

## **Interregional Competition as Innovated World Order: Is It Enhancing Exchanges or Destabilising the World?**

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**Abstract:** The paper deals with the idea of the world continuous transformation to the present regionalism. This is why the analysis is focused on the regional emergence as a multi-faceted concept. Another objective of the paper is the delimitation between the global political terms and the regional policy sectors. The first conclusion of the paper is that the regions do not fight each other with military weapons, but with economic, monetary and trading instruments used within an encompassing institutional and legal framework. This transposition may also apply to political and cultural issues. Economists use competition from an ideal-typical angle and, again, a belief in the market forces, the hidden hand, and the ensuing equilibrium between offer and demand. However, in political science, settlement or equilibrium does not really apply. For a political scientist, competition refers to power games that cannot result in lasting, uncontested domination *by one* but consist in shifting dynamisms of power/dominance *among all*.

**Keywords:** regionalism; sector-to-sector confrontation; culturalism; 'proliferation' of regions.

**JEL Classification:** R11; O18; P25

From 1989 to 1996, the world was transformed from one where nations, nationalisms and international world wars had dominated international relations for a century to a situation of coexistence among world regions, of regionalisms and of interregional relations. This transformation from nations to regions took place after a particularly tensed period of cold war, from 1947 to 1991, defined by its meta-regional scale and bilateral nature, when tensions were paroxysmal.

In relation to the Pacific region, the pace of change since the late 1980s has been even more rapid. As early as 1989 and 1990, during the collapse of communism in Europe and the withering of the competition between the USA and the USSR, Pacific nations took early steps to move past the cold war by founding cooperative dynamics such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation or APEC and other regions soon followed suit.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The first APEC meeting was held in Canberra in 1989, the second in Seoul in 1990. APEC is an initiative largely associated with Australia and Japan as original 'launchers'.

Does such regionalisation suggest that coexistence among world regions is to be peaceful? By contrast with the cold war, which was defined by the confrontation in total or - already - global terms of one *Weltanschauung* setting forth against another, the answer is affirmative.<sup>1</sup> However, in terms of regional drives and inter-regional affirmations, reality is more complex and, above all, plural.

In the Eurasian and Pacific regions since the 1990s, no less than four major dynamics have become structuring realities. In chronological order of affirmation, these consist of a *co-operation* process within APEC beginning in 1989, a '*unioning*' process within the European Union or EU from 1992, a *co-operation* process within the Shanghai dynamic from 1996, when the Shanghai Group is created, and an *association process* within the 'ASEAN + 3' in 1997, as well as through the project of an East Asian Community.<sup>2</sup>

This proliferation of inter-State groupings, one step ahead of the proliferation of States after the decolonisation processes and the demise of the Soviet Union (Boniface 2000), has set the stage for an inter-regional competition. This competition is less likely to be peaceful than fiercely competitive.<sup>3</sup> The nature of this competition remains unclear, whether commercial and financial or informational and communicational, but it will probably be intense, with a hegemonic, Mahanian view on the part of at least some Region-States.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Weltanschauung*: this philosophical term, of German origin, means a representation of the world. It refers here to the individual/liberal view or the collective/communist view, epitomised by the rigidity of the cold war divide.

<sup>2</sup> 'ASEAN + 3' is a forum aiming to coordinate cooperation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN and three East Asian countries: China, Japan, and South Korea. The first leaders' meeting was held in 1997, the group's impact was strengthened by the Asian financial crisis of 1997-1998 and the grouping was institutionalised by 1999. Recently, the suggestion is that the significance of the grouping is being eclipsed by the East Asia Summit, but that is not clear given the comparatively new existence of an 'East Asian' dynamic since 2005. The creation of 'ASEAN +' is a reaction to APEC, ASEM and Shanghai, a reactive trait also suggested for NAFTA in 1993 seeing light almost concomitantly (1993/94) with the EMU in Europe (1992/93), etc. In 2010, 'ASEAN + 3' became 'ASEAN + 6', with Australia, New Zealand and India.

<sup>3</sup> The suggestion that regions become competitive refers to reality: for example the 2007-2008 *international* crisis is creating competing *regional* solutions, different in the West and in Asia - Orwell's 1984 opening chapter depicts world regions - Oceania, Eurasia, Oceania - in a state of perpetual, 'total' war.

<sup>4</sup> Alfred Mahan, as conceptualiser of maritime power, provided a historical analysis of naval strategy and a vision that the mastery of naval power is directly related to the control of the world dynamics. In *The Influence of Sea Power upon History 1660-1783*, published in 1890, he suggests that maritime space is not the complement of terrestrial space but the very medium of the projection of power and that the USA ought to turn the shores of other countries into the borders of the USA, patrolling and 'occupying' seas and oceans. This has influenced USA naval strategy until today: the positioning the USA fleets permanently in various locations of the world: the 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet in the East Mediterranean; the 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet in the Northwest Pacific.

This paper analyses three instances of interregional competition, in Asia-Pacific, in Asia and in Eurasia, with as its main objective to understand the gradually emerging nature of this tension. It is set within the realist school of international relations analysis albeit its main aim is less to further theoretical developments than to discuss how such a hypothesis of an enhanced world-tension is becoming a determinant of post-cold war international relations. It suggests that alternative groupings are being sought in order to react to the formation of APEC, such as the Asia-Europe Meeting or ASEM in 1996, formed at the same time as the Shanghai dynamic of 1996 and of the 'ASEAN + 3' in 1997.<sup>1</sup> These 'coincidences' suggest that the emergence of inter-regional cooperative organisations must be analysed strategically, not just descriptively. Regional emergences must be viewed as expanded into a multi-faceted concept (Part I) and a concept to be used for applied analysis (Part II).

## **1. Regional Emergence as a Multi-Faceted Concept**

The end of the cold war, from Detente in the 1970s to the collapse of the near totality of Eurasian communist regimes in the late 1980s and early 1990s, marked an easing of tensions, the opening-up of borders and the dismantling of repressive and authoritarian communist regimes.<sup>2</sup> Today, free from the bi-polar worldview and competition between the USA and the USSR during the cold war, regions are free to act on their own. Regions and States today seem free to organise and construct themselves, or to confront each other, without the biased terms of the dominantly ideological situations of the cold war. This is in fact but a partial representation of regional dynamics: militarily confrontation may have receded, but ideology and cultural contestation and confrontation still linger on.

### **1.1. The Obsolescence of Militarism: Absent from most Regionalisms**

The most striking difference between the cold war from 1947 to 1989 and the post cold war from 1991 onwards is the demise of military tension as a paramount form of international affirmation.<sup>3</sup> This demise logically follows that of the USSR and of

<sup>1</sup>. See supra note 2 page 108

<sup>2</sup>. The 'end' of the cold war does not convey a single, commonly agreeable meaning. Rather it points to a shift of dynamics from a 'global bilateralism' to a 'multifaceted, multisectoral pluricentrism'. This is the period following the 1972 inter-German *rapprochement*, which marks, for the first time since the beginning of the cold war, an 'easing-out' of East-West tensions, soon to be followed by the Helsinki process resulting in the 1975 Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe, later (1995) to become the OSCE.

<sup>3</sup>. Not forgetting the military intervention in the post cold war, notably in Kuwait in 1991 and Iraq in 2003, but it is during the cold war that military confrontation was part and parcel of the international game, first in Korea, then in Vietnam, etc. Today, it still occurs but marginally.

the Warsaw Pact (Chabal 2004 b). In the post cold war, no military organisation has been created anew, at least not of an officially military nature. For instance, NATO remains intact but was substantially changed through the 1999 renewed Treaty, evolving from a strictly military *command* to a forum used also for discussing security *doctrine*; and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation or SCO created in 2001, clearly a security organisation, is not advocating a military nature.<sup>1</sup>

Militarism is, on the face of it, absent from most regional constructions and when it is present, as was just recalled, it is in some organisations that are *not* part of a regional construction, such as NATO and transatlantic security. Glancing through the history of Community Europe, of ASEAN, of West-Africanism, of Latin-Americanism, one cannot see that regional projects revolve around militarism.<sup>2</sup> Two dynamics stand out here for comparison: Europeanism and Atlanticism.

First, European affairs have experienced military attempts but these have tended to fail. In 1953-1954, the project of a European Defence Community or EDC passed all stages of preparation and adoption but faltered in the French parliament in 1954, despite the fact that France was at the origin of the project in 1953. This was most probably due to the fact that, after the Second World War, Europeans were not yet ready to trust each other militarily. These newly-innovated partners had been still at war less than ten years earlier. From the 1950s to the 1980s, Europeans benefitted indirectly from the West European Union or WEU, a European alternative of sorts to the Atlantic NATO. However, the WEU was never able to pick up momentum among Europeans, despite the efforts of its Secretary General A. Cahen, in the 1980s, even though the Community had reached a critical mass of ten Member-States with the admission of Greece in 1981. Since 1992, Maastricht Europe has incorporated the WEU ambition into the European Treaty and even conceived rapid military deployment capabilities, but has been hitherto unable to use these capabilities outside the umbrella of NATO (Chabal 2004 c).<sup>3</sup>

European militarism is incompatible with Atlanticism. Europe is not prepared to leave the NATO and its USA-dominated protection.<sup>4</sup> In other words, European

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<sup>1</sup>. Even if its member-States regularly conduct joint military exercises and if many Western analysts sometimes wonder about its nature, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is not a military organisation.

<sup>2</sup>. The sending of ECOWAS troops to the Ivory Coast in 2002 and 2003 is an interesting case that would need to be explored but lies outside the scope of this article. To take it up briefly, this occurrence is exceptional and has remained exceptional, not leading to a 'militarisation' of ECOWAS.

<sup>3</sup>. As the European Community was 'relaunched' or 'deepened' by the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty, signed in December 1991, ratified in 1992 and entered into force on January 1st, 1993, which considerably contributed to the integrative nature of the European construction (common policies, majority decision-making for more numerous sectors, etc.).

<sup>4</sup>. The likeliness of such a 'distanciation' has been further reduced by France's recent (April 2009) falling in line back into the NATO integrated command.

militarism is a failure of a logical kind. The European construction is a model-building initiative, an institutional initiative taken in the 1950s for geopolitical reasons. It is an elaborate form of influence-seeking, not a direct domination-seeking or hard-power seeking dynamic or ‘face one’ of power.<sup>1</sup> The conception within the European Union of the drive towards world power consists of a trading capacity. The aim is to be the first trading bloc in the world, equipped with an institutional capacity to influence the ways in which other regions are equipping themselves with institutions.

Second, Atlantic affairs have experienced great success. NATO, launched in 1949 as a reaction to the Soviet threat after 1945 and consolidated as a counter-force to the Warsaw Pact created in 1955, enabled western European members, in line otherwise for the domino effect, to prepare from the 1950s onwards to strike back if need be. And it empowered North American members, in search for a justification to remain projected on the European theatre after the Second World War, to do just that. Through NATO, both the USA and Canada have been able to remain involved in Europe through times of peace after WW II. NATO never demonstrated regional ambitions, nor has it been capable of being more than an integrated or strategic command among allies. The difference between allies and neighbours comes to mind: allies can combine across great geographical spaces; while neighbours unite across common borders. Allies made sense in the cold war dynamics; neighbours make sense in the post cold war era. The Atlantic is not a region; it is a geopolitical space, the history of which is one of strategic confrontations and tensions that travelled from both sides of the ocean.<sup>2</sup>

In the post cold war, and especially since 1999 and the new prolonged Treaty, NATO has essentially served two purposes. First, it replaced the UN for interventions in Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999. It did so in 1995 to prevent a front of instability from building up at its gates, but not in compliance with the original Treaty’s article 5. Then in 1999, it did so again to prevent such a possibility but this time in compliance with article 5 of the renewed Treaty. Next, NATO has been reconsidered from being a strictly military organisation to also being a peace-keeping organisation offering a number of educational and humanitarian programmes.<sup>3</sup> NATO’s success, as a military organisation, makes it the longest-lasting, oldest-dating multilateral alliance in contemporary history.

<sup>1</sup> On the various ‘faces’ of power (Steven Lukes 1974), see section II, paragraph 1 of this article.

<sup>2</sup> For instance H. Coutau-Bégarie, *Géostratégie du Pacifique*, 2001, *La Puissance maritime*, 1998, *La Lutte pour l’empire de la mer*, 1999, *Traité de stratégie*, 2003. The United Kingdom allegedly maintained until 1943 secret plans to invade the USA.

<sup>3</sup> The author was NATO research fellow on East Asia in 1994-1996 with a Final Report on *The Emergence of a Collective Security Framework in Northeast Asia* (<http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/94-96/f94-96.htm>) and associated research fellow on the East Mediterranean in 1998-2000 (<http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/98-00/deraulin.pdf>).

To sum up on European and Atlantic aspects of militarism, it seems that Europe is not military and that Atlanticism is not regional. To be sure, the military dimension is all the more absent in groupings that are regional and all the more present in groupings that are not regional. Regionalism has more to do with 'integrative cooperation' of neighbours while militarism has more to do with alliances.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.2. The Sectoral Emphasising: Towards a Sector-to-Sector Confrontation

This receding of militarism as a main form of direct tension and competition or confrontation leaves other forms of tension and confrontation open and active. These other and novel forms are becoming prominent and conveyors of renewed balances of power through the sectoralisation of regions' *modus operandi*. Sectoralism as strategy and sectoralism as confrontation, two trends of such a sectoralisation, need here to be explored.

First, taking sectoralism into strategic consideration, regions tend to organise themselves according to policy sectors rather than in 'global political terms'. That is to say, the post cold war is characterised not only by a shift from a global scale to a regional one but also by a shift from a global management of intergovernmental affairs to a sectoral one. To be sure, the UN is yielding more and more intervention tasks to sectoral branches through such bodies as the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the International Labour Office ... and intervenes less and less directly. Even military peacekeeping operations are often devolved to NATO, at least in Western Eurasia and in Africa. This new balance in UN world governance of States is offering more and more leeway to Region-States as to the governance of emerging regional *nexi* of power through integrative neighbourhoods.

The difference between 'global political terms' and 'regional policy sectors' ought to be specified. First, a global regional construction refers to the fact that regions, in a rather Orwellian manner, would construct in order to pursue a classic or zerosumish power game at the risk of clashing with other regions.<sup>2</sup> Regionalism here equates with nationalism, regionalism as the clausewitzian 'continuation' of nationalism by other means.<sup>3</sup> The trend here is to ingrate in order to 'vitalise' in a simplistic Ratzelian perspective.<sup>4</sup> Second, a sectoralised regional construction

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<sup>1</sup>. The concept of 'integrative cooperation' comes from the author's NATO fellowship Report (1996) - see preceeding note.

<sup>2</sup>. As was recalled above note 3 page 108, in his novel *1984*, George Orwell depicts the world as made up of three regions - Oceania, Eurasia, Eastasia - forever engaged in a perpetual war against each other.

<sup>3</sup>. Clausewitz, Carl von, *On War*, abridged version, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press, 2007

<sup>4</sup>. See F. Ratzel, *Politische Geographie*, 1897 and the concept of 'Lebensraum' or 'vital-space'.

refers to the fact that regions build themselves according to a similar division of policy work. This similarising makes possible an exchange of cooperation between regions, at one remote from a bloc-construction of an often antagonistic nature. It follows that confrontation can and does exist, only shifting from a holistic scale to a sector-by-sector competition. Thus, Europe, APEC, ASEAN and MERCOSUR organise themselves as regions on a regional but not on a sub-regional basis and mainly on a sectoral and sub-sectoral programme basis. Geography is but a justification, not a foundation. Instead, the founding principle is neighbourhood as a framework for sectoral programmes. Neighbours unite their forces in a political attempt to manage for the future while focusing on their common or 'communal' present.<sup>1</sup>

Second, sectoralism as confrontation points towards a sector-to-sector dynamic of competition akin to a head-to-head dynamic of tensions. This political, community-type management of the future can be a peace-longing way to tackle inter-regional competition but this might be an *arealist* view. Inter-regional competition is always present. Neighbours unite in order to dominate other regions, if possible gradually, sector by sector. Four random illustrations are suggested below to demonstrate this intense and only seemingly subdued form of confrontation.

- Trade is a major sector of tension, wholly conducive to intense soft power games, even if it can be differentiated into various trade commodities. International competition is now a macroeconomic one with figures of GDP, of market shares and of growth rates replacing those of the arms race and nuclear arsenals of the cold war. To be or not to be member of the WTO became for China in the late 1990s a major strategic question. The Sino-European textile war in the early 2000s remains a case in point of international tensions of a new kind.<sup>2</sup>

- Transportation, the logistical capacity to ship goods and merchandises, is a classic, collateral aspect of economic trading competition. Global in nature, this competition tends to open or expose global public actors, such as States, to global private actors, such as shipping companies. The new regions are less material and territorial than service-linked and communicational but they still remain fiercely competitive.<sup>3</sup> The two aspects come together in the issue of security of maritime routes or shipping lanes for which wars may break out again, which also is triggered by neo-piracy, a concern for both States and transporters.

<sup>1</sup>. For instance, one of the founding principles of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is that of 'good neighbourhood', an open concept able to mean anything from peace to integration.

<sup>2</sup>. China's economic success after its opening-up from 1978 onwards, its high growth rates throughout the 80s and the 90s, its role in the 1997/1998 Asian economic crisis lead to its entry into the WTO in 2001.

<sup>3</sup>. Transport issues are complex. It is necessary for a region to experience a certain internal capacity before it can compete in world logistical terms. See (Chabal 2004 a)

- Education is an interesting forum for soft-power games. During the cold war, students travelled to their corresponding political worlds. Those from communist countries studied in Moscow, East Germany or Beijing while those from non-communist States studied in the USA, England or Australia. In the post cold war, the European strategic Bologna process consisting of 'aligning' countries on a model that is not only common in formal traits -the 'LMD' or '3-5-8'- but prone to a Paretian circulation of elites,<sup>1</sup> education thus becomes a sector of dedicated attempts at model-seeking and model-imposition (Chabal 2006 a).

- Institutions in general and institutional-model imposition in particular are contemporary forums of inter-regional strategic confrontation. If not head-to-head in a coming to war sort of way, they are already a major forum of aggressive positioning. The European experience of formalising cooperation agreements competes with American and Asian ways of dominating. The Europe-linked proliferation of interregional dialogues, processes or summits, such as the Asia-Europe Meeting or ASEM, or European Union-Latin America summits, is a case in point. The new form of competition is how to devise the most efficient, peaceful-looking institutions in order to export them to other regions. It is possible to transpose substantially, not just lexically, the concepts of military acts of tension to the sectors that make up international exchanges of an economic, logistical, educational or institutional nature.

In other words, regions do not fight each other with military weapons but with economic, monetary and trading instruments used within an encompassing institutional and legal framework. This transposition may also apply to political and cultural issues.

### **1.3. Much Ado about Culturalism: Values, Identities, Projects**

Beyond military and economic aspects of mounting regionalisms as continuations of nationalisms, cultural aspects must be questioned. The reason for this questioning is simple. Political leaders call more and more upon identities and values to justify and legitimise their regional efforts. From the Southeast Asian identity that can say 'No!' and the European identity that can say 'Yes!', to the Latin American one that can say 'Not in my backyard!' and the West African one that questions European neo-influences, all regions are relevant to illustrate a concern for identity as a legitimising dynamic.

A difference exists between two kinds of regional *rapport* to identity and values. Either the regional process begins with institution-building then works on its

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<sup>1</sup> The Italian sociologist Vilfredo Pareto has demonstrated that one form of social inequality is that a comparatively small number of influential people, or elites, tend to occupy key top positions in a 'rotating' manner by 'circulating' from one to the other. See (Pareto, 1935)

identity as is evidenced by the European example; or the regional process begins with values and thus with identity then works on institutions as seems clear in the Asian dynamic. A further advantage for Asia is that counter-identities - neither European; nor Western - come in handier to rally round neighbours as partners. The values debate between cultures is not mostly about values; one must indeed decipher reality and point out to the proper dimension, rather than to the over-obvious one. The discourse about values, prominent as it is, comes analytically second only to the dynamic of legitimising political efforts to unite regions. The values debate is about legitimacy. Legitimacy is about acceptance, acceptance of leadership in the Weberian approach, thus acceptance of regional leadership.<sup>1</sup> Legitimising is thus about making political values acceptable. The legitimacy of a region as a subsuming of national references has first and foremost to do with the subjectivity of the people living in that region. Therefore, legitimacy is the heart of regionalism. Without legitimacy and capacity to mobilise, there can be no region. Legitimacy is the substance of region-building because it is the very substance of politics and regions are in essence political constructions. This conceptual approach can be illustrated in the case of Europe, of Asia, and of the Asia-Pacific.

Europe since the end of the Second World War has been building itself with peace as a legitimating leitmotiv. This is perhaps why Europe, as a political construction, is floundering or evolving with ups and downs according to the progress and recess of identity-building. The original trauma was so intense, from the thirty-year war in the seventeenth century to the devastation of the two world-wars in the twentieth century, that the aspiration for peace engulfed Europeans in a desperate attempt to stop drowning in mutually-assured conventional destruction. As a result, except for the recent single currency, peace-ensuring or supra-sovereign institutions were built without much efficacy as to identity-building. Hence, the present debate of legitimacy *versus* bureaucracy of Europe or the democratic gap unfolding in today's Europe, a debate which even divides both political parties in their midst and candidates to the European Parliament.

Asia is building itself with values as a legitimating leitmotiv. Here the Asian values debate has preceded institutional construction of institutions but construction seems to be lagging behind.<sup>2</sup> 'ASEAN +' exists mainly through ASEM; APEC is not regional; the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation contradicts the East Asia Community. Asians are coming to terms with their cultural differences. Community-building is presented as cultural community-building rather than as politically integrative community-building (Chabal 2006 b). Integrative dynamics

<sup>1</sup> Max Weber's analysis of leadership as authority - traditional, legal-rational, charismatic - dissects the nature of the consent of the governed to vest power into the governing and then to accept their governance.

<sup>2</sup> See (Kim Jung-Ho, *The 'Asian Values' debate and new East-Asian democratic values*, in Chabal 2010 a. pages 96-115)

through a cultural medium is indeed a dynamic distinct from Europe -most indicative in Asian music, entertainment and movies-<sup>1</sup> versus the European gray little men in Brussels - as EU Commission officials are sometimes mockingly referred to. Asian values for the future or commonality, not isolation, juxtapose against European values reacting to the past - peace, not war. In other words, Asia is inventing a way to react to any risk of isolation and the European construction has made war in Europe near impossible.

Asia-Pacific is building itself with free trade as a legitimating leitmotiv and is therefore in a different *rapport* to identity when compared to Europe and Asia. The Asia-Pacific emphasis is on pragmatism and opportunism rather than on the construction of a region in the European sense. Opportunism - as economic pragmatism and political reactivity - is evidenced in the chronology. The 1989 Canberra and the 1990 Seoul summits were the launching steps of APEC, immediately around the fall of the Berlin wall in October 1989 and the Malta summit of December 1989 between R. Reagan and M. Gorbachev, sometime before the demise of the USSR in December 1991.<sup>2</sup> Pragmatism, as suggested by the capacity to invent a new geo-economic core based upon the ocean as the element of commonality, the capacity to regionalise as a cooperation and to suggest as early as the 1994 APEC Bogor Summit to create a Free Trade Area among APEC participants by 2020, while a FTA is usually a post-community and pre-single market step.

To sum up, while APEC is essentially a business entity, Asia is an entity of culture and Europe an entity of appeased politics. Europe's post WW II essence is that of a peace that works. Yet, despite differences underlined between the three elements - peace in Europe, values in Asia, free trade in Asia-Pacific -, the comparison holds. The invention of a regional culture is part and parcel of the regionalism at play and it is a culture that makes sense in the particular region under consideration. Furthermore, a culture makes an explicit reference to the contrary forces to be fought off. Some examples of such counter-forces include war and destruction in Europe, colonialism and submission in Asia, continental division and neo-colonialism in Asia-Pacific.

The concept of regional construction yields that of regional competition or that, more precisely, of a displacement of the factors of competition from hard-core militarist factors to organisational and cultural ones. Regions, once self-identified intra-regionally (Part I), that is to say once they have built their centripet institutional existence and elaborated on their values, usually engage inter-

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<sup>1</sup>. For instance, a recent phenomenon of a 'Korean wave' or *Hallyu*, consisting of Korean artistic products becoming so popular in the whole of Asia as to create a wave of 'Korean-ness', now links with an added commercial value for Korean trade and an added diplomatic clout for Korea.

<sup>2</sup>. The promptness of the Baltic States to declare independence from the USSR even before that date: 11<sup>th</sup> March 1990 for Lithuania, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> August for Estonia and Latvia.

regionally into reciprocal groupings and, as a consequence, into centrifugal rivalry (Part II). That is to say they seek to enlarge their perspectives and partnerships with other regions but realise that they are also becoming competitors of these other regions. This process begins with the main continuation of a colonialist type of imposition, thus by a tendency to yield to a universalist zero-sum game.

## 2. Using Regional Emergences for Applied Analysis

Moving to concrete analyses, regions have truly become international actors such as any other international actor.<sup>1</sup> The emphasis here will be put on facts and events, yet at the same time placed on facts and events approached within existing frameworks. Schools of international relations apply to regional studies.<sup>2</sup> For the critical school, regions are transnational commercial hegemonies in the making, embodying one form of the international division of labour and of the division of means of international production. For the liberal school, regions are constructing an international system, a system able to operate on a meta-national level and a system acting on an infra-global level but not producing world integration. For the realist school, regions are intergovernmental competitors and, within this school, this article examines three aspects of the competition among actors talking hard to each other, in fierce diplomatic intergovernmental negotiation, around a self-sustaining institutional race and, potentially, a coming to war.

### 2.1. The Hardened Political Discourses on the Universality of Values

One way in which regions are evolving is that their construction processes dwell upon militant identities and, therefore, on centrifugal values radiating from a core to a periphery. Among the numerous ways in which values can be addressed, one consists of addressing them as a hegemonic dynamic, through the notion of universalism. As suggested above, what is at stake here is a universalist culture or a culture of universalism akin to a cultural ideology. The notion of universal values proposed notably by politicians promoting regional integration implies the subsuming of existing, more national and local values, under the integrating authority of these regional values.

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<sup>1</sup>. S. Santander (2007) analyses the EU as a coherent actor of interregional relations but also as a model-exporter seeking to influence other regions by negotiating their institutional alignment.

<sup>2</sup>. See, among many, (Beits, 1979, p. 253; Cox, 1983, pp. 162-175; Gilson, September 2005, pp. 307-326; Gilson, 2002, p. 66; Hänggi, *Regionalism through interrégionalisme*, in Liu & Régnier (ed.), 2003, p. 257; Hänggi, May 2000, p. 14; Hettne September 9-11, 2004, p. 26; Hettne & Söderbaum, 1999, pp. 6-21; Hettne, 2003, 272 p.; Mattli, 1999, 207 p.; Milliken, 1999, pp. 225-254; Ripsman, 2005, pp. 669-693; Rüländ, 2002; Rüländ, 5-6 July 2002; Reiterer, Summer 2002, pp. 133-152; Slocum, and Van Langenhove, 2004, pp. 227 – 252)

To be sure, one step ahead of identity-building and of intra-regional culture construction, lies the natural, human tendency to seek hegemony, a natural tendency from the realist perspective. In other words, influence or power only truly makes sense if it is absolute (Haushofer 1941). This search or hegemonic drive takes on nowadays a universalist form as a culture of universal values. These universal values serve as a basis for the question of which world order, whether democratic, liberal or enlightened, should take over which other world order, whether economic, State-driven or conservative, now that the East - the irreplaceable other bloc during the cold war- has withered. Regions outnumber the two or three camps of the cold war -the West, the East and the Non-Aligned States-<sup>1</sup> and they appear to be imposing, centrifugally, their values onto other regions.

Indeed, it is interesting how some almost unnoticed drift has occurred from values in general such as peace, identity, and free trade, as perfectly acceptable, national or regional and legitimate justifications for the existence of the self, to universal values in particular, such as multilateral views as to what would be universal values, national or regional, and goals. That is *de facto* a universalisation of just such values and goals. In other words, values are no longer mere identity bases, they are also militant ingredients for a competition against other values in other regions. Universalisation implies an active, potentially expansionist dynamic of imposition of values and goals onto others, even over the resistance of others. What is at work is a classic power-imposition exercise, clearly a cultural expansion, not a territorial expansion, such as that of which political science, through Dahl in the 1960s to Lukes in the 1970s and 1980s have explored facets, aspects or faces (Lukes 1974, 2005). Such cultural or territorially symbolic imposition operates in three phases.

First, a one-dimensional view of applied inter-regional power suggests that one region imposes its views and values, among other elements, *against or over the resistance of others*. This is *par excellence* the cold-war bloc-to-bloc situation, if one accepts that the West or the USA won the cold war in 1991 - which is debatable as it can be argued that the demise of the USSR was more of an implosion than a defeat. More generally, when a region, the North - the European Union or North America - behaves as if one part of the world not only knew better but also had to be followed, imitated, respected and feared, such behaviour is one-dimensional imposition.<sup>2</sup> Examples here include the European Union seeking to impose its commercial views over the differing interests of an astounded group of African-Caribbean-Pacific countries, such as was the case during the 1994 renegotiation of the ACP or Lomé agreements according to terms favourable to the

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<sup>1</sup>. The non-aligned movement in the 1950s had already added a third 'party' to the dichotomy between the USA-driven West and the USSR-driven East.

<sup>2</sup>. Charismatic power or charismatic legitimacy draws upon the unconditional adherence of 'followers' to the leader's preferences.

Europeans; or a member of the North-American Free Trade Agreement seeking to impose its views over the emerging power of MERCOSUR Member-States after 1993, when it seems that the over-early realisation of a free-trade bloc with the USA, Canada and Mexico jeopardised to some extent the Mexican economy, not yet ready to take in the full blow of customs-less competition with the two northern partners.

Second, a two-dimensional view of applied inter-regional power takes on the form of a seemingly negotiated situation by *negotiating for one region's interest in the name of protecting other regions*. This is the situation where a region, still seeking to dominate, acts less directly or unequally but engages the other region in a levelling-off relation, possibly dwelling on the wish to symbolically compensate for past violent imbalances. The Europe-Asia dialogue or ASEM process relating since 1996 to the enlarging West Europe and Southeast Asia illustrates this rather well even if the concept of protection applies imperfectly here as neither Europe nor Southeast Asia seeks to actually protect or seek protection by the partner region but rather both seek together to be stronger in the new global game. Still, they protect each other's regional roles and identities by giving it a renewed creative visibility. ASEM was actually, fifteen years ago, the very first institutional inter-regional dialogue to have seen light in the world.

Third, a three-dimensional view of applied inter-regional power consists of a region striving to *convince other regions or countries that its values are beneficial for those regions or countries*. In the contemporary, global post-cold-war world, this is really an attempt at model-imposition, in particular through an exportation of an institutional mode of region-building.<sup>1</sup> This situation is that of the replacement of overt *imposition* dynamics by covert *imitation* incentives. Convincing other regions that it is easier for them to interact, exchange, trade and exist provided that they accept, adapt, adopt and open up to the inspiring region's ways of doing things, making decisions, relaying the regional level onto their constituent national identities is, to be sure, a very powerful but softer way to gain influence over others.

Is there really a difference in nature between today's universalism and yesterday's colonialism<sup>2</sup> or is it rather a difference of degree? The mechanism of the realist, mutually assured imposition drive has not changed. Its degree or form has been adapted to a novel dynamic, which no longer brings in contact countries as sovereign States, but creates interactions among multilateral regions. This new game, so long as States remain the sovereign actors of international relations and

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<sup>1</sup> Seminars are regularly organised for that purpose. See *Is There a European Model of Governance ? A Comparative Perspective*, IPSA Conference, March 18-20, 2010, Jean Monnet Building, European Commission.

<sup>2</sup> . And before-yesterday's imperialism in the Antiquity ?

are not replaced by Region-States, is subtler, fostering intra-sovereign *regions* competing among themselves through *States*-related decisions.

## 2.2. The Conflicting Regional Launches: from Regions to ‘Proliferation’ of Regions

Another way in which regions are evolving is that their global dynamics consist of their emergence and/or acceleration almost everywhere in the world *at the same time*. This suggests a process which is more likely to lead to a race for resources, whether political, symbolic or influential resources, than to the gradual harmonisation of their international presences.

The analysis will concentrate on the Asia and Asia-Pacific regions, although by definition, the multiplication of regional dynamics as a global phenomenon applies world-wide.<sup>1</sup> In broad terms, the world has gone from roughly five regional dynamics, before the 1990s, to more than twenty, beginning in the 1990s. Such a proliferation of regions applies naturally to Asia and the Asia-Pacific, as a truly world-wide phenomenon. This region is, additionally, characterised in the 1990s not just by such a proliferation but also by a very *early* start in the process of regionalisation.

In Asia-Pacific, as *early* as 1989, such proliferation began with the creation of APEC (Canberra Summit 1989, Seoul Summit 1990) even before the official end of the cold war in December 1991.<sup>2</sup> This early ‘initiative’, a neutral term, or this ‘offensive’, a realist expression, is clearly an attempt to fill in the vacuum of bipolarity by uniting the Pacific as a geopolitical space hitherto considered less vital than others, and to equip the USA with a Pacific community complementing the Atlantic one. The multilateral dimension of APEC must be underlined. The bilateral treaties between the USA and Japan in 1953 and that between the USA and Korea in 1954 were of a different nature. Regionalisation and multilateralisation, occur as two sides of the one coin.

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<sup>1</sup>. This paper focuses on the Asia-Pacific. However the analysis claims to be valid for other regions as well. MERCOSUR and Maastricht in 1991 triggered NAFTA in 1993; the EU of 1992 triggered West Africa to add in 1994 a West African Economic and Monetary Union or WAEMU to the Economic Community of West African States or ECOWAS of 1975; and the end of the cold war and of apartheid triggered southern Africa in 1992 to include South Africa into the Southern Africa Development Community or SADC, while South Asia similarly activated the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation or SAARC also in 1992. Projects such as the Common Market of the Black Sea in the early- and mid-1990s or of Councils such as the Gulf Cooperation Council, though created in 1981, also echo this point.

<sup>2</sup>. December 1991 is the demise of the USSR. The collapse of the Berlin Wall is October 1989, the Malta Summit is December 1989 and the departure of the Baltic Republics from the USSR anticipated by more than a year on this rupture, at least for Lithuania, see *supra* note 2 page 116.

Still *early*, the American part of the Asia-Pacific space launched successively a South-American initiative, MERCOSUR in 1991, and a North-American one, NAFTA in 1993, clearly as a counter-offensive to Maastricht - initiatives seen as offensives are a postulate of the present paper. The cold war had prevented for forty years the post World War II regions from truly deciding for themselves of their own course of action because there were by necessity aligned on one superpower.<sup>1</sup> The European Community was encouraged to unite by the USA, through the Organisation for Cooperation and Development in Europe created in 1948. The Marshall Plan is originally offered by the USA also to Eastern Europe and the USSR. Its refusal in 1947 by the USSR for herself and for Eastern Europe can be taken as one possible definition of the beginning of the cold war. Logically in the post cold war, regions catch up very rapidly as they are freed or detached from an alignment on one great power and can choose their own way. Regionalisation is thus a form of des-alignment.

Between 1995 and 1996, the Asian part of the Asia-Pacific triggered three major initiatives *concomitantly* with other European dynamics. First, Southeast Asia launched anew as ASEAN enlarged from six to ten members in just four years, between 1995 and 1999, beginning with Vietnam.<sup>2</sup> This is thus an 'ASEAN-II', soon to innovate yet more with 'Asean+3' in 1997 (today '+6' - since 2010) and with the ASEAN Regional Forum or ARF in 1994, whose potential as a political initiative was captured after 2001 by the world emphasis on the fight against terrorism. This potential will probably, however, pick up momentum again with a link to an East Asian Community: at the same time as ASEAN is enlarging in Southeast Asia, the three Northeast countries - China, Korea, Japan - join in the dynamic through a kind of association via the notion of the whole of East Asia or East Asia Community, whose first Summit was held in December 2005.

Second, China and Russia engaged Central Asia into the Shanghai dynamic in 1996. Again an offensive, consisting of engaging the newly independent Central Asian republics and not letting them ascribe to a western influence, whether the USA or the European Union. Uzbekistan was an interesting case: the country engaged the West in the early 1990s, then it engaged the region after 2005 and the post-Andijan sanctions imposed by the West to the region - in protest against a violent police repression of popular uprisings - and since 2001 Uzbekistan has played a greater role through joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. This early offensive in 1996, as soon as the Tajik civil war from 1992 to 1996 is over, and even with Uzbekistan, is noteworthy for two reasons. It associates both China

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<sup>1</sup>. This ought to fine-tuned for China, aligned on the USSR from 1949 till 1956 and then engaging the United States into a *rapprochement* which bears fruit in the early 1970s. see note 1 page 118.

<sup>2</sup>. Yet still a communist regime, whereas in 1967 the ASEAN was basically 'the Asia that can say No!' to communism. The ASEAN admits Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar in 1997 and Cambodia in 1999.

and Russia for the first time after the early days of communist honeymoon from 1949 to 1956; it rallies Central Asia to Russia *indirectly* via China, the real main initiator, thus giving China a prominent role.

Third, a reactive offensive launched the Southeast Asia-Europe meeting or ASEM in 1996. Politically, ASEM achieved several goals. It enabled ASEAN to affirm itself and not be isolated by the Shanghai process through a *tour de genie*: it engaged Asia as 'ASEAN+3'; it enabled the European Union to substantiate a foreign policy dimension now that the Maastricht Treaty encompassed a novel Common Foreign and Security Policy or CFSP-*PESC* exists (Chabal 2004 c). And it not only enabled China not to feel alienated by the Europeans but it enhanced China into a crossroad role: symbolically and cartographically, ASEM associates Southeast Eurasia and Western Eurasia, thereby 'containing' or 'trapping' the Shanghai Asia.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, no less than six major sub-regional initiatives or offensives were taken in just six years. Additionally, the picture was made complete by the pan-Asian dynamics of 'ASEAN+' vs. Shanghai, and the pan-East Asia one of an East Asia Summit as from 2005.

Is this a series of coincidences? On the contrary, this is a vivid sign of an intensive inter-regional competition for geopolitical power and inter-regional political leadership. One need only underline two points in order to further highlight this. First, one country only, China, is a member of all Asian dynamics: APEC, ASEAN+, SCO and ASEM. Second, the one country - the USA - which is a member of APEC and of NAFTA but neither of ASEAN+, nor of ASEM, nor of SCO, is a competitor for China in global terms.<sup>2</sup> The global USA-China tension, resembling as early as the beginning of the 1990s as a head-to-head confrontation potentially coming to war, is thus a dimension made evidently clear also through the inter-regional analysis.<sup>3</sup>

### 2.3. The New 'Head-to-Head' Hypothesis of the New Cold War

Yet another way in which regions are evolving is that the result of the previous two characteristics - a hardened discourse; a proliferation of regions - is a situation of competition. Competition has been historically resolved, ever since Thucydides and the Peloponnesian wars, through the wining-over by one party at the zerosumish expense of the other party. Signs abound of the harshness of the competition. These

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<sup>1</sup>. Or the 'innovated Asia'. Note also that Central Asia equips herself with a number of Centralasian structures. See (Chabal, 2007, published in 2011)

<sup>2</sup>. Interestingly enough, the USA has applied for the status of observer to the SCO but was turned down.

<sup>3</sup>. The end of the cold war suggested that the USA-USSR tension of the then recent past was to be replaced (immediately?) by a (as fierce?) USA-China tension.

include the European Union/China commercial tension over textile and the Russian/European Union tension over gas-deliveries *at the time* when Ukraine and Belarus are talked of, among others, for another possible enlargement of the European Union.

To pick up from the suggestion made *supra* according to which a renewed bipolar tension of an inter-regional nature is in the making, bipolarity must be defined anew. If a novel form of 'cold tension' has been rampant since the end of the cold war in 1991, it is a new cold war of a specific nature. It is interregional in essence and it confronts two super-regionalisers. That is, not just two powers - China and the USA - but two interdependent multilateral activists, each seeking - rather than to divide and rule - to associate and rule and to begin to integrate.<sup>1</sup> Regionalisers operate essentially by placing themselves at a crossroad, and then by comforting the open regionalisation or regionalisations with the intention of adding up spheres of co-prosperity.

Today's multi-regionalist contenders, China and the USA, have placed themselves each at the crossroad of at least three regionalisms. China did so in order to *respond to needs*, and the USA in order to *project power by offering security*. Let us examine the two in turn.

First, China, as recalled *supra*, is the only member of the three integrative co-operations in the wider Asia - Euro-Pacific-Asianism- which includes ASEAN +, SCO and APEC. In each case, the motivation is to respond to a need or to be needed and thus legitimised as a multi-polar actor. First, ASEAN after the inception of its 1995+ enlargements needed China, hence the ASEAN+3 - Korea and Japan are also useful, albeit less indispensable - to attract Europe into ASEM. ASEM only makes sense through ASEAN+3, not just ASEAN. Second, the SCO or Shanghai dynamic corresponds to a need, in the post-Soviet dynamic, to regulate Russian-Central Asian new relations; and there exists also a need for China of a go-west energy policy. Third, APEC as a Pacific-rim comprehensive ambition needed the whole of the East Asian part of that rim, not just China but also Hong Kong and Taiwan. China can coexist with Taiwan, in a multilateral cooperation - APEC - not an inter-State organisation.

Second, the USA, as is well known, conducts a long-dating Mahanian foreign policy consisting of a projection of power.<sup>2</sup> This projection of power is less subtle than that of China and geopolitically different. It seeks to secure continents and oceans, such as the Atlantic, the Americas, and the Pacific. In each case, the

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<sup>1</sup> As each one was leading an entrenched camp, 'vertically' as it were. To 'associate' by agreement, as in the NAFTA Agreement, or to 'integrate' by sheer impact of quantitative advantages as in the SCO Organisation, these are two different forms of regionalisation by design.

<sup>2</sup> One of the postulates of Alfred Mahan's geopolitical thought is that maritime space was to be, for USA foreign and military policy, a space of natural power projection, as if the borders of the USA were to be the shores of other nations. See above note 4 page 108.

dynamic calls for a surge of premiership. First, Atlanticism and NATO are a *more sectoral* (military, not holistic) and *reduced* form (West Europe, then Europe, not Eurasia) of turning the USA projection of 1917 and 1941 into a permanent securitisation of the non-communist Eurasia.<sup>1</sup> Second, NAFTA commercialisation of North America, in response to the MERCOSUR-based marketisation of South America, echoes the post-colonial, fundamental securitisation and awareness. 'America for Americans' meant then (in 1823) not for Europeans and it means, today, not for other instigators. Third, Pacific co-operationism is a reactive, prompt, less direct securitisation of a space that complements the Atlantic, placing the USA at the geopolitical centre of the control of two Oceans.<sup>2</sup> The Mahanian view beholds, indicative of the fact that the borders of the USA are becoming the shores of other nations.

Beyond the seemingly dominant issue of regional open institution-building, more multilateral for China than for the USA and more clearly vertical for the USA than for China, lies the coming to confrontation between the two regionalist contenders. Such confrontation is not between Huntingtonian blocs of civilisation clashing one against the other (Huntington 1993). A clash means open aggression, but deterrence has made such major clashes obsolete for sixty years. Sino-USA tension is building up but that tension will not be released in a major war.

The question remains about the nature of such tension. It is a different nature from past situations when superpowers confronted each other with power tactics of the same nature, such as the USA and the USSR, in a mirror-like contrast - collectivism Vs individualism. Today, the nature of *interregional* tension is more subtly different in at least two ways.

First, there exists a difference in the earnestness of regional multilateralism. Both China and the USA are involved in multilateralism but China is more involved than the USA. Originally, USA unilateralism and Chinese centrality compared rather well. Since the late 1990s, however, in particular since China's restraint during the 1997-1998 economic crisis, China has adapted to a world becoming really multiregional and also des-aligned due to Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests of 1998 and to North Korean and Iranian nuclear programmes. In 1997, the role of Asia and of China in Asia changed. Not only was China, as the growth leader, not affected as such by the crisis, probably due to the limited internationalisation of her public sector, but China's macroeconomic attitude was above all one of regional solidarity: if China had accompanied the loss of value in the Thai, Korean, Indonesian and Japanese currencies with a devaluation of the Chinese Yuan, the then residual comparative exporting advantage of those four countries would have

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<sup>1</sup> This is exactly the scenario followed by the USA in Saudi Arabia from 1990/1991 onwards, after the intervention concerning Kuwait.

<sup>2</sup> As mentioned above, APEC is a Japanese and Australian initiative of the late 1980s. See note 2 page 107.

been jeopardised. The only asset left to those four countries for a short while - the chance to bring in currency from exports - would have been lost and their situation made all the harsher. China did not choose this unilateral attitude, which would have corresponded, though, to her long hesitation to devalue the Yuan in order to boost her exports even further.

China's acceptance of ASEAN's need, of Russia's stabilisation and even of the APEC game is a case in point for China but also for Central Asia, East Asia and Russia.

The multilateralism on the part of some is confronted by a lesser multilateral drive on the part of others. The USA still dominates in NAFTA and in NATO and intends, as a main self-drive, to keep on dominating. The difficulty here is notional as well as diplomatic. A region is an entity that makes geopolitical sense and entails obligations despite its pluri-national dimension. Today's confrontation is thus more subtle than before in history, such as with imperialism, colonialism or cold-war attitudes. This added complexity can be further illustrated concretely, after the earnestness of regional attitudes, by the concreteness of such attitudes.

Second, there remains, to be sure, a difference in the concreteness of realisations. Again, both China and the USA have to deliver the convincing goods of their regional involvement, but China does so more concretely than the USA. Logically so. Multilateralism is more conducive to convincing through concrete, economic realisations; unilateralism is conducive to imposing through fashionable ideas, ideals and judgmental abstractions, of which Huntington's clashes are one (Huntington 1993). Here, China's Asianness - trade as a main medium of interaction - is an asset; but USA Westernness - procedures and formal agreements as a main medium of exchange - is a source of possible rigidity. Naturally, in both cases of multilateralism and unilateralism, confrontation occurs and needs weapons. But in one case, that weapon is multilateral growth; in the other case, that weapon is a judgmental positioning *vis-à-vis* a good or an evil.<sup>1</sup>

In sum, initiatives as offensives, competition as containment, and inter-regionalisms seen as modern nationalisms, the conclusion logically points to a far less peaceful post cold war world than envisaged at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s.

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<sup>1</sup>. 'Good' as a universal 'value'; 'evil' as a particular 'axis' (the 'axis of evil' coined by George W. Bush in 2001).

### 3. Conclusion: from Helsinki to Kabul

This analysis of the competition between three contemporary regionalisms, in Eurasia, Asia and the Asia-Pacific, had as its main objective to probe into the nature of this competition. In essence, this competition has become diversified in sectors, intensified in determination and clarified in terms of its main actors. Within regionalisations, a new category of actors emerged which this paper suggests to refer to as superregionalisers. These new actors question the chance for an appeasement of post cold war international politics and suggest instead a radicalisation of such politics.

The context of international relations is fast changing and the Helsinkian view, prevalent in the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the 1970s, of a possible reconciliation between East and West is being superseded. As one of many examples of this rapid change, the recent deepening of the Afghan stake - which is of course the democratisation of the regime but largely, too, the western influence in the region under a NATO/UN umbrella - will not reconcile influences in the region and may become a source of confrontation between the two superregionalisers highlighted in this paper - China and the USA,<sup>1</sup> in particular after the withdrawing from Afghanistan of western troops, likely to be followed by a Chinese move-in under SCO umbrella.

This paper has concentrated on competition as a specific form, in the post cold war, of internationalisation and of freedom. First, international tends to mean, in the post cold war, regional: the only really international or global phenomenon marking the past twenty years is enhanced or accelerated regionalisation; regionalisations tend to become regionalisms of a mutually-assured containing nature. Second, free tends to mean, in the post cold war, less codification and more aggressive, confrontational competition. This is paradoxical in a sense: there has been an upsurge in codification, certainly in international trade, the WTO having more power than the GATT, and also in the mention of an appeal to international law. In another sense, however, aggressiveness has taken on, in a context where the codifying borders of the cold war blocs have disappeared, many more and new forms, as there is a freedom to confront, a freedom to aggress, a freedom to contest, a freedom to say 'No!' in a largely borderless world. Freedom today is, as a medium of an *essentially* competitive nature,<sup>2</sup> including the freedom to dominate over others in many new and numerous ways, from trade to information, from the military to the scientific, from cooperation to terrorism.

Finally, the concept of competition as used by a political scientist such as the author of this article is different from the approach of other scholars. Lawyers use

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<sup>1</sup>. 'Confrontation' or, in a vocabulary more appropriate to the post cold war, 'confrontational competition.'

<sup>2</sup>. A nature the essence of which is competition, see Steven Lukes, *op. cit.*

competition from a belief in positive, textual and procedural, regulations for the settlement of disputes.<sup>1</sup> Economists use competition from an ideal-typical angle and, again, a belief in the market forces, the hidden hand, and the ensuing equilibrium between offer and demand. However, in political science, settlement or equilibrium does not really apply: for a political scientist, competition refers to power games that cannot result in lasting, uncontested domination *by one* but consist in shifting dynamisms of power/domination *among all*.

The hand may well be hidden but above all else it is hiding ideologies. Fairness is that of winners or conquerors or dominators imposing their fairness, whether through imperialism, colonialism or neo-colonialism. Clearly, the post-cold-war has not been peaceful. Afghanistan will long remain both the disputed link in the energy-transportation routes from the Caspian Sea to the Sea of Oman and the testing ground for competition influence between a USA-NATO and a China-SCO, no longer inter-State but inter-Region competition on a massive and potentially war-mongering scale. Such a confrontation will probably not be of a direct military nature, to echo one of the early sections of this paper. It will however occur at least around tensions for accessing oil and gas resources. For the time being, as to the USA and China, only the latter is in a real regional dynamic, with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The USA is still mainly in a State-to-State confrontation dynamic. NATO is a not a regional organisation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is.

### **Used Acronyms**

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN + 3	ASEAN Plus Three (China, South Korea, Japan)
ASEAN + 6	ASEAN Plus Six (China, South Korea, Japan, Australia, India, New Zealand)
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy (PESC)
EAC	East Asian Community
EAS	East Asian Summit
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDC	European Defence Community
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy (PESD)
EU	European Union

<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, can competition law lead to fair trade or does it not all ascribe to a more complex dynamic ?

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GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LA	Latin America
LMD	'Licence' (BA), Mastère, Doctorat
MERCOSUR	Mercado Comùn del Sur, Common Market of the South
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WB	World Bank
WEU	West European Union
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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