The Origins of Regionalism in the EU and ASEAN

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Within both academic and policy circles, there is a tendency to discuss regionalism as an economic phenomenon, neglecting its security and socio-cultural dimensions. This has been the case since the end of the Cold War, when the forces of globalisation made economic regionalism prevail over its other forms, and the importance of geoeconomics surpasses that of geopolitics (Luttwak 1998 in Beeson 2005:973). Considering the reoccurring argument about the new bipolarity of the international system, this paper revisits security regionalism, which was prevalent during the Cold War, analysing the implications of both extra- and intra-regional security dynamics for the emergence and deepening of what Borrell (2023) described as the two most advanced projects of regional integration (the EU and ASEAN). Widening, or enlargement, occurred after the Cold War and is therefore outside the scope of this paper.

The paper is framed by Buzan and Waever's (2003) updated version of regional security complex theory (RSCT), including its global and regional levels of analysis. Although Buzan and Waever redefined the RSCT in a more constructivist fashion to include non-traditional security threats, thus extending the processes of securitisation/de-securitisation to sectors beyond the military-political one and actors other than the state, the focus of this paper is on traditional threats emanating from both inside and outside the two regions. The theory's neo-realist elements are thus of particular relevance, especially for the paper's global-level analysis that focuses on the distribution of power within, or polarity of, the anarchic international system. Conversely, the regional-level analysis focuses on the polarity, patterns of enmity/amity, and the construction of collective identity within the EU and ASEAN, thus incorporating both neo-realist and constructivist elements.

The paper starts with defining concepts such as regionalism, regionalisation, and regions. This is positioned against the major theoretical debates on the emergence, deepening and widening of the two regions, all of which are discussed with reference to Wunderlich's (2007) two waves of theories, first corresponding to empirical developments during and second after the Cold War. After justifying the paper's theoretical choice, the second part provides an empirical analysis of the first-wave developments, comparing the two regions in terms of the interplay between their extra- and intra-regional security dynamics and the implications of these for the widely assumed goal of regional integration.

Conceptual and Theoretical Considerations

Regionalism is commonly understood as a policy-driven, top-down project, and *regionalisation* as a societal-driven, bottom-up process (Dent 2008:7), implying the difference between the two in terms of state/non-state actors. Although such understanding has been criticised, with both regionalism and regionalisation involving both types of actors (Soderbaum 2012:19), this paper adopts a broadly positivist paradigm, which necessitates understanding regionalism as a state-led endeavour. The conceptualisation of *regions* is equally contested. Whilst acknowledging the socially constructed nature of all regions that implies the presence of both material and ideational structures, this paper identifies regions through material structures such as formal organisations (Soderbaum 2012:14). In this way, both the EU and ASEAN constitute regions or rather security regions, with security defined in terms of socially constructed processes of securitisation/de-securitisation (Buzan et al. 1998:204).

The concept of security regions thus combines both objectivist and constructivist elements, which this paper argues

makes it interchangeable with that of *regional security complexes* (RSCs). RSCs were originally defined as clusters of states with territorial patterns of security interdependence the intensity of which sets the states inside apart from those outside (Buzan 1991:190), but the definition was later reformulated to allow for the possibility of non-state actors and sectors other than the military-political one (Buzan and Waever 2003:44). There are different types of security complexes based on both variations in polarity and patterns of enmity/amity (as classified by Buzan and Waever 2003:62), with this paper adopting an enmity/amity-based classification that distinguishes between*conflict formations*, *security regimes* and *security communities* as three main types, positioning them on a spectrum from chaos, or anarchy, to integration, or hierarchy (Buzan 1991:218).

Whereas RSCs are intrinsic to the international system, regional-level dynamics can get both *penetrated* and *overlaid* by the global-level ones, depending on the degree of external involvement. Overlay signifies greater involvement, as it describes a situation when global-level (great or super) powers move directly into the region and subordinate the intra-regional security dynamics to the extra-regional patterns of great/superpower rivalry, essentially preventing RSCs from forming, let alone operating (Buzan 1991:221).

It is important not to confuse regional integration with the security community. The former eliminates the security complex by transforming it into a single actor (Buzan and Waever 2003:58) and can thus be understood as the goal of regionalist projects. The latter, on the other hand, is a type of RSC where the regional states cooperate to such an extent that they are no longer able to imagine a war with each other (Deutsch 1957 in Adler and Barnett 1998:6). Waever (1998) and Acharya (1998), who apply the latter concept to their respective analyses of the EU and ASEAN, define security communities in more constructivist terms by focusing on collective identity formation as a precondition for community formation.

The EU's model of regional integration is commonly understood in supranational terms, despite the unresolved nature of the first-wave debate between *supranational* (particularly neo-functionalist) theoretical approaches that emphasised restraints on the sovereignty of nation-states and *intergovernmental* (particularly neo-realist) approaches that emphasised the centrality of Westphalian states (Wunderlich 2007:7). This debate was inherently Eurocentric, occurring within the context of Western Europe, and treating the EU as a sui generis model of a highly institutionalised region that should be followed by other regions (including ASEAN) which were seen as weakly institutionalised (Soderbaum 2012:15). Transcending the supranationalism/intergovernmentalism divide, *multi-level governance* and *new regionalism* approaches dominated the second wave theorising among both scholars of European Studies and International Relations (IR). Both approaches extended the regionalist agenda by incorporating a greater variety of actors, sectors, and levels (Wunderlich 2007:35). Further broadening occurred under constructivist approaches, including the revised *RSCT* and its domestic, regional, inter-regional and global levels of analysis (Buzan and Waever 2003:51).

This paper argues that RSCT is an ideal theoretical approach for a two-level analysis of the Cold War-era EU and ASEAN, as not only does it allow for a combination of neo-realist (polarity) and constructivist (enmity/amity, collective identity) elements, but different aspects of this theory have been employed by scholars of both EU and non-EU regionalisms, thus allowing for cross-fertilisation across the fields of Area Studies and IR. The two levels of analysis (global and regional) are brought together by the global-regional interactions between superpowers, great powers, and regional powers (as classified by Buzan and Waever 2003:35).

Whereas many of the Cold War-era EU states, including the EU itself, could project power to more than one region, this was not the case for ASEAN and its member states. The Cold War-era EU should thus be classified as a great power, or 'regional great power' (as used by Buzan and Waever 2003:431), ASEAN as a regional power, and the US and USSR as superpowers. For the purposes of this paper, however, both the EU and ASEAN are classified as regional powers.

Empirical Developments During the Cold War

One may argue that the two regions did not pursue security-oriented initiatives until after the Cold War, with the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) being the most

cited examples. Both EU and ASEAN, however, or rather their earliest antecedents, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and Association of Southeast Asia (ASA), emerged during the Cold War.

Whereas the EU's emergence was driven by an external threat emanating from the superpower rivalry between the US and USSR, ASEAN's emergence was driven by an internal threat embodied in the disputes between regional powers. This can be explained by the difference between the EU's overlay and ASEAN's penetration by global-level security dynamics, which suppressed the regional-level dynamics in the former's but not the latter's case.

The US played a major role in the emergence of both organisations, albeit this role was conducive to regional integration only in the case of the EU. In both cases, the common external threat was addressed through broader inter- and trans-regional security arrangements, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO). The latter has since dissolved, with other security frameworks, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), emerging in the post-Cold War era instead. Although the deepening was, in both cases, driven predominantly by intra-regional security dynamics, there was a difference in the format regionalism took. The EU was marked by reoccurring disputes between proponents of supranationalism and intergovernmentalism, whereas the members of ASEAN have, since the beginning, agreed on the intergovernmental format.

Superpowers, Great Powers, and Extra-Regional Security Dynamics

The EU's emergence can be explained by the neo-realist logic of the Cold War, in particular the role of the US, which, by encouraging multilateralism, was a significant external driver behind the Western European processes of securitisation/de-securitisation (Beeson 2005:970). On the one hand, the Marshall Plan and what was then the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) can be construed as the US's attempt to change Western Europe in the image of the US economic model. On the other hand, the US's main objective was strategic, with the OEEC and NATO being components of its Containment Policy (Beeson 2005:975).

The US thus developed a two-tier approach towards Western European regionalism, indicating the interconnectedness of economic and security issues (Wunderlich 2007:56). Its political leverage, however, was of greater significance than its economic assistance, with the country being a major driver behind Germany's reintegration into the new security architecture of Western Europe (Wunderlich 2007:59) as well as the supranational format of the EU's integration (Cafruny 2009:65). Although it can be argued that the US facilitated the EU's emergence, the EU's ultimate format was decided by intra-regional security dynamics, with the organisation adopting both supranational and intergovernmental features (Wunderlich 2007:72, 97).

In contrast to its policy in Western Europe, the US constructed a bilaterally-based 'hub and spokes' system in Southeast Asia, which discouraged regional integration (Beeson 2005:977). Indeed, the Southeast Asian states managed to establish ASEAN during the Cold War despite, rather than because of, the US's foreign policy. This is supported by the fact that East Asian regionalism, as marked by the ASEAN+3, did not emerge until after the Cold War, precisely because of the US opposition to any such groupings (Beeson 2005:978).

Unlike the EU when it came to NATO, ASEAN did not institutionalise its cooperation with SEATO. Instead, it aimed to keep the region free from external interference, as marked by the Declaration on the Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) (Acharya 1998:209). Other inter-regional security initiatives were attempted, such as the Colombo Plan or the US proposal to create an Asian version of the OEEC, but all of these were unsuccessful (Wunderlich 2007:77-78). Moreover, whereas the global-level polarity dominated the EU's extra-regional security dynamics, ASEAN's dynamics were dominated by conflicts between original and what later became new members of the organisation, laying the basis for ASEAN's major intra-regional dynamics following its post-Cold War enlargement. The most prominent example of these conflict-prone relations was ASEAN's securitisation of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, which enhanced a shared sense of collective identity among the organisation's original members (Wunderlich 2007:89) based on a distinction drawn between ASEAN's ZOPFAN and Vietnam's military expansionism (Acharya 1998:209-210).

Regional Powers and Intra-Regional Security Dynamics

Buzan (1991:214) argues that Cold War-era Western Europe was without an RSC, with the pre-WWII intra-regional security dynamics, such as the hostilities between Germany and France, being overlaid by the post-WWII US-USSR rivalry. Contrary to Buzan, Waever (1998:76) argues that an RSC in the form of a security community emerged in Western Europe as processes of securitisation/de-securitisation continued, with the first focusing on a common external threat from the USSR and the second on internal dynamics of a non-military kind (Waever 1998: 81, 85). NATO can thus be seen as a defence alliance created to respond to external military threats, and the EU as a security community created to respond to internal (predominantly non-military) dynamics, a distinction increasingly blurred in the post-Cold War era. Unlike NATO, the EU was also meant to facilitate the convergence of national interests by cultivating a shared sense of collective identity among its members (Waever 2005:91-92).

This can be contrasted with Southeast Asia, where intra-regional security dynamics, such as the hostilities between Indonesia and Malaysia, became the main drivers behind the Southeast Asian RSC that emerged alongside the processes of decolonisation. The classification of the Cold War-era ASEAN is also more ambiguous than that of the EU, with classifications of ASEAN as a security regime (Buzan and Waever 2003:134) that has by the end of the Cold War transformed into a weak security community (as suggested by Acharya 1998) competing with those seeing ASEAN as a conflict formation that has evolved into a security regime only after the Cold War (Buzan and Waever 2003:154). This paper classifies the Cold War-era ASEAN as an underdeveloped security community. Despite being defined in terms of 'security' (i.e., the existence of both military and non-military security threats) (Acharya 1998:219), rather than the EU-style 'a-security' (i.e., a lack of military threats), the organisation's regional powers moved towards the amity side of the enmity/amity spectrum whilst developing a distinct sense of regional identity. This justifies the classification of ASEAN as a security community.

The EU's intra-regional security dynamics evolved around the integration/fragmentation and supranationalism/intergovernmentalism debates about the deepening (and later widening) of Western European regionalism. Disregarding the opposition by several member states (most prominently France), supranationalism became the dominant integration format (Waever 2005:87), with its proponents securitising Europe's past of inter-state rivalry and its ultimate outcome of fragmentation as a threat to Europe's future (Buzan and Waever 2003:356). Its opponents, on the other hand, securitised supranational integration (and sometimes integration per se) as a threat to the national interests and identities of the individual member states.

Similarly to the EU, ASEAN started as a 'non-war community' (as defined by Deutsch 1957) that gradually transformed into a security community, albeit its internal military dynamics remained more prevalent than in the EU (Acharya 1998:199). This can be explained by the lack of a common external threat perception among ASEAN's members, as seen in the juxtaposition of Thailand's securitisation of Vietnam with Indonesia's and Malaysia's securitisations of China as the main external threat (Wunderlich 2007:88). Moreover, ASEAN founders did not want to emulate the EU integration model, with the Bangkok Declaration institutionalising the organisation's intergovernmental format (Acharya 1998:204). The clear preference for intergovernmentalism can be explained by the different historical trajectories of the two regions. The Westphalian state and nationalism were discredited by WWII in Western Europe and emphasised by decolonisation in Southeast Asia, the latter of which saw many of the regional states experiencing sovereign statehood for the first time (Wunderlich 2007:73, 76).

The construction of regional identity, as opposed to national identity, was complementary to the processes of securitisation/de-securitisation outlined above. In the case of the EU, the broader dichotomy between a democratic, capitalist West and an authoritarian, communist East laid a foundation for the EU's regional identity that has since developed to incorporate a full range of norms. These include respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the peaceful resolution of disputes, all of which were meant to have both constitutive and regulatory effects on the national interests and identities of its members (Wunderlich 2007:142-143).

Known as the ASEAN Way, ASEAN's normative framework came to comprise the principles of non-use of force (in intra-regional relations), non-interference (in the domestic affairs of other regional states) and regional autonomy (from extra-regional interference), which are complemented by three decision-making procedures, namely

informality, consultation, and consensus (Wunderlich 2007:152). Whilst the principles of non-use of force and non-interference were not unique to ASEAN, the organisation's interpretation of the latter was, and still is, rather unique, as it stands for a self-imposed restriction on criticising the actions of a fellow member state towards its own population (Wunderlich 2007:153). The principle of regional autonomy, as marked by the ZOPFAN Declaration, refers to ASEAN's commitment to non-alignment (Acharya 1998:213), and the consensus-based decision-making serves to protect the national sovereignty of each member state (Wunderlich 2007:155).

Concluding Remarks

This paper argues that both convergence and divergence in the extra- and intra-regional security dynamics shaped the emergence/deepening of the Cold War-era EU and ASEAN. As put by Beeson (2005:981), the existence of the Cold War enabled the emergence of the regionalist project in Western Europe, whereas the ending of it removed the most important obstacle (US opposition) to further development of a regionalist project in Southeast Asia (Beeson 2005:981). This means that whereas global-level bipolarity was a decisive extra-regional dynamic behind the EU's emergence, effectively overlaying Western Europe's internal security dynamics (e.g., the Franco-German rivalry), it only penetrated, rather than overlaid, the internal dynamics in Southeast Asia (e.g., the Indonesian-Malaysian conflicts), thus allowing a greater space for the formation and operation of ASEAN.

Intra-regional security dynamics, which were decisive for the deepening of both projects, were dominated by the supranationalism/intergovernmentalism debate about the preferred integration format in the case of the EU. This was unlike ASEAN, where the uncontested centrality of nation-states guaranteed the adoption of an intergovernmental format, albeit both EU and ASEAN have, at least by the end of the Cold War, taken the security community form of RSC.

The updated version of RSCT, which incorporates both neo-realist and constructivist insights, has been chosen as a theoretical background for the paper's empirical analysis. This theory can, however, be utilised well beyond the scope of this paper's analysis of the Cold War-era developments, especially considering that it transcends the post-Cold War theoretical dichotomy between the particularism of Area Studies and universalism of IR. The return of global-level bipolarity and the rising importance of geopolitics, as signalled by the intensifying US-China rivalry and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, thus warrant increased scholarly attention to the issues of military security threats, security regionalism, and RSCT.

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