I. Introduction

The current distribution of power towards actual and emerging great powers and the active participation of non-state actors in setting the stage of international relations (no matter in the environment, security, financial realms) rules out the option of a single global hegemony to establish the frameworks and types of relations between states.

Whereas the Cold War limited the amplitude and intensity of the global governance as being mainly constructed by the two geopolitical blocs and the countries aligned to either of them, the end of the Cold War opened a new world order with US invasion in Iraq in 1991 setting a precedence on how this post-Cold War order would evolve, as on using force to change not only the international order but also domestic order.

While we have had a constant dichotomy between the necessity of supranational institutions and sovereignty, having global regimes such as nuclear weapons, human rights, climate, trade as the major issues that has required a collective global response based mainly on a functionalist paradigm. Yet, as we accept that global governance extends way beyond “war and peace” into production of global commons, we argue that there is an emerging international political and economic disequilibrium that stands as the organizing principle; in return, one would expect security to feature grossly on the great powers foreign policy agenda.

The passage from the G7 to G20, the emergence of the New Development Bank and the Asia Investment Infrastructure Bank, the advance of China capabilities to project military power at the
South China and of Russia at the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and at the Arctic, North Korea continuous nuclear testing, apparently successful, the lifting of sanctions on Iran, etc. signal a shift in power structure (both economic and military) at the global level, but also a transition from global to international governance as there is hardly any consensus on institutional frameworks among major powers.

That has given space for foreign policy alternatives both in terms of new normative as to justify state performance but also complementary geography, such as region, to give sense to inter-states dynamics.

As “customary international law” has been often the rule not the exception of the US (United States withdrew from the landmark 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, preferential application of UNCLOS), China (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UNCLOS), Russia Federation (as it is the case with the Helsinki Act, annexation of Crimea in 2014, withdrawing from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe in 2015 (in 2007 only suspended its participation) in applying international law that has contributed to a gradual erosion of the liberal order that currently it bears as alternative “a more fragmented and contested world”¹. For instance, peaceful settlements of various conflicts are the result of great powers negotiations (Syria, Ukraine) and less the intervention of international organizations, say UN or OSCE.

Back from a “holidays from history” both Russia and China strive to restore the old world order before the US unilateralism that would be founded on balance of power, sovereignty, noninterference in other states’ domestic affairs, and the UN Security Council’s approval before using military force.

The article works on starting from two assumptions: (i) the international order is being reshaped as power is diffused and authority further decentralised to states and (ii) there is an increasing dynamic in terms of international relations at the regional level that may further spur regionalism.

The article questions the appropriateness (acceptance and ability) of the current international relations system to ensure complementarity to the UN global governance since:

- the increasing assertiveness of rising powers challenging the actual international relations systems having at its core the Western order;
- the emergence of regional integration schemes within and across regions

The article is a scientific endeavour that brings both empirical and normative approaches as we look mainly at collecting data on inter-state dynamics and look at the foreign policy discourse on the revision of the global order normative construct.

It takes two reference points: the financial crisis in 2008 and Moscow’s clear violation of the 1997 Helsinki Final Act, which forbids the “demand for, or act of, seizure and usurpation of part or all of the territory of any participating State”.

The analytical framework is based on the following hypothesis:

(1) the emergence of regional orders founded not on the construction of regionness but as on:
(2) a complex of interdependences both of functional rationale and national interests lay the basis of new forms of regional authority that would be conditioned on the agency of regional hegemons.

We then develop an analysis matrix to gather and interpret empirical evidence in the region as we look at the following indicators:

(i) Prevailing ideologies
(ii) Emerging regional institutional frameworks and actors
(iii) Power parity
(iv) Trade, aid, investment flows and technological transfer
(v) Great Powers factor

The matrix brings together both fundaments of regionalism and of regionalization into a sum total of process, structures and actors to better capture a timely and overarching inter-state dynamics in the Southeast Asia region.

We will test our hypothesis in the Southeast Asia region. Far from being a coherent regional identity construct, part of regional integration projects still in their infancy, Southeast Asia is a vivid international relations laboratory.

The questions we look to address are: what kind of regional worlds emerging shall we expect? Founded on regional communities or more on trans-national relations? How feasible is to expect the emergence of regional trade blocs as a side effect of slowing globalization? Would economics follow politics? Is further regional institutionalization of the region to be expected?

The article is structured in 3 parts. The first part looks at metatheoretical considerations contrasting classical and idealist type theories that lay explanatory ground of the relevance of regional worlds; the emergence of region and regional hegemons as a new locus and actors for international relations are further discussed; further concepts such as regional order and European order are probed against the two hypothesis. Part two seeks to investigate the state of art in regional integration in the Southeast Asia region by applying the matrix. We further pursue our analysis also by exploring
secondary data looking at programmatic, strategic state documents and foreign policies dynamics of the great and emerging powers in the region under scrutiny. In part three we conduct the analysis testing the two hypotheses.

II. What redux of the balance of power? US, the super-power to stay.

By main indicators- economic and technological advance- the US is way ahead of China; the US ability to project power globally, commanding the sea, space and air, it will leave re-emerging great powers nothing but to strengthen their regional hegemony and challenge the global order. The entire global systems has undergone through successive crisis following on the US announcements of various pivoting foreign policy actions. Currently, we face processes of destabilization both in terms of societal systems (national extremism and economic turmoil caused by divergence standing in between austerity and further subsidizing debt that eventually turned into a backlash of integration and the resurgence of the nation states in the European Union, identity politics in the Middle East, social unrest in China, economic stagnation in Japan and China) per se and security on almost every continent (from the Ukrainian crisis to incremental assertiveness of Turkey and the widening fault lines between European secular nation-states order and Islam and royalists in the Middle East, Russia- China geo-economics in Central Asia to geopolitics in the South and East China Sea). There is an increasing cross-border/trans-national dynamic defined by membership to radical movements (ISIS), or outlaw activities such as drugs and weapons smuggling, human trafficking,

While the rationale behind the global capitalist system has pushed for centre-periphery relations, for low-wage and high-production regions, the advance of rising powers in tandem with the US diminishing relative power has brought to the front the competition for securing raw materials that further exacerbates securitization of access sea and land lines; and that is from Japan that is almost exclusively dependent on imports of raw materials to Western Europe rallying on crude oil and gas from Central Asia to China that finds itself at unease with the US increasing presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

Is that coming back as the guiding principle for the international system? Yes, but not for the regional international relations. Here, a dense institutionalised relationships in between governments calls for both functional and great powers politics.

As long as the issues of force, power, violence are dealt with in Europe „through a hegemonic American power” and the relationship in between Western Europe and other states (Russia , Middle
have been primarily handled by the United States while the US has encouraged sovereignty
hailing within the European Union, it has fostered a hard line on any other integrationist project,
albeit Russia initiative in Central Asia, calling Russia as searching for rebuilding its empire.

Yet, as Russia Federation is desperately pushing to coherently give a new impetus to its stance in
Central Asia, the US has pushed onto the fora a new megatrend in terms of conducting regional international relations advancing the TPP and TTIP.

While the US seeks to withdraw from its battlefields once triggered in its quest to advance the
Western-like values and order, with military expenditure declining amongst the US and NATO allies
when emerging powers increase spending.

The international system develops yet an anarchic structure that favours decentralization of global
governance to regional formats. That coupled with the post-2008 crisis has strengthened even further
the understanding that the sole Western-like global order isn’t last as a universal modus operandi.

While in theory, once could assess the last two decades as the primacy of neo-liberalism and
democracy as the ordering principles at the global level, in reality, almost each regional has struggled
to shape a circumstantialised unique order taking time, location and even modality as determining variable.

Hence, Middle East, South and East Asia, Central Asia, Latin America, all have been steering
regionalised economic and political orders. A sort of rewritten Monroe Doctrine! Adopting a
simplistic understanding of international relations deconstructed at the regional level has ignored the
complexity and nuances of entrenched historical, cultural and not least economic dynamics within a
particular geography.

The stubbornness of the Western powers to construct a world-system that is Western –like designed
having as centrepiece development of statehood and nation-building coupled with neo-imperialist
approach, meddling in domestic affairs and reaping national resources has gradually led it to
bankruptcy.

Except Europe, if we leave out Russia Federation, each region has resisted one way or another to the
imposition of a Western made construction of the intra-regional affairs. And that is mainly due to
regional powers that have managed to exert influence to its peripheries as imposing its own design of
the strategic and international affairs, albeit quite often resorting to the application of both hard and
soft power.

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III. The Europe order, at home!

While the European order would define the international system for several centuries following the Westphalia peace, three critical junctures would redefine both the structure and the agency of the European order and that starting with the 20\textsuperscript{th} century would attempt to go global:

(i) The emergence of NATO, Council of Europe and the European Economic Community would herald a new model of ordering inter-state relations in Europe where supra-national organizations would limit by consent the sovereign prerogatives of states in managing both some foreign and national affairs;

(ii) The end of the Cold War and the ascendance of US unilateralism signalled preference for expanding the European order at the global system of inter-state relations (at first by expansion eastwards to replacing the CMEA and Warsaw Pact, and later failed attempts further eastwards and to the south triggering a string of coloured revolutions).

(iii) The invasion in Georgia, the annexation of Crimea, the war in Syria, the increasing China assertiveness at the global level, the transition from G7 to G20 and the like would very much describe a new world order not resembling the European matrix but consistently claiming for a redefinition of the fundamentals on the international system with different but interdependent regional orders.

The conditionality of the European substantially institutionalised order that has brought Eastern Europe “back to Europe’ into unique regionally integrated regimes under steering from a supranational organizations, the EU, NATO, Council of Europe, OSCE into a regional international relations as trans-gouvernementalism has been recently complemented by a creeping back intergovernmental model which favours the return of bilateral relations in problem solving issues.

While various integration projects (customs, monetary, fiscal unions) have had a spill over effect at other societal levels fostering the creation of a European society with recognition of common values and shared authority exercised in a multi-level governance, the recent developments such as the refugee crisis and Russia annexation of Crimea have been perceived as existential threats to the integrity of the nation states.

Thus, the post Cold-War regional order founded on the “low politics” in the shift from the “common market” to the “single market” got stuck into the “high politics” of state power relations, allegedly caused by the NATO and EU further enlargements.

The global European-like order pushed forth by the Breton Woods institutions, WTO (replacing GATT) and OECD has been challenged by parallel structures and regimes such as AIIB and the New Development Bank and decisively by the resurgence of the balance of power as the ordering principle in Europe.
Hence, despite a “rich institutionalised” Europe inter-state rivalries are back on playing politics.

While the US would not withdraw its support for politically and militarily managing the EU relations with Russia and Middle East, expecting a more politically integrated European Union would be unrealistic as EU member states would continue to use the supra national institutions to their single own interests, a “vehicle through which national governments concert their policies”\textsuperscript{3}. Wallace would also argue that the post-sovereign regional system would be as long as “mutual insecurity is resolved”\textsuperscript{4} otherwise state-to-state international politics would prevail.

Despite the fact that the EU has managed to push forth an inter-state dynamic based on patterns of cooperation and interdependence that has brought the EU coined as the “civilian power”, at least within its borders, a sort of “Euro-paralysis”\textsuperscript{5} plays out a feeble EU drifting away when it comes to foreign and security policy, with the European main capitals pursuing their own agenda.

IV. Meta-theoretical considerations and contrasting theories

We engage Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer neorealism and notions of the old and new regionalism of Amitav Acharya, Björn Hettne and Fredrik Söderbaum as the main theories to explain new emerging international orders at the regional levels. We then employ Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye theory of complex interdependence as applied at the regional levels to further a more integrated explanatory analysis and to come to terms with both classical and more idealist type theories.

Thus, we bring together structure, process and agency and that does enable us to capture timely and geographically projected events in an integrative explanatory research. The overstated influence of the global structure is thus coupled with the necessity to monitor the interaction within a particular geography and attribute results to a multi-actor agency to construct an analytical framework that is to establish a causality chain as ‘structure has no existence or causal power apart from process’\textsuperscript{6}.

The neorealism theory

As the structure of the international system has been into a transition phase following on the end of Cold War from a bi-polarity of authority location and approximately power parity to a multi-polar structure, for an enduring US led order, the US re-balance towards Southeast Asia while scaling down


\textsuperscript{4} Idem, p. 223.


in Afghanistan and Middle East, proves that “despite its preponderant international position the United States lacks the resources to be the cornerstone in all of the world’s major regions.”

While Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer neorealism focus on the anarchical character and distribution of capabilities in the international system triggering a permanent quest of great powers to reshuffling of the global order, we also refer to earlier and recent definitions of regionalism and new regionalism to explain some of the key trends and counter-trends in inter-states dynamics that underpin regional orders and that is both the emergence of regional spheres of influence to impinge upon the global balance of power and more integrated patterns of cooperation.

Power redistribution in the international system enables the emergence of a multi-polarity international structure and that is an increasing number of states have access to influence in the global system by sharing access to economic, military and cultural resources.

As Kenneth Waltz would argue that unipolarity is “the least durable of international configurations” and he goes on arguing that power asymmetry will give way to power competition as weak states would seek to increase their position in the system.

Regarding the rising of a state to the status of a pole, ranking top in the international system depending on how they manage to score in all “[…] size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence”.

To be continued!

The old and new regionalism

Nevertheless, considering a conditioning rapport that the system structure can have on the positioning of a region role and influence into the global order, we need to consider also regions as constructed both politically and socially- Central and Eastern Europe would have faded in the back of history assuming that peoples would not have strove for a “return to Europe” by joining the value-based family of the EU as much as the Baltic states would loose in importance unless becoming members of the NATO alliance.

Taking note of the new regionalism as “[…] a theory about the world order in transformation and the emergence of a multi-level pattern of governance” the authors also envisage the world order that may result from new regionalisms in interaction. We side with the operational definition of the new regionalism as “the urge for a regionalist order, either in a particular geographical area or as a type of

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11 Björn Hettne and Fredrik Söderbaum, Theorising the rise of regionness in New Regionalisms in the Global Political Economy, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2004, p.34.
world order.”\textsuperscript{12}

To avoid any confusion, we need to draw a clear-cut distinction in between two mistakenly interchangeable concepts and that is \textit{regionalization} (we use it to seek to make empirical demonstration of emerging \textit{regional patterns} of cooperation that may lead to integration) and \textit{regionalism} (we use to redefine the a new emerging \textit{regional normative construct} as opposing the European order).

By earlier definitions of regionalism we follow closely on the interpretations given by Amitav Acharya who finds regionalism as a foreign policy tool exercised by small states to primarily “[…] protect their sovereignty and autonomy from great power meddling”\textsuperscript{13}. As “new entrants” into the international relations system most of the states in both regions would seek marginal regional integration as sufficient to preserve their sovereignty and not to build supra-national regional societies although there are prerequisites to facilitate that (mainly cultural and language factors).

Hedley Bull’s (quotation needed!) definition of international society could be very well applied at the regional level to describe an intensive trans-national dynamics with non-state actors being part of the core of the national emancipation and further projection of interests at the supra-national level. Here, civil society organizations play a critical role as they assembly in supra-national networks around various thematic interests- environment, cultural, education, etc. Private sector companies also form alliances at the regional level while seeking to develop market-like standards and procedures to forge a conducive and stable environment that would sell and bring the region into the global value and supply chains.

Yet, in order to qualify for having an embedded \textit{regional society} a region would demonstrate an increasing dynamic of “social movements and other types of social networks formed on the basis of professional, ideological, ethnic or religious ties, which contribute to the formation of a transnational regional economy and regional civil society.”\textsuperscript{14}

Björn Hettne and Fredrik Söderbaum argue\textsuperscript{15} that an even higher level of regioness relies on the emergence of \textit{regional communities} and it is characterized by the co-existence of both the “formal” region centered on inter-state dynamics and the “real” region that is built on a vibrant bottom up and trans-national civil society and also around a shared culture, identity and values. At the same time “micro-regionalism” arise while fostering cross-border relations within a congruent macro-regional logic.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibidem.
\textsuperscript{15} Idem, p.43.
In this case, the region\textsuperscript{16} itself becomes the organizing factor for the states behavior within the region and to the rest of the world.

As Walter Lippmann already proposed four such possible regional systems “an Atlantic system managed by the US and the Great Britain; a Russian system, a Chinese system and eventually an Indian system” and Bull spoke as small powers within the geography of the great powers would need to accept and buy in as in need for protection eventually “[…] was to forgo the right to form alliances with any extra-regional power”\textsuperscript{17} by employing Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye theory of complex interdependence we further demonstrate that Bull’s theory as inappropriate to further capture regional complex interdependence.

George Liska introduced also the concept of “local” Great Power and its traction towards small states as to “cluster [and giving up to] stronger hands the chief responsibility for organizing regional security”\textsuperscript{18}.

While many would expect the topic of the article to be explored by means of at least one theory and that is regional integration, we avoid such an endeavour, as our taken on the regional dynamics in both regions do not follow a predetermined patterned regional order resembling the European one. As we may consider that the integration in a particular sector would “spill-over” exerting functional pressure for deepening regional integration, that would just reinforce our primary claim that both authority is relocated upwards to the regional level and downwards from the global institutions while power gets diffused horizontally towards non-state actors.

Secondly, we want to avoid disputes whether regionalization or regionalism is the best term to describe the regional dynamics. Hence, the regional complex interdependence that is by far more multifaceted and multidimensional than described by the theory of regionalism.

While more advanced forms of supra-national political regional integration may emerge, we avoid entering into the functionalist/neo-functionalist debate of David Mitrany, Ernst Has, as our assumption is that the (i) state system is to prevail while accommodating non-state and other forms of government structure into a by far more complex international polity, this time, confined by the intricate interdependence at the regional levels, and secondly the integration theory as a reflection of the integration dynamics in Europe falls short to describe the actual inter-state relations in both regions that are the focus of our article.


As we consider the limitation of the paper, we keep the Western hemisphere as a default referent although sporadically we would make appeal to also to dynamics within the West so that we reinforce our arguments for the two regions under investigation.

Taking benefits from the neorealism paradigm we hold domestic dynamics as constant variable in the states within Eurasia region as we assume that the primary goal they have is survival especially maintaining territorial integrity. This is by no means to null the critical role that domestic elites may have in altering the foreign policy of a state, yet, that remains conditioned by the circumstantiality projected by the regional hegemon in the geographical area they co-exist. Domestic dynamics may oppose resistance to an emerging regional order as driven by the regional hegemon, still that remains a function of the intentions and capacity of the regional hegemon to extern pressure on a particular state within its power projected reach. And that is no better demonstrated rather than the refusal of Ukraine and Armenia to sign the Deep and Comprehensive Trade Agreements (citation needed!) with the EU following on concerted pressure from Russia Federation despite sufficient domestic elites’ support.

**Back to the sovereignty-bound regionalism**

While Amitav Acharya argued in terms of a transition from sovereignty-bound regionalism to an intrusive regionalism in Europe claiming on the success of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (later to become Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), we argue that the failure of all OSCE, NATO and the EU to collectively respond to crisis arising in the Eastern and Southern EU neighborhoods and grossly mismanaging the crisis arising in the aftermath of Euromaidan in Ukraine and Spring Revolutions in the Middle East……

Following on Acharya definitions, the birth of Eurasia Economic Union (EEU) is a mix of both voluntary and coercive elements; as initially Armenia announced that it would sign the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the European Union, at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius after a tit-for-tat preceding with Russia it declined its participation and it favored instead Eurasian Customs Union. The geopolitical pressure from Russia was widely recognized as a push factor to Armenia to join the ECU, as Russia threatened to withdraw its troops from the region of Nagorno-Karabahk in Azerbaijan.

The membership of states in Central Asia to the Collective Security Treaty Organization was driven mainly by Russia military stance upon the region. Yet, often CSTO was described as an extension of

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20 Ibidem.
Russia interests to play geopolitics in the region; for instance, the tension on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border was resolved not\textsuperscript{22} by the mediation of CSTO but rather of the two states themselves. Armenia also complained\textsuperscript{23} on the ambivalence of some of the Alliance members (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) as taking sides with Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Yet, not just overlapping of membership but also the existence of divided loyalties to various concurrent groupings is another element that hampers the emergence of a cohesive security community; also membership of some CSTO members (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) that have often supported Azerbaijan standing on the conflict with Armenia.

Intrusive regionalism has relied on extensive forms (as often embraced in the Asia Pacific region but not in Central Asia) of regional initiatives on regional confidence-building and preventive diplomacy mechanisms while “sovereignty concerns prevailed over constructive intervention by ASEAN in the political arena”\textsuperscript{24}, when it comes to human rights monitoring actions has been limited so far from all regional organizations. An example of another intrusive regionalism is \textit{ASEAN Surveillance Process}, as ASEAN members opposed as to much of internal interference by establishing an \textit{ASEAN Surveillance Mechanism} advocated by the US\textsuperscript{25}.

Yet, the main constitutive elements for the European order, \textit{human rights, humanitarian intervention} have not been driving forces in establishing regional wide mechanisms for monitoring and control based on consent. On the contrary, both South and East Asia and Central Asia have been characterized by military intervention and coercion. Acharya would argue that “[…] prospects for world order will be affected by a clash between two forms of regionalism: intrusive and sovereignty-bound, the former shaping the values, identities and foreign policy behavior of the West, while the latter characterizes much of the rest”.\textsuperscript{26}

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the newly established Eurasia Economic Union (EEU) all of them remain bound by the overarching norms of sovereignty and non-interference while both regions are substantially dominated by “pull and push” factors as not just one regional hegemon but also external great powers claim strategic interests. So far both cooperative and competitive inter-state relations have ensured the balance of power and regional \textit{collective} production

\textsuperscript{22} CSTO Indecisive on Kyrgyzstan Intervention, \url{http://www.eurasianet.org/node/61294}, retrieved on March 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2016.
\textsuperscript{23} Sarkisian Blasts Armenia’s Ex-Soviet Allies Over Karabakh, \url{http://www.azatutyun.am/content/article/26624917.html}, retrieved on March 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2016.
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ibidem.}
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Idem}, p.31.
Yet, none of the aforementioned regional organizations would embrace a regional order where the peoples would gradually shift loyalties in favor of supra-national institutions that would “[...] possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states”27.

Since the failure of the draft Treaty on a European Constitution, one would struggle to appeal to the integration theory as a panacea to grasp with the processes within the European Union (a lost of appetite for further political integration, proliferation of referenda as opposing further communitarization of policy, the emergence of multiple speed and divergent project of overlapping coalitions) and beyond, in the very Eastern and South vicinities (the EU soft power has lost traction among potential candidates). As states become more inward looking while pursuing foreign policy due to an evolutionary security environment (refugee crisis, asymmetric wars, etc.) with impact on the domestic political dynamics, while not claiming the “obsolescence of regional integration theory”28: in studying both Central Asia and South and East Asia we find the regional complex interdependence as reconciling both theories derived from idealist IR perspectives such as integration theories with the neorealist one.

While the balance of power approaches to regional security would evolve in Europe as giving scope to “security communities”29, power politics and inter-state territorial conflicts still hampers further regional institutionalization.

In South and East Asia, both US and China competes for power while US claims prevalence of UNCLOS international regulations in settling down disputes at sea and China calls on sovereignty and non-interference from a power outside of the region.

While economic cooperation has been pushed down to the South Asia this has not generate a “spill over” effect to “high politics”; on the contrary, for instance India would gladly welcome China investments but would not hesitate to conduct strategic naval exercise with Japan and US in Philippine Sea near the South China Sea30. The best example is also the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) that has remained strictly defined by its inter-governmental character and not evolving into a regional economic community31.

In Central Asia, while SCO and CSTO have complementarily broached security issues, recently China, without calling and informing Russia, proposed to Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan a new Central Asian security bloc32 which may signal an incremental geopolitical competition looming as

well while time ago, painfully, Russia „welcomed” China’s global economic initiative the One Belt, One Road that massively raises the geo-economic competition in between both Russia and China over Central Asia dominance.

While Acharya would distinguish between “bureaucracy-drive regionalization” and “market driven regionalization”, with the former as a feature for the regional integration in Europe, and the latter outside of Europe, we take his “regionalization without regionalism”\(^{33}\) as appropriate to describe emerging economic trans-national patterns of cooperation and not ……

While we share partly the findings of Hettne and Inotai\(^{34}\) as distinguishing in between the old and new regionalism, we still underline the role of the regional hegemons in driving any inter-state dynamic rather than giving credit to “below” and “from within” in both regions we look at. Although there is “an increasingly wider menu of issues”\(^{35}\), such as border terrorism, refugees, environment, pandemics, there is hardly any autonomy in enterprising trans-national cooperation without state consent.

Although there are few trans-national networks tackling other issues than limited to security or trade, they are grossly dominated by state that do not hesitate to undertake aggressive interventions against if fear of losing control arises (examples from Central Asia recent demonstrations and also from China, Vietnam, Cambodia, etc.

While in Europe, there has been an aquis communautaire to enforce domestic institutional adjustments to meet both the Copenhagen and Madrid criteria and bring all aspirant countries in line with the political, economic and administrative requirements, in a nutshell human rights, liberal democracy, peaceful settlements of border issues and free trade, none of the regional groupings claim interference in the domestic affairs of member states in the two regions (see the acceptance of Cambodia and Burma to ASEAN despite international protests and also acceptance of Armenia to the EEU while there is still a frozen conflict with Azerbaijan; and also the issue of non-interference in the ASEAN’s Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.

Regions- as the new locus to project and manage international order

While bipolarity and a short US driven unilateralism were organizing principles of the global order, both has brought in fake expectations as of “the end of history”\(^{36}\) and the “world as being flat”\(^{37}\). As great power politics intensify, regions have become the playground both for augmenting state

capabilities (for instance China expanding power projection facilities in the South China Sea), resume proxy wars (protracted conflicts in Syria, Transnistria, etc.) and bolster international state posture (Russia intervention in Syria, in Nagorno-Karabah, US overextending its military capabilities in the Baltic countries and Eastern Europe, Afghanistan, boosting military presence in the Indian and Pacific oceans).

From an economic point of view, the financial crisis in Asia (1997) and the global one (2008) have given way to complex intra and trans-regional economic mega trends both in terms of regional regulatory frameworks (Trans-Pacific Partnership, One Belt, One Road, etc.) and new organizational alliances (Asia Infrastructure and Investment Bank, New Development Bank, Eurasia Economic Union, etc.).

As economic power continues to shift towards East and developing countries, from an ideological perspective, since the liberal order has lost its traction at least amongst various governments in Asia, Middle East, Latin America, Africa and here also Western and Central European countries do not make an exception, there is an emerging intra-regionally and trans-regionally consensus on the sort of state driven market economy and illiberal democracy.

Yet, a word of caution is needed as not any intra and inter-regional dynamic to be equated with an emerging regional order. The flow of people and goods and a minimum of interdependence in between the countries sharing the same geographic area, a region may not earn the status of projecting and regulation international order. It yields on both great power competition and cooperation to become “meaningful” in the balance of forces at the global level.

The rising of regions as locus for complementing international orders needs an evolutionary understanding, as they are “created and re-created in the process of global transformation”.

At various stages (pre-Westphalia, post-Congress of Vienna, post-Treaty of Versailles, post-World War II, during the Cold War and post-Cold War) in the consolidation of the international systems concepts such as territory/borders and space have given the relevance of a demarcated

That the emerging regional order in the two regions under can be better explained by comparative analysis with the European order may serve to extract differences and similarities, possible congruent patterns, one of our objective is to identify what trends and dynamics in new emerging regional orders.

One of the subsequent questions to answer is when does a region become relevant from the
international order point of view?

Thus, apart from sharing the same geography of place and a certain level of interdependence a particular region becomes of relevance once it grasps with the order principle of organizing inter-governmental, cross-border, trans-national and even people-to-people relations. For that reason we shall use the concept of *regionness* as the indicator to test the consolidation of a region to elevate to the status of *regional order* as a function of regional integration processes.

Far from entering a stage of *new regionalism* (as defined in Fawcett and Hurrell, 1995; Böas *et al.*, 1999b) Southeast Asia has featured particular forms of regional integration drawn altogether by US limited outreach, successive crisis of global liberal order and shift in power parity among great powers. While non-state actors have become more entrenched in regional inter-state dynamics (terrorist organizations as being textbook cases) due to a deeper interdependence particularly of the global political economy, the influence of that should not be overestimated as “because actors and processes interact at the various levels and their relative importance differs in time and space”.

The questioning of the *global liberal order* has given way to regional mega economic trade agreements such as the TTIP, TPP and One Belt, One Road initiative but also to regional free trade

Far from embracing proposals to include regions as constructed on *civilizational orders*, as much as the outcome of *regionness* coming from *within* the regions where *societies* group together to voice and articulate *common* social, cultural and political identities, we take the root-causes as being *exogenous* to the regions and derived from the *anarchical structure* of the international relations system and latest geopolitical security architecture both in Europe, Eurasia and South-East Asia.

To be continued!

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