

Call for papers

‘European and global governance since the 1970s. What can historians contribute to contemporary debates?’

International conference, Paris, November 2011

Thematic outline

This conference forms part of the work of the European Joint Research Group which involves eight European research centres in a project entitled ‘European regionalism and the globalisation in the Twentieth Century’. Our objective is to analyse the interlinkages between the process of European integration – as a political project and as a model of governance – and global governance since the 1970s. This is designed to contribute to a wider reflection on the new structures and patterns of global governance, at a time when the universal model constructed in the 20th century – the League of Nations, the United Nations and their affiliated bodies – is undergoing a degree of redefinition.¹

The end of the Cold War seemed, for a while, to underline the victory of the universal Western model. The crises of recent years have however demonstrated the rise of the BRICs which constitute new poles of power, the emergence of enlarged governance structures (notably G20), and the difficulties of existing multilateral structures in confronting the new challenges, whether political, economic or environmental. This would thus seem to suggest that a definition of a new form of global governance is underway, and will probably remain ongoing for many years to come. The European Union is involved in this process and in so doing seeks to underline the value of its own model:

- the EU itself is a system of multilateral governance, even though the European project and its component parts have much wider objectives
- the EU is a prominent actor on a whole series of issues that will be at the heart of the global debate
- the EU is not currently a superpower and is unlikely to become one in the foreseeable future.

A European regional project has gradually developed during the 20th century. This has involved linking the affirmation of regional solidarity with a series of universal values that were also central to global level institutions. European integration has therefore always raised the issue of the relationship between regionalism and universalism. Such experience can, in some circumstances, be an asset for the EU as it involves itself in the effort to redefine global structures. At a global level also a balance will need to be struck between multilateralism and regionalism.² Amongst the issues currently under debate for instance are:

- what role will there be for regionalism as a mode of global governance?

¹ See for example the study by Notre Europe, *Partenariat euro-américain, une nouvelle approche*, 2010: http://www.notre-europe.eu/uploads/tx_publication/Etude75-PartenariatEuro-Am_ricain-fr.pdf

² On this theme see Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, *The ghost of Bancor. The economic crisis and global monetary disorder*. Conférence, Fondations internationale Robert Triffin, Louvain-la-Neuve, 25 février 2010. Disponible : http://www.notre-europe.eu/uploads/tx_publication/Speech-TPS-LouvainLaNeuve-25.02.2010.pdf

- what pattern of dialogue can be established between regional groupings, and the EU especially, and the existing or emerging great powers?

The work of contemporary historians offers fundamental insights into this question of the relationship between the European project/model and the model of global governance and helps to contextualise the issues involved. Historians, after all, have worked extensively on the interplay of economics, social and cultural factors and politics, and have also studied the relationship between public and private sector governance.

The analysis will focus primarily on the period between 1970 and 2010. These years are often talked about as those of a second wave of globalisation, triggered by the economic crisis of 1971/3. They are also characterised by the weakening of the institutions created after 1945, the appearance of new global level actors (Japan, West Germany, China) and the emergence of new forms of governance like the G5. It remains important however to take account of the earlier period, between 1890 and 1950 during which many of the issues at stake today first appeared: transnational cooperation initially dealt with functionally, then politicised and integrated into the League/United Nations, the balance between economic, political, cultural and social priorities, regionalism and its relationship with universal concerns.

The project will explore both the periodisation of the issue and the frontiers between different fields of governance. The post-1945 period saw political cooperation placed at the top of the hierarchy, with other fields of activity, whether more or less institutionalised, being implicitly or explicitly considered less important, not least by historians looking back at the era. The era after 1980 and the rise of neo-liberalism called into question this order, emphasising the autonomy of each of the specific fields (economics, politics, culture etc), and the differences between the national, European and international levels of cooperation. The current situation, while still characterised by different levels of cooperation, invites further questions about which level is most appropriate, which actors should be most involved and how they should interact. Analyses of how the situation has developed until now, should hence offer useful information for those making choices about the future.

Call for papers

This conference seeks to analyse, by looking at precise case-studies, the functional interaction between European and global levels of cooperation, comparing and contrasting their forms and structures of governance. Priority will be given to studies on the period since 1970, without however necessarily excluding contributions on earlier eras. In particular we will be investigating:

- **forms of global governance.** For example: European powers within the UN, the issue of permanent seats on the Security Council; the G7 and European powers within the G7; the European Council as a forum for devising European positions on international questions; bilateral dialogue and decision-making at European Council or G7 level; the emergence of the G20 and the role of Europeans within G20; regionalism and the great powers within the G20
- **specific fields of cooperation.** For instance, monetary cooperation (interplay between the international monetary cooperation and European monetary integration), international trade (private/public regulation, free

- trade, market organisation, relationship between European level arrangements and global rules), the service sector (postal service, telecommunications etc) between regional and international organisation, public health (WHO etc), culture (UNESCO), labour relations (ILO) etc
- **fora for dialogue and competition:** the Bilderberg group, the Trilateral Commission, the World Economic Forum etc.

Historical papers, but also studies based upon economics, political science, sociology or law will be welcome. Proposals, including a summary of the paper and a CV should be **sent to gdreurope@gmail.com** by **June 30, 2011**.

The languages of the conference will be French and English. It will take place in Paris in November 2011. The publication of conference proceedings is planned.

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