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# Preface

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In the late 1980s and the early part of the 1990s, a number of polities of East and Southeast Asia firmly engaged in a democratization process. At the same time and largely because of this process, a number of prominent regional leaders asserted that such a development was contrary to “Asian values” and would affect negatively the economic performance of the countries concerned. As it turned out, the economic performance of the countries of the region was affected, not by democratization, but by the globalization of the world economy and in the first instance by the financial consequences of this globalization: thus the downturn struck more a country such as Indonesia, which had not democratized, than a country such as Taiwan, which had fully democratized.

At the beginning of the third millenium as at the beginning of the 1990s, whatever the extent of the financial crises, the same question remains, equally urgent and equally daunting: does democratization affect economic performace negatively and, more specifically, does it affect economic performance negatively in the particular context of East and Southeast Asia? Such a question has not so far attracted the full attention of scholars, perhaps because too little emphasis was placed, after World War II, on the weight of political factors in socio-economic development: as a matter of fact, the converse relationship, that which relates democratization to previous economic performance, has been studied in an increasingly sophisticated manner since S. M. Lipset first raised the matter in the early 1960s in *Political Man*. Now, however, with regional leaders

stating emphatically that democratization would have an ill effect on the well-being of citizens, the problem of relating economic performance to democratization has to be directly confronted. The aim of this book is therefore to provide at least some elements of answer to the question, even if it is naturally recognized that the short duration of the democratization process and the small number of countries concerned must mean that conclusions can only be tentative.

This work would not have been possible without the help of scholars from the region and in particular of those who agreed to undertake the difficult task of writing country chapters on the basis of a commonly agreed framework. We are truly grateful to all of them. We wish to thank the United Nations University for its generous financial support, one of us, Takashi Inoguchi, having been associated with that university at the time the project started. We are also indebted to the University of Malaysia and to Jomo Kwame Sundaram for having organized the first meeting of the group of contributors at Kuala Lumpur in January 1997. We are especially grateful to the Shizuoka Research and Education Foundation for the generous funding and hospitality which it provided for our second meeting at Hamamatsu in March 1997. We thank the academic institutions to which we belonged during the whole or part of the period, the European University Institute in Florence, the University of Siena, Colorado College in Colorado Springs, the University of Tokyo, and the Australian Graduate School of Management of the University of New South Wales in Sydney, for having provided us with greatly needed facilities such as e-mails, faxes, and telephones, as these were obviously essential instruments for the completion of a collaborative enterprise such as this. We are most grateful to Professor Martin Shefter of Cornell University for allowing us to reproduce the figure which appears in his *Political Parties and the State* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994): the analysis which he conducts in this volume has helped us markedly in the development of our conceptual framework.

We learnt much while undertaking this study, both about the concrete political, social, and economic life of the countries concerned and about comparative politics and administration: we hope that readers, too, will find that this volume helps to assess, not just whether democratization does affect economic performance, but, perhaps even more importantly, what democratization practically consists of at the level of party development in particular, as well as what economic performance entails in terms of economic governance.

Florence, Tokyo, and Sydney, October 1998