthening the Foundations for Growth  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
November 18, 1998

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<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia, Mahathir, Anwar</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agendas</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Policy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral Meetings</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN (Mini-Multilaterals)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Distribution</strong></td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Cooperative Growth Strategy, Growth Oriented Macro policies, Employment and Social Safety Nets, Financial and corporate Sector restructuring, Private Capital Flows, Strengthen Financial Architecture  