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Natolin

## DEPARTMENT OF EU INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY STUDIES

InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations



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**InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations**



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**InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations****INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: “THE EU,  
THE US AND CHINA – TOWARDS A NEW INTERNATIONAL  
ORDER?”**

On April 22 and 23 2011, the College of Europe's InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of EU-China Relations organised a two-day international conference, in Bruges, on “The EU, the US and China – Towards a New International Order?”

For the purpose of sharing with our readers the topics of discussion at the conference, we have edited this special issue of the *EU-China Observer*. The two-day conference in itself was considered as a huge success, with 27 papers presented and discussed, while more than 80 people participated in the event from across Europe, the United States, China and beyond. Their papers and discussions demonstrated the divergent and convergent interests between the three actors and opened many unanswered questions for future consideration. This conference demonstrated that cooperation between all the three actors is essential on a wide range of issues.

The abstracts, prepared by each conference participant, are arranged according to the order of the panels presented at the conference. Each panel included 3 to 6 papers. When designing the panels, we planned to take at least one paper from each of the three countries/region, but this goal did not always work out in practice. The abstracts not only offer readers – who could not attend the event – a glimpse of the issues discussed, but also permit them to gain a better idea of the themes at stake.

The abstracts came in all shapes and sizes, but after sufficient tampering, they were all revised so as to be more or less equal in distribution. Please note that these abstracts reflect the views of the authors solely and do not necessarily reflect the views of the organisations that they represent.

**InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations****CONFERENCE PROGRAMME****INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE****“The EU, the US and China: towards a New International  
Order?”****College of Europe, Dijver 11, Bruges, Belgium, Room E****Friday, 22 April & Saturday, 23 April 2011****Friday, 22 April 2011****09:00 – 09:10****WELCOME SPEECH**Prof. **Paul DEMARET**, Rector – College of Europe**09:10 – 09:50****KEYNOTE SPEECHES**

Presentations:

**Ambassador Viorel ISTICIOAIA BUDURA**, Managing Director  
for Asia, European External Action Service  
**Ambassador SONG Zhe** – Chinese Ambassador to the  
European Union**09:50 – 10:05****COFFEE BREAK****10:05 – 12:35****PANEL 1 – MULTILATERAL FORUMS; G2, G3, G20?**

Chair:

**Alan HENRIKSON**, Fulbright Professor, College of Europe

Presentations:

**Michael SMITH**, Loughborough University  
**Jan WOUTERS and Matthieu BURNAY**, K.U. Leuven  
**David FOUQUET**, Asia-Europe Project  
**Ramon PACHECO PARDO**, King's College London  
**Agata JASKOT**, College of Europe  
**Haibing ZHANG**, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies

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Discussant: **Wei SHEN**, ESSCA Ecole de Management, Angers

**12:35 – 13:50** **LUNCH BUFFET**

**13:50 – 15:05** **PANEL 2 – THE EU, THE US AND CHINA: AFTER THE FINANCIAL CRISIS**

Chair: **Pierre DEFRAIGNE**, Executive Director College of Europe – Madariaga Foundation

Presentations: **Sylvain PLASSCHAERT**, K.U. Leuven  
**Miguel OTERO IGLESIAS**, Oxford Brookes University  
**Lanbiao LIU**, Nankai University

Discussant: **Raymond AHEARN**, Congressional Research Service

**15:05 – 15:20** **COFFEE BREAK**

**15:20 – 16:35** **PANEL 3 – THE EU, THE US AND CHINA – PARTNERS OR RIVALS IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY SECURITY?**

Chair: **Suisheng ZHAO**, University of Denver

Presentations: **Veronica LENZI**, IMT Lucca  
**Crystal JEWETT**, University of Nevada  
**Oybek MAKHMUDOV**, Institute for the Retraining and Requalification of Teachers, Uzbekistan

Discussant: **Pierre DEFRAIGNE**, Executive Director College of Europe – Madariaga Foundation

**19:00** **DINNER at Maximiliaan van Oostenrijk restaurant, Bruges**

**Saturday, 23 April 2011**

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### **09:00 – 10:45** **PANEL 4 – POWER, GEOSTRATEGY AND SECURITY IN EU-US-CHINA RELATIONS**

Chair: **Fraser CAMERON**, Hertie School of Governance

Presentations: **Jean-François SUSBIELLE**, Grenoble Ecole de Management and Sciences Po Paris  
**Suisheng ZHAO**, University of Denver  
**Scott BROWN**, Glasgow University  
**Yiwei WANG**, Tongji University  
**Bernt BERGER**, SIPRI

Discussant: **Michael SMITH**, Loughborough University

### **10:45 – 11:00** **COFFEE BREAK**

### **11:00 – 12:30** **PANEL 5 – THE EU, THE US AND CHINA – THE IMPLICATIONS FOR EAST ASIA**

Chair: **Bernt BERGER**, SIPRI

Presentations: **Elena ATANASSOVA-CORNELIS**, K.U. Leuven, University of Antwerp, IEP Lille  
**Shaohua HU**, Wagner College  
**Maria GARCIA**, University of Canterbury (NZ)  
**Chuanxing WANG**, Tongji University

Discussant: **Yongjin ZHANG**, Bristol University

### **12:30 – 13:45** **LUNCH BUFFET**

### **13:45 – 15:00** **PANEL 6 – MEDIA, PERCEPTIONS AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

Chair: **Jing MEN**, InBev-Baillet Latour Professor of European Union-China Relations, College of Europe

Presentations: **Holli SEMETKO**, **Christian KOLMER** & **Roland SCHATZ**, Emory University and Media Tenor International  
**Kejin ZHAO**, Tsinghua University  
**Pete GRIES**, University of Oklahoma



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Discussant: **David FOUQUET**, Asia-Europe Project

**15:00 – 15:15** **COFFEE BREAK**

**15:15 – 16:30** **PANEL 7 – THE EU, THE US AND CHINA: DO NORMS AND  
CULTURE MATTER?**

Chair: **Wei SHEN**, ESSCA Ecole de Management, Angers

Presentations: **De-Yuan KAO & Grant MARLIER**, Boston University  
**Lucie XIA**, London School of Economics  
**Salvatore FINAMORE**, University of Cambridge

Discussant: **Wei GONG**, London School of Economics

**16:30 – 16:45** **CLOSING SESSION**

Speaker: **Jing MEN**, InBev-Baillet Latour Professor of European Union-  
China Relations, College of Europe

**19:00** **DINNER at the Song Hua restaurant, Bruges**

**InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations****PANEL 1: “MULTILATERAL FORUMS: G2, G3, G20?”****THE EU, THE US AND CHINA: STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT,  
POLITICAL COMMITMENT AND DIPLOMATIC INTERACTION IN  
MULTILATERAL FORUMS**

Michael Smith\*

This paper addresses the issues arising from the engagement of the EU, the US and China within multilateral forums such as the G2, the G3, G7/8 and G20. The first part of the paper explores the extent of – and variations in – this engagement and links it to changing patterns of global power distribution and institutional structure, arguing that asymmetries of engagement and interaction reflect both strategic choices by – and structural pressures on – the three parties. The second part of the paper explores the extent of commitment shown by the three parties, both to cooperation in general and to specific initiatives undertaken in different multilateral forums, arguing that variations reflect the desire on the part of the EU, the US and China to promote specific interests, to accommodate global pressures or to defend existing positions. The third part of the paper investigates the diplomatic interactions involving the three parties within multilateral forums, and argues that differences of diplomatic style and culture provide an important element in an explanation of their mutual relations. The paper concludes by considering the ways in which mutual engagement in multilateral forums has re-shaped the nature of the EU-US-China “triangle” and by discussing the implications of this for EU policy in particular.

**CHINA, THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE UNITED STATES IN THE  
G20**

Jan Wouters and Matthieu Burnay\*

This paper will analyse the challenges faced by the EU and its member states in the context of the G20. The G20, created initially in 1999, has undergone a remarkable “upgrade” in global governance since 2008, by this establishment of consistent high-level summits bringing together the heads of states or governments from 19 countries, plus the Presidents of the European

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\* Prof. Michael Smith is a Jean Monnet Professor of European Politics from Loughborough University.

\* Prof. Jan Wouters is a Jean Monnet Professor of International Law and International Organisations from the K.U. Leuven. Mr Matthieu Burnay is Project Manager for the InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of EU-China Relations, K.U. Leuven.

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Commission and of the European Council. In the wake of the financial crisis the G20 has become "the premier forum for [...] economic cooperation" (G20 Pittsburgh Summit Declaration) between this particular group of countries. Because of it has a larger membership than the G7/G8, the G20 is regarded by many as a more appropriate and legitimate body to address these concerns. Its agenda is gradually opening-up to address other concerns of global governance. The paper aims to understand the status of the EU within the G20, taking into consideration that its relative power greatly depends on its interactions with the US and China. On the one hand, as a global superpower, the US has succeeded in securing its leadership position within the G20. On the other hand, because of its growing economic and political power – as well as because of its deep ties with the developing world – China has strongly benefited from the reconfiguration of the "G" forums. Where does the EU fit between these two powers in this evolving G20? How do they work together in terms of agenda-setting, preparation, the meeting itself, the follow-up process? Does the experience within the G20 offer evidence that China is not in favour of a G2 with the US but rather prefers a multipolar world order? How does the bilateral relationship between China and the US affect the G20 and how should the EU cope with this? Is the development of a G3, a "strategic triangle," within the G20 a viable option? The paper will explore the actual practice within the G20 and will argue that the EU's strategy should oppose any attempts to "bilateralise" or "trilateralise" global governance and multilateral forums. The EU should rather try to strengthen the strategic partnership it has with both the US and China, while trying to build broader coalitions that include other OECD countries (i.e. Canada, Australia, Japan, Korea, Mexico and Turkey) and emerging powers (i.e. the BRIC countries).

## **EUROPE IN A BIPOLAR WORLD**

David Fouquet\*

Following a decade of unchallenged American supremacy after the end of the Cold War and another decade of turmoil, uncertainty and US decline, the global balance of power has evolved into conditions entering or having already established what could be regarded as a bipolar situation. The astounding ascendancy of China in the past two decades has given rise to some speculation of a possible condominium between the US and the rising China, quickly dismissed as premature geopolitical fantasy. And while most discussions reflect on perceptions of a multipolar world order, it appears increasingly evident that only two powers dominate all others by their actions, influence and policies. American academic David Shambaugh previously wrote of the emerging "strategic triangle" between the US, China and the EU. Leaders of these three major actors have repeatedly stressed that global

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challenges can only be met multilaterally and not by one or two single superpowers. Many have pointed to the emergence of the G20 construct that includes China, India, Brazil and other rising countries, as a major new multipolar force in global governance, replacing the decades-old concept of the G7. The 2010 British House of Lords report on EU-China relations expressed a different formulation, noting "We are moving rapidly towards a multipolar world, but with key players. Though it will not compete with the US in hard power, the EU aspires to be one of them. That was part of the rationale for the Lisbon Treaty. Without resolving its relationship with China, the EU cannot achieve its aims." It may seem incongruous or contradictory to have a self-avowed developing country considered as a superpower, but in fact, that was also the case during the Cold War bipolar era when the US and the Soviet Union shared the planetary leadership. China may have more of a claim to such status because its GDP and economic influence surpass those of the Soviet Union at its peak. The PRC has more economic, if not yet political, influence over its region and in the world economy than the USSR had. During the Cold War bipolar period, it was the Soviet Union's system of alliances and its missionary ideology that made it such a "peer rival" – attributes that China does not seem to possess or aspire to. This research paper will focus on the perception of a bipolar leadership by the US and China, on how the EU has been swept into a downward spiral in influence in the recent past and on some possible consequences and recommendations for future European policy.

**THE EU AND THE G2: IS A G3 POSSIBLE?**

Ramon Pacheco Pardo\*

The G2 exists. Over the past decade, China and the US have been working together to deal with both traditional and non-traditional security issues. Terrorism, the nuclear programmes of Iran and North Korea, climate change or the financial crisis are a few examples of areas in which the interests and goals of Beijing and Washington converge, resulting in greater bilateral cooperation. The Strategic and Economic Dialogue launched during the Barack Obama administration, itself a continuation of the bilateral Senior and Strategic Economic Dialogues launched in 2005 and 2006 respectively, has even served to institutionalise the G2. The institutionalisation of the G2 poses a threat and an opportunity to the EU. It is a threat insofar it is a step towards making the relationship between China and the US the central element of the international system. As a result, the position of other actors runs the risk of being deemed as secondary when it comes to dealing with systemic issues. Thus, the EU could ultimately be sidelined because of the centrality of the G2. At the same time, the current infant status of the G2 offers the opportunity for other actors to join the group before it is accepted as the *de facto* institution to manage the international system. Cold War-style antagonism is unlikely to

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return anytime soon. Therefore, the G2 could still grow in membership and become a G3. In this paper, I argue that the EU is at a crossroads when it comes to joining China and the US to form a G3. The G2 is fast becoming accepted by policymakers in Beijing, Washington and beyond as the indispensable institution in the international system. To ensure that the EU does not become a casualty of the rise of the G2, its leaders need to act with celerity and strengthen the role of Brussels in international affairs to warrant it a place at the table with China and the US. I argue that to make China and the US accept a G3, the EU needs to undergo three changes. Firstly, Brussels has to move beyond its normative power identity. The EU has seldom been perceived as such by third parties, and it should accept that its objectives and policies are no different from those of other powers. Secondly, the EU needs to stop giving the impression that it treats China with contempt. Criticism of issues such as trade imbalances, human rights or currency manipulation should not continue if Beijing is to accept a G3. Finally, EU leaders have to delegate to the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and to the nascent European External Action Service on foreign policy. Otherwise Europe will still be accused of not having a common voice. If the EU is willing to undergo these three changes, then the creation of a G3 will be within its reach.

**CHINA-EU-US RELATIONS AND THE TRIAD'S QUEST FOR  
MULTILATERALISM**

Agata Jaskot\*

In a world of emerging developing countries confronted with burgeoning non-conventional threats, dynamically developing new concepts of security, civilization and climatic change – with “Wikileaks” progressively rewriting the rules of diplomacy – the current formula of multilateral cooperation based on the predominance of developed Western countries is no longer viable. The hypothesis is that concerted action towards fully effective “multilateralism” is the only response to the current dysfunctions of the international system. The proposed paper will deal with the contentious issue of defining the relationship between the big three driving forces of contemporary globalisation: China, the EU and the US in the backdrop of three types of system definitions: the (1) UN-centred system, the (2) US-centred system and the (3) decentralised and regionally-focused great-power system. The leitmotif of the discourse will be anchored in the logic of a diplomatic “triangle,” in which each of the “legs” plays a specific role in relation to the other – a peculiar system preventing the tumult of the world order. The purpose of the research is to present a model of transformation of the interactive mechanism between the “big three,” which clearly departs from the bilateral state-to-state logic towards a “rapprochement,” to “true” multilateralism (that is cooperation on an equal footing) in the diplomatic,

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security, economic, cultural and climatic domains. The effectiveness of the “triad” is challenged by a set of factors, among others: China's belief in the principle of non-interference, its tendency to remain on the sidelines of institutionalised multilateral cooperation and a differentiated response pattern to China's rise. Therefore, the EU and the US need to involve China in a triad aiming to: (1) acquire the logic of multilateralism to the detriment of “bilateralism” (and therefore dropping the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”), (2) shift the focus on countries' immediate interests to long-term interests favouring sustainable development, (3) allow convergence of values (including the “good corporate citizen” principle), (4) show significant involvement in the international decision-making processes based on negotiations, (5) formulate a system of incentives inherent to the global game and its new rules. The methodology of assessment will encompass scrutiny of the UN, and G2, G3 and G20 relations taking into consideration official reports, statements, statistics and scholarly analysis. The structure of the research will therefore revolve around three pivotal priorities for comprehending effective, concerted actions relating to: (1) environment and sustainable development, (2) development aid and (3) security issues. Since trade relations constitute the main trigger behind EU-China-US cooperation, each of the aforementioned parts will inevitably relate to landmark trade decisions. The analysis will lead to the conclusion that a UN-centred system will be unable to emerge in the coming years. For now, the predominant system in international relations is frozen between the US-centred and regionally based great-power model. In a triad, where each of the players are driven by different growth patterns and by the implementation of contradictory policies, the emergence of a common globally-responsible conscience appears to lay far on the horizon.

## **THE ADJUSTMENT OF WORLD ECONOMIC PATTERNS AND CHINA'S ROLE**

Haibing Zhang\*

The global financial crisis has opened the gateway for the process of adjustment of world economic activity, mainly due to the opportunities it has created for emerging markets. Although, the overall economic power of the developed countries is in relative decline, as a result of the financial crisis, their institutional power – along with their declining hard power – have not diminished as dramatically. The best example of this is the importance of the US' economic recovery on future patterns of international economic activity. As for the developing countries, the emerging market economies have become the major force behind the adjustment of world economic activity and they now have a realistic opportunity with which to strongly influence and shape world economic governance along the rules that they see fair. Yet

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their overall international influence remains weak. As a result of the financial crisis, both developed and developing countries need to find a mutual middle ground within which to rebalance the global economic order with the future global economic governance needing to demonstrate overall more flexible and diverse characteristics. This is where China, as one of the critical actors in the global economy, can play an important role both in mitigating the divide between the developed and developing countries during multilateral negotiations on global economic governance and in reinforcing international economic cooperation. In sum, this paper seeks to put forward the most important current-day changes taking place in the global political economy.

**PANEL 2: “THE EU, THE US AND CHINA: AFTER THE  
FINANCIAL CRISIS”****THE RENMINBI ON THE INTERNATIONALISATION TRAIL – THE  
ROLE OF HONG KONG**

Sylvain Plasschaert\*

China, since the inception of Deng Xiaoping's Open-Door policy, has become one of the most important economic and trading powerhouses worldwide. In effect, there are few countries that have benefited as much from the increasing trends of globalisation than China. China has not only profited from these increasing trends, but it has also worked hard to demonstrate its openness to global trade. However, Beijing has not proved so liberal with regard to its exchange rate policy, by preferring to resist calls to unpeg the renminbi (RMB) to the dollar peg. Nonetheless, this paper demonstrates that incrementally, China is seeking to internationalise its currency through a vast array of different channels (by permitting, for example, international transactions in RMB) with the objective to allow full convertibility of the currency within the next five years. This objective is sought due to the untenable nature of the present RMB regime. More specifically, this paper also demonstrates that this gradual internationalisation of the RMB regime will be made possible thanks to the role of Hong Kong, which can act as hub for the RMB, by increasing the offshoring of the RMB outside of China and by acting as a testing ground for financial reform. In sum, Hong Kong will act as an efficient springboard for the RMB to become progressively immersed in the deepest waters of the international finance universe.

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**InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations****“CURRENCY WAR” BETWEEN THE US AND CHINA: WHERE DOES  
THE EU STAND?**

Miguel Otero Iglesias\*

The main objective of this paper is to discern where the Eurozone (EZ) stands within the current framework of increased “currency wars” between the US and China, and whether it is able and willing to change the current International Monetary System (IMS) to a more coordinated and managed exchange rate regime. The answer is that the EZ has made certain progress in the latter two faces of monetary power, focused on preference-shaping and agenda-setting, but as yet not in the first face where decision-making takes actually place. France, for instance, has certainly made some efforts, with the support of China, to start the debate on the transformation of the current flexible-dollar-standard (FDS). On the back of the ideational effect of the European Monetary Union (EMU) and the internationalisation process of the euro, Europeans have gained enough leverage to make considerable impact in the second and third faces of power. However, by not being politically united, the EZ precludes any possibility to force the US to enter into a compromise and relinquish the exorbitant privilege that the centrality of the dollar offers the US.

**RENMINBI EXCHANGE RATE ISSUE IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**

Lanbiao Liu &amp; Xiaoyun Fan\*

As the economic strength of China increases and the global economic imbalances are exacerbated, the RMB exchange rate has become one of the hottest topics over the past decade. Although the issue of the appreciation of the RMB's exchange rate was not originally a source of contention, in today's economic crisis climate, this issue has been put forward as one of the focal points of the global crisis. In other words, the impact that the RMB is having on global trade balances is now untenable for external actors such as the US. The latter has been, instead, pushing for a more flexible exchange rate regime with regard to the RMB. However, upon investigation, this paper demonstrates that global imbalances were mainly the cause of the implementation of the US' global financial integration model, and the zealous call for the appreciation of the RMB is unreasonable in this respect due to the fact that the justification of the RMB exchange rate regime is related to the stabilisation and development of the global economy and to the sound operation of China's economy. In addition, China has also made great strides

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\* Prof. Lanbiao Liu is Professor and Assistant Director of the Financial Development Institute at Nankai University. Prof. Xiaoyun Fan is Professor and Director of International Monetary Research at Nankai University.



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to help restore the optimal functioning of the global economy. Therefore, this paper will help to clarify some ambiguous or even distorted ideas on the issue of the RMB exchange rate and will help to provide the rationale behind the appropriate exchange rate policy. Finally, the paper will also set out a number of suggestive strategies for the Chinese government in relation to this exchange rate issue.

**PANEL 3: “THE EU, THE US AND CHINA: PARTNERS OR  
RIVALS IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY SECURITY?”****ENERGY AND SOFT POWER: A CHANCE FOR THE ROLE OF THE  
EUROPEAN UNION IN THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER?**

Veronica Lenzi\*

The rapid increase in world demand for energy, especially from actors such as China, has created considerable competition with other importing countries, such as the US, which has traditionally played a leading role in the access to global oil and gas resources. As a result of this race, international institutions and regulatory bodies have experienced difficulties in performing their assignments, especially over the last decade. In the past, energy security was mainly guaranteed by colonialism and the military control of energy sources. In recent times, multinational oil and gas corporations have taken the lead in safeguarding the national interest of their country of origin. The EU is particularly exposed to the current critical situation, as it suffers from both its intrinsic weakness on matters inherent to security and from its fleeting common energy policy for which it lacks the necessary instruments with which to respond. Since energy is a variable, Europe should then undertake an alternative path. The paper will focus on the use that Europe can make of its soft power on hard issues, such as energy. The goal of this research is to demonstrate how the EU's marked multilateral approach – together with its political reliability, economic relevance and geographical position – can lead it to play a substantial role in the definition of the international political and economic energy agenda, as a necessary point of equilibrium between the approaches of other big importing countries, such as China and the US. First, the paper will discuss the current energy competition scenario, analysing why it is likely to lead to consistent and constant political conflicts. The study will then concentrate on Europe. It will move to investigate how it is possible to define soft power in relation to trade and security issues, discussing how the particular type of soft power that Europe puts in place possesses characteristics that make it a potential point of strength and mediation for a reform of the importers' supranational energy institutions. Through a

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comparative analysis of the instruments that the US, China and the EU assign to energy competition, the potential for EU soft power in reforming intergovernmental relations on energy among buyers, will be confronted with to the US' usage of soft power and military dissuasion and China's aggressive and concise energy diplomacy. Finally, in the light of what was previously assessed, the paper will investigate the main limits shown by the European approach to the implementation of its foreign and energy policies. This analysis will first be conducted through plausible probes that build on the combination of geo-economics and geopolitics. Thereafter, the goal will be to highlight what changes would be necessary in order for European soft power to recollect and develop its potential, successfully addressing Europe's energy insecurity and defining a different framework that reinforces and regroups the major importing countries' respective strategies.

## **PERCEPTIONS AND REALITIES OF THE "CHINA THREAT" IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Crystal Jewett\*

Building on my earlier work concerning the "China Energy Threat," this paper seeks to address the rather broad topic of competition between China and the US. Typically the popular discourse on the matter has favoured the idea that there is some inevitable military conflict on the horizon between China and the US over Taiwan, natural resources, economic factors (etc.). International relations theory does not support these notions. Using the neoliberal theoretical framework that states will cooperate because it is in their best interest to do so, I seek to demonstrate that China and the US have formed an interdependent regime, despite some competitive economic elements in this arrangement. Interdependence greatly reduces the probability of armed conflict. The purpose of this article is twofold. First, I seek to eradicate the presumption that China and the US are engaging in some form of Cold War-esque *détente*. To do this, I will highlight the existing interdependence of the two nations using the case study of energy security. Concerning fossil fuels, I find that China has presented a strong economic challenge to the US in securing adequate supplies from abroad. Paradoxically, this has led to cooperation between the two nations in implementing renewable energy strategies due to a precarious and shared reliance on foreign oil. This interdependence ultimately nullifies the notion of looming military conflict between the two states. Secondly, this paper looks to future scenarios specifically concerning the aforementioned energy matters, where cooperation between China, the US and the EU will not only become mutually beneficial, but also rather necessary. Energy and economic interdependence are key factors in shaping the future of China-US-EU relations. China has become, for all practical purposes, a capitalist state. The old paradigms of economic competition have to be realigned in the face of

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a rising China. This reality – not potential military conflict – should be the focus of international relations discourse concerning the China-US-EU relationship.

## **THE GEOPOLITICAL ROLE OF EXTERNAL ACTORS IN ESCALATING CONFLICTS IN CENTRAL ASIA**

Oybek Makhmudov\*

The Central Asian region presents a significant array of human, natural and industrial resources. Yet, economic development in the region will lead to an increase in demand for water and energy resources. The demand for, and availability of water, in the five Central Asian states, is context-specific and subject to change over time. Water shortages generate political friction, in addition to other factors such as territorial disputes. The growing demand for water and energy resources from external actors in the region has resulted in their increased interference with regard to the internal policies of Central Asian states. From the start, Western countries and Russia had more political considerations than economic implications in Central Asian energy projects. For external actors, the unstable political situation in the region provides greater opportunities in controlling resources. Hence, greater control over export routes naturally increases energy security for Western consumers, producers and the global energy markets by making deliveries less vulnerable to technical or political disruptions on any individual route. The development of the Nabucco project by the EU plans to open a direct energy corridor connecting NATO member states with Central Asia and Afghanistan. In order to resolve water and energy distribution in the region, Russia would not hesitate in deploying the Collective Security Treaty Organisation's rapid collective security forces. In order to counterbalance Russia and the West, China has increased its energy cooperation among SCO countries, by combining geo-economic factors with geostrategic ones. The enhanced involvement of external actors in energy issues imposes the need for the strategic development of the Central Asian states' national economies. In effect, energy projects provide additional investments for the economy, but in reality it directly increases the escalation of conflict and of militant activities in the region. From a medium-term perspective, militants would increase their attacks on pipelines passing through Central Asian territories. For certain external actors, the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan is beneficial, because it guarantees the permanent supply of Central Asian natural resources to Europe only. One of the best solutions to resolving Central Asian countries resource sustainability is to conclude an integration model permitting the development of alternative and intelligent energy resources.

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InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations**PANEL 4: "POWER, GEOSTRATEGY AND SECURITY IN EU-US-CHINA RELATIONS"****IS EUROPE A STAKEHOLDER IN THE CHINA-US RIVALRY?**

Jean-François Susbielle\*

At the end of WW2, the European continent was occupied by the two winners of the conflict, the US and the Soviet Union. In the subsequent Cold War, Europe was split in two halves, separated by the "Iron Curtain," each side tightly secured in a political and military alliance – with NATO on one side and the Warsaw pact on the other. However, after the eventual fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of its core enemy, the Atlantic organisation suddenly lost its *raison d'être*. Many analysts then pondered whether NATO should be dismantled, in a new world marked by the "end of History" and pacified by free-trade. It was only at the end of the 1990s that NATO found itself a new justification and was involved in the first military operations of its history on the occasion of the wars in the former Yugoslavia. Soon after, the September 11 attacks presented the Western alliance with a new and identified enemy – international terrorism – again justifying its military involvement in Afghanistan or Iraq. Yet in early 2009, with the arrival of Barack Obama in the White House, a new accommodating diplomatic line led to a global misalignment, in sharp contrast with the hardline approach taken in the Bush era. As a result, some countries like Germany and Turkey are now starting to spread their wings, showing a growing independence from Washington. While other countries like Britain, France and India find it increasingly difficult to take cues from their ally as they fail to read a clear strategic line. The EU is now in the thick of the deepest financial and economical crisis of its history, while China on the other hand, has achieved superpower status – a superpower with deep pockets – huge foreign reserves waiting to be invested, and attractive domestic markets for equipment and consumer goods. By the end of 2010, China was welcome as the benevolent saviour of a debt-laden Greece on the verge of bankruptcy – with Spain and Portugal increasingly looking towards Beijing, with suggestions even raised during the Spanish Presidency to lift the EU's arms embargo on China. During a NATO summit in November 2010 in Lisbon, European leaders were very careful not to criticise China for its mercantilist export practices and its undervalued currency, refusing to follow the US along that path which demonstrated Beijing's growing political influence on the European scene. Since the end of WW2, Europe has been totally dependent on US military organisation for its security. Enjoying the US' protection, European countries have consistently reduced their military expenditure down to 1% GDP, as compared to 4.6% in the US. Yet by failing to identify a common enemy –

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besides global warming – European countries could be tempted to lean towards China and its financial, industrial and commercial might. Is a disunited and weak Europe bound to become a stake in the rivalry between the two great powers? Or is the return of a hard line American policy – after 2012 – to be expected, thus triggering a new and tighter transatlantic bond?

**CHINA'S GEOSTRATEGY AND RELATIONS WITH MAJOR POWERS  
DURING THE GLOBAL DOWNTURN IN 2008-2010**

Suisheng Zhao\*

China followed Deng's *taoguangyanghui* (low profile) policy for many years after the end of the Cold War. During the global economic downturn in 2008-10, however, instead of talking about Deng's low profile dictum, China reminded the West that "no one should expect China to swallow the bitter fruit that hurts its interest," in response to President Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama. Some observers hence believe that the Chinese leadership has reoriented Chinese foreign policy toward a more assertive – if not a more aggressive – direction after its rapid economic development in the past three decades. This paper examines China's foreign policy behaviour during the global downturn and finds that although the global economic crisis could become a point of shift in China's strategic relations with the Western powers, China continues to make the most of its foreign policymaking based on the issues that are of importance only to China, i.e., the so-called core interests such as the Taiwan and Tibetan issues, rather than on the basis of broader regional or global economic and security concerns. One defining tension in China's foreign policy agenda is finding a balance between taking more international responsibility as a rising power and focusing on its narrowly defined core interests to play down its pretence of being a global power.

**GEOSTRATEGY AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS – THE US  
PERSPECTIVE**

Scott Brown\*

This paper seeks to examine the evolution of the US' perspectives on the geostrategic and security relations with the EU and the PRC in the early twenty-first century. The paper starts out with an analysis of developing relations with both actors from the end of the Cold War. It then turns to an examination of the transatlantic debate over 2004-2005 on the EU's proposal to remove its arms embargo against China. The fourth section examines in

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detail the US perspectives of its triadic relationship with the EU and China which were evident from the debate and claims that the US continues to be concerned over the rise of China and how the EU interacts with it. The paper argues that it became apparent over the course of the embargo debate that the US took a widely divergent perspective on the geostrategic and security implications of China's rise from its European allies. The episode also effectively served as a "window" into the broader strategic/security dimensions of the US-China relationship, and serves to highlight the importance of US-China regional security ties for understanding why the US has been, to date, more concerned about China than the EU.

**EU-US-CHINA: NEW TRIAD IN THE ERA OF UNCERTAINTY**

Yiwei Wang\*

Traditionally, EU-US-China relations were identified as trilateral or triangular relations, within the perspective of relations among great powers. This article challenges this approach by focusing on the concept of "Civilisational G3" – in other words, with each side of this triangle respectively constituting the three major pillars in global governance: traditional civilisation, modern civilisation and post-modern civilisation. This paper argues that in the era of uncertainty, the respective political leaders of the EU, the US and China have sought to use common challenges as the driving force in their respective cooperation. However, the link between EU-US-China relations and global governance should be balanced by the common interests of the business community and by the common values of the general public. In the long run, the world's sustainable development is shaping the new EU-US-China triangular relations and is helping to better define the trinity of common interests, common challenges and common values that is shaping the new EU-US-China paradigm.

**WHAT'S AT STAKE IN EAST ASIAN SECURITY? CHALLENGES FOR  
THE US, CHINA AND EUROPE**

Bernt Berger\*

In 2010, the security situation around traditional hot spots has turned East Asia once more into a "powder keg." Beyond disagreement over how to treat real security issues, such as the tensions on the Korean peninsula, geostrategic thinking and tactical moves among key players have led to new mistrust about mutual intentions. While key players such as South Korea, Japan and

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China have not yet managed to get over traditional security dilemmas, the (re-)involvement of the US has provided the security situation with a broader perspective of strategic rivalry between Washington and Beijing. With changing threat perceptions and a reconsideration of key hot-spots after cross-strait relations have improved, the real issue of East Asian security is still the lack of a viable security architecture. Europeans are neither involved in East Asia's strategic setting nor are they involved in its security affairs. Yet, the old debate on how the European toolbox is relevant for Asia deserves renewed consideration. The question is how tried and tested security mechanisms can be married with regional solutions.

**PANEL 5: "THE EU, THE US AND CHINA – THE  
IMPLICATIONS FOR EAST ASIA"****RESHAPING THE EAST ASIAN SECURITY ORDER: US-CHINA  
HEDGING AND THE EU'S STRATEGIC CHOICES**

Elena Atanassova-Cornelis\*

The proposed paper examines how the dynamics of US-China relations are reshaping the evolving security order in East Asia and explores their implications for the EU's role in influencing regional developments. The rise of China and its consolidation as a major power presents a challenge to the international strategic order and US global primacy by questioning, in particular, America's hegemonic position in East Asia. For more than half a century, US dominance in Asia has been sustained by the "hub and spoke" security system of bilateral military alliances between Washington and regional states, especially Japan and South Korea. American commitments in the political, economic and security areas have provided for regional economic growth and stability thereby ensuring the US of its leadership position in East Asia. However, Beijing's strengthened regional role and military posture have worried Washington that China, as it becomes stronger, will seek to alter the American-centred order. The US has pursued a hedging strategy towards China by emphasizing common interests and bilateral cooperation with Beijing, while reinforcing its security alliances and partnerships in East Asia. Beijing, for its part, has seen the consolidation by the US of its alliance system as directed at China and hence aiming to constrain its rising power in East Asia. While seeking conflict avoidance and limited cooperation with America, China, too, has responded with strategic hedging. This has included military modernisation, active regional diplomacy and the development of new strategic partnerships, including the one with the EU. For Asian states wary of China's long-term strategic goals in the region, the hub and spoke

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system continues to be seen as a primary guarantor of their security needs. At the same time, China's emergence as a locomotive for regional economic growth and its embrace of multilateralism have significantly reduced the "China threat" perception in the region. As a result, China's rise has come to be perceived as beneficial for Asian stability, which, in turn, has paved the way for a reshaping of regional order along the lines of expanded cooperation and multilateralism. US-China hedging creates both opportunities and constraints for the EU to influence the evolving East Asian order. On the positive side, Europe plays no part in the geopolitical rivalries in Asia and its regional involvement does not exacerbate Asian security dilemmas. The EU's soft power, comprehensive approach to security stressed in the ESS and promotion of multilateralism can contribute to a viable regional order. So the cooperative dimension of US-China hedging is conducive to this form of European engagement. On the negative side, Europe's limited ability in tackling hard pressed security issues in East Asia, perceived lack of understanding of regional geopolitical dynamics and narrow focus on economic interests means that Brussels can do very little to arrest any potential shift in US-China relations towards a major power rivalry. All this suggests that while the future of East Asian integration, and global order remains far from certain, US-China relations – combined with Europe's strategic manoeuvring – will remain crucially determining factors.

## **STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE EU'S ROLE IN CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS**

Shaohua Hu\*

Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, many people have called for a more active role for the EU in cross-Taiwan strait relations. While acknowledging its immense power and influence, this paper argues that the EU's role will remain limited for three structural reasons. Despite the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009, the EU's *sui generis* system will continue to constrain its policy toward cross-strait relations. With the 27 countries of varying interests, power and perspectives, it is difficult to expect the EU to change its current policies towards the strait, which consists of its commitment to the "one-China" principle and to finding a peaceful solution to the perpetual tensions between Beijing and Taipei. Secondly, the regional structure along the strait is so complex that the EU cannot come up with new initiatives. Since China is more important than Taiwan for the EU, it is unlikely that the latter will see a shift in its policy towards a strategy that is more favourable towards Taiwan. However, supporting the Chinese unification process, especially in a non-peaceful manner, will run counter to the EU's interests and principles. Finally, the global structure will limit the EU's freedom of actions. On the one hand, China can help the EU deal with global issues, such as economic globalisation, climate change and diplomatic multilateralism; on the other

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hand, there is no added-value in the EU adopting a policy that differs from that of the US, whose interests lie in maintaining the status quo along the strait.

## **COMPETITIVE FEARS AND BALANCE OF POWER: THE EU, THE US AND CHINA AND THE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT OF THE ASIA PACIFIC**

Maria Garcia\*

Drawing on documentary evidence, as well as interview materials, this paper charts the motivations behind the free trade agreements (FTAs) policies of the EU, the US and China in the Asia Pacific region. Economists have cast doubts as to the benefits of individual FTAs between large economies and smaller ones, whilst questioning the wisdom of limited agreements<sup>1</sup> (Krugman, 1991, 1993; Bhagwati, 2008; Sally, 2005). Whilst the benefits of FTAs are asymmetrical, offering advantages to particular economic sectors – notably to exporters, and in the new generation agreements of the EU and the US, also to service providers – the overall net welfare gains for the larger economy tend to be minimal.<sup>2</sup> Within this context, political economists have found that FTAs carry significant political motivations as well, ranging from altering domestic coalitions against liberalisation, to locking-in domestic reforms, or emulating others.<sup>3</sup> This paper further focuses on the political motivations behind the FTA policies of the current three major economic powers and develops an analytical framework of competitive diffusion,<sup>4</sup> by offering evidence of economic and geopolitical balancing taking place amongst these powers, as they prepare for an uncertain future. The analysis places a special emphasis on the investigation of the role of fear and uncertainty in the development of these FTA policies, which, at least in purely economic terms, would seem a less beneficial alternative to the multilateral system or to FTAs amongst the major economies. This analysis also highlights the effects exogenous policy choices may have on the different members of the FTA by establishing a series of chronological and content comparisons of

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<sup>1</sup> Jagdish Bhagwati, *Termites in the Trading System: How Preferential Agreements Undermine Free Trade*, 2008, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Paul Krugman, "Regionalism versus multilateralism: analytical notes" in *New Dimensions in Regional Integration*, J. de Melo and A. Panagariya (eds.), 1993, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 58–89; Razeen Sally, "Looking East: The European Union's New FTA Negotiations in Asia", *Jan Tumlir Policy Essays*, No. 3/2007, 2007, Brussels: ECIPE.

<sup>2</sup> Raymond J. Ahearn, *Europe's Preferential Trade Agreements: Status, Content and Implications*, R41143, 2010, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service.

<sup>3</sup> Vinod K. Aggarwal and Shujiro Urata, *Bilateral Trade Agreements in the Asia Pacific: Origins, Evolution and Implications*, 2006, Abingdon: Routledge; John Ravenhill, "The New Bilateralism in the Asia Pacific", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 2003, pp. 299–317.

<sup>4</sup> Mireya Solis and Saori Katada, "Explaining FTA Proliferation: A Policy Diffusion Framework" in M. Solis, B. Stallings and S. Katada (eds.), *Competitive Regionalism. FTA Diffusion in the Pacific Rim*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 1–26.

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negotiations between the three major powers and states in the Asia Pacific (focusing with greater detail on ASEAN member states).

**EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM UNDER REGIONAL SECURITY  
COMPETITION AND CHINA'S PARTICIPATION IN SHAPING THE  
POST-COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

Chuanxing Wang\*

Regional integration in East Asia can be weighed and evaluated relying mainly on two organising concepts: regionalisation and regionalism. In this paper, regional integration refers to regionalism. When compared with regionalism in Europe and North America, the impact of regional international security on regionalism in East Asia is substantially different. As the US made a promise to guarantee the security of (Western) Europe, all sides within this region were no longer concerned about obtaining relative security gains, which is essential for the further development of regional integration in (Western) Europe. In North America, the NAFTA region constitutes a quasi-security community, which in this part of the world, focused regional integration on economic issues. In East Asia, while the US promises to guarantee the security of its regional allies, this also greatly constrains the further development of regional integration in East Asia due to the rivalries that it creates with non-allied states. Consequently, regionalism in Europe, North America and East Asia produces different effects on European countries, the US and China's respective capabilities in shaping the emerging international system.

**PANEL 6: "MEDIA, PERCEPTIONS AND PUBLIC  
DIPLOMACY"****NEWS, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

Holli Semetko, Christian Kolmer and Roland Schatz\*

Drawing on comparative and continuous content analysis of television news in the US, different EU member states and China, the authors discuss the visibility and tone of coverage over the year 2010. Comparisons with the EU-

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US may go back further, as the comparable content data is accessible. The authors discuss the movement of countries along two dimensions – visibility and tone. They draw upon theories of news production and key concepts in political communication research to explain the findings. The authors argue in conclusion that the role of the news media, and the ideological constraints under which news organisations operate, need to be integrated into the theory and practice of public diplomacy and international relations.

**CHINA'S RISE AND DISCURSIVE POWER STRATEGY – A CASE  
STUDY ON CHINA'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS STRATEGY SINCE 2003**

Kejin Zhao\*

Discursive power is regarded by the Chinese government as one of the most important goals of China's foreign policy. This paper discusses the real intentions of the Chinese government to advocate the concept of discourse power. China's insistence on the concept of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" does not translate easily. The exact meaning is not clear and China does not attempt to explain it in Western terms. This paper therefore asks: why does China use this approach and what does China hope to gain by doing so? To address this question, the paper draws on interviews with more than 50 Chinese government officials and prominent scholars since 2003, and identifies reasons for the emergence of a similar phenomenon within China. 2008 marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of China's Reform and Open-Door Policy, as initiated by Deng Xiaoping. Although China joined the mainstream international community through this Policy, one of the main findings of the paper is that China does not want to be considered as a member of Western society. Instead, China is in the process of developing a unique type of nation-building to promote the Chinese model in the coming years. Ultimately, China wants to realise the revival of nationhood and the Chinese government is consequently busy formulating discursive strategy and public diplomacy to promote this ultimate goal.

**PANEL 7: "THE EU, THE US AND CHINA: DO NORMS AND  
CULTURE MATTER?"**

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**InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations****AND THEN CAME LIBYA: THE CHINESE PERSPECTIVE ON THE  
SOVEREIGNTY AND THE EVOLUTION OF USE OF FORCE NORMS  
IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**

Grant Marlier and De-Yuan Kao\*

Following the recent United Nations Security Council (UNSC) vote authorizing the use of force in Libya, there has been much discussion regarding China's abstention. Much of the analysis seems to overlook China's actual UNSC voting behaviour since the end of the Cold War. We studied China's voting behaviour in the UNSC with a particular focus on votes authorising the use of force in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). Interestingly, China has voted in favour of 30 of 42 such resolutions since 1990, and since late 1999 had voted in favour of 20 in a row – until the vote regarding Libya. We also analysed the normative justifications for these votes, as a proxy for assessing China's normative position on the limits of sovereignty. We then compared Chinese normative positions to the US and European normative positions. We find that although there seems to be a degree of normative convergence regarding how to use force in UNPKOs, there still seems to be a degree of divergence over when it is appropriate to use force. Essentially, the US and EU tend to set more limits on sovereignty than China. We might think of this as a convergence on the degree of force necessary in an intervention, but a divergence on degree of consent necessary for an intervention. Once China agrees to intervene, however, they seem likely to agree to a broader use of force mandate than in the past. Interestingly, each party's normative position evolved. Since 1999, the US and EU generally agree to a more circumscribed mission and rules of engagement, and China generally agrees to use force not only to protect UN personnel, but also to “prevent attacks” on civilians, “without prejudice” to the domestic government. This relatively recent normative equilibrium regarding the degree of force necessary may be significant, for various reasons discussed.

**CULTURAL POWER AND ORDER: RETHINKING THE EU-US-CHINA  
RELATIONSHIP**

Lucie Xia\*

In both academic debates and policy discourse, the interaction of the EU, the US and China has been considered as a defining feature of the shifting geopolitical order. Relying both on the English School's general framework for the analysis of global order, and the French sociological tradition of research on international politics, this study will argue that the transformative nature of globalisation generates the very fluid and shifting set of relationships that

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constitute the EU-US-China power triangle, which raises the political salience of the international society's cultural and societal differences. Firstly, the proposed paper will examine the major strategic shifts and trends of the early 21st century, namely the coexistence of Pax Americana, the pan-European region and China's renaissance. It will also argue that the three major powers perceive each other as competitors and as partners. This is because of the growing strategic convergence among them particularly with regard to political and military issues and to the challenge of "new geopolitics." Secondly, the paper will contend that norms and values matter in this power triangle to the extent that they enable us to understand the nature of the three polities and that these ideational forces form the profound cultural forces driving the evolution of the relationships. The projection of an actor's ideals represents both the construction of these particular ideals and the specific identity of an international actor. This section will compare how Normative Power Europe, the US' soft power and China's peaceful rise exercise the normative power of attraction in a global context and "shape normality" in the international order. Thirdly, based on the fact that ideational factors are closely linked to the power-politics configuration in which an actor finds itself in the international system, the following section will 1) address the divergence between the EU and the US in relation to the renaissance of China 2) present the philosophical underpinnings behind the divergence between Chinese values and Western values 3) explore European and Chinese perspectives on challenging US hegemony. This paper concludes that international order is a political construct and, thus, that the understanding of the nature of current major international actors – the EU, the US and China – is key to understanding the nature of the international system. Furthermore, understandings of international order reflect differences in political and cultural contexts and trajectories. The dynamics of the EU-US-China relationship reveal that power and cultural diversity are a central problem in terms of the widening and deepening of the emerging international order. This study hopes to shed new light on the complex web of the mutual relationships that form part of the EU-US-China triangle, resulting from the different nature of their polities whilst enabling us to comprehend the emerging pattern of cooperation and conflict in the new global multipolar system.

## **NORMS, INSTRUMENTS AND STRATEGY: COMPARING EU AND US ENGAGEMENTS OF CHINA**

Salvatore Finamore\*

The resurgence of China as a major global actor presents a number of questions and challenges for the traditional great powers in the international system, which are confronted with the need to devise strategies to respond to the threats and opportunities resulting from this phenomenon. The approach

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adopted by the US and by the EU since the mid-1990s has often been described as one of “engagement,” a concept which however struggles to find a clear definition in academic literature. This contribution views engagement as characterised primarily by the aim to socialise Beijing into the norms and values upheld by the West, within the international community, and it presents an analytical framework to study engagement through the lenses of socialisation theory. This framework is applied comparatively to the policies pursued by the US and by the EU in their respective bilateral relations with China, with the aim of investigating the existence of areas of comparative advantage and the potential for transatlantic synergies and cooperation in engaging China.

**InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of  
European Union-China Relations****CLOSING SPEECH AT THE CONFERENCE**

Jing Men\*

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

After two days of intensive discussions on EU-US-China relations, it is time to close the conference.

During the two days,

- About 80 participants in total attended this international conference,
- 27 papers from 7 panels were presented and discussed,
- Many issues were addressed: including global governance, the impact of the financial crisis, energy security, geostrategy, the implications for East Asia, public diplomacy and norms and values.

This is quite an impressive result, given that the conference was organised around the Easter holiday weekend. Before the conference was held, I was asked many times why we would organise the conference at the end of this week. A very simple answer is that at the College of Europe, Easter Friday and Saturday are not considered as official days of holiday. Secondly, since it is the Easter holiday weekend, it may attract more professors and researchers. As Bruges is a famous scenic spot, our conference participants could ideally combine their academic work with a pleasant visit to this historic town. In this way, we are sure that you may have a different Easter holiday. Many years later, when you think back upon your different Easter holidays, you may have forgotten the majority of them, but you will always remember this special Easter weekend that you spent in Bruges.

The idea of organising this conference dated back to 2008, when I prepared the course on EU-China relations at the College of Europe. We know that EU-China economic and trade relations serve as the cornerstone of the partnership. The institutionalised dialogue framework from the summit meeting to the working group level meetings plays an important role in promoting exchange and mutual understanding between the EU and China. The normative issues, in particular, the European approach on the civil and political human rights and the Chinese emphasis on the right to subsistence constitute another main theme in EU-China relations. Yet, while focusing on bilateral relations between the EU and China, I found it impossible to avoid examining the impact of the US on either the EU or China's foreign policy, or on EU-China relations more generally. Moreover, while the US remains the world's only superpower, its strong ties with the EU and its love-hate relationship with China not only affects their respective bilateral or trilateral relations, but to a large degree, also defines the development of international relations. Although US-China relations are much more complicated than the traditional transatlantic ties – with its many ups and

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downs – the US, in recent years, has tended to recognise China's rising influence in the world; terms such as "G2" and "Chimerica" were created by the Americans in recent years to define the close interdependence and need for cooperation between the two sides. While the concept of the G2 may reflect China's rising importance in world affairs, the position of the EU was somehow neglected. Therefore, when the EU-China summit meeting was held in Prague, the Chinese Premier dismissed the notion of a G2, pointing out that the US and China alone are not capable of solving all the global issues, whereas multipolarity and multilateralism represent the rising trend in international politics. Such a statement echoed the European Security Strategy published in 2003, which pointed out that "no single country is able to tackle today's complex problems on its own. The European Union is inevitably a global player." When designing the panels for this conference, I first asked whether in today's international structure, if the G2 does not work, what about a G3 or the G20? This question was later developed into the topic for the first panel.

From multilateral frameworks to bilateral cooperation, from hard power to soft power, from geostrategic considerations to public diplomacy, the conference has tried to address a wide range of important issues where the EU, the US and China have considerable incentives to work together. Compared with the US and the EU, who are the founders of the current international system, China is a latecomer, and in many cases, a rule taker. Yet, China is rising much faster than many people predicted and expected. The question for both the EU and the US is how to adapt to China's rise. Whereas China needs to consider how best to continue its development – without provoking strong resistance from the US and the EU – whilst learning how to behave as a responsible international actor.

Currently, the world is in a process of transformation. From the reform of major international regimes to the development of key bilateral relations and multilateral frameworks, the EU, the US and China are important actors in such a process. Committed research efforts need be devoted to these topics. This international conference offers a platform for us to exchange our research results, to get to know each other and to establish a network so that we can further promote research in this field.

This international conference is the third such activity organised by the Chair. The first conference was organised in April 2009 on "Prospects and Challenges for EU-China Relations in the 21st Century: The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement." The second conference was organised in February 2010 on EU-China-Africa relations. Some of you have participated in all three conferences. By organising an annual conference on a major theme in EU-China relations, our idea is not only to strengthen academic exchanges and establish a wide research network on EU-China relations, but it is also to distribute our research results as far wide as possible. Therefore, every conference has resulted in the publication of an edited book. We published the first book with Peter Lang and the second book with Ashgate. From next week onwards, we will undergo the selection procedure for the different chapters in the future book, based on the quality of the papers, the comments of the chairs and discussants and the relevance of the papers to



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the theme of the book. We will keep you informed of the procedure and hope that by the end of this year, we can distribute an excellent publication on EU-US-China relations onto the market.

Before completing the book, we will first publish a special edition of the conference in the next issue of the *EU-China Observer*, where a report of the conference will be compiled alongside the conference paper abstracts. Since the beginning of 2008, we have run the electronic journal, the *EU-China Observer*. The idea is that we publish this journal once every two months. The length of each article in the journal is 2,500 words. Any of you who are interested in contributing papers to our *EU-China Observer*, don't hesitate to contact either Ben or myself so that we can discuss the issues that you would like to address in your paper proposal.

Thanks to your commitment and cooperation, this conference was held successfully. I would like to thank all the paper contributors, the discussants and the chairs, and all the participants – without your active participation, this conference would not have taken place. We are very glad to meet all of you here and we hope that we will keep in touch and preserve this network in order to stimulate more research and exchanges.

I would like to give our special thanks to the two ambassadors who delivered the keynote speeches yesterday morning: Ambassador Isticioaia Budura and Ambassador Song Zhe. In particular, Ambassador Isticioaia Budura has stayed two days with us at the conference and actively participated in our conference. This is really impressive. My thanks also goes to the Chinese Mission to the EU for their support with regard to the organisation of this conference.

I also would like to thank our Rector Prof. Paul Demaret and the Dean of our department Prof. Gstöhl, our teaching assistant Paul Quinn, our secretary Sabine Dekeyser, the Communications Office and all the other people who supported us in one way or another with regard to the preparation and organisation of this conference.

In particular, I would like to give my thanks to Benjamin Barton. This is the second conference that we have organised together. Due to the fact that I took maternity leave for 3 months and a half, I have relied on him to a large extent in communicating with all the conference participants and in making preparations for the conference, from food to accommodation and even copying the conference papers on the USB keys. It is a very pleasant experience to work together with him. I regret that he will leave at the end of this academic year and I wish him good luck for his future career. I suggest that we give him a warm round of applause to thank him for his hard work.

Before ending my speech, I would like to make a final announcement: next spring, we will organise the fourth international conference in Bruges, which will be focused on climate change and environmental protection. Our idea is that we will organise an annual international conference on EU-China relations. If you have any good proposals for conference topics, don't hesitate to contact us. We can explore the possibility of jointly organising conferences in the future.

Finally, I hope you enjoy the sunshine in Bruges and have a safe trip back home. I look forward to seeing you in the near future. Thank you!

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**GROUP PHOTO OF CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS**

