

3. A new unipolar trend after Obama? Back to unipolarism?

- Empirical evidence of the US « absolute advantage »: a) consolidated US military supremacy (more than the next ten powers); b) US economic strength and relative ec. recovery
- ‘US unilateralism’ is not a G.W.Bush parenthesis: even if marginal under Obama, deep historical roots and long term and various tendencies

However: the literature about the US decline (Keohane, Zacharia,...) and limits of US power (Nye) is not obsolete

Is the concept of a post-hegemonic world still relevant?

Third conclusion: we are still in a post-hegemonic international system:

No single hegemon is like to emerge

4. Fourth scenario: is the world going towards fragmentation and anarchy

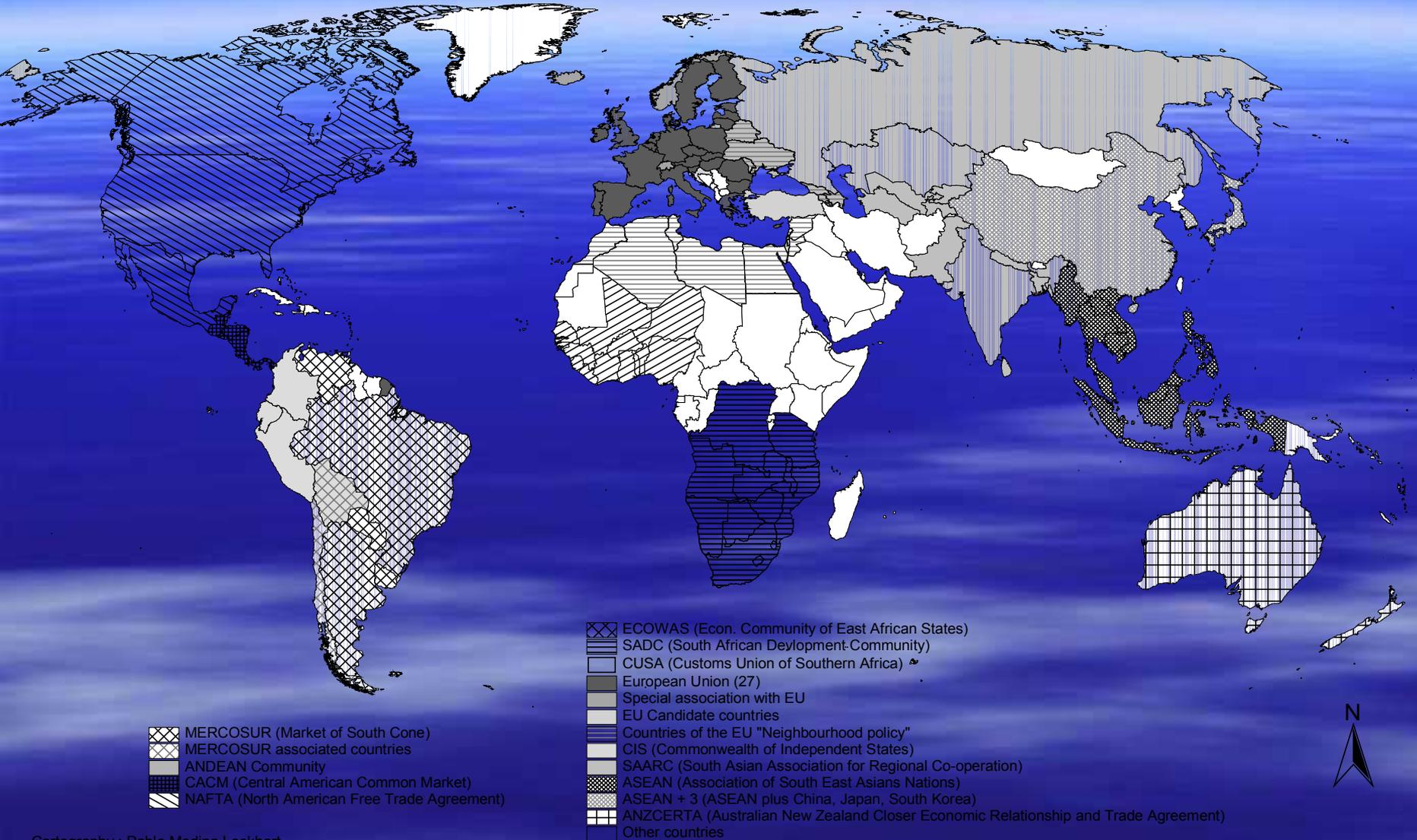
The challenges addressed by a very large, various comments focusing on several kinds of empirical phenomena:

- a) Political: proliferation of WMD, failing states, informal terrorist networks...: « non polarity » (R.Haas 2009)
- b) Cultural: sub-national and ethnocentric fragmentation, religious fundamentalism.....
- c) Economic/trade: protectionism and bilateralism versus multilateralism (« spaghetti bowl » J.Bagwati and L.Summers, S.Woolcock 2009)

Fragmentation as a call for a multilevel global governance
including regional level

« **A WORLD OF REGIONS** » (Katzenstein
and a large international literature)

MAIN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



Cartography : Pablo Medina Lockhart



in conclusion: a new kind of multipolar world

- Heterogeneous
- Asymmetrical
- Interdependent, interpolar
- Post-hegemonic
- Regionalized, multilevel

A fifth virtuous scenario? A new epoch of multilateral cooperation : several multilateral approaches

In the context of the efficiency- and legitimacy gap of the multilateral network (WTO, IMF, WB, ONU etc) new and different trends towards multilateral cooperation are emerging and could to some extent « **multilateralize the multipolar world** »

HOWEVER VARIOUS PRACTICES:

- US- centred minilateralism
- Instrumental multilateralism (ex: the China agenda):
- EU-style multilateralism and Japan-style multilateral cooperation

US- centred minilateralism (coalition of willing dominated by US)

Examples

- Iraqi war
- Anti-terrorism: 2003, « Proliferation Security Initiative »
- Environment protection: 2004, « Asia-Pacific partnership clean development and climate »
- Natural disaster(tsunami,2004) Humanitarian aid
- Democracy export :«Regional Democracy caucus »

instrumental multilateralism

- see M.Mastanduno,R.Food, N.McFerlane, *US Hegemony and I.O.*(OUP 2002) :«the US power enables it to engage in a careful weighting of the costs and benefits of multilateral cooperation and to be selective about the terms of its engagement with I.O. » according to policy goals .
- However....

China's instrumental multilateral approach

According to many observers the concept of « instrumental multilateralism » could be appropriate defining the China foreign policy as combining defense of national interests with instrumental multilateral cooperation. What kind of multilateral approach?

Global multilateralism (WTO, Olympic games, etc) and « asiaticization of regional multilateralism »:

- Shanghai cooperation organization
- 6 parties talks about the Korean peninsula
- ARF (Asian regional Forum)
- ASEAN plus 1: free trade area before 2010
- ASEAN plus 3: Asian fund, monetary cooperation
- ASEAN plus 6 and East Asia summits
- ASEM and APEC

Functional multilateralism

Multilateral cooperation to solve specific community faced challenges:

- Japan approach as an example starting in the 90s: multilateral fora as arena for limited, single issue problem solving cooperation (at least, limiting competition and rivalry)

A large array of multilateral practices: could they change the states behaviour towards enhanced cooperation?

- multilateral commitments are becoming increasingly relevant: they imply respect of rules and procedures, including, possibly, an incipient respect of rule of law,
- notably if regional and global rules are combined !.

Multilateralism exclude coercion and hierarchies
(J.Ruggie, R.O.Keohane):

- a) general principle of conduct;
- b) diffuse reciprocity (mutual recognition between legally independent territorial entities)

In this context:

Japan-EU, new avenues for bilateral cooperation (strengthening multilateralism)

- Climate change: Nagoya protocol on access and benefit sharing (ABS) in preparat.of Cancun (December)
- Helping developing countries efforts for biodiversity and Copenhagen 2009 targets
- Security in Central Asia (Afghanistan-Tajikistan)
- Space exploration (international conference)
- ASEM: Japan as bridge-maker and coordinator
- EPA: Economic partnership agreement (negotiations)

Fit to cope with the evolving nature of security threats

beyond the traditional security threats

- Terrorism
- Piracy
- Cybernetic attacks
- Drogue trade and global criminal networks

conclusions

- The EU's concept of a binding, value oriented, post-hegemonic, multilvel-multilateral cooperation will not easy be prevailing
- However, the EU could a) implement it at the scale of a still relevant world's region; b) consistently assert it within an open global context as the best way to cope with common challenges; c) look for enhanced convergence with other global players as Japan.....
- AN OLD MYTHOS IS COMING BACK: MANY SISYPHUS ARE STRONGER THAN ONE!