

Europeanization and French Policy in East Asia 1988-2002

Reuben Yik-Pern Wong

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
International Relations

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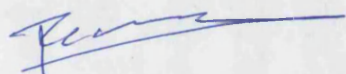
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Declaration of Originality

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is an original, unpublished piece of work resulting from my own research. The thesis was submitted to the London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London, for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations.



Reuben Yik-Pern Wong
18 September 2003

Abstract

This thesis is about French foreign policy and how it has been constrained or enabled by the European Union (EU). It applies “Europeanization” theory to French policy in East Asia, testing the extent to which three dimensions of the Europeanization process (policy convergence, national projection and identity reconstruction) are evident and mutually compatible. The extent to which EU membership and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) make a difference to French policy and vice versa, is evaluated over the period covering the second term of President François Mitterrand (1988-95) and the first term of President Jacques Chirac (1995-2002).

France is a core country in the European Union and has taken part in European foreign policy (EFP) projects since the founding of European Political Cooperation in 1973. At the same time, its foreign policy is distinguished by a tradition of national independence and power projection. This thesis studies the interaction of French national policy with collective European foreign policy (EFP), and French interaction with the preferences, statements and actions of the Commission, the Council, the Member States and the European Parliament concerning East Asia. Most studies argue that if there is any “Europeanization” taking place, it is limited only to the bottom-up national projection variant that seeks to amplify French policies as “European”, ie. to “Gallicise” European foreign policy. This study examines the record of French and EU interactions with China, Japan and Vietnam in the areas of economic exchanges, political-security relations and human rights to establish if there has been a trend of converging “European” policies and collective European conceptions of interest and identity. It concludes that the utility and impact of EU institutions and the CFSP on French foreign policy behaviour is more significant than is commonly imagined or admitted, and that the foreign policies of EU member states tend over the long term towards convergence.

Preface

My academic interest in French foreign policy was sparked by a stint as First Secretary in the Singapore Embassy in Paris, from 1995-1998. French foreign policy and its interaction with European foreign policy-making, was both a fascinating and confusing subject. This thesis is the result of several years of observation, research and inquiry growing out of the fascination that professional experience in Paris spawned.

The thesis builds on an earlier 30,000-word dissertation, “French Foreign Policy and China, 1988-2000: The Europeanization of National Foreign Policy and its limits”, which I wrote when reading for the degree of M.Phil in European Politics and Society at St Antony’s College, Oxford University (1999-2001). That dissertation underscored the *national* peculiarity of French policy over Europeanization.

The theoretical framework in Chapter Two on Europeanization, and Chapter Four on China draw on parts of the earlier dissertation; but have been significantly revamped and re-written with subsequent research and insights. Chapter Three on foreign policy objectives and the relationship between French policy and European Foreign Policy is new. Chapters Five and Six, on Japan and Vietnam respectively, are also based on new research and interviews. With the benefit of additional research and reflection since 2001, and the luxury of comparison between three countries instead of a single case study, this thesis privileges the view that the foreign policies of EU member states tend over the long term towards policy convergence Europeanization.

Note on names:

Throughout the main text of this dissertation, Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese names are reproduced in the normal East Asian order; that is, surname first and given name second. Thus Jiang Zemin, Yoshida Shigeru, Hashimoto Ryutaro and Ho Chi Minh.

An exception is made for Japanese names cited in the footnotes and interviews, which are presented in the usual Western order of given name followed by surname.

Chinese names are rendered in the *hanyu pinyin* system (eg. Mao Zedong and not Mao Tse-tung), except for the familiar forms of non-mainland Chinese names (eg. Chiang Kai-shek, Lee Kuan Yew).

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My heartfelt thanks go to Chris Hill for his solid supervision on arguments, sources and research questions to pursue. A great intellectual inspiration on European foreign policy issues, I will also remember with fondness his incredibly swift turnaround of chapter drafts, his encouragement and Suzhou tea.

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I am grateful to representatives of many organisations for agreeing to my requests for interviews, information, or offering invaluable suggestions, often at short notice:

Paris: the Quai d'Orsay, the Ministry of Defence, the Finance Ministry's Department of External Economic Relations (DREE), the Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, British and German Embassies, the SciencesPo library (especially the Salle de Presse), Bibliothèque Nationale François Mitterrand, the Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIP), Reporters sans Frontières; and the Comité Vietnam;

Brussels: the European Commission External Relations Directorate-General, the Secretariat of the Council, the ELDR group at the European Parliament, and the French Permanent Representation;

London: the French, Vietnamese and Chinese Embassies;

Asia: the French Missions in Shanghai, Tokyo, Singapore, and Hanoi; Vietnamese officials, scholars and businessmen in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City; and the numerous Singaporean, Vietnamese, Chinese and Japanese officials in Europe and Asia who shared their perspectives and gave feedback on my arguments.

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Abbreviations and Terms used

AI	Amnesty International
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
CESDP	Common European Security and Defence Policy
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSP	Country and Regional Strategy Paper (of the European Commission)
<i>doi moi</i>	Economic renovation (Vietnam)
DREE	French Department of External Economic Relations
EC	European Community
EFP	European Foreign Policy
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
EP	European Parliament
EMU	European Monetary Union
EPC	European Political Cooperation
EU	European Union
<i>Elysée</i>	French President's Office
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
G7	Group of Seven most industrialized nations - USA, Japan, Germany, UK, France, Italy and Canada
G8	The G7 plus Russia
GAC	General Affairs Council of the EU
<i>Gaimusho</i>	Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon)
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IHT	International Herald Tribune
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JCMS	Journal of Common Market Studies
JEPP	Journal of European Public Policy
<i>Keidanren</i>	Confederation of Industries (Japan)
KEDO	Korean Energy Development Organization
MAE	<i>Ministère des Affaires Etrangères</i> (see " <i>Quai d'Orsay</i> ")
<i>Matignon</i>	French Prime Minister's Office
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MITI	Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Japan)
MINEFI	French Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry
MFN	Most-Favoured Nation
NAS	New Asia Strategy
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NIE	Newly Industrialising Economy

ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PESC	<i>Politique Etrangère et Sécurité Commune</i> (or CFSP)
PKO	Peace-Keeping Operation
PRC	People's Republic of China
<i>Quai d'Orsay</i>	French Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Quai d'Orsay, Paris
TCA	Trade and Cooperation Agreement
TEU	Treaty of European Union
UN	United Nations
UNCHR	United Nations Commission on Human Rights
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNTAC	UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTAET	UN Transitional Authority in East Timor
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<i>Việt kiều</i>	Overseas Vietnamese
WTO	World Trade Organization

Chapter One

Introduction

This thesis is about French policy in East Asia: whether and how it has been constrained or enabled by the European Union in the 1990s. As a subject on its own, French foreign policy is a complex and fascinating study - intimately associated with Charles de Gaulle - of a defeated global power regaining self-respect, military power and diplomatic weight in world affairs after liberation from the national *désastre* of Nazi invasion and occupation from June 1940 to June 1944.¹ France is one of just a handful of EU states (together with Britain and perhaps Germany) with the diplomatic, economic and military wherewithal to play an appreciable role in world affairs without the “cover” of the EU. Yet French foreign policy is also closely linked with European construction, building European foreign policy and acting via Europe.

This study focuses on the interaction of French national policy with collective European foreign policy (EFP) in one area of the world – East Asia. The research question is salient in the light of France’s 1993 definition of Asia as the “new frontier” of French diplomacy, and the EU’s 1994 “New Asia Strategy”.² This thesis will examine the impact of EU membership and European institutions such as European Political Cooperation (EPC) and its successors the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) on French policy. How have over 30 years of participation in EU foreign policy coordination structures and practices affected French policy? Since 1970 and the start of foreign policy coordination under European Political Cooperation (EPC), France has been one of the long-term participants in European Foreign Policy. Most studies of the effect of the European Union on a member state’s foreign policy have concentrated on the difference made to new (or sometimes potential) members. Studies such as those on Spain, Portugal and Greece have highlighted the constraints and *acquis politiques* - such as the

¹ The definitive (if slightly dated) study on postwar French foreign policy and the effects of the Nazi trauma on French defence and foreign policy thinking is Alfred Grosser’s *Affaires Extérieures: La Politique de la France 1944-1989*, Paris: Flammarion, 1989.

² Commission of the European Communities (henceforth European Commission), “Towards a New Asia Strategy”, COM (94)427, Brussels, July 1994.

recognition of Israel by Spain in 1986 – that new member states had to accept.³ By contrast, it has been implicitly assumed that “old” member states, such as France and the other five signatories to the 1957 Rome Treaties, have not had to make significant adjustments since they were present at the creation of the EC and could directly influence the evolution and direction of EU policies and institutions from the beginning.

The Research Question

The central objective of this thesis is to assess the impact of EU membership on French foreign policy in East Asia in the 1990s. This thesis will examine the impact of EU membership and European institutions such as the Commission, Council, European Parliament and CFSP/ESDP on French foreign policy. France is a core country and founding member of the European Union, and a middle power in the international system. It projects its diplomatic influence unilaterally as well as through the European Union. French foreign policy is distinguished by a tradition of national independence and power projection. While the French approach to Community policies (trade and economic policies under Pillar I of the 1993 Maastricht Treaty) has generally been cooperative, the French record under EPC/CFSP (Pillar II) has been mixed. The dominant scholarship on French foreign policy, exemplified by Stanley Hoffmann, portrays it as nationalistic and independent. France under de Gaulle twice blocked EC enlargement to include Britain, in 1963 and 1967. In 1965, he triggered the “empty chair” crisis in opposition to majority voting that resulted in the Luxembourg Compromise. French foreign policy is usually cast as action springing from narrow national interests rather than collective “European” interests and positions.⁴ French criticisms of the American *hyper-puissance*, and rancorous quarrels with the US, other EU Member States and candidate countries in 2002-3 over intervention in Iraq, have reinforced the view that French policy under President Chirac today remains unashamedly Gaullist.⁵

³ See chapters on Spain and Portugal in Christopher Hill (ed), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*, London: Routledge, 1996; K. Hanf and B. Soedentorp, “Small States and the Europeanization of public policy”, in Hanf and Soedentorp (eds), *Adapting to European Integration*, London: Longman, 1998.

⁴ See Stanley Hoffmann “Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe”, *Dædalus*, Summer 1966; “The European Community and 1992”, *Foreign Affairs* 68/4 (Fall 1992); and “La France dans le Monde 1979-2000”, in *Politique Étrangère*, 2/2000, pp.307-317. See also Alistair Cole, *French Politics and Society*, London: Prentice Hall, 1998, p.260; Stanley Hoffman, “Conclusions”, in G. Ross, S. Hoffman and S. Malzacher (eds), *The Mitterrand Experiment*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987.

⁵ Hubert Védrine, “De l'utilité de la France”, Interview in *Politique Internationale*, 78, 1998, pp.41-64; “France's foreign policy: ever awkward, sometimes risky”, *Economist* 1 February 2003; “Jacques Chirac:

Despite this persistent tradition of independence and unilateralism, the influence of “Europe” on French foreign policy thinking is more considerable than commonly thought. In the 1950s, an institutionalised long-term cooperative relationship with Germany through European integration offered a means to compensate for the loss of French national greatness and empire. Yet, the memory of Nazi defeat and occupation led de Gaulle to insist on “national independence” in the 1960s. The tension between the two strategies has remained a key and recurrent theme in post-war French foreign policy.⁶ Under CFSP cooperation, the French Foreign Ministry (Quai d’Orsay) today takes part in the exchange of diplomats with other EU foreign ministries, information sharing, and joint reporting in third countries. French policy makers have been subject to socialisation pressures arising from very frequent and regular consultations with other national diplomats and EU officials. Many scholars argue that these intense and repeated contacts have socialised national diplomacies into becoming more “European” and taking a “coordination reflex” in foreign policy-making.⁷ Few would however describe France as a “Europeanised state” or “province” subscribing to multi-level governance within the European Union, as Germany has often been portrayed.⁸ At best, French policy is often portrayed as traditional and selfish national interest in substance, albeit cloaked in the language and form of collective European interest.

Why “East Asia” and how is it defined?

East Asia is significant because it contains two of the world’s most important economic, demographic, military and diplomatic powers (China and Japan); the developing world’s most successful regional organisation (ASEAN) comprising 10 states with European colonial histories, and with which the EU has had an extensive

Can Gaullism work today”, *Economist*, 29 March 2003; “France’s diplomacy: Cocorico? Or have the chickens come home to roost?” *Economist*, 19 April 2003.

⁶ See Anand Menon, “France and the IGC of 1996”, in *Journal of European Public Policy* [hereafter *JEPP*], 3/2, June 1996, pp.231-252. Stanley Hoffmann argues that a stable relationship with Germany and combating national decline were the two constant preoccupations of French foreign policy in the 20th century. See his “France: Two Obsessions for One Century”, in Robert A. Pastor (ed), *A Century’s Journey: How the Great Powers Shape the World*, New York: Perseus Books, 1999, pp.63-90; and “La France dans le Monde 1979-2000” *Politique Etrangère* 2/2000.

⁷ Studies on socialization pressures and the “coordination reflex” include Simon Nuttall, *European Political Cooperation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992; Jakob Øhrgaard, “Less than Supranational, More than Intergovernmental: European Political Cooperation and the Dynamics of Intergovernmental Integration”, *Millennium* 26/1, 1997; and Kenneth Glarbo, “Wide-awake Diplomacy: Reconstructing the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union”, in *JEPP* 6/4, 1999.

⁸ See Philippe Moreau Defarges, “La France, province de l’Union européenne?”, in *Politique Etrangère* 1/96 (spring 96), pp.37-48; and Klaus H Goetz, “Integration policy in a Europeanised state: Germany and the Intergovernmental Conference”, in *JEPP* 3/1, March 1996, pp.23-44.

bloc-to-bloc relationship since the 1970s; and four Newly Industrialising Economies (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore) which are all among the EU's top 20 trading partners. Since 1996, the EU deepened its relations with countries in the East Asian region (ASEAN, China, Japan and South Korea) through the launch of a historic inter-regional dialogue (ASEM) that includes biennial leaders' summits, cultural, educational, business and official exchanges.

"East Asia" as a region and term are contested concepts. In the West, the term is often understood as succeeding the older Eurocentric idea of the "Far East", which includes the countries geographically farthest from Europe on the Eurasian landmass - China, Korea and Japan. Yet it sometimes includes Southeast Asia (itself a modern, externally-imposed name and somewhat new geographical concept at the end of the Second World War).⁹ The historian Fernand Braudel, in his classic work on civilizations, grouped under the category "Maritime Far East" Indochina, Indonesia, the Philippines, Korea and Japan.¹⁰ In this thesis "East Asia" will refer to *both* Northeast and Southeast Asia, ie. the region which includes Greater China (including Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao), Japan and Korea, and the 10 ASEAN countries. This definition encompasses all the states sharing what Lucian Pye called an "East Asian Confucianist" political culture (including Vietnam and Singapore), as well as non-Confucian states (eg. Cambodia, Philippines, Myanmar/Burma, Malaysia and Indonesia) exhibiting "Southeast Asian" political culture.¹¹ I thus include all the Asian member states in ASEM, plus Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. Excluded from this definition are Australasia, South Asia, and the Russian Far East.

Is there a French Policy in Asia?

Some scholars argue that French actions and activities in Asia are too incoherent and short-term to merit being called a 'policy'. François Godement argued that by the middle of the 1990s, France had fallen on the margins of significant Western actors in Asia. Notwithstanding Paris' important diplomatic role in two Paris Peace Conference

⁹ Philippe Richer, "Introduction: A propos d'un angle complexe", in Philippe Richer (ed.) *Crises en Asie du Sud-est*, Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1999:13, pp.13-10. The term "Southeast Asia," used from 1923 by Heine-Geldern in his monograph *Sudöstasien* was popularised when the Allies created in 1943 the "Southeast Asia Allied Command" under Admiral Louis Mountbatten. See also Donald K. Emmerson, "'Southeast Asia': What's in a Name?", in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, XV, 1984.

¹⁰ Fernand Braudel, *Grammaire des Civilisations*, 1963, repr. Paris: Flammarion, 1993, pp.297-318.

(1973 and 1989) and the financial and military contributions made by France towards the UN mandate in Cambodia, France was hamstrung by a reputation of being unable or unwilling to determine developments or sustain any major activities in Asia.¹² Godement felt that France's role in the resolution of the Cambodian conflict was confined to that of 'hotelier'. Worse, relations with most countries in the Asia-Pacific nose-dived after Chirac's resumption of nuclear testing in the South Pacific in 1995.¹³ In stark contrast to the lively postcolonial debates on Paris' Africa policy and the controversies over French commitments in the Middle East and its alleged pro-Arabism¹⁴, there was little debate and even less of a comprehensive policy towards Asia. Meanwhile, the UK and Germany had adopted documents detailing their Asia policies, and the EU had adopted the Commission's 'New Asia Strategy' paper, as well as papers on China, Japan and Korea.¹⁵

I would argue that France did in fact have a committed and coherent policy of actively engaging East Asian countries in a comprehensive partnership. France was active on many fronts in East Asia in the 1990s: on human rights (esp. in China, Vietnam), on economic matters (first Japan and the NIEs, then ASEAN and China), on the diplomatic front (ASEM, Paris peace conference on Cambodia, and the 1997 coup), and even on the military (cooperation with Taiwan and Singapore) and intellectual fronts (Council on Asia-Europe Cooperation, "Asian values" dialogue with Malaysia and Singapore). Explaining French policy as being driven primarily by mercantilist ambitions in the region's rapidly growing markets (at least until the Asian economic crisis of 1997-98)¹⁶ is thus too reductionist an account. It does not capture a complex relationship that included major disagreements and debates over human rights, strategic arms sales, and the appropriate security role of France and EU states in East Asia. This

¹¹ Lucian Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Political Authority*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1985

¹² François Godement, "Une politique française pour l'Asie-Pacifique?", *Politique Etrangère*, 4/95, Patricia Wellons, "Sino-French Relations: Historical Alliance vs. Economic Reality", in *The Pacific Review*, 7/3, 1994, p.964.

¹³ Godement 95:964

¹⁴ See eg. Rachel Utley, "'Not to do less but to do better...': French military policy in Africa", *International Affairs* 78/1, 2002, pp.129-146, and Godement 95:964

¹⁵ See eg. Godement 95:969, Nesshöver 1999; and David Shambaugh, *China and Europe: 1949-1995*, London: Contemporary China Institute, SOAS, 1996.

¹⁶ Godement, "Une politique française pour l'Asie-Pacifique?"; Patricia Wellons, "Sino-French Relations: Historical Alliance vs. Economic Reality", in *The Pacific Review*, 7/3, 1994; and Miguel Neves Santos, "Towards a Common China Policy for the EU: a Portuguese Perspective", in Richard Grant (ed), *The European Union and China*, London: Routledge/RIIA, 1995.

thesis proposes that a more accurate understanding of French (and EU) objectives and policies in East Asia necessitates analyzing the multiple facets and inter-relationship of the economic, political and human rights objectives of the East Asian region to French and EU interests.

This thesis seeks to answer the following key questions:

- a) What were French national interests (both perceived and objective) in East Asia in the period under study?
- b) What were EU interests in East Asia? In the event of a conflict of interests, how was France affected by common European policies on international issues?
- c) To what extent did France adapt its national foreign policy to EU institutions, and other member states' national foreign policies? In other words, how and to what extent is French foreign policy being Europeanized?

Choice of Case Studies and Periodisation

The four main targets of French policy in Asia are China, India, Japan and ASEAN. To answer the questions above, three East Asian case studies are covered in this thesis: China, Japan and Vietnam. China and Japan are obvious choices because of their economic and political importance to Europe. The EU has clearly defined political-economic interests in China and Japan: both countries were identified as cornerstones of the EU's 1994 "New Asia Strategy".¹⁷ Despite human rights disagreements - heightened by the 1989 Tiananmen massacre - China is an increasingly important focus in European foreign policy. China is important to EU interests because of its rising economic power, strategic position in the Asia-Pacific, and diplomatic importance as permanent member in the UN Security Council. Japan is the EU's largest economic partner outside of Europe and North America. It is also a significant member of important Western fora such as the G7 and OECD. Among ASEAN countries, Vietnam was chosen because of its historical relationship with France, to test the extent to which France-Vietnam relations have been affected by foreign policy Europeanization.

China, Japan and Vietnam are significant and representative of French and EU interests in upgrading political-economic ties in East Asia. France's economics-

oriented East Asia policy was launched by Prime Minister Edouard Balladur's government in 1993 (based on the "German model") and formally defined by President Chirac in 1995. Vietnam is a former French colony with which France tries to maintain privileged ties. France often spearheads EU policies towards ASEAN's Indochinese states. The EU has since the 1991 Paris Peace Conference invested substantial political and economic resources in Vietnam's *doi moi* liberalisation reforms and the reconstruction of Cambodia. EU leaders and officials meet regularly with their Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese counterparts at ASEAN and EU-related fora, ARF and under the aegis of ASEM.

Admittedly, the choice of China and Japan lends a bias towards Northeast rather than Southeast Asia. Generalisations about French policy from these two case studies may be more valid for the *larger and more powerful* states of East Asia. Other significant countries in the region that were *not* chosen as case studies – Indonesia, the four NIEs (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore), Thailand, Myanmar/Burma, Malaysia - however appear frequently in the discussions on China, Japan and Vietnam in chapters 4-6 as joint targets of French and European policies (economic, political, strategic and human rights) in the region. The choice of Vietnam as the third case study attempts to compensate for this geographical and power bias by including a Southeast Asian state of comparatively low economic, diplomatic and political clout (albeit, like Cambodia and Laos, one with a long history of relations with France).

These three countries are members of a region increasingly referred to as "East Asia".¹⁸ EU leaders and officials meet regularly with their East Asian counterparts at fora such as the ASEAN-EU dialogue, the ARF and since 1996, under the aegis of ASEM. The case studies assess French policy interacting with three very different targets in East Asia: a politically powerful and economically rising state, an

¹⁷ European Commission, "Towards a New Asia Strategy", COM (94)427, Brussels, July 1994. The EU's first comprehensive strategy papers on China and Japan were unveiled in July 1995.

¹⁸ COM (94)427 defined "Asia" as three regions comprising: the 8 countries and economies of East Asia (China, Japan, the Koreas, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao and Mongolia), the 10 countries of Southeast Asia (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Burma, all members of ASEAN since 1998), and the 8 countries of South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Afghanistan). A fourth region, Australasia (centred on Australia, New Zealand) was grouped under "Asia" by the EU in its COM (2001)469 final, 4 September 2001.

economically powerful state well integrated into Western fora, and a poor and until recently isolated state with which France has colonial ties.

The 1990s decade under study is compelling for three reasons. At the international systemic level, it straddles the end of the Cold War and the rise of a more assertive and self-confident European Union in world affairs in the early 1990s. Second, the period witnessed the emergence of human rights as a prominent, controversial and often divisive issue in international relations. At the domestic and third level, the 1990s covers the second term (1988-1995) of Socialist President François Mitterrand and the first term (1995-2002) of Gaullist President Jacques Chirac.

In the first four years (1988-1992) of Mitterrand's second term, foreign policy initiatives emanated from the Elysée Palace (Presidential office). During this period, Mitterrand's foreign policy agenda was dominated by the collapse of the Soviet Union and other Communist regimes in central and eastern Europe, German reunification, the bicentennial of the French Revolution and human rights, and the Gulf War.¹⁹ Aside from Paris' involvement in the resolution of the Third Indochinese War, East Asia was not a high priority until relations with China deteriorated to the point of confrontation over human rights and French arms sales to Taiwan. The second phase started in 1993 when the Gaullist Prime Minister Balladur used his strong electoral mandate to make an economic push into East Asia, and normalize France-China relations. After formal normalization in 1994 and the election of Gaullist President Jacques Chirac in 1995, East Asia rose slowly but steadily in significance on the French radar. Japan, ASEAN, China and South Korea were targeted for French commercial expansion, in tandem with German, British and Commission policies. Relations with China in particular rapidly warmed and even caused a split in EU ranks in 1997 over the appropriate EU approach to human rights and trade in China. Over the same period, relations with Vietnam were far more constant. Regular high-level visits were made in connection with the French diplomatic role in the resolution of the Third Indochinese War and the signing of the Paris Peace in 1991. Mitterrand and Chirac made state visits to Vietnam in 1992 and 1997 respectively. French relations with Japan were cordial but not especially warm.

¹⁹ Hubert Védrine, *Les Mondes de François Mitterrand: À l'Élysée 1981-1995*, Paris: Fayard, 1996, is an illuminating and detailed insider account by Mitterrand's foreign policy adviser.

They nose-dived in 1995 over French nuclear tests in the South Pacific but have stabilized with increased defence and sectoral cooperation, regular high-level visits between both sides kick-started by Chirac in 1996, and increasingly institutionalised links between the EU and Japan.

National Policy vs European Policy

A case can be made for France pursuing *national* goals in East Asia up to and including the 1990s. France helped China breach US-led diplomatic isolation and a Western trade embargo when it recognized the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1964, and broke the EU consensus in April 1997 by refusing to support a hitherto routine collective EU position for a resolution in China's human rights situation at the Committee on Human Rights (which took place shortly before President Chirac's commercially important state visit to China). France also went against general opinion in the EU, Japan and most Asian capitals when it resumed nuclear testing in the South Pacific in 1995. On the other hand, French policy in East Asia can be read as actions supporting or consolidating agreed collective EU policy. (EU interests and policies, for useful analysis, are taken to mean objectives and declarations made in the name of the EU interest by EU institutions such as the Commission, the Parliament and the Council.) The EC had established relations with China in 1975 and in 1995 a common policy on China was defined.

This leads us to the main puzzle of this thesis. The French may have been a founding member of the EC in 1957, but they also seem to have had to adapt to unanticipated convergence pressures of the overarching structure of European foreign policy, consisting of (i) national policies, (ii) CFSP and (iii) Community policies.²⁰ Incremental policy coordination, common positions, declarations and increasingly, common policies and actions place convergence pressures on member states. Policies in France's traditional spheres of influence have undergone significant adaptation towards multilateral approaches. This is obvious even in the Middle East and in Africa, two old French colonial backyards.²¹ Among multilateral approaches, the EU has

²⁰ Christopher Hill, "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualising Europe's International Role", in *Journal of Common Market Studies* [hereafter *JCMS*], 31/1, 1993, pp.306-328.

²¹ B. Kodmani-Darwish, "La France et le Moyen-Orient: entre nostalgie et réalisme", in *Politique Etrangère* 4/95; *Politique Etrangère*; Rachel Utley, "Not to do less but to do better...": French military policy in Africa", *International Affairs* 78/1, 2002, pp.129-146.

usually been the favoured vehicle for the pursuit of French interests in these regions and in third countries, in preference to the UN, OECD or ad hoc groupings of states. This trend is no less true for French policy in Asia.

While East Asia is a region of growing interest for French and European foreign policy, the countries in this region could be considered “least likely” target countries for a coherent EU region-to-region approach. This is because European Foreign Policy is more institutionalised in the EU’s immediate and near-abroad priority areas and issue-areas, in particular Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean/Middle East, and external trade (especially negotiations with other trade powers and in WTO). The European Union’s involvement in these geographic and issue areas has been the subject of numerous analyses. Parallel to this literature on the EU’s policies in the near-abroad are in-depth studies on French policies in these same areas, with little cognisance – aside from trade relations - of the effect of Europe on French national policies.²² In effect, habits of cooperation, consultation and coordination on the EU’s policy in the East Asian region are relatively new and not well established.

Approaches to understanding French Foreign Policy

The dominant academic approach to French policy is to explain it as a medium power with Gaullist great-power ambitions, reflexes and clear foreign policy goals of security and independence.²³ These works, together with institutional analyses²⁴ explain French foreign policy as the product of a rational state with a clear sense of its “national interests” (more on this in Chapter Three). Recent empirical studies on European foreign policies (both collective and those of individual European member states) in East Asia have largely approached the subject matter from a national foreign policy perspective. Does participation in EU foreign policy make a difference to the

²² Marianna P. Sullivan, *France’s Vietnam Policy: A Study in French-American Relations*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978. Exceptions include Christoph Nesshöver, “Bonn et Paris face à Pékin (1989-1997): vers une stratégie commune?”, *Politique Etrangère* 1/99; and Jean-Pierre Cabestan, “Sino-Western European Relations: Distant Neighbours or Distant Rivals?”, in *China Review*, Autumn/Winter 1995, pp.42-44.

²³ Jean Doise and Maurice Vaïsse, *Politique étrangère de la France: diplomatie et outil militaire*, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1992; Frédéric Bozo, *Politique Etrangère de la France depuis 1945*, Paris, 1998; Philip H. Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993; Alfred Grosser, *Affaires Extérieures*, op cit.

²⁴ Marie-Christine Kessler, *La Politique Étrangère de la France: Acteurs et Processus*, Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1999.

foreign policy of EU member states? No, according to the dominant view, exemplified by Stanley Hoffmann. Foreign policies are the domain of sovereign states and the EU can never have a foreign policy, properly speaking, as it is made up of a collection of states.²⁵ As such, individual states within the EU can at best be constrained by EU structures (cf. regime theory), but will never allow these structures to set their policy. The “Gaullist” approach posits that member states such as France (and the UK) with a strong attachment to an independent foreign policy will resist pressures to conform to European institutions.

As the “Gaullist” approach is increasingly inadequate in explaining the actions and policies of France, even in its *domaines réservés* (traditional colonial spheres of influence), other works emphasise the input and impact of EU foreign policy making mechanisms. According to this second view, French foreign-policy making has been fundamentally altered by Europe. There is a coordination reflex among EU foreign policy-making élites, and this is set to increase over time with the further institutionalisation of foreign policy coordination with CFSP since 1992 and ESDP since 1998.²⁶

A third approach is to ignore the member states’ foreign policies altogether and to study the role of the EU in different regions of the world. This approach assumes that member states’ foreign policy interests are increasingly subsumed by and expressed through the EU.²⁷ Hazel Smith, for example, argues that the EU has been a significant unmistakable actor in international relations for several decades and is recognized by other actors as such. European Foreign Policy is thus its own animal, distinct from and

²⁵ Hoffmann, “Obstinate or Obsolete?”, op cit; Hedley Bull, “Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, in *JCMS*, 21, 1983, pp.149-170.

²⁶ Françoise de La Serre, “France: The Impact of François Mitterrand”, in Hill (ed), *The Actors in Europe’s Foreign Policy*, London: Routledge, 1996; Christian Lequesne, *Paris-Bruxelles: Comment se fait la politique européenne de la France*, Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1993; Margaret Blunden, “France”, in Manners and Whitman 2000. Also Øhrgaard, “Less than Supranational, More than Intergovernmental: European Political Cooperation and the Dynamics of Intergovernmental Integration”.

²⁷ Hazel Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy*, 2002; Christopher Piening, *Global Europe: The European Union in World Affairs*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1997; Regelsberger et al (eds), *Foreign Policy of the European Union: From EPC to CFSP and Beyond*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1997; David Shambaugh, *China and Europe: 1949-1995*, London: Contemporary China Institute, SOAS, 1996; Richard Grant (ed), *The European Union and China: A European Strategy for the Twenty-First Century?*, London: Routledge/RIIA, 1995; H Maull, G Segal, and J Wanandi, (eds), *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, London: Routledge, 1998; and G.A. Richards and Colin Kirkpatrick, “Reorienting

far from being merely a summation of individual Member States' foreign policies through a complex system of inter-governmental negotiation.²⁸

"Europeanization" as an Approach

The "Europeanization" approach used in this thesis (see Chapter Two for a survey of Europeanization literature) is a merged/shared sovereignty conceptualisation of European Foreign Policy. It is derivative of the second and third approaches above.

To answer the question of how much French foreign policy has been affected by the EU, this thesis proposes three concepts of Europeanization²⁹ applicable to national foreign policy: (i) a top-down process of **policy convergence**; (ii) a bottom-up and sideways process involving the export of national preferences and models, **national projection**; and (iii) the socialization of interests and identities, **identity reconstruction**. The first concept of Europeanization is used predominantly in the literature to explain the top-down adaptation of national structures and processes in response to the demands of the EU. This concept predicts cross-national policy convergence between EU states after a sustained period of structural and procedural adaptation. A second Europeanization concept refers to the bottom-up projection of national ideas, preferences and models from the national to the supranational level. Third, Europeanization in its broadest sense means a process of identity and interest convergence so that "European" interests and a European identity begin to take root alongside national identities and interests, indeed to inform and shape them.

Interregional Cooperation in the Global Political Economy: Europe's East Asian Policy", in *JCMS*, 37/4, December 1999, pp.683-710.

²⁸ Simon J Nuttall, , *European Foreign Policy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

²⁹ On the burgeoning literature on Europeanization in domestic politics and policy making, see Cowles, Caporaso and Risse (eds), *Transforming Europe : Europeanization and domestic change*, Cornell University Press, 2001; Robert Harmsen and Thomas M. Wilson, "Introduction: Approaches to Europeanization", in Harmsen and Wilson (eds), *Europeanization: Institutions, Identities and Citizenship*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000; Alistair Cole and Helen Drake, "The Europeanization of the French Polity: continuity, change and adaptation", *JEPP*, 7/1, 2000; Hussein Kassim, B Guy Peters and Vincent Wright, (eds), *The National Coordination of EU Policy*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000; Vincent Wright, "The National Co-ordination of European Policy-making: Negotiating the Quagmire", in Jeremy Richardson (ed), *European Union: Power and Policy-making*, London and New York: Routledge, 1996; Yves Mény, Pierre Muller and Jean-Louis Quermonne (eds), *Adjusting to Europe: The Impact of the European Union on National Institutions and Policies*, London: Routledge, 1996; and Robert Ladrech, "Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France", *JCMS* 32/1, 1994.

The three aspects of Europeanization and their expected indicators (summarized in Table 1.1) will be used as a guide in the three country studies in chapters 4-6.

Table 1.1 Three Dimensions of Europeanization in National Foreign Policy

Aspects of Europeanization	National foreign policy indicators
I Adaptation and Policy Convergence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increasing salience of European political agenda b) Adherence to common objectives c) Common Policy outputs taking priority over national <i>domaines réservés</i>
II National Projection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) State attempts to increase national influence in the world b) State attempts to influence foreign policies of other member states c) State uses the EU as a cover/umbrella
III Identity reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Emergence of norms among policy-making élites b) Shared definitions of European and national interests

The “EU” will be taken as represented by its key actors: the Commission, the General Affairs Council (GAC), and the European Parliament (EP). The objectives and declarations made by these EU institutions will be taken as representative of the EU, eg. “New Asia Strategy” paper proposed by the Commission in spring 1994 and approved by the Council in July. The European Parliament has also played an important role (especially in foreign aid and human rights) and has since 1987 called into question continued EU development assistance and political cooperation with particular Asian countries (especially China, Myanmar and Indonesia) in view of their human rights records.³⁰

Sources

Existing analyses do not systematically test how the European dimension has or might have shaped France’s *national* foreign policy. As little in-depth research has been done on French policy in Asia in the period under study³¹, much of the empirical

³⁰ Council of the European Union, *Annual Report on Human Rights 2002*, pp. 45-47, 126-131.

³¹ An exception is René Dorient’s “Un septennat de politique asiatique: quel bilan pour la France?”, *Politique Etrangère*, 1/2002, 2002. Other articles tend to focus on French relations with China or Vietnam, eg. Christoph Nesshöver, “Bonn et Paris face à Pékin (1989-1997): vers une stratégie commune?”, *Politique Etrangère* 1/99, pp.91-106; Jean-Pierre Cabestan, “Paris-Pékin: Un dialogue sans complexes?”, *Politique Internationale* 75, Spring 1997; Patricia Wellons, “Sino-French Relations:

material contained in this thesis is based on primary sources found in French newspaper archives, political memoirs and policy speeches by French and other EU personalities on Asia. Many French positions and intra-EU politics on the making of its Asia policy are potentially sensitive and hence unpublished. Consequently, interviews with French officials, academics, foreign diplomats and other actors based in Paris, Brussels, Singapore and Vietnam were necessary. Where anonymity was requested, the organizational affiliation rather than the person has been identified in the text. Most official EU (Commission and EP, but not GAC) documents are disseminated and freely available on the EU's website. Official French positions expressed in documents and speeches - chiefly from the President's office (Elysée), National Assembly, Senate, Prime Minister's Office (Matignon) and Foreign Ministry (Quai d'Orsay) - are available on the Quai d'Orsay website. Also invaluable were news reports and analyses in *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*, and articles in the journals *Politique Etrangère*, *Politique Internationale*, *Notes et Études*, and *La Revue Internationale et Stratégique*.

Plan of the Thesis

Chapters 2-3 set out the context in which French and EU policy operate. Chapter 2 first surveys the burgeoning literature on Europeanization and groups the literature into five schools of thought: adaptation, national projection, identity reconstruction/socialisation, modernisation and policy isophormism. Most of the work on Europeanization - the transformation and adaptation variously applied to the politics, policy and process of EU member states - focuses almost exclusively on the *domestic* impact of EU, ie. the impact on national institutions and domestic politics. Second, it asks if the phenomenon of Europeanization - which is so often understood as a process of transformation in domestic politics and institutions - can be applied to EU member states' *foreign* policies and what a national "foreign" policy means in the structure of policy-making in Europe. The third objective of this chapter is to establish an operational definition of Europeanization for the case studies in chapters 4-6, using the parameters of convergence, projection and socialization by which this process in a member state's foreign policy can be understood and studied.

Historical Alliance vs. Economic Reality", *The Pacific Review*, 7/3, 1994; Françoise Mengin, "Relations France-Chine, quel anniversaire s'agit-il de célébrer?", in *Relations Internationales et Stratégiques*, 14, été 1994:29-34; and Tran Van Tong, "La France et le Vietnam: pour une approche nouvelle", *Commentaire*, été 1994, 18/66, pp.287-296.

Chapter 3 addresses the first two of the three key questions raised at the beginning of this chapter by identifying and pinning down French foreign policy goals and objectives from those of the EU in East Asia. This chapter provides a background overview of French and European interests in East Asia after French decolonisation in the 1950s, with a focus on the motivations and objectives around and since 1989 (Berlin Wall and Tiananmen) and 1991 (Maastricht and CFSP). The first section looks at French objectives in three domains: economic, politico-security and human rights interests, through the lens of national (French) foreign policy. The second section looks at these same domains but through the lens of the EU (chiefly the Commission, the Council and the Parliament). This chapter contends that national and collective EU foreign policies in East Asia are intimately related in a dialectical process of continuous, iterative adjustment and cannot be neatly differentiated. Increasingly, the definition of “interests” takes place as much in Brussels and in other EU capitals, as in Paris. An understanding of the top-down and bottom-up dimensions of Europeanization is thus necessary to make sense of the evolution in French policy in the region.

Chapter 4 shows how the French conception of the national interest vis-à-vis China *evolved* between the presidencies of Mitterrand and Chirac. It argues that a change in *perception* is a more satisfactory explanation for the French policy change towards China and Asia in the 1990s, as compared to the mainstream account of France pursuing national over community interests in order to increase its economic presence in China. We see France moving towards EU norms and standards of behaviour in its political relations with China. Gaullist-style rhetoric on French grandeur and a special relationship with China still figured prominently. However, the discourse was broadened to stress China and *Europe* as great powers with common interests and goals. In trade and investment relations, it is the “German model” emphasising economic interests which is emulated by France and then institutionalised as EU policy. French trade policy towards China was Europeanized in terms of policy learning and emulative transfer from another EU member state.

Chapter 5 argues that Paris’ conflictual relations with Tokyo up to 1991 were mediated by the EU, first as a “cover” for French economic protectionism, then as a source of top-down pressure for policy change towards Japan. As a key member of the G7, OECD and IMF, and observer in security fora like the OSCE, Japan is often

regarded and treated more as a member of the “West” rather than an Asian state. Influenced by Europeanization pressures from the Commission and other EU member states, France changed its hostile policy towards Japan and converged its actions with the EU mainstream in viewing Japan as a valuable partner with similar “civilian power” capabilities and goals, eg. economic diplomacy via trade and aid, promoting liberal democracy and human rights (albeit differing on the priority of economic or political rights), and balancing relations with the US and other great powers (such as Russia and China).

Chapter 6 delves into the supposed special relationship between France and Vietnam. This serves as a counter-factual test case to Asian countries - such as China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Myanmar and the Koreas - which are targeted by the Commission or Council for clear and declared policy objectives and even comprehensive EU strategies. France is expected as a former colonial power to keep its privileged relations with Vietnam out of the EU policy process. Indeed, it managed to build a kind of special relationship with Hanoi in the decade between 1979 and 1989 when newly reunified Vietnam was an ostracised state. But even in what might be expected to be a French *domaine réservé*, Paris in the 1990s increasingly framed its expectations, objectives and policies towards Vietnam within the context the EU (though playing the role of EU initiator).

The Argument

France in many ways prefers an EU with weak institutions. However, French foreign policy after de Gaulle has clearly become less nationalist and more “European”. This development is partially explained by constructivist accounts of the impact of EU norms and values and the internalisation of community interests among foreign policy élites. French policy discourse today is replete with the ideas of collective EU objectives and common actions. A notion of shared European goals increasingly informs and shapes preferences, as well as the discourse on “national interests” emanating from Paris. At the annual Conference of French Ambassadors in 1994, then-Foreign Minister Alan Juppé made a clear pitch for Europeanising French foreign policy:

It is necessary that all our embassies in non-EU countries take European policy into account. The external action of the Union is sometimes perceived as offending our national policy or competing with it... This is an erroneous impression, at best a reaction which should be corrected. It is your role, as ambassadors of France, both to assert the identity of the European Union and to explain the specific positions defended by France within the institutions thereof. It is without reservations therefore, that you will endeavour, wherever you are, to affirm the political identity of the Union.³²

The *structure* of French foreign policy making is thus significant. The preferred and most important structure is obviously the EU. Evidently, the French are not abandoning national foreign policy autonomy altogether; but they are defending and promoting French interests *within* the institutions of the EU. French foreign policies are increasingly being defined in the *context* of EU foreign policy structures where French interests meet with those of other member states' and collective positions have to be negotiated. Even in security policy, that other bastion of Gaullist sovereignty, Paris' co-leadership with London since the end of 1998 towards a joint European defence capability is symptomatic of an increasing French willingness to pool resources in collective EU initiatives, even in sensitive areas impinging on national sovereignty.³³

A second theme running through this thesis is that French élites are redefining their interests according to accepted collective EU norms, goals and shared principles. Recent neo-functionalist and constructivist contributions to the study of EFP seem to suggest that policy convergence is deepening. These approaches argue that "prolonged participation in the CFSP feeds back into EU member states and reorients their foreign policy cultures along similar lines." The main agents for convergence include élite socialisation, bureaucratic reorganization, and an institutionalised "imperative of concertation."³⁴

This thesis recognises that French elites often prefer to work outside of EU structures in East Asia and that French resources may still be sufficient to underpin coherent national policies towards individual countries (especially those in which

³² Cited in Françoise de La Serre, "France: The impact of François Mitterrand", in Christopher Hill (ed), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*, London: Routledge, 1996, pp.36-37. See also Henrik Larsen, "Discourse Analysis and Foreign Policy: The Impact of the Concepts of Europe, Nation/State, Security and the Nature of International Relations on French and British Policies towards Europe in the 1980s", Ph.D Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 1993.

³³ Stanley Hoffmann, "Towards a Common Foreign and Security Policy?", *JCMS*, 38/2, 2000:189-98.

³⁴ See M.E. Smith, "Conforming to Europe", p.614 and K. Glarbo, "Reconstructing Europe", p.650.

France has strong historical ties, as in Indochina). It argues however that national resources are increasingly inadequate for a consistent, comprehensive policy towards whole geographic regions. Indeed, French capabilities are increasingly inadequate even to meet national objectives in large countries such as China and Japan.

While EU institutions as independent variables on national foreign policy behaviour are not critical on every issue, they are often significant and need to be studied in order the better to appreciate the motivations and formulation of French national foreign policy. That such changes have occurred at all in the foreign policy of a state traditionally “verbally favourable to a CFSP and politically ambivalent, because of a strong attachment to an independent security and above all foreign policy”³⁵, indicates the power of institutions and the unintended effects of French participation in EFP. Studies on the participation of other member states in EFP may well show more evidence of the creeping influence of EU membership on other national foreign policies.³⁶ An understanding of at least the top-down and bottom-up dimensions of Europeanization, and possibly also those of changing identities, is thus necessary to make sense of the evolution in French policy in East Asia since foreign policy cooperation between the member states was farther institutionalised in the 1990s.

³⁵ Stanley Hoffmann, “Towards a Common Foreign and Security Policy?”, *JCMS*, 38/2, 2000, p.193.

³⁶ Building on Manners and Whitman 2001; Brian White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001; and Christopher Hill’s *The Actors in Europe’s Foreign Policy*, 1996 and *European Political Cooperation and National Foreign Policies*, 1983.

Chapter Two

Europeanization Theory and Foreign Policy

Chapter One suggested that the impact of European Union institutions should be taken into account in the study of French foreign policy, a subject long dominated by Gaullist approaches portraying it as independent and resistant to change. Building on that idea, this chapter seeks to develop an operational theory of Europeanization in order to better understand the extent of the influence, opportunities and constraints on French choices afforded by the European Union.

“Europeanization” is a relatively new and ill-defined concept in the scholarly literature of European Studies/International Relations. It often refers to the political and policy *changes* caused by the impact of membership in the European Union on the member states. Europeanization theorists draw on ideas found in institutionalism as well as in rationalisation and globalisation theories. Ben Rosamund defines Europeanization as an “institutionally thick form of rationalisation within the global economy.”¹ Borrowing from institutionalist theory’s hypothesis that international institutions have “persistent and connected sets of rules (formal or informal) that prescribe behavioural roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations”,² various Europeanization scholars argue that sustained membership and participation in the EU leads to the convergence of national policy-making, both in style and content.³

Like globalisation theory, there is much debate over the nature, causes and effects of Europeanization, and precious little agreement on what exactly

¹ See Ben Rosamund’s *Theories of European Integration*, London: Macmillan, 2000, pp.179-18; and “Europeanization and Globalization”, in Robert Harmsen and Thomas M. Wilson (eds), *Europeanization: Institutions, Identities and Citizenship*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000.

² Robert Keohane, “International Institutions: Two approaches” in *International Institutions and State Power*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1989, p.161.

³ Alistair Cole and Helen Drake, “The Europeanization of the French Polity: continuity, change and adaptation”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 7/1, 2000; Hussein Kassim, B Guy Peters and Vincent Wright, (eds), *The National Coordination of EU Policy*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000; Vincent Wright, “The National Co-ordination of European Policy-making: Negotiating the Quagmire”, in Jeremy Richardson (ed), *European Union: Power and Policy-making*, London: Routledge, 1996; Yves Mény, Pierre Muller and Jean-Louis Quermonne (eds), *Adjusting to Europe: The Impact of the European Union on National Institutions and Policies*, London: Routledge, 1996; and Robert Ladrech, “Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The Case of France”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 32/1, 1994; K. Hanf and B. Soedentorp (eds), “Small States and the Europeanization of public policy”, in *Adapting to European Integration*, London: Longman, 1998,

Europeanization *is*. What are the forces behind this process and can it be observed in the EU member states? If so, what are the markers by which we can identify this process and compare it across countries and issue case studies? The first aim of this chapter is to survey the burgeoning literature on Europeanization, the transformation and adaptation variously applied to the politics, policy and process of EU member states, and to identify the main strands of argument in the literature. Most of the recent Europeanization literature focuses almost exclusively on the *domestic* impact of EU, ie. the impact on national institutions and domestic politics. The key processes at work seem to be the adaptation and transformation of national structures, politics and policies. Second, this chapter seeks to establish an operational definition of “Europeanization”. It asks if the phenomenon - so often understood as a process of transformation in domestic politics and institutions - can be applied to EU member states’ *foreign* policies. The third objective of this chapter is to propose parameters by which this process in a member state’s foreign policy can be understood and studied.

I Literature Review: Five Meanings of Europeanization

Alistair Cole and Helen Drake identify four different usages of the concept (“Europeanization” as: an independent variable, emulative policy transfer, smokescreen, and imaginary constraint). The two strongest definitions are (i) as a constraining, independent variable - where the EU imposes policy orientations on national governments - eg in public services and industrial policy, and (ii) as a source of policy transfer and learning - where states look to other EU member states for policy ideas. The other two uses of Europeanization - as “smokescreen” and imaginary constraint - paradoxically empower EU governments by giving them manoeuvring room to make politically difficult domestic reforms under the cover of the EU. For example, French governments used the European Monetary Union convergence criteria to justify domestically sensitive reforms to pension and welfare schemes. These uses focus on the manipulation of Europeanization in political discourse.⁴ Harmsen and Wilson identify as many as eight distinct, if partially overlapping, senses of the term “Europeanization” in current usage. Most of these senses are dependent variables, or *effects*, of other phenomena, such as European integration, democratisation or modernisation.⁵ The

⁴ Cole and Drake, “The Europeanization of the French Polity”, pp.39-41.

⁵ See Cole and Drake, “The Europeanization of the French Polity”; and Harmsen and Wilson, “Approaches to Europeanization”, in Harmsen and Wilson (eds), *Europeanization*, pp.13-18.

concept of Europeanization is thus beset by different uses of the term and ambiguities about independent and dependent variables. I would group these different usages and varied meanings of the concept “Europeanization” into a taxonomy of five categories.

(A) National Adaptation

One of the oldest and most widely received conceptions of Europeanization is by Robert Ladrech, who defines Europeanization in terms of **national adaptation** to EU membership:

An incremental process *reorienting* the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making.⁶

This “reorientation” or national adaptation school of Europeanization championed by Ladrech suggests that Europeanization is a top-down process introducing change from the supranational/European level to the national level in decision-making politics. This school understands Europeanization as a process in which “Europe, and especially the EU, becomes an increasingly more relevant and important point of political reference for the actors at the level of the member-states.”⁷ It is *not* however (to use neo-functional language on integration and convergence) a Haasian process that follows a self-perpetuating integrationist logic, where political actors in Europe “shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states,”⁸ and where the end result is a supranational state. In other words, Europeanization as understood by Ladrech is a process in which the state is reactive, and where the state adapts and makes adjustments in its domestic politics and policy in **compliance with the constraints and requirements** of European institutions. Similarly, Sonia Mazey and Jeremy Richardson, Kenneth Hanf and Ben Soedentorp, have all understood Europeanization as an incremental process of adjustment and adaptation reorienting Member States’ politics and policies towards the EU.⁹

⁶ Robert Ladrech, “Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The case of France”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* (hereafter *JCMS*) 32/1, 1994, p.69. Italics added.

⁷ Hanf and Soedentorp, “Small States and the Europeanization of public policy”, p.1.

⁸ Ernst Haas, “International Integration: The European and Universal Process”, *International Organisation*, Autumn 1961.

⁹ Mazey and Richardson, “EU policy-making: a garbage can or an anticipatory and consensual policy style?” in Mény, Muller and Quermonne (eds), *Adjusting to Europe; the Impact of the European Union on National Institutions and Policies*, London: Routledge, 1996, pp.44-45; Hanf and Soedentorp, “Small States and the Europeanization of public policy”, pp.1-9.

Christian Lequesne's detailed study of the iterative process of French EU policy-making and the interaction between Paris and Brussels also makes an argument for the national (in this case, French government's) reorientation of domestic politics and structures.¹⁰ Focusing on the institutions of the EU and joint policy-making in the EU framework between Brussels and the national governments, Lequesne and writers like Alain Guyomarch have suggested an incremental "iterative process" of Europeanization in the national administrations as governments adapt their mechanisms and practices of policy-making in politics, administration and law.¹¹ Incrementalism and "muddling through" are the main processes in this model of Europeanization. Adaptations are *ad hoc* and there is no thought-out, coherent plan. Moreover, the extent and nature of the EU influence depends on endogenous factors in the member-states which affect their capacity to adapt.¹² National institutions may clash with, or conform to, European integration; in particular, their capacity to accommodate, refract or resist pressures for change are key to understanding distinct national and sectoral trajectories of Europeanization.¹³

(B) National Projection

In contrast to the national adaptation school of Europeanization, a bottom-up understanding of Europeanization is also common currency. In this conception, which I will call the "**national projection**" school, nation-states are the primary actors and agents of change rather than passive subjects. Alan Milward argues that the early construction of the EU was achieved by, and contributed towards, the post-war construction of European nation-states. European integration was viewed as a means and vehicle for the achievement of nationally defined goals.¹⁴ For Simon Bulmer and Martin Burch, Europeanization is a process of "seeking to export domestic policy models, ideas and details to the EU."¹⁵ In the place of a reactive state being constrained

¹⁰ Christian Lequesne, *Paris-Bruxelles: Comment se fait la politique européenne de la France*, Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1993.

¹¹ Alain Guyomarch, "The Europeanization of Policy-Making", in Guyomarch et al (eds), *Developments in French Politics*, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001, pp. 116-136; Guyomarch, Machin, and Ritchie (eds), *France in the European Union*, London: Macmillan Press, 1998; also Keeler and Schain (eds), *Chirac's Challenge: Liberalization, Europeanization and Malaise in France*, New York: St Martin's, 1996.

¹² Hanf and Soedentorp, *Adapting to European Integration*, p.188.

¹³ Goetz and Hix (eds), *Europeanised Politics? European Integration and National Political Systems*, London: Frank Cass, 2001.

¹⁴ Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, London: Routledge, 2000.

¹⁵ Simon Bulmer and Martin Burch, *The Europeanization of Central Government: The UK and Germany in Historical Institutional Perspective*, Oslo: ARENA Working Paper 99/30, 1999, p.6.

to change its policy-making processes, this notion of Europeanization sees the state as being pro-active in *projecting* its preferences, policy ideas and models to the European Union. This conception of Europeanization shares many similarities with rational-choice, interest-based accounts of national preferences and national élites using the EU as an instrument to further national interests.¹⁶ It especially strikes a chord with Gaullist accounts of French “leadership” in EFP and Europe as a “power multiplier” for French diplomacy.

The “national projection” school of Europeanization at first glance provides a countervailing antithesis to the national adaptation/policy convergence school. The latter fails to appreciate the roles played by member states themselves – especially the larger and more powerful ones, in fashioning EU structures and policies. These states, in “projecting” their national policies and policy styles onto the larger European structure, “Europeanise” their previously national priorities and strategies and create a dialectical relationship.¹⁷ By exporting their preferences and models onto EU institutions, they in effect generalize previously national policies onto a larger European stage. This has several benefits. First, the state increases its international influence. Second, the state potentially reduces the risks and costs of pursuing a controversial or negative policy (eg sanctions) against an extra-European power. As some scholars have noted, even small states within the European Union may pursue integration as a way of “formalizing, regulating and perhaps limiting the consequences of interdependence.”¹⁸ At any rate, a strong European presence in the world is potentially beneficial to all in increasing individual member states’ international influence.¹⁹ Other scholars have argued that Germany “Europeanised” its low-deficit, fiscally disciplined macro-economic policies into the EMU convergence criteria, that the UK Europeanised its sanctions on Argentina during the Falklands conflict in 1982, and that France projected its institutions into the early EC and its predecessor, the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community.²⁰ These examples also suggest that foreign policy-making is as susceptible

¹⁶ Andrew Moravcsik, “Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach”, *JCMS* 31/3, 1993.

¹⁷ See Guyomarch et al, *France in the European Union*, London: Macmillan Press, 1998.

¹⁸ Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, London: Routledge, 2000, p.19.

¹⁹ Elfriede Regelsberger et al (eds), *Foreign Policy of the European Union: From EPC to CFSP and Beyond*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1997, p.4.

²⁰ Lisa Martin, *Coercive Cooperation: Explaining Multilateral Economic Sanctions*, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992; Machin, “Introduction”, in Hall, Hayward and Machin (eds), *Developments in French Politics*, revised ed., London: Macmillan, 1994, p.1

to Europeanization as domestic policy, politics and processes, ie. foreign policy is *not* a special case immune to Europeanization pressures on member states.

(C) Identity Reconstruction

A third meaning of Europeanization refers to the **reconstruction of identities** in contemporary Europe. This usage is predominantly employed by anthropologists and social constructivists. Borneman and Fowler define Europeanization “as a strategy of self-representation and a device of power” which is “fundamentally reorganizing territoriality and peoplehood, the two principles of group identification that have shaped the modern European order.”²¹ Studies of this type of Europeanization have focused on the redefinition and negotiation of identities within EU institutions such as the European Commission and the European Parliament.²² They envisage a teleological movement: the fading away of Member States’ monopoly on the loyalties of their citizens over the long term, to the benefit of *European* attitudes and objectives. This meaning of Europeanization is akin to neo-functionalist theory in stressing a gradual transfer of identity and affective affiliation towards a new supranational Europe.²³ The identity reconstruction thesis finds echoes in the old Deutschian idea of political communities. Europeanization here is transnationalism and cultural integration.

Élite socialization is a phenomenon frequently associated with national officials attached to the Commission and other EU institutions in Brussels. Research undertaken in recent years by Jakob Øhrgaard, M.E. Smith and Kenneth Glarbo suggest that officials are increasingly thinking in “European” rather than “national” terms. Irène Bellier’s anthropological study of European Commission officials suggests that these officials were exhibiting traits of cultural ‘hybridisation’ whereby their ‘national being’ was becoming a ‘European being’.²⁴ Most scholars agree that intense and repeated contacts have socialised not only EU officials, but also national officials working in EU institutions. Even national diplomacies are becoming more “European” and displaying

²¹ J. Borneman and N. Fowler, “Europeanization”, in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 26, 1997, p.487, as quoted in Harmsen and Wilson, p.17.

²² See I. Bellier and T.M. Wilson, “Building, Imagining and Experiencing Europe: Institutions and Identities in the European Union”, in *An Anthropology of the European Union*, Oxford: Berg, 2000.

²³ Ernst Haas, “International Integration: The European and Universal Process”.

²⁴ Irène Bellier, “A Europeanised Elite? An Anthropology of EC officials”, in Harmsen and Wilson (eds), *Europeanization*, pp.149-150.

a “coordination reflex” in foreign policy-making.²⁵ Hill and Wallace point out the potential transformational effects of élite socialization within this complex network:

From the perspective of a diplomat in the foreign ministry of a member state, styles of operating and communication have been transformed. The COREU telex network, EPC working groups, joint declarations, joint reporting, even the beginning of staff exchanges among foreign ministries and shared embassies: all these have moved the conduct of foreign policy away from the old nation-state sovereignty model towards a collective endeavor, a form of high-level networking with transformationalist effects and even more potential.²⁶

Whether or not national officials have indeed been “localized” or “captured” by EU interests to think “European” rather than “national”, most studies indicate that officials in Brussels work with *both* the national and the European interest in mind. In their study of the impact of the EU on Irish officials, Laffan and Tannam note that “public officials are no longer just agents of the Irish state; they are participants in an evolving polity which provides opportunities for political action but also imposes constraints on their freedom of action.”²⁷ Research in this school suggests convergence as “prolonged participation in the CFSP feeds back into EU member states and reorients their foreign policy cultures along similar lines.” The main agents for convergence include élite socialisation, bureaucratic reorganization, and an institutionalised “imperative of concertation.”²⁸

(D) Modernization

A fourth meaning of Europeanization is the political, economic and social **modernization** set in motion by prospective membership in the European Union. This sense of Europeanization is often applied to economically less developed states on the geographical “periphery” of Western Europe as they are being brought into the “core” through EU membership. This modernisation meaning of Europeanization is common in

²⁵ Via the COREU (*correspondance européenne*) telex network, working groups in Brussels, policy coordination in New York and other capitals among European embassies, ‘Gymnich’ meetings between foreign ministers, etc. Aside from Nuttall, see Kenneth Glarbo, “Wide-awake Diplomacy: Reconstructing the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union”, in *JCMC* 6/4, 1999; and Jakob Øhrgaard, “Less than Supranational, More than Intergovernmental: European Political Cooperation and the Dynamics of Intergovernmental Integration”, *Millennium* 26/1, 1997.

²⁶ Hill and Wallace, “Introduction: Actors and Actions”, in Christopher Hill (ed), *The Actors in Europe’s Foreign Policy*, London: Routledge, 1996, p.6.

²⁷ Bridgid Laffan and Etain Tannam, “Ireland: The Rewards of Pragmatism”, in Hanf and Soedentorp (eds), *Adapting to European Integration*, p.69.

²⁸ M.E. Smith, “Conforming to Europe: The Domestic Impact of EU Foreign Policy Co-operation”, *JEPP* 7/4, October 2000, p.614 and K. Glarbo, “Wide-awake Diplomacy: Reconstructing the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union”, in *JEPP* 6/4, 1999, p.650.

works on Ireland, Greece, Spain and Portugal.²⁹ Similarly, the term is also taken to mean “joining Europe” and applied to the candidate Central and Eastern European countries in the context of EU enlargement. This applies to the adoption of a West European state model and involves the firm anchoring of democratic institutions and market economies. Ágh has however suggested a variation of the concept of Europeanization as describing a successfully completed process of transition in which some or all of the candidate countries become fully integrated into the entire range of West European integration and Trans-Atlantic cooperation.³⁰

(E) Policy Isophormism

Policy isophormism is a fifth and final meaning of Europeanization. Arising as a logical by-product of advanced policy adaptation and convergence (School A) and socialization (School C), this variant is concerned with the degree of convergence in substantive policy areas. Claudio Radaelli has suggested that the Europeanization of policy has two dimensions. On one hand there is the “direct” Europeanization of various areas of public policy to the extent that regulatory competence has passed from the member states to the European Union. On the other hand, there has been an “indirect” Europeanization where member states begin to emulate one another regarding particular policy choices or policy frameworks.³¹ Advocates of this school of Europeanization as isomorphism draw on the work of Dimaggio and Powell from the 1980s, arguing that over time, particular organizational forms or policy choices come to be perceived as ‘legitimate’ by the actors concerned, to the exclusion of other choices. Radaelli, Lodge and others currently argue that in the present context, the type of intensive transnational cooperation fostered by European integration may lead to the

²⁹ See B. O’Leary, “Towards Europeanisation and Realignment?: The Irish General Election, February 1987”, in *West European Politics* 10/3, 1987, pp.455-465; K. Featherstone, “‘Europeanization’ and the Centre-Periphery: The Case of Greece in the 1990s”, in *South European Politics and Society*, 2/1, 1998, pp.23-39; David Corkill, *The Development of the Portuguese Economy: A Case of Europeanization*, London and New York: Routledge, 1999; Kostas A. Lavdas, *The Europeanization of Greece: Interest Politics and the Crisis of Integration*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997.

³⁰ A. Ágh, *The Politics of Central Europe*, London: Sage, 1998, pp.42-45; and “Europeanization of Policy-making in East Central Europe: The Hungarian Approach to EU accession”, *Journal of European Public Policy (JEPP)* 6/5, 1999, pp.839-854. For Ágh, Europeanization is a positive condition contrasted with three less desirable ones: ‘Germanization’, ‘Turkization’, and ‘Yugoslavization’.

³¹ Claudio Radaelli, “How does Europeanization Produce Domestic Policy Change?: Corporate Tax Policy in Italy and the United Kingdom”, *Comparative Political Studies*, 30/5, 1997, pp.553-575. See also his “Policy Transfer in the European Union: Institutional Isomorphism as a Source of Legitimacy”, in *An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, 13/1, 1997, pp.25-43; and M. Lodge, “Isomorphism of National Policies? The ‘Europeanization’ of German Competition and Public Procurement Law”, in *West European Politics*, 23/1, 2000, pp.89-107.

emergence of such shared senses of legitimate (and illegitimate) choices. However this is a contested phenomenon and the empirical evidence has been at best inconclusive.³²

Table 2.1 Five Schools of Thought on Europeanization

Schools of Thought on Europeanization	Direction of Change / Related Processes	Major proponents
National Adaptation (A)	Top-down/Globalisation, policy convergence	Ladrech (94), Kassim (2000), Cole and Drake (2000), Lequesne (94)
National Projection (B)	Bottom-up and sideways/ Policy projection, Policy learning, Policy transfer	Bulmer and Burch (99) Moravcsik (93), Guyomarch, Machin & Ritchie (98)
Identity Reconstruction (C)	Top-down/Elite socialization	M.E. Smith (2000), Hill & Wallace (96), Nuttall (92,2000), Ørregaard (97), Zielonka (98), de Schoutheete (86)
Modernisation (D)	Top-down/Democratisation, Economic Development, 'Westernisation'	Agh (95, 98, 99), Corkill (99), K. Featherstone (98)
Policy Isophormism (E)	Top-down and sideways/Policy learning, emulation and transfer	Radaelli (1997, 2000), Lodge (2000)

II Conceptualising National and European Foreign Policy

Definitional Starting Points

Before assessing the applicability of Europeanization in foreign policy, it is first necessary to define what we mean by foreign policy in the context of an EU member state which takes part in a complex European foreign policy-making mechanism. The notion of a "foreign policy" is problematic as it often carries with it the conceptual assumptions of the state-centred view of world politics. Although the international system is populated by important non-state actors, the dominant paradigm in international relations still conceives of foreign policy as essentially the *domaine réservé* of sovereign governments and therefore exclusive to states. One of the most comprehensive definitions of "foreign policy" in the international relations literature, by KJ Holsti, characterises foreign policy as "ideas or actions designed by policy makers to solve a problem or promote some change in the policies, attitudes, or actions of another state or states, in nonstate actors, in the international economy, or in the physical

³² Harmsen and Wilson, p.15.

environment of the world”.³³ For David Allen, the essence of foreign policy is often understood as the definition of national ends, objectives or interests, and the pursuit of these interests. Foreign policy is therefore seen as “an attempt to design, manage and control the external activities of a state so as to protect and advance agreed and reconciled objectives.”³⁴

The main problem with using either notion of “foreign policy” is that the EU is *not* a unified state actor with identifiable “European interests”. Despite habits of policy consultation and coordination through EPC since 1970, the EU is still a “flexible and disaggregated series of patterns, arrangements and institutions which express a collective yet pluralistic identity, and of which others are increasingly aware”.³⁵ If in this essay we use a working definition of foreign policy as “actions and ideas designed by policy makers of an *international actor* (rather than state actor) to promote a change in the attitudes of other actors or in the environment”, we will be justified in characterizing the EU as a significant international actor which not only makes foreign policy, but also exerts a significant influence on world politics, whether in interactions with other states,³⁶ regional or international organizations from ASEAN to the UN³⁷, or international regimes like the WTO.³⁸

“EU foreign policy” (EFP) is thus a much more encompassing concept than the narrow focus of intergovernmental politico-diplomatic activities under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which was established by the Maastricht Treaty and succeeded European Political Cooperation (EPC) in 1993. As the EU is not a single unified actor, “EU foreign policy”³⁹ (EFP) will be understood in this essay as the sum and interaction of the “three strands” of what Christopher Hill calls Europe’s “**external**

³³ K.J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, 6th edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992, p.82.

³⁴ David Allen, “Who speaks for Europe?”, in Petersen, John and Sjørnsen (eds), *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe?*, London and New York: Routledge, 1998, pp.43-44.

³⁵ David Allen and Michael Smith, “Western Europe’s Presence in the International Arena”, in *Review of International Studies*, 16, 1990, p.23.

³⁶ John Peterson, *Europe and America: The Prospects for Partnership*, New York and London, 1996.

³⁷ David Allen, Reinhardt Rummel and Wolfgang Wessels, *European Political Cooperation: Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe*, London: Butterworth Scientific, 1982.

³⁸ See Youri Devuyt, “The European Community and the Conclusion of the Uruguay Round”, in Rhodes, Carolyn and Mazey, Sonia (eds) *The State of the European Union: Building a European Polity?*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1995.

³⁹ This term is adapted from Roy H. Ginsberg’s “European foreign policy” in his article, “Conceptualising the European Union as an international Actor: Narrowing the Capability-Expectations Gap”, in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 37/3, Sep 1999, pp.429-454.

relations system", comprising: (a) the national foreign policies of the member states, (b) EC external trade relations, and (c) the CFSP.⁴⁰ National foreign policies have of course always existed side by side with, sometimes in competition to collective EC/EU policies, eg on issues as diverse as dealing with the US, Russia, the Middle East, nuclear disarmament, UN reform and WTO negotiations. On the economic front, the record of Community policies (mainly economic and trade policies) has generally been a success while the record of politico-security policies under EPC/CFSP has been mixed. Whatever the record in each area, it is clearly perceived that "Europe' does act in various issue areas...Europeans also act variously as individuals, groups and nations, and are sometimes taken by outsiders to be representative of Europe as a whole".⁴¹

State-centric and European- Idealist conceptions of European Foreign Policy

Although the case for the EU's actorness is persuasive, the lack of a coherent "European" foreign policy has often been attributed to the absence of a centralized decision-making state-like executive. EFP decisions are often arrived at as compromises between national foreign policies of member states. As such, European foreign policy as a subject of enquiry up till the end of the 1990s tended to be either dismissed out of hand by realists as non-existent, or idealised teleologically as an inevitable end-product of European integration, quite divorced from the realities of persistent (and often divergent) national foreign policies. Within European foreign policy studies, one school sees Member States as the principal actors while another emphasises the role of supranational institutions (eg. the Commission) and the emergence of a "European interest"- a kind of pan-European national interest. Neither school has developed good causal theories of EU foreign policy because they tend to be highly normative and to advocate positions on what the EU should be rather than what the EU is actually doing in world politics.

The study of the foreign policy of EU member states is thus split into two rival camps. In one camp is the traditional approach, focusing on the foreign policy of individual member states as rational, selfish and purposive actors – let us call this the "state-centric" school. Such has been the dominance of this approach in the study of

⁴⁰ Christopher Hill, "The Capability-Expectations Gap", pp.321-324.

⁴¹ Christopher Hill, "Convergence, Divergence and Dialectics: National Foreign Policies and the CFSP", in Jan Zielonka (ed), *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1998, p.36.

French and British foreign policies that in the case of France, it has resulted in the overwhelming “Gaullist” paradigm covered in chapter one.⁴² The “hard” position in this tradition claims that states are the only essential and salient actors. Any study of EU foreign policy is thus unproductive as the “real” Europe is the one of state governments. As Hedley Bull claimed in 1983, “‘Europe’ is not an actor in international affairs, and does not seem likely to become one.”⁴³ Bull felt that only an independent European nuclear deterrent and military power (represented by a West European military alliance led by France and Britain) would give Europe a real capability in foreign affairs. Of course, Bull’s assessment was coloured by the escalating Cold War tensions of the 1980s between the USSR and Reagan’s USA, but Bull’s prognosis for a European military capability independent of the US and NATO is still shared by many states (chiefly France and to a lesser extent Britain)⁴⁴ and individuals today.

Not all scholars in the state-centric tradition dismiss the EU as a serious international actor because of its lack of state-like qualities, nor do they agree with Bull’s military-security conclusion. Neorealist intergovernmentalists privilege the centrality of the state while acknowledging the EU’s influence, albeit only as a forum in which governments meet periodically to negotiate new contracts that enhance their interests and power. Miles concludes that the EU merely represents an advanced forum for negotiations at intergovernmental conferences (IGCs).⁴⁵ The “Harvard approach” of liberal intergovernmentalism, represented by Andrew Moravcsik, believes that the member states can raise the common interest in EU policy-making. It has a materialist and rationalist bias in its stress on “interstate bargain”, deals and side-payments between Member States’ governments who at certain times come to common agreements when their preferences converge. In this conception, decisions at the European level are

⁴² Stanley Hoffmann 66, 99, 2000; Alfred Grosser, *Affaires Extérieures: La Politique de la France 1944-1989*, Paris: Flammarion, 1989; Philip Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993; Roy MacRidies, “France: the Quest for Rank”, in *Foreign Policy in World Politics*, 8th ed., Englewoods Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1992; Frédéric Bozo, *Politique Etrangère de la France depuis 1945*, Paris, 1998.

⁴³ Hedley Bull, “Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, in *JCMS* 21, 1983, p.151.

⁴⁴ See Louis Gautier, “L’Europe de la défense au portant, in *Politique Etrangère*, 2/99 (Summer 1999), and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, “Joint Declaration by the British and French Governments on European Defence”, Anglo-French Summit, London, 25 November 1999.

⁴⁵ L. Miles, “Integration Theory and Enlargement of the European Union”, in Rhodes and Mazey (eds), *The State of the European Union, Vol.3: Building a European Polity?*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995.

viewed as “conventional statecraft” between sovereign states- the key actors in all EU activities.⁴⁶

In the other camp - which I will call “European-idealist”⁴⁷ - is the perspective which treats European Foreign Policy as a given, ie. as a foreign policy that already exists, has a consistent personality that makes an impact on world politics, and is taken seriously by other actors.⁴⁸ While this approach does not deny the continued importance of individual Member States’ foreign policies and accepts that EFP will not supplant national foreign policies any time soon - especially in defence and security matters - it often presumes that EFP’s scope will expand eventually to subsume national policies in almost all other functional areas.⁴⁹ Walter Carlsnaes and Steve Smith in 1994 made the bold prediction that the essentially “multilayered character” of the new Europe would mean that “differentiated as to function, and maybe implicitly acknowledging suzerainty-like hierarchies, they will develop kinds of diplomatic relations and foreign policies that we best anticipate by reading about ‘proto diplomacy’ in Der Derian’s *On Diplomacy* (1987) and by searching even further away in time and space – among the empires of antiquity, the Chinese and Indian diplomatic traditions...”.⁵⁰

The European-idealist perspective downplays the realist emphasis on state power and national interests, and privileges instead the role of supranational European institutions in building a common “European” identity, and a distinctive moral presence in world politics. François Duchêne, the first major spokesman in this school, envisaged the EU as a “civilian power”, a kind of “soft power” which wields civilian instruments on behalf of a collectivity which has renounced the use of force among its

⁴⁶ Andrew Moravcsik, “Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interest and Conventional Statecraft”, in Hoffmann and Keohane (eds), *The New European Community: Decisionmaking and Institutional Change*, 1991, pp.1-40.

⁴⁷ Some of the writers cited may object to being labeled idealist, and may think of themselves as progressive realists instead. Here, I am using “European-idealist” in the sense of believing in, arguing for and advocating a coherent and powerful European actor in international politics in place of a Europe of nation states.

⁴⁸ See Hazel Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy*, London: Pluto, 2002; Simon Nuttall’s *European Foreign Policy*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. and *European Political Cooperation*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992; Carlsnaes and Smith (eds), *European Foreign Policy: The EC and Changing Perspectives in Europe*, London: Sage, 1994; Jan Zielonka, *Explaining Euro-Paralysis*, London: Macmillan Press, 1998; Brian White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001; Hazel Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy: What it is and what it does*, London: Pluto Press, 2002.

⁴⁹ See Michael E. Smith, “Conforming to Europe: The Domestic Impact of EU Foreign Policy Cooperation”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 7/4, October 2000, pp.613-631.

⁵⁰ Carlsnaes and Smith, p.271.

members and encourages others to do likewise.⁵¹ Taking as their starting point Duchêne's premise that the EU should and can become a "civilian power" and a model of reconciliation and peace for other regions in the world, European-idealists posit that EU foreign policy should focus on the promotion of democracy, human rights, and security cooperation. Many have advocated the German model of using economic leverage focusing on issues such as environmental concerns and open trading rather than military power as the way forward for the EU after the Cold War. Karen Smith lists propaganda, diplomacy and economic instruments as three of the four instruments (excluding military) that the EU could and should exploit as a civilian power.⁵² Taking the goal of pedagogy a step farther, Romano Prodi has advocated a role for Europe as a civilizing force in world politics, and for Europe "to lead and set an example to other peoples and races".⁵³ Acknowledging that the European Union may never possess a common defence policy, Richard Rosecrance has suggested that the EU has unparalleled foreign policy strengths as an "attractive power" at the pivotal point between overlapping international clubs.⁵⁴

Attempts since the early 1980s to bridge this divide have focused almost entirely on comparing individual member-states' foreign policies, albeit *within* the framework of the EPC/CFSP.⁵⁵ Manners and Whitman argue that there is something "distinctive" about the foreign policies of EU member states. These states' foreign policies are made under opportunities and constraints qualitatively different from that of the US, hence a distinctive foreign policy analysis method to study EU member states' foreign policies is necessary.⁵⁶ It clearly matters if a state is a member of the EU or not; relations between that state and the EU (and its member states and its policies, eg. the Common Agricultural Policy) can pass overnight from being "foreign" to domestic policy.

⁵¹ François Duchêne, "The European Community and the uncertainties of Interdependence", in Max Kohnstamm and Wolfgang Hager (eds), *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign-Policy Problems before the European Community*, London: Macmillan, 1973. On soft power, see Keohane and Nye, "Power and Interdependence in the Information Age", in *Foreign Affairs* Sep-Oct 1998, pp.81-94.

⁵² Hans Maull, "Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers:", *Foreign Affairs*, 69 (1990-91), pp.91-106; Karen E Smith, "The Instruments of European Union Foreign Policy", in Zielonka (ed), *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1998.

⁵³ Romano Prodi, *Europe As I See It*, Oxford: Blackwell/Polity Press, 2000, p.34.

⁵⁴ Richard Rosecrance, "EU: A New Type of International Actor", in Jan Zielonka, ed., *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, London: Kluwer Law International, 1998.

⁵⁵ Hill 1983 and 1996; Peterson and Sjurgen 1998.

⁵⁶ Manners and Whitman, p.3.

Foreign Policy Analysis and Europeanization

Instead of getting bogged down in the debate of whether foreign policy can really exist for the EU as a non-state actor, and how to identify and evaluate a debatable “policy”, it may be more fruitful to conceptualise EFP in terms of a *process*, and of the EU’s actorness, presence and impact in international affairs (going back to Holsti’s definition of ideas or actions aimed at making changes in the environment). In this regard, the two concepts indispensable to the study of European foreign policy are *actorness* and *presence*.⁵⁷ Sjösted argued that the EU is an international actor in its own rights because it is an entity, which (a) is delimited from others, and from its environment; (b) is autonomous in the sense of making its own laws and decisions; and (c) possesses certain structural prerequisites for action on the international level.⁵⁸ The second concept is that of Western Europe’s *presence* in international affairs. Although the precise qualities (and indeed composition!) of “Western Europe” have remained obstinately resistant to definition or analysis and EFP is produced in a messy manner, the reality is that there is a cohesive European impact on international relations.⁵⁹ The EU has a “variable and multi-dimensional presence” in international relations. The two concepts are inextricably linked, as “actorness” is at least partly defined by presence in an issue-area or domain of activity. Thus the EU is an actor in issues ranging from China’s WTO membership, to the NPT and Human Rights charter, NATO expansion, and the plight of refugees from wars in Africa, Asia, or the Middle East. The EU is present and active both as an actor in itself and through its member states at both bilateral and multilateral discussions and negotiations on these issues.

A decision-making model of EFP could be used as a heuristic device to capture the process of EFP decision-making in the EU.⁶⁰ John Peterson has advocated a *foreign policy analysis* (FPA) approach to studying European foreign policy, that is, the study of *policy-making* with attention paid to the relationship between the decision-making process and policy outcome.⁶¹ As part of a larger movement in international relations which rejects the search for general “macro-theories” like those of the idealist and

⁵⁷ See Hill, “The Capability-Expectations Gap”.

⁵⁸ G Sjöstedt., *The External Role of the European Community*, Farnborough: Saxon House, 1977.

⁵⁹ David Allen and Michael Smith, “Western Europe’s Presence in the International Arena”, in *Review of International Studies*, 16, 1990, pp.19-37.

⁶⁰ Roy H. Ginsberg, “Narrowing the Capability-Expectations Gap”, pp.433-435, which presents an agent-structure model inspired by David Easton’s classic work on governmental decision-making.

⁶¹ John Peterson, “Decision-making in the European Union: Towards a Framework for Analysis” *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2(1), 1995, pp. 69-93.

realist schools, in favour of middle-range theories, Peterson's FPA approach finds echoes in Simon Nuttall's historical institutionalist account of EPC and Christopher Hill's 1996 study of the actors (national actors and the Commission) in Europe's foreign policy. A policy-making approach could be useful in conceptualising EU foreign policy because EFP is *not* a coherent policy in the EU, but a multi-faceted, multi-level process with multiple decision-makers at the national, supranational and sub-national levels.

Europeanization theorists argue that over time, there has been a "dissipation of the national" in favour of the European. For example, Kassim argues that the French state has recognized that it has limited autonomy in many policy areas, and accepted a considerable degree of Europeanization in economic, fiscal and trade policy.⁶² EMU is the clearest example of this trend.

Ben Tonra defines Europeanization in foreign policy as "...a transformation in the way in which national foreign policies are constructed, in the ways in which professional roles are defined and pursued and in the consequent internalisation of norms and expectations arising from a complex system of collective European policy making".⁶³ This "transformation" usually translates as adaptation to EU norms and standards. In the 2000 volume edited by Manners and Whitman on the foreign policies of the 15 EU member states, "Europeanization" was equated by many scholars to mean "adaptation" (School A) although the editors did not specifically use the term in this context.⁶⁴ It did however characterize Europeanization as an "incremental process orienting Member States' politics and policies towards the EU".⁶⁵ Manners and Whitman conclude that "member states conduct all but the most limited foreign policy objectives inside an EU context".⁶⁶ If this generalization is true, then the foreign policies of EU states must, with the cumulative weight of the *acquis* of EPC/CFSP/CESDP – to name but one of the three arenas of each member state's participation in EFP – increasingly show some discernible impact on the foreign

⁶² See Hussein Kassim "French Autonomy and the European Union", in *Modern and Contemporary France* 5(2), 1997, p.167; and Martin Marcussen et al, "Constructing Europe?", pp.614-615.

⁶³ Ben Tonra, "Denmark and Ireland", in Manners and Whitman, (eds), *The Foreign Policies of European Union Member States*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, p.229.

⁶⁴ Manners and Whitman, p.245.

⁶⁵ Manners and Whitman, p.245.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.271.

policies of these states. I would argue that the logical extension of the Manners and Whitman thesis is foreign policy *convergence* (both in substance and in process) over the long term, although the process may suffer periodic setbacks and reversals.

III Applying Europeanization Theory to National Foreign Policy

Is French foreign policy too Gaullist to be Europeanised? Stanley Hoffmann, observing the reassertion of nationalist sentiment in the EC by de Gaulle's France in the 1960s, made the realist claim that states remained the basic units in world politics,⁶⁷ and that France today remains fiercely jealous and protective of its foreign policy independence.⁶⁸ Intergovernmentalists like Hoffmann privilege the role of national governments in defining their national interests independently of the EU, and then bringing these interests to the table for negotiation. Andrew Moravcsik, the chief scholar arguing for liberal intergovernmentalists, argues that "the primary source of (European) integration lies in the interests of the states themselves and the relative power each brings to Brussels".⁶⁹ The key actors are governmental élites and the motivation for integration is the preservation of executive capacity at the national level, *not* its erosion:

The EC provides information to governments that is not generally available...National leaders undermine potential opposition by reaching bargains in Brussels first and presenting domestic groups with an 'up or down' choice...Greater domestic agenda-setting power in the hands of national political leaders increases the ability of governments to reach agreements by strengthening the ability of governments to gain domestic ratification for compromises or tactical issue linkages.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Stanley Hoffmann, "Obstinate or Obsolete? The fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe", *Dædalus*, summer 1966.

⁶⁸ See Hoffmann's "La France dans le Monde 1979-2000", in *Politique Etrangère*, 2/2000, 2000, pp.307-317; and "France: Two Obsessions for One Century", in Robert Pastor (ed), *A Century's Journey: How the Great Powers Shape the World*, New York: Perseus Books, 1999.

⁶⁹ Andrew Moravcsik, "Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interest and Conventional Statecraft", in Hoffmann and Keohane (eds), *The New European Community: Decisionmaking and Institutional Change*, 1991, p.75. Intergovernmentalism is thus in many regards in line with rationalistic institutionalism, the second major approach to the study of international institutions, which stresses the importance of states as the main actors. See Robert Keohane, "International Institutions: Two approaches" in *International Institutions and State Power*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1989

⁷⁰ Andrew Moravcsik, "Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach", *JCMS*, 31/3, 1993, p.515.

Noting the emergence of “two cultures” competing for control of the European foreign policy-making process, David Allen opined that the culture of Commission control had been set back by the Treaty of Amsterdam, which privileged Council control. The EPC had been devised essentially along the lines of the Gaullist Fouchet Plan, to prevent Brussels from becoming a foreign policy centre and to keep foreign policy as a *national* competence within the Council. Even so, the “Brusselsisation”⁷¹ (steady enhancement of Brussels based decision-making bodies) of foreign policy shows no sign of abating, and France has not been immune to this process.

Europeanization theory (especially School C) privileges the role played by European institutions in changing the interests, politics and policy-making of its member states over time into a more convergent whole. In this sense, it shares insights and assumptions with sociological institutionalism, which suggests that “the EU’s common policies, or *acquis politiques*, have encouraged new conceptions of interest and identity among its member states”.⁷² Sociological institutionalists believe that institutions play more than a cost-minimising, information and utility-maximising coordinating role in ensuring reciprocal cooperation for the collective good. The “sociological institutions” in EFP are found in the form of *unwritten* rules, norms and practices, found in both Pillar I and CFSP and include the “Gymnich formula” (foreign ministers’ informal retreat held every six months or so by each Presidency), and the premium placed on consultation and consensus. Sociological studies from the late 1990s indicate that EPC/CFSP institutions have a strong “socialization” effect; élites involved even in the inter-governmental bargaining process of EPC/CFSP show surprising signs of internalising supranational norms and interests, feeding these back to their national capitals.⁷³ Quai d’Orsay officials note that CFSP is today an essential component of French foreign policy formulation. Between 1974 and 1999, over 74 “Gymnich” meetings were held at foreign minister level, ie. an average rate of three times yearly. At the official level, the intense activity of some 30 CFSP Working

⁷¹ David Allen, “Who speaks for Europe?”, in Petersen and Sjørusen (eds), *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe?*, 1998, pp.41-58.

⁷² Michael E. Smith, “Conforming to Europe: the domestic impact of EU foreign policy co-operation”, *JEPP* 7/4, October 2000, p.628.

⁷³ Jakob Ørregaard, “Less than Supranational, More than Intergovernmental: European Political Cooperation and the Dynamics of Intergovernmental Integration”, *Millennium* 26/1, 1997; Irène Bellier, “A Europeanised Elite? An Anthropology of EC officials”, in Harmsen and Wilson (eds), *Europeanization*, pp.149-150.

Groups in Brussels had become an “integral part of French foreign policy”.⁷⁴ EU policy on Asia was coordinated across the three-Pillar structure established by the Maastricht agreement. The French Permanent Representation in Brussels noted that the EU had “amplified” French interest in areas of little traditional French influence in Asia (eg. Nepal, Sri Lanka).⁷⁵ The *process* of formulating CFSP - if not always the results - was becoming Europeanised.

How far does the Europeanization perspective explain recent French foreign policy? We are thus faced with a dichotomy. The Europeanization perspective portrays France as a member state subject to the strains, constraints, opportunities and influences of EU membership as a “member of the club” and obliged to behave and play a certain role in the EFP regime. In contrast, the intergovernmental perspective (with its realist and liberal variants) views France as an independent power driven by its national interests, a state that shapes, influences and sets the pace of European foreign policy, and determines its level of cooperation according to its interests in the issue at hand. The two paradigms and their major characteristics are summarized in [Table 2.2](#).

⁷⁴ Interview with CFSP Director, Quai d’Orsay, Paris, September 1999.

⁷⁵ Interviews with French Ambassador to the Western European Union, Brussels, 27 March 2003; and Commercial Counsellor, French Permanent Representation to the EU, Brussels, 28 March 2003. On EU policy towards Asia, officials from the 15 EU Member States meet twice a month to discuss Commercial policy (Pillar I) in the “Article 133 committee”; Asia Directors from the national capitals meet once a month for Pillar II (CFSP) discussions; the Justice and Home Affairs (Pillar III) committee meets twice every 6 months. Asia is sometimes also discussed in the COPs (comité politique et sécuritaire) which meets twice a week (Tuesday and Friday). For details on the working groups and committees that report to the Council on Ministers, see Neil Nugent, *The Government and Politics of the European Union*, 1999, Basingstoke: Macmillan, pp.150-152.

Table 2.2 Europeanization versus Intergovernmentalism in the study of National Foreign Policy

	Europeanization Theory	Intergovernmentalism	
		- Realist variant	- Liberal variant
Central variables	Knowledge/learning/roles	Power	Domestic Interests
Role of Institutions	Strong (Sch.A) Medium to Weak (Sch.B)	Weak	Weak
Meta-theoretical orientation	Sociological (Sch.C, A) Rationalistic (Sch.B, D)	Rationalistic	Rationalistic
Behavioural model	Role-player	Concerned with relative gains	Concerned with relative gains
Main actors	European élites, member states (Sch.B), institutions, IOs, interest groups	State	Government élites, domestic interests
Actors' Preferences	Socialised and negotiated (A,C,D,E)	Exogenously given and fixed	Dynamic, rising from processes in national polities

Of course, the table above exaggerates the differences between the two perspectives. The supranational-intergovernmental divide has narrowed considerably today as member states adjust to the increasing Brusselisation of foreign policy making. Britain and France, the two most “independent” member states in the EU, increasingly accept that they can no longer assure their own national defence nor pursue an independent global role today.⁷⁶ Brian White argues that even Britain, the member state traditionally most opposed to European supranational integration and in favour of intergovernmental decision-making in the EU, shows characteristics of moving towards foreign policy decision-making at the European level.⁷⁷

To recapitulate, the five major meanings of Europeanization are: a top-down process of national adaptation (School A), a bottom-up and sideways process of national projection (B), the multidirectional processes of socialization (C) and modernization (D), and policy isophormism (E). The five schools are not mutually exclusive but share many overlapping assumptions about causes, effects and processes. For example, the top-down school of national adaptation (School A) would accept that member states play critical roles in forging “European” policies (School B) in the first place. The

⁷⁶ Christopher Hill, “The Actors Involved: National Perspectives”, in Elfriede Regelsberger et al (eds), *Foreign Policy of the European Union: From EPC to CFSP and Beyond*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1997, pp.92-93.

⁷⁷ Brian White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001, ch.6.

notion of Europeanization thus lacks paradigmatic consistency. Unlike major schools of integration theory such as neo-functionalism or intergovernmentalism. Europeanization does not put forward a series of inter-related premises concerning the dynamic or the end-state of the European integration process. Europeanization is a concept which can be criticized as lacking “core tenets, common to all or most usages of the term, which might serve as the basis for constructing a common paradigmatically defined research agenda.”⁷⁸

The growing currency of Europeanization in recent years could be attributed to the concept’s utility in two areas. First, it evokes parallel and interconnected processes of change at both the national and European levels. The concept recognizes and captures more accurately than the paradigmatic theories the significant changes that are taking place at the national level, fostering at the same time convergence and diversification at various levels of European polities and societies. Second, the concept has a strong focus on the interrelationship of institutions and identities. It shows how institutional change and development may affect identities and interests, as well as how changing identities may create pressures for new institutional forms and modes of behaviour.

The wide range of usages of the term Europeanization in the literature touches on most aspects of political, societal and economic change in Europe today and can be applied to foreign policy analysis. This thesis proposes that three of the five schools of the Europeanization concept outlined in the literature survey at the beginning of this chapter, could be useful in understanding the changes taking place in policy-making in a long-time EU member-state. The dominant usage of Europeanization in the literature is as a dependent variable. For Ladrech, Kassim and other scholars, it is national adaptation to pressures arising from European integration. For Harmsen and Wilson, it is an *effect* on national institutions, identities and citizenship. The primary usage of the Europeanization concept - that of capturing the top-down adaptation of national structures and processes in response to the demands of the EU – is of course critical in testing if national policy-making has indeed been affected by EU membership, and in what ways. Europeanization scholars may debate the institutional forms and distinctive national responses to EU pressures. Some may note that Europeanization as adaptation

⁷⁸ Harmsen and Wilson, “Introduction: Approaches to Europeanization”, in Harmsen and Wilson (eds), *Europeanization*, p.19.

has actually increased divergence within the EU.⁷⁹ Over the longer term however, a sustained period of structural and procedural adaptation would necessarily result in cross-national policy convergence between EU states. Convergence in policy style and content is expected as EU institutions prescribe roles and constrain activities. Coupled with the second and third processes of national projection and identity reconstruction, the overall picture expected is one of converging rather than diverging policy outputs, whatever the differences between national structures, preferences and policy inputs.

The second process, that of the projection of national ideas, preferences and models from the national to the supranational level, can be expected of states which command larger resources, strong domestic pressures or dogged commitment to change or forge a certain EU policy. National preferences are expected to be projected onto the European structure by the more powerful member states which seek to structure EU institutions and policies according to their interests. This was the case of CAP for France and industrial competition for Germany.

Third, Europeanization in its broadest sense of identity and interest convergence so that “European” interests and a European identity begin to take root does not mean that the European will simply supplant the national over time. National identities and interests in Europe have evolved and grown over centuries and will not go away after just a few decades of European integration. However, European identity shapes and is increasingly incorporated into national identities.

We could measure the degree to which a state’s foreign policy has been Europeanized over time according to three criteria:

a) National adaptation/Policy convergence

- Has convergence and/or adaptation of national policy with EU norms and directives taken place?
- Is convergence in substantive policy areas visible in the “direct” Europeanization of public policy where regulatory competence has passed from national capitals to Brussels; or the “indirect” Europeanization where member states learn from one another through transnational cooperation and policy transfer?

⁷⁹ Mazey and Richardson, “EU policy-making: a garbage can or an anticipatory and consensual policy style?” op cit.

- Have national institutional structures and policy-making processes been adapted in response to European integration?
 - b) Projection of national policy onto EU structures (“National projection”)
 - Has the state pushed for its national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?
 - Has the state benefited from the ‘cover’ of the EU?
 - How indispensable is the EU to the achievement of national foreign policy goals?
 - c) Internalisation of ‘Europe’ in national identities (“Identity reconstruction”)
 - Has there been a reshaping or hybridisation of identities which relativises national identities and privileges a European identity?
 - What kinds of European norms have arisen among national officials and how do they apply to foreign policy?

The key Europeanization argument tested in this thesis is that membership in the European Union has had an important impact on French foreign policy and that this impact is increasing in salience. As a top-down process, Europeanization is “the process of change caused by participation over time in foreign policy-making at the European level”⁸⁰. As a bottom-up process, it is the projection of national preferences, ideas and policy models into Europe. A third aspect is the redefinition of national interests and identity in the context of “Europe”. Europeanization is thus a bi-directional process that leads to a negotiated convergence in terms of policy goals, preferences and even identity between the national and the supranational levels.

Conclusions

“Europeanization” in this thesis is understood as a process of foreign policy convergence. It is a dependent variable contingent on the ideas and directives emanating from actors (EU institutions, statesmen, etc) in Brussels, as well as policy ideas and actions from member state capitals (national statesmen). Europeanization is thus identifiable as a process of change manifested as policy *convergence* (both top-down and sideways) as well as national policies amplified as EU policy (bottom-up

⁸⁰ White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*, p.118.

projection). Identity reconstruction (towards a “European” identity) is a closely related effect observable over time.

At times, this convergence could be a raising of the common interest, eg. encouraging the development and consolidation of democracy and human rights abroad by trading and having full political/diplomatic relations with governments that respect minimum human rights standards. At other times, it is the lowest common denominator decision/preference that prevails and becomes EU policy. This could be the case in legitimising one member state’s interests by raising EU protectionist barriers against other trading countries/groups of states.

The resulting EU foreign policy is the end product of not only a series of negotiations between governments, EU (Commission, Council and Parliament) officials and Member State representatives, but also a process of policy learning and emulation between individual member states.

Does the Europeanization hypothesis on convergent pan-European conceptions of interest and identity stand up in the national foreign policies of member states over the last decade? This thesis will study the case of French foreign policy towards three countries in a region of growing economic and political interests to Europe in an attempt to answer this question. The overlapping and inter-related forces of Europeanization (policy convergence, national projection and identity reconstruction) and their expected indicators will be used as a guide in the case studies in chapters four to six. But before we look at individual case studies, the next chapter will examine the broad context of French objectives and involvement in East Asia in the 1990s, and compare that with EU objectives and policies in the East Asia. This will provide us with a preliminary idea of the relationship between the two: ie. whether and to what extent French policy in East Asia is being “Europeanised”, the EU’s Asia policy is being “Gallicised”, or both processes are happening simultaneously and interests are being re-shaped in the context of EFP.

Chapter Three

French and EU objectives in East Asia: *which affects which?*

Chapter One discussed the predominant view of French foreign policy as Gaullist, based on *national* interest, national independence, security and a quest for rank. It asked whether such an approach was applicable in Asia, a region of the world where France ceased to play an important role after 1954, but in which successive Presidents since de Gaulle have tried to project French prestige, if not power, despite low levels of French economic, political and cultural presence. Chapter Two noted that the Gaullist approach exaggerates the policy autonomy of large EU Member States such as France, and suggested Europeanization theory as a credible alternative to this perspective. In the three senses of top-down policy convergence (Europeanization from above), bottom-up policy projection (“Gallicisation” of European foreign policy), or identity socialization (the blurring of distinctions between the “national” and the “European”), Europeanization theory may help to focus on the effects of the European Union on national foreign policies of Member States and vice versa.

Although East Asia is a region of growing interest for French and European foreign policy, the Member States’ national policies towards countries in this region might be considered the “least likely” candidates for Europeanization theory.¹ In effect, habits of cooperation, consultation and coordination on the EU’s policy in the East Asian region are relatively new and not well established. European Foreign Policy is more institutionalised in the EU’s immediate and near-abroad geographical and issue-areas, in particular Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean/Middle East, and external trade (especially negotiations with other trade powers and in WTO). The European Union’s policies in these areas have been the subject of numerous analyses.²

¹ Ref. the three foreign policy Europeanizations of policy convergence, national projection and identity reconstruction, in chapter 2, Part III.

² See Alan Mayhew, *Recreating Europe: the EU Policy towards Central and Eastern Europe*, Cambridge UP, 1998; Heather Grabbe and Kirsty Hughes, *Eastward Enlargement of the European Union*, London: RIIA, 1997; Karen Smith, *The Making of EU Foreign Policy: The case of Eastern Europe*, London: Macmillan, 1999; S. Stavridis et al (eds), *The Foreign Policies of the European Union’s Mediterranean Countries and Applicant Countries in the 1990s*, London: Macmillan, 1999; R. Gomez, “The EU’s Mediterranean Policy: Common Foreign Policy by the back door?”, in Peterson and Sjørnsen (eds), *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe?*, 1998; Søren Dosenrode, and Andres Stubjær, *The European Union and the Middle East*, London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001; Youri Devuyst, “The European

Parallel to this literature on the EU's policies in the near-abroad are in-depth studies on French policies in these same areas, with little cognisance – aside from trade relations – of *Europe's effect* on French national policies.³

While economic motives have been an important driving force behind French and EU policies in the rapidly growing markets of the greater China area, the NIEs and Southeast Asia (at least until the Asian economic crisis of 1997-98)⁴, the economic accounts of French/EU relations with East Asia are by themselves inadequate. They obscure a complex relationship that includes contestation over human rights, French arms sales and military cooperation with Taiwan and Singapore, and the appropriate security role the EU (as a whole or represented by individual Member States) plays in East Asia. A more accurate understanding of French (and EU) policies in East Asia necessitates analysing the multiple facets and inter-relationship of their economic, political and human rights objectives.

Interests and Objectives

The concept of the national or state *interest*, once thought to be the self-evident “general and continuing ends for which a nation acts”⁵, is today often discredited as a vague and subjective idea with little conceptual clarity or value. Clearly pinning down the idea of national interest in concrete terms and using it in the analysis of foreign policy poses real problems as what politicians and statesmen declare to be the state's “national interests” are often the shifting, sectoral interests of particular segments (eg. the military-industrial complex, the ruling élite, class or party) of their national polity. “National interests” as determinants of state behaviour are “not as self-evident or objective” as once assumed.⁶

Community and the Conclusion of the Uruguay Round”, in Rhodes and Mazey (eds) *The State of the European Union*, 1995.

³ Exceptions include Christoph Nesshöver, “Bonn et Paris face à Pékin (1989-1997): Vers une Stratégie Commune?”, in *Politique Etrangère* 1/99, 1999, pp.91-106 and Hervé Dejean de la Bâtie, , *La politique chinoise de l'Union européenne: en progrès, mais peut mieux faire*, pp.1-26, on IFRI's Centre Asie website, <http://www.ifri.org/f/Centre%20asie/articles/hdb-ue-chine.htm>, accessed 9 May 2002.

⁴ See François Godement, “Une politique française pour l'Asie-Pacifique?”, *Politique Etrangère*, 4/95; Patricia Wellons, “Sino-French Relations: Historical Alliance vs. Economic Reality”, in *The Pacific Review*, 7/3, 1994, pp.341-348; Miguel Santos Neves, “Towards a Common China Policy for the EU: a Portuguese Perspective”, in Richard Grant, (ed), *The European Union and China*, 1995.

⁵ The Brookings Institute, *Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy 1953-54, 1955*, pp.373-5.

⁶ See Chris Brown, *Understanding International Relations*, 2nd ed., Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001, p.33 and Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003, p.43.

Nonetheless, I would argue that that the idea of French interests in particular regions of the world is still a useful analytical concept. French statesmen invoke “national interests” with surprising frequency, coherence and consistency as a tool for political action. For example, the quest for a strong French cultural and political presence in East Asia has been expressed by French leaders over many decades, from de Gaulle in Phnom Penh (1966), to Chirac in Singapore (1996). Their references to such national goals or interests are usually a means of justification, rationalisation and mobilisation. James Rosenau concedes that the continued use of the concept in political action and foreign policy renders it a datum requiring analysis.⁷

These interests may not be immutable or always consistently rank ordered. But an analysis of a state’s foreign policy should include the representations of its interests by its foreign policy makers, though carefully distinguishing between *aspirational* and *actual* interests. The concept of “interest” in foreign policy is useful for comparing aspirations with actual policies; offering a criterion for the evaluation of foreign policy; and providing a yardstick for the evaluation of aspirations.⁸

Some general aspirational interests as defined by national political élites in Paris have been quite explicit. These include the goal of tripling the French share in Asian trade in a decade, announced in Chirac’s 1996 speech in Singapore ahead of the inaugural ASEM summit in Bangkok. Other foreign policy goals have been more implicit and need to be inferred from the available evidence. The search to build up strategic influence in the region, for example, is unmistakable in areas such as the French campaign since 1994 for a separate seat in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), eagerness in selling or developing sophisticated weaponry (to Japan, Taiwan, or Singapore), and defence dialogue/cooperation (with South Korea, Japan, China, Malaysia and Singapore).

⁷ James Rosenau, “The National Interest”, in *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy*, revised and enlarged ed., London: France Pinter, 1979, p.293.

⁸ Following Joseph Frankel, *National Interest*, London: Macmillan, 1970, pp.28-9.

Comparing foreign policy objectives

Instead of using the concept of *interests*, which carries the assumptions of deep-seated motives or a “stake in which a given unit has in a problem”⁹, this thesis will as far as possible employ the term “objectives.” Objectives are more easily identifiable short-term goals that foreign policy actors set for themselves. These goals could change periodically with the main actors (eg. companies, governments, NGOs), individual personalities involved (it makes a difference whether the French president is enthused about a foreign policy issue or not), or changes of governments. For example, Mitterrand’s stress on human rights objectives in East Asia between 1989 and 1992 were swiftly abandoned with the election of a right-wing government in 1993 under Prime Minister Balladur.

Before examining the empirical record in the next three chapters, this chapter will trace an overview of French and EU engagement with the key states and international organizations in the region, focusing in particular on the aims and objectives expressed in the aspiration or rationalisation of French and EU actions and statements. It aims for a broad understanding of French and European policies in the region, with a focus on the motivations and objectives around and since 1989-91 (Berlin Wall/Tiananmen and Maastricht/CFSP).

Part I looks at French economic, political-strategic and human rights objectives in East Asia from a national perspective, while Part II examines the same objectives in the region, but through the lens of the EU. By analysing the consistency, coherence and communication between the two sets of objectives, we should arrive at some tentative conclusions on levels of interaction between “French” and “European” interests, as well as whether there is a causal relationship between the two.

I French Objectives in East Asia

France played a much reduced role in East Asia after the humiliation of Dien Bien Phu up to the 1980s. Pressing concerns in Algeria and Europe, combined with French weakness in Asia, rendered it unable to influence major events in the region, or

⁹ Hill 2003:119.

to halt the decline of the French language. In the three decades up to the Tiananmen massacre in 1989, Asia occupied a low rung in French priorities, dependent on the personal interest accorded to the region by French presidents and prime ministers. In contrast, Europe, Africa and the Middle East were continually regarded in Paris as the areas of priority. Without the benefit of a long-term French vision for the region, the approach to Asia has been dominated by successive French Presidents, without this domination translating into permanent or coherent policies. While de Gaulle maintained a close watch on developments in China and criticised American strategies in the second Indochinese War (such as American escalation and the spread of hostilities to Laos and Cambodia), France did not play a substantive role in Asia in the 1960s and 1970s beyond symbolism and rhetoric. Under the 5th Republic (from 1958), de Gaulle's France made three then-newsworthy "gestures" in Asia: the diplomatic recognition of Communist China in 1964,¹⁰ de Gaulle's 1966 Phnom Penh speech calling for the unilateral withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam¹¹, and withdrawal from the Armistice Commission of Panmunjon at the same time France left the NATO command. Although each of these three gestures was made in the context of French-US relations rather than French interest in Asia *per se*¹², the Gaullist tradition of the *grande geste*, symbols and "special relationships" has continued to inform the discourse and practice of French policy in East Asia.

Georges Pompidou's presidency (1968-74) witnessed the start of an economic dialogue with China and the first French state visit to Beijing. But it was Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (1974-81) who raised Asia up the ladder of French diplomatic and intellectual priorities. Giscard d'Estaing launched a serious political dialogue with India and took a high-profile position on Cambodian representation at the UN after the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1979, on the side of ASEAN, China and the US against the Soviet Union and Vietnam. The French role in the resolution of the Cambodian conflict leading up to the 1991 peace accords was in many respects a *rentrée politique* for French prestige and involvement in Asian political affairs.¹³

¹⁰ There was bipartisan support for early diplomatic recognition of Communist China and Mitterrand had written a tract in support of French recognition, "La Chine aux défis" in 1961. See *Le Point*, 9 May 1983.

¹¹ For a detailed account of French interests in Indochina during the American military build-up from 1963 to 1973, see Marianna P. Sullivan, *France's Vietnam Policy: A Study in French-American Relations*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978.

¹² See François Godement, "Une politique française pour l'Asie-Pacifique?", p.962.

¹³ Godement 95:962.

Mitterrand's presidency (1981-95) incorporated several Gaullist principles - national independence, the balance of military blocs around the world – together with European construction, the right of people to self-determination, and the development of poor countries.¹⁴ Mitterrand combined a “*penchant marqué*” for consultations with Vietnamese leaders, with the Gaullist symbolism of “grand state visits to China”, including a homage to Confucius at the ancient philosopher's birthplace.¹⁵ Symbols aside, the Mitterrand era was however noteworthy for neglecting substantial ties with East Asia. President Mitterrand himself acknowledged the “quasi-absence” of French influence in the region.¹⁶ Mitterrand neglected even to visit Japan during his first term (1981-88), although he made overtures to Japan and ASEAN during his second term on account of the new economic dynamism in East Asia.

The Tiananmen massacre and the end of the Cold War, both in 1989, jolted the French into a realisation of the opportunities afforded by international systemic changes and catalysed a major re-assessment of French priorities in East Asia. One dimension was an emotional and normative French reaction, with French leaders trumpeting a national mission of promoting human rights on the bicentennial of the French Revolution. After years of neglecting human rights, France extolled itself as a beacon of human rights and universal values, with President Mitterrand and Foreign Minister Roland Dumas appropriating the myths and values of 1789. Another dimension was an opportunistic push to increase French political, strategic and economic stakes in the region, first through Taiwan, then building on its good relations with the ASEAN states, bolstered by Vietnam's membership in ASEAN in 1995. The moral dimension was de-emphasised from 1993 so that relations with East Asian countries – and with China in particular - returned to the original Gaullist underpinnings of pragmatism, dialogue between great powers and civilisations, joint statements in favour of a multipolar world, and respect for ideological differences.

¹⁴ François Mitterrand, *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France: introduction à vingt-cinq discours (1981-85)*, Paris: Fayard, 1986, p.3.

¹⁵ Godement 95:962.

¹⁶ Mitterrand, *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure*, p.17. Hubert Védrine, *Les Mondes de François Mitterrand: À l'Élysée 1981-1995*, Paris: Fayard, 1996, a detailed “inside account” of Mitterrand's foreign policies towards different world regions, does not contain a single chapter on East Asia and mentions the region's countries and leaders only in passing.

The Chirac presidency (1995-) is the first one with a comprehensive policy on East Asia. It is also distinctive in having the first French president who enjoys personal and direct contacts with many Asian leaders and appreciates the region's history and cultures. Only de Gaulle before him had such close relations (in particular with Chiang Kai-shek).¹⁷ The policy shift raising Asia's importance in French policy had begun during the Mitterrand presidency and was launched by Prime Minister Edouard Balladur's government in 1993 (based on the pragmatic trade-oriented "German model")¹⁸. This policy shift was further elaborated and upgraded by President Chirac into a programmatic policy in which East Asia was defined as the *nouvelle frontière* of French diplomacy. Alain Juppé as Foreign Minister defended the French shift from a pro-Taiwan to a pro-China policy as a realistic, pragmatic pursuit of long-term French interests in China given its international political and economic significance.¹⁹

a) *Economic objectives*

Although economic interests are today undisputed as an important driving force behind French policies in East Asia, it is noteworthy that the region only recently (in the 1990s) became a major focus of French trade and investments. French economic initiatives in Asia tend to shadow policies spearheaded by Germany (Europe's largest trader), the UK (Europe's largest investor) and the European Commission. Unlike German and Italian businesses, French small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are almost completely absent from the region. The successful French companies in East Asia operate in a small number of specific sectors (eg. luxury goods, aerospace and armaments, pharmaceuticals, infrastructure building, oil, finance) dominated by industrial giants. France was slow in learning to collaborate with Japan, Asia's economic superpower, and slow to penetrate the Chinese market after its opening in 1979. As of 1999, the total stock of French FDI in Japan, the most important economy in Asia and the second largest in the world, accounted for under 2% of total French FDI in the world, while that in China, the world's largest recipient of international FDI in 2001-2, was less than in Singapore (Table 3.1). French FDI is overwhelmingly

¹⁷ Godement 95: 963; see also Lin Hua, *Chiang Kai-shek, de Gaulle contre Ho Chi Minh, 1945-46*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994.

¹⁸ Nesshöver, "Bonn et Paris face à Pékin", in *Politique Etrangère* 1/99.

¹⁹ Juppé, "Diplomatie Française: le deuxième souffle", *Politique Internationale* 61, 1993, pp.24-25.

concentrated in Western Europe and North America (almost 70%), with the total stock in East Asia trailing that in Central and Eastern Europe, and Latin America.²⁰

Table 3.1: The principal destinations of French FDI in Asia in € million (up to December 1999)

	Capital € million	Loans € million	Total € million	Percentage of total French FDI
Japan	5204	105	5309	1.9%
Singapore	2358	79	2437	0.9%
China	1106	152	1258	0.5%
South Korea	796	99	895	0.3%
Hong Kong	715	59	774	0.3%
Thailand	333	182	515	0.2%
India	392	9	401	0.1%
Vietnam	210	53	263	0.1%
Indonesia	226	3	229	0.1%

Source: René Dorient, "Un septennat de politique asiatique: quel bilan pour la France?", *Politique Etrangère*, 1/2002, 2002, p.188.

While this lag is being redressed by recent high-volume French investments, eg. Renault in Japan (Chapter Five), French economic officials see the low French FDI levels in Asia as an urgent challenge for the long-term effects on trade competitiveness and French economic presence in the region.²¹ Seven out of the 25 "priority countries" identified by the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry (MINEFI) as critical to maintain the current French share of world exports (5.2%) in 2010, are found in Asia. French exports have long under-performed and thus fall well short of the 5.2% target in all the Asian markets.²² The only area in East Asia where France is still a major player is Indochina, where it retains special economic, political and cultural relations. At the end of 1992 after Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia, French companies were the third largest investors in the country, after Taiwan and Hong Kong.²³ Vietnam has a

²⁰ MINEFI (French Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry), "Evolution des Investissements français à l'étranger", last updated 18 June 2001, on www.commerce-exterieur.gouv.fr/pgtabimplantations.htm; and MINEFI, "Contexte international des investissements directs étrangers", on www.commerce-exterieur.gouv.fr/rapport2001/panorama/pages/invest.htm, accessed 1 September 2003.

²¹ Interview with Bertrand de Cordoue, Director (Asia), Department of External Economic Relations (DREE), French Ministry of Finance, Paris, 9 April 2003; and Mme Olivia Calvet-Soubiran, Japan Desk, Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIP), 15 April 2003.

²² The seven Asian target countries are China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, India, Malaysia and Thailand. MINEFI, "Conférence de l'exportation", 27 May 2003, on www.commerce-exterieur.gouv.fr.

²³ Oxford Analytica, "Vietnam: Economic Orientation", 17 February 1993.

large force of cheap labour and 600 million barrels of proven oil reserves.²⁴ France today remains the country's largest Western trading partner and non-Asian aid giver, and thus its consistent support for Vietnam's access to IMF funds, membership in ASEAN and the WTO can be viewed from the expected utility to French interests in Indochina.

In contrast, Germany is the most successful EU player in the larger and older Asian growth markets. It recognized the significance of new Asian markets early on when EC trade with East Asia overtook EC-US trade for the first time at the beginning of the 1990s. After Tiananmen, it was Germany among EU and other Western countries which most systematically and successfully depoliticised economic relations with China, a key and rapidly growing market (see chapter four). Germany took the lead in formulating its "Asian policy" in October 1993. This policy's central ideas were "to strengthen economic relations with the largest growth region in the world",²⁵ restore high level visits to Beijing and stop applying pressure on human rights. The success of the "German model" prompted other EU member states, in particular Britain then France (each had seething issues with Beijing, over Hong Kong and Taiwan, respectively) to rethink their post-Tiananmen policies and to delink trade from politics and human rights issues.²⁶

The aim of "catching up with the Germans" – never far beneath the surface – has resulted in a series of emulatory policies emanating from the French Finance and Foreign Ministries, and supported by the Presidency and the Prime Minister's office. Regular inter-ministerial meetings on Asia started in 1993. In mid-1994, French Industry and External Trade Minister Gérard Longuet visited Beijing, Hong Kong and Singapore to launch "Ten Initiatives for Asia", a series of proposals to encourage French trade, investment and joint ventures with Asian companies. While the launch of the "Ten Initiatives" is dismissed by some as a Department of External Economic Relations (DREE) manoeuvre to stave off administrative reforms aimed at merging DREE into the Quai d'Orsay (French MFA), a number of coordinating agencies linking

²⁴ Stratfor report, "Vietnam looks to France for Economic boost", 14 February 2002, on www.stratfor.com.

²⁵ "German Asian Policy", Botschaft der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Peking, 1993, p.5, as cited in Yahuda and Zhang, "Europe and China", in Maull et al, *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, p.194.

²⁶ Cabestan, "Sino-Western European Relations", pp.42-43.

private and public organizations jumped onto the bandwagon to promote French economic interests in Asia. A French Business Centre (FBC) was set up in Singapore, a Centre Français du Commerce Extérieure (CFCE) in Paris, and French Business Associations (FBAs) throughout Asia.²⁷ This characteristic of French economic policy, policy *learning* from other EU states, is symptomatic of the policy convergence and identity reconstruction (Europeanization I and III) of French policy in East Asia. In 1995, Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette announced that Asia would receive special attention as the “*nouvelle frontière*” of French diplomacy. French leaders’ visits to China began to take on a pattern of political dialogue on international developments, accompanied by announcements of contract signatures. President Chirac has played an active role in promoting French exports and industries in East Asia, often portraying this as beneficial for France *and* Europe (in the case of pan-European companies like Airbus). Chirac made explicit the French goal of recovering French market share in his “Singapore speech” in 1996: to exponentially increase the French share of the Asian market from 2% to 6% within ten years - in other words, to match the German level of trade in Asia (and China in particular).²⁸

An often debilitating characteristic of French economic strategies in East Asia is an over-reliance on big contracts signed with East Asian governments and supported by high-level French officials. This strategy has often been hamstrung by politics and the competing demands of high-tech French military industries – whose markets are mainly in the more developed economies of Taiwan, South Korea and ASEAN - and the demands of aerospace, infrastructure and communications industries, whose prime markets are in the less-developed economies of China and Vietnam.²⁹

The dilemma of France caught between Beijing and Taipei is a case in point. In 1991, French trade with Taiwan (\$2.5 billion) was slightly more than trade with China (\$2.4 billion). Competing military and commercial groups in France had lobbied the French government hard over their respective interests in Taiwan and China. The pro-Taiwan military and industrial circles had succeeded in persuading Mitterrand to agree

²⁷ Godement 95:960.

²⁸ *Le Monde*, 28 February and 1 March 1996. Conversations with Quai d’Orsay officials, Paris, March 1996 and Chinese Embassy in Paris, September 2000 confirmed the French determination to match the German presence in the China market.

²⁹ Godement 95.

to the sale of frigates and Mirage fighter jets, and were hoping to win lucrative contracts to build metro systems and to supply high-speed inter-city trains to Taiwan under its \$300 billion twenty-year development plan. The Association for the Promotion of Economic and Cultural Exchanges with Taiwan (ASPECT) office had been upgraded to the “Taipei Representative” in 1993, and the French government made available a mansion in the expensive 7th *arrondissement* of Paris for Taiwan’s new representation.³⁰

b) Political and security objectives

A political and security presence in East Asia is important in defending France’s UNSC status and claims to being a global power with global responsibilities. To this end, France has worked steadily after the Cold War to increase its political and military cooperation with states in the region. As a permanent member of the Security Council, France (and Britain, the other EU Member State with global pretensions) would immediately become embroiled in any UN response to any crisis threatening East Asian peace and security. To shirk these responsibilities would undermine its credentials as a global power.

France has important naval assets based in the South Pacific and Indian Ocean. In fact, the combined tonnage of the French Indian Ocean and Pacific fleets (around 60,000 tonnes and 5-7 frigates, see [Table 3.2](#)) in 1996 was comparable to the Malaysian Navy’s. France and the UK also occupy seats on the Korean Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) with the US, Japan, South Korea, China, Russia and the EU, set up in 1996 to avert nuclear proliferation in the Korea peninsula. While Britain has security arrangements with Singapore, Malaysia, New Zealand and Australia through the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA), France has steadily built up its security presence through commitments and cooperation activities with key countries in the region.

³⁰ Interview with H.E. Mr Chiou Jong-Nan, Taipei Representative to France, Paris, 17 April 2003. Also Françoise Mengin, “The Prospects for France-Taiwan Relations”, *Issues and Studies*, 28/3 March 1992.

Table 3.2: French Force Deployment in the Indian and Pacific Oceans

Bases	Personnel	Air Forces	Naval forces	Ground forces
Djibouti	3,430	6 Mirage F-1C (+4 in store) 1 C-160 transport a/c 3 SA-310 helicopters	3 landing boats 1 tug boat	1 Marine infantry regiment 1 Foreign Legion regiment 36 ERC-90 5 155 mm artillery
Le Réunion- Mayotte-Terres australes/ antarctiques	4,130	2 C-160 transport a/c 2 AS-555 helicopters	4 patrol boats 1 amphibious ship 2 landing craft	1 Marine infantry regiment 1 support battalion 1 Foreign Legion company
Indian Ocean Command	1,210	1-2 Atlantic 2 MR a/c	2 frigates (+2 destroyers/ frigates in reserve) 1 AOR (HQ afloat) 2 support ships 1 nuclear-powered sub	
New Caledonia (HQ Nouméa)	3,680	2 C-160 transport a/c 2 AS-555 helicopters 6 SA-330 helicopters 2 Guardian MR a/c	3 patrol boats 1 amphibious ship 1 hydrographic ship	1 Marine infantry regiment 14 AML 5 105mm artillery
French Polynesia (HQ Papeete)	3,850	2 CN-235 3 Guardian MR a/c 3 AS-332 helicopters	3 patrol boats 1 amphibious ship 1 landing craft 1 hydrographic ship 2 supply tenders	1 Marine infantry regiments 1 Foreign Legion battalion
Pacific Ocean Command			3 frigates	
Total	16,300	6 (+4) combat a/c 6-7 MR a/c 7 transport a/c 16 helicopters	5-7 frigates 10 patrol boats 3 amphibious ships 6 landing craft 9 support ships plus reinforcement and occasional patrols	4 Marine infantry regiments 3 Foreign Legion units 36 ERC 10 14 AML 5 155 mm artillery 5 105mm artillery

Key: a/c=aircraft, **AML**= armoured reconnaissance vehicle with 90 mm gun, **AOR**= command and replenishment ship, **ERC**=improved armoured reconnaissance vehicle with 90 mm gun, **MR**=maritime reconnaissance.

Source: Stares and Régaud, "Europe's Role in Asia-Pacific Security", *Survival* 39/4, 1999, p.127.

Besides Taiwan, France has established close defence links with Singapore.³¹ A bilateral accord was signed in 1997 which allowed an Advanced Jet Training (AJT) school of the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) to base a squadron of 18 A-4 Skyhawks with 200 military personnel in Cazaux Air Base, southwestern France. This was the first time the French government had permitted a non-NATO country to base

³¹ Singapore is respected in military circles as a key state in Southeast Asia for its capabilities in developing, producing and exporting arms, as well as having a dense network of defence relations within the region as well as with extra-regional military powers. See Bates and Mak, *Arms Transparency and Security in Southeast Asia*, SIPRI Research Report No.13, New York: Oxford University Press/SIPRI, 1997, pp.53-59.

troops on French soil since the end of NATO's military presence in France in 1966.³² East Asia represents a lucrative arms market and it was the only one that registered growth during the global contraction in the industry after 1989. Japan, China, Taiwan and South Korea alone represent 82% of the region's arms market.³³ France and other major European arms manufacturers (Britain, Germany and Sweden) have been active in this competitive market and have offered themselves as serious alternatives to the US and Russia as arms suppliers.³⁴

During the US-Japan FSX fighter controversy, French aerospace company Dassault offered to help Japan build the FSX based on the Rafale fighter.³⁵ From a strategic perspective, the 1989-92 sale of French frigates and fighter jets to Taiwan has increased France's profile and stake in one of the security flash-points in East Asia. In January 1994, French relations with China were normalized and a joint France-China communiqué was issued, committing France to recognise one China and to refrain from selling new arms to Taiwan. However, France continues to sell weapons to many East Asian countries. Just two months after normalization, the French sold Exocet, Crotale and Mistral missiles, torpedoes, anti-submarine sensors and electronic warfare equipment to Taiwan, justifying the sales as legitimate as agreement was made before 1994.³⁶

Aside from arms sales and new defence relationships in East Asia, France has used its status as one of the UNSC "Permanent Five" and its influence in the EU to raise its national diplomatico-strategic profile and presence in East Asia. France established a bilateral high-level strategic dialogue involving defence ministers and senior officials with Japan in 1994, and with China and South Korea in 1996.³⁷ France has skilfully pushed for institutionalising dialogue with China under the EU framework. Responding to Singapore's October 1994 proposal for a regular APEC-style meeting of leaders from

³² *Le Monde*, 10 February 1998 and 23 March 1999; and International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 2001-2002*, Oxford UP, 2001, pp. 56, 208. The total RSAF presence (including pilots, support crew, technicians and families) is estimated to be 600.

³³ SIPRI 2002.

³⁴ Green 95:148.

³⁵ Green 95:149 and p.180 n.65. See also Michael Chinworth, "The Technology Factor in US-Japan Security Relations", in Green and Cronin (eds), *The US-Japan Alliance: Past, Present and Future*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999, pp.286-310.

³⁶ See David Shambaugh, "Europe and China", pp.20-21.

³⁷ "European Defence and Euro-Asia Security Relations," Speech by Alain Richard, French Minister of Defence, Paris, 19 February 1999. Strategic talks with Japan began in 1994, and South Korea, in 1996.

Asia and Europe, the French immediately supported the proposal as a means, inter alia, of further institutionalising regular cooperative contacts with the leaders of China.³⁸ Despite an initial lukewarm response from the British and German governments, France used the offices of former President of the European Commission François Xavier-Ortoli and the French presidency of the EU in the first half of 1995 to push the idea in EU circles. It managed to use EU institutions to build a coalition of support from the other member states and the Commission to launch the first ASEM summit in March 1996, just 17 months after the idea was first broached in Paris.

France has leveraged on its historical ties with Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia as a bridgehead for French interests in Southeast Asia. Mitterrand made the first state visit by a major Western to Vietnam in February 1993 during a time when the US still called for an international embargo on Vietnam. French interests in shoring its position in the Indochinese region explains keen French interest in encouraging the integration of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in regional and international organizations like ASEAN, ASEM, APEC, the Francophonie, and the WTO. These historical ties have conferred on France an influence, both on its own and through the EU, on developments in Indochina and the wider Southeast Asian region. For the 7th Francophonie summit in Hanoi in 1997, France donated generous aid to Vietnam to build an International Conference Centre (costing FF45million), refurbish public buildings, set up bilingual schools, and to train translators.³⁹ France played an important diplomatic role in the resolution of the Third Indochina War and was an active mediator in the stand-off between Co-Prime Ministers Hun Sen and Ranarriddh after Hun Sen launched a coup d'état against First Prime Minister Ranarriddh in 1997.

Finally, presidential leadership and personality has been a significant factor in French relations with Asia in the 1990s. President Chirac has invested much time and effort cultivating personal ties with East Asian leaders. He is known to have very good and long-standing relations with many East Asian leaders since he was Prime Minister (1974-76 and 1986-88) and Mayor of Paris (1977-1995). Chirac has visited Japan on some 50 occasions, and has met with Singapore's founding prime minister Lee Kuan Yew practically every year since the 1980s, and Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir

³⁸See Michael Leifer, "Europe and Southeast Asia", in Maull et al, *Europe and the Asia Pacific*", p.199; and Christopher Hill, "Closing the Capabilities-Expectation Gap?", p.32.

³⁹ *Le Figaro*, 14 November 1997; *Le Monde*, 13 November 1997

Mohamed since the early 1990s. In 1998, the Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamed was Chirac's guest of honour at the Bastille Day parade on the Champs Elysées. Chirac was also known to get along well with Chinese leaders Jiang Jemin and Zhu Rongji. Chirac even invited Jiang and his wife to his private estate in the Corrèze in 2001, a gesture usually reserved by French presidents for very few close leaders, and comparable to the invitations of Reagan and Bush to their ranches. The warm reception accorded to Jiang caused some consternation in French public opinion and incited much criticism.⁴⁰ In addition, the "Asia hands" in the Quai d'Orsay have found themselves in favour with Chirac for their specialist knowledge of eg. China, India and Japan. They have often been rapidly promoted to positions of high foreign policy decision power as Diplomatic Advisors in the Elysée, in the Foreign and Defence Ministries, in the Quai as well as important ambassadorial positions in New York, Washington and Berlin.⁴¹

c) *Human Rights*

French policy-makers often declare that France has a "historic heritage" as the "cradle of human rights", with a special role in promoting these rights. Some French scholars and statesmen have gone so far as to claim that the 1789 French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen has served as the main inspiration behind contemporary efforts to enshrine an international human rights regime. French philosophers, diplomats, statesmen and lawyers have been closely involved in the development of the international human rights regime. The French legal specialist and Nobel Peace Prize winner René Cassin is widely recognised - together with Eleanor Roosevelt - as one of the two "guiding lights" behind the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which closely followed the model established by the French Declaration while substituting "human" for the more ambiguous "Man" throughout the text.⁴²

⁴⁰ *Libération*, 22 October 1999; *Le Canard Enchaîné*, 27 October 1999; "Une complaisance coupable", *La Croix*, 27 October 1999; "Polémique sur une visite d'Etat", *Le Figaro*, 29 October 1999.

⁴¹ See "Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, conseiller diplomatique de Jacques Chirac et fidèle complice de Villepin", in *Le Figaro*, 17 April 2003; "La droite reprend la haute main sur les nominations dans l'administration", *Agence France Presse*, 9 August 2002; and "A l'Elysée, une structure hiérarchisée et des contacts personnels", *Le Monde* 7 May 1996.

⁴² Lynn Hunt, *The French Revolution and Human Rights: A brief documentary history*, Boston: Bedford Books, 1996, p.3. See also Eric Pateyron, *La contribution française à la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme*, Paris: La Documentation Française, 1999.

Yet the empirical record shows scant priority given to human rights in French foreign policy. Despite French statesmen stressing that French political and diplomatic interests should be pursued in compliance with moral interests,⁴³ most observers note the overwhelming evidence of a hard-nosed *realpolitik* approach to human rights in French policy. The state most like the US in viewing itself as a universal model of human rights, the defence of human rights abroad was in practice a low-priority issue for France. It has had a long history of tolerating and often supporting repressive regimes in Africa and Indochina, not to mention a notorious official “torture bureau” in its military establishment in the 1954-62 Algerian War, and the French secret services’ sabotage and sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior*, Greenpeace’s anti-nuclear ship in Auckland Harbour.⁴⁴ As Brewin observed in 1986, human rights were basic but never central to the foreign policies of major European governments.⁴⁵

I would argue that despite its reputation for double standards, France did make serious attempts at promoting human rights in its foreign policy, especially during the Mitterrand presidency. In the 1980s French foreign policy discourse started to contain normative references to the defence of human and citizenship rights, democracy and the rule of law.⁴⁶ In 1982, France joined the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Sweden in submitting an inter-state complaint against Turkey at the European Committee of Human Rights, claiming that human rights were being violated by Turkey’s military regime, against the European Convention on Human Rights.⁴⁷ In 1984, a Consultative Committee for Human Rights was set up to advise the government on the promotion of human rights in the world, in particular through international organisations. Mitterrand made Bernard Kouchner, the high-profile founder of the NGO Médecins sans Frontières, a senior minister in charge of humanitarian action at the start of his second presidential mandate, in 1988. The French government often intervened on behalf of

⁴³ Marie-Christine Kessler, *La Politique Étrangère de la France*, Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1999, pp.160-61 notes that as early as 1963, the Jeanneney commission had recommended that ethics should be linked with French aid and cooperation policy towards developing countries.

⁴⁴ David Forsythe, “Comparative Foreign Policy and Human Rights”, in Peter Baehr et al (eds.), *Innovation and Inspiration: Fifty Years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Amsterdam: Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999, p.127; Richard Sears, *The Rainbow Warrior Affair*, London: Unwin, 1986.

⁴⁵ Christopher Brewin, “Europe”, in R.J. Vincent, (ed), *Foreign Policy and Human Rights*, Cambridge: RIIA/Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.190.

⁴⁶ Mitterrand, *Réflexions sur la Politique Extérieure de la France*, p.3.

⁴⁷ Peter R. Baehr, *The Role of Human Rights in Foreign Policy*, 2nd edition, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996, pp.29, 72. Turkey agreed to three reports in 1986 to ensure the prohibition of torture practices.

individual victims of human rights abuses in the Soviet Union, and sometimes sanctions were applied or other measures taken which included the world of sport. At the 40th anniversary of the UDHR in 1988, President Mitterrand paid tribute to NGOs and expressed support for the promotion of democracy and human rights:

I do not forget the daily, stubborn activities of non-governmental organisations, who report on, protest and denounce violations of human rights, and give support to the victims of such violations. Without them, the traces of the victims would disappear for ever, their rights ridiculed in secret. France will support the consolidation of these activities, the clarification of their position, and protect their members' actions and witnesses.⁴⁸

In East Asia as in the Soviet Union, the French government's interest in human rights was incidental and largely confined to individual cases. The French government, like most Western governments, by and large ignored domestic interest groups' demands to pressure foreign governments on gross human rights violations and abuses in Asia, notably China's Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, and Khmer Rouge pogroms in Cambodia after the Maoists took power in 1975.⁴⁹ In Asia, where most of the worst authoritarian regimes were communist, left-leaning intellectuals and politicians in France tended to ignore the excesses of these regimes out of an idealised empathy with the ultimate goal of a communist society.⁵⁰ The neglect of human rights in Asia was only ended in 1989. France under Mitterrand and Foreign Minister Roland Dumas took a vociferous leading position and used the EC to project and Europeanize its condemnation of the Chinese government in the aftermath of the Tiananmen massacre.

The promotion of Third World solidarity and human rights (in particular economic and social rights) was a major plank of Mitterrand's Socialist governments. In 1989, political and civil rights moved to the centre of French attention because of the end of the Cold War, the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution, and the dramatic events in China and Eastern Europe. The most high-profile French human rights policy

⁴⁸ Speech by President Mitterrand at celebration of 40th anniversary of the UDHR, Paris, 10 December 1988, cited in Baehr 96:125.

⁴⁹ See Andrew J Nathan, "China and the International Human Rights Regime", in Economy, Elizabeth and Oksenberg, Michel (eds), *China Joins the World: Progress and Prospects*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999, p.148.

⁵⁰ On the French Left's avoidance of criticising communist regimes, see Jean-François Revel, *La Grande Parade: Essai sur la survie de l'utopie socialiste*, Paris: Plon, 2000; and especially Stéphane Courtois' controversial bestseller, *Le livre noir du communisme*, Paris: Laffont, 1997, which estimated at 85 million (two-thirds in Asia) the number of people killed by Communist regimes since 1917.

was in reaction to Tiananmen. Mitterrand's denunciation of the Chinese government on 4 June 1989 was scathing: "a regime which is reduced to opening fire on its youth to survive has no future."⁵¹ Along with the US and other Western democracies, France imposed sanctions to "freeze" relations and reduce French diplomatic representation in China. Roland Dumas announced on 7 June that French unilateral measures would include a "suspension of all political visits to China."⁵² France also played "the leading role" in cobbling together a list of 10 collective EC sanctions at the EC's June 1989 Madrid summit, with the 10th (on banning high technology military sales and transfer) added on French insistence.⁵³ The Madrid sanctions were reinforced on 15 July when they obtained the agreement of Canada, the US and Japan at the G7 summit hosted by France.⁵⁴ Encouraged by human rights activists in France, Paris also offered political asylum to the dissident student leaders, gave them a special profile in the bicentennial Bastille Day parade,⁵⁵ and allowed them to set up the Federation for Democracy in China, in Paris.⁵⁶

In relation to other countries in Asia, Dumas and Mitterrand also promoted human rights. During his February 1993 state visit to Vietnam, Mitterrand declared to his hosts that "democracy and development must always go together" while Dumas gave his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Manh Cam a list of 20 detainees about whom he demanded information.⁵⁷ From mid-1993, the principled Mitterrand-Dumas approach had passed its peak. It was abandoned, ostensibly to promote economic exchange, in favour of a more conciliatory position that implicitly accepted Asian arguments that human rights could be culturally relative. The French position shifted with the election of a conservative government headed by Prime Minister Balladur in mid-1993, and the normalization of France-China relations in 1994 after four years of confrontation over Tiananmen and Taiwan. The policy shift was reinforced by President Chirac's philosophical-semantic approach from 1995 and was most evident in the case of China.

⁵¹ Cited in Richard Arzt, "Le pari chinois de Chirac", in *L'Express*, 4 April 1996 and Andrew Nathan et al (eds), *The Tiananmen Papers*, 2001, p.397.

⁵² *Le Quotidien de Paris*, 8 June 1989. See also Jack Donnelly, *International Human Rights*, 2nd ed., Boulder: Westview, 2003, pp.107-114 and Ch.6 on "responding to Tiananmen".

⁵³ Françoise Mengin, "The Prospects for France-Taiwan Relations", p.48.

⁵⁴ Dumas, "Situation en Chine", op cit.

⁵⁵ Rosemary Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders*, Oxford University Press, 2000, p.117.

⁵⁶ Mengin, "The Prospects for France-Taiwan Relations", pp.51-52.

⁵⁷ Oxford Analytica, "Vietnam: Economic Orientation", 17 February 1993.

Chirac's approach to human rights, in comparison to Mitterrand's, is more circumspect. Chirac has publicly admitted that the French record was not "irreproachable" and that France, the *patrie* of human rights, had room for improvement.⁵⁸ France in April 1997 broke ranks with the EU's CFSP practice since 1990 of sponsoring the human rights resolution on China at the UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR), one month ahead of Chirac's state visit to China. As the French were so instrumental in the European position of 1989, their policy reversal in 1997 was stunning. Their defection was motivated essentially by *national* interests in improving France-China economic and political relations. The French sought to preserve a semblance of European unity despite this split. They defended their action as serving the larger "European interest" by creating change in China through dialogue rather than ritually criticizing it at the CHR, a method which they claimed had failed to move the Chinese leadership.

II The European Union's Objectives in East Asia

As seen in Part I, France does not deploy only its national resources in its dealings with countries in East Asia. It leverages on international clubs and organisations such as the G7, and of course the EU. European foreign policy (EFP) can be understood as an overarching structure in which individual Member States' national foreign policies operate. Part II focuses on the EU's objectives in East Asia, tracing the coherence, consistency and commitment of the EU and its constituent Member States (especially France) to these declared objectives through different stages in the evolution of the EC/EU and the expansion of its interests and presence in East Asia. Following European decolonisation in Asia in the quarter-century after 1945, the EC's relationships with East Asian countries in the 1970s were at best "secondary relationships" and "derivative" of the Cold War.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Message du Président de la République, in *La Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme: Colloques des 14, 15 et 16 septembre 1998 à la Sorbonne*, Paris: Documentation Française, 1999, p.16.

⁵⁹ Borrowing from Michael Yahuda, "China and Europe: The Significance of a Secondary Relationship", in Robinson and Shambaugh (eds), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994 and David Shambaugh, *China and Europe: 1949-1995*, London: Contemporary China Institute, SOAS, 1996, p.2.

Based on EU documents and statements by key EU spokesmen, the EU has had three fundamental and enduring objectives in East Asia since the 1980s.⁶⁰ First and most clearly, this has been to raise the *economic* (and corresponding *political*) presence of the EU. Second and more controversially, the promotion of *human rights and democracy*. Thirdly, to contribute to *regional peace and stability*.

The strategic objective of building an anti-Soviet united front via political cooperation with ASEAN, China and Japan, grew in importance during the 1970s, when communists took power in all the Indochinese countries in 1975 and Vietnam invaded Cambodia in 1979. Henry Kissinger's "Year of Europe" speech which taunted Europe for its external weakness, the October 1973 Yom Kippur war and the subsequent OPEC oil embargo fed feelings that the EC was impotent in the face of global challenges and that European Political Cooperation (EPC) had to advance quickly from procedure to substance. The Declaration on European identity in December 1973 was an attempt to respond to these challenges by defining Europe's place in the world in relation to the great powers and other international organisations. In their Declaration, the EC-9 recognised the "major role played by China in international affairs" and resolved "to intensify their relations with the Chinese government and to promote exchanges in various fields as well as contacts between European and Chinese leaders".⁶¹ China on the other hand attempted to develop an anti-Soviet international united front⁶². China and ASEAN envisaged a strong and united Europe as a useful counterweight against the Soviet Union. The main Chinese political interest lay in encouraging "the emergence of the EC as an independent centre in world affairs with a view to reducing the leverage of the superpowers in international affairs."⁶³ In 1975, China became the first communist country to recognize the EC. An EC-China dialogue was established and several trade agreements were signed from 1978. A President of the European Commission, Roy

⁶⁰ European Commission's "New Asia Strategy": COM (94)314 and COM (2001)461 final. See also Rosemary Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders*; and Peter Ferdinand, "Economic and Diplomatic Interactions between the EU and China", in Grant (ed), *The European Union and China*.

⁶¹ Para 17 of "Declaration on European Identity by the Nine Foreign Ministers", Copenhagen, 14 December 1973, in Hill and Smith (eds), *European Foreign Policy: Key Documents*, London: Routledge, 2000, pp.92-96.

⁶² An exaggerated perception of the EC's defence capabilities and strong Chinese insistence on the need for Western unity against Soviet aggressiveness led to Alexander Haig dubbing China the "16th member of NATO" and being "more European than the Europeans". See Yahuda, "China and Europe", pp.268-69, and Gerald Segal, "Europe, China and the Soviet Threat", in Shaw Yu-ming, *Europe and China in the Twentieth Century*, Taipei: Institute of International Relations, 1986.

⁶³ Yahuda, p.272.

Jenkins, visited China for the first time in 1979. The first EC-ASEAN meeting at ministerial level was held in Brussels in 1979. In 1980, the convergence of views on Soviet expansionism led to a strongly worded EC-ASEAN Joint Statement issued from Kuala Lumpur which condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.⁶⁴

The EC/EU's bloc-to-bloc relations with ASEAN are its most institutionalised relations in East Asia and were until the mid-1990s hailed as a "success story" and a "paradigm" of inter-regional cooperation and dialogue. Since the establishment of the EC in 1958 and ASEAN in 1967, the European Commission has been most keen in putting relations between the EC and ASEAN on a multilateral footing to break the monopoly of exclusive country-to-country contact between newly-independent Southeast Asian states and former European colonial powers.⁶⁵ Supported politically by European heavyweights like German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the EC became ASEAN's first dialogue partner in 1972. Contact was at its most dense on the economic level, and the EC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement signed in 1980 established a broad framework to cover technical assistance and commercial and economic cooperation. At the political level, ASEAN represented a grouping of anti-communist friendly pro-Western states in the prevailing Cold War environment. In European eyes, the withdrawal of the United States from Vietnam in 1975 increased the importance of the ASEAN states as a bulwark against communism in Indochina. Soviet naval expansion in the Pacific, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, all in 1979, further galvanised the EC-ASEAN relationship.⁶⁶ While the 1980 Cooperation Agreement offered a flexible and non-controversial basis for the relationship, by the end of the decade, Asian economic dynamism had fed feelings in Europe that Asia was a source of economic threat rather than partnership. With the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the resolution of the Cambodian conflict in 1991, important strategic questions were raised about the nature of the EU's engagement with ASEAN and the region of Asia more generally.

⁶⁴ Soedjati Djiwandono, "Europe and Southeast Asia", in Maull, *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, London: Routledge, 1998, pp.206-207.

⁶⁵ See articles in Edwards and Regelsberger (eds), *Europe's Global Links: The European Community and Inter-regional Cooperation*, London: Pinter, 1990 by Manfred Mols, "Cooperation with ASEAN: A Success Story"; and Simon Nuttall, "The Commission: Protagonists of inter-regional cooperation", pp.143-160. See also Anthony Forster, "The European Union in South-East Asia" *Continuity and Change in Turbulent Times*, *International Affairs*, 75/4, 1999.

⁶⁶ Forster 99:745.

The transformation of the EC into the EU equipped with a common foreign and security policy in 1993 reduced the difference between economic and political instruments of the EU, which opened up the potential of a more integrated approach to the EU's external policy. The Commission's recommendation for a second-generation EC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement incorporated the EU's new priorities. These included new economic agenda items like 'fair trade', social legislation and labour standard, and political items like the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Human rights abuses in East Timor and a massacre in Dili in November 1991 further soured the relationship, with Netherlands cancelling aid to Indonesia that year and Portugal (supported by the European Parliament) leading EU opposition to renewing the 1980 Cooperation Agreement. The defence of 'European values' (including human rights, democracy and environmental issues) championed notably by the Netherlands and the Scandinavian states, became a cornerstone of the EU's 'new agenda'.⁶⁷

"New Asia Strategy"

Some writers have scorned the idea of a credible EU policy in international politics, or even the existence of an EU policy at all.⁶⁸ The EU's presence in East Asia has certainly had a much shorter vintage than the centuries-old colonial histories of Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands, and still cannot match the breadth and depth of Britain or France. Indeed it has been argued that the EU has thus far failed to surmount individual national policies of the significant European colonial powers in Asia in the 20th century – Britain, France and the Netherlands – in order to pursue a common and coherent strategy.⁶⁹ What exists of EU policy in Asia has long been dominated by Pillar I issues related to economic matters. The Commission's 1994 "Towards a New Asia Strategy" (NAS) paper noted as its principal objective that "the main thrust of the present and future policy in Asia is related to economic matters." The NAS emphasized the rapid economic changes that had taken place in the region over the previous

⁶⁷ Foster 99: 750 and Donnelly 98:109-110.

⁶⁸ See Hedley Bull, "Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?", in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 21, 1983, pp.149-170. Ignacio Ramonet concludes in 'Leçons d'un non-guerre', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 1998, 'l'Europe n'existe pas. Sa politique extérieure et de sécurité commune est un fantôme. See also Andrew Clapham, "Where is the EU's Human Rights Common Foreign Policy, and How is it Manifested in Multilateral Fora?" in Philip Alston (ed), *The European Union and Human Rights*, Oxford UP, 1999, p.627 and fn.1.

⁶⁹ See Miguel Santos Neves, "Towards a Common China Policy for the EU: a Portuguese Perspective", in Grant, (ed), *The European Union and China*, London: Routledge/RIIA, 1995.

decades, and the need to ensure a proactive and effective EU presence in the region in light of Asia's growing economic weight:

The rise of Asia is dramatically changing the world balance of economic power. By the year 2000, the World Bank estimates that half the growth in the global economy will come from East and Southeast Asia alone. This growth will ensure that by the year 2000 one billion Asians will have significant consumer spending power and of these, 400 million will have average disposable incomes as high, if not higher, than their European or US counterparts. The European Union needs therefore to accord Asia a higher priority than is at present the case.⁷⁰

The Commission's NAS reflected EU élites' view that Europe should play a greater role in the affairs of the post-cold war world, and its objectives were based on an optimistic long-term view of Asia's rise in international economic and politics. It reckoned that "the establishment of an important presence in Asia will allow Europe at the beginning of the XXIst century to ensure that its interests are taken fully into account in this key region." The NAS thus set as a major objective the deepening of political and economic relations with Asian countries "to contribute to stability in Asia by promoting international co-operation and understanding". At the same time, it recognized the problems of poverty and committed itself to continue EU aid "to promote the economic development of the less prosperous countries and regions". Finally, the NAS also committed the EU "to contribute to the development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Asia." The EU in the 1990s concluded agreements with several of the key players in the region. These include an EC-Japan Joint Declaration in 1991, annual summits with Japan and China, and summit-level meetings between EU and East Asian leaders under the umbrella of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

a) The EU's Economic objectives

EU objectives in East Asia have been overwhelmingly Community-related since the 1970s (aside from during the 1979-89 Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia). They were particularly oriented towards trade and investment relations with Japan and the Newly Industrialising Economies (NIEs), and development aid for the other countries and ASEAN. Although 1991 was a watershed year when EC-Asia trade overtook

⁷⁰ See Executive Summary, COM (94) 314 final.

transatlantic trade for the first time,⁷¹ Europe's ability to compete with the US and Japan in the dynamic growth areas of East Asia were relatively weak. Western Europe was preoccupied with Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) following the collapse of communism, and with building a new kind of European political order that would respond to the new realities after the Cold War. In the 1980s and 1990s, the major criticism made about European companies in East Asia was that commitment was lacking from the top, and that in comparison to American companies, European companies had a much smaller pool of talented Asians to draw from. Establishing and cultivating good business relationships provided European companies with a key business challenge and imperative.⁷² Bemoaning this gap, the CEO of French utilities company Lyonnaise des Eaux Jérôme Monod observed that "Asia is the region where European companies need to invest their best human resources."⁷³

As External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten noted in 1998, Asia accounted for 24.1% of the EU's external trade: more than the countries of the Mediterranean, Latin America, Africa and the former Soviet Union combined.⁷⁴ The ASEM countries were the largest source (24.8%) of EU imports in 1999, ahead of NAFTA ([Appendix 1](#)). The Commission's 1994 NAS paper put forward several strategies by which European companies could raise their presence in these markets. The EU's enhanced economic engagement in East Asia had antecedents in the EU's attempts to promote and institutionalise privileged economic relations with China and ASEAN in the 1980s. Simon Nuttall has argued however, that the EU lacked the instruments to implement comprehensively the "new Asia policy" of 1994; as such, existing policies were developed in lieu of the implementation of a global strategy.⁷⁵

To take one example, the European Community as a whole witnessed a rapid expansion of relations with China in the 1980s.⁷⁶ Economic relations between China

⁷¹ Hanns G. Hilpert, "Economic Interactions", in Maull, *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, London: Routledge, 1998, p.57.

⁷² Jean-Pierre Lehmann, "The economic setting", in Maull, *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, p.77.

⁷³ Jérôme Monod, "How Europe can succeed in Asia", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 22 February 96.

⁷⁴ Chris Patten 2000, "Europe and Asia: A closer partnership in the new millennium", p.1. EU investment in Asia continued to grow despite the Asian crisis: €7.8 billion in 1998 for ASEAN countries, up 13% on 1997.

⁷⁵ Simon Nuttall, "European and Asian Policies", in Maull, *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, p.175.

⁷⁶ A good account of this period is found in Harish Kapur, *Distant Neighbours: China and Europe*, London and New York: Pinter Publishers, 1990, ch.9 and 10.

and the Community as a whole were institutionalised with the establishment of three important accords: the 1978 EC-China Trade Agreement, the 1979 Textiles Agreement and the 1980 Trade Preference Agreement. The Community's unilateral decision to include China in a preferential agreement with effect from 1 January 1980 granted full exemption from customs duty for all industrial goods and partial exemption for certain processed agricultural products exported to developed countries. The EC-China Joint committee created by the 1978 bilateral agreement and affirmed in the 1985 EC-China Trade and Cooperation Agreement, quickly became the most institutionalised component of the EC's interactions with China, with the Commission playing the role of intermediary.⁷⁷ Since 1985, the Commission has been the engine in developing various forms of economic cooperation. The member states have entrusted the External Trade Commissioner to conduct economic negotiations with China at the EU level in order collectively to exercise greater bargaining power. In July 1995, the Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan unveiled the EU's new initiative, "A Long-term policy for China" which emphasised commerce but placed less emphasis on political, diplomatic or strategic relations.⁷⁸

Mirroring the EU's increasing economic links with China after 1975 is the history of its interactions with Vietnam from 1990. Diplomatic relations between the EU and Vietnam were normalized in November 1990. A series of cooperation agreements were signed with Vietnam. A first EC-Vietnam Textile and Clothing Agreement was signed in December 1992 and entered into force on 1 January 1998. A new Agreement, providing increasing access to the EU market, was concluded in November 1997. A third Agreement to allow further increases in Vietnam's access to the EU textile and clothing market was signed in October 2000. An EC-Vietnam Framework Cooperation Agreement was signed in July 1995. A "third generation" agreement, it contains a Human Rights article, and also provides for Most Favoured Nation treatment. Vietnam formally acceded to the EC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement on 1 May 1999.⁷⁹ The EU is a very important economic partner for Vietnam and supports its *doi moi* (economic renovation) policy. It absorbs about 22% of

⁷⁷ It organizes meetings of European and Chinese experts such as the Sino-EC business weeks.

⁷⁸ See David Shambaugh, *China and Europe: 1949-1995*, London: Contemporary China Institute, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1996.

⁷⁹ "The EU's relations with Vietnam: Overview", European Commission website, http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/Vietnam/intro/index.htm, consulted 16 February 2002.

Vietnam's exports, and is Vietnam's second largest trading partner after Japan. However, the EU supplies only 12% of Vietnam's imports, far behind its Asian trading partners. In 1998, the EU's trade deficit with Vietnam was over €1.5 billion.

Potential political impediments like the EC-ASEAN impasse over EC conditionalities in a second-generation cooperation agreement and the 1997-98 Asian economic crisis have not prevented an impressive trade and economic growth between the two regions. In the early 1990s, ASEAN was a more important trading partner to Western Europe than Central and Eastern Europe.⁸⁰ Japan and China are today the EU's 2nd and 4th largest trading partners in the world. In the 1998 and 1999 Asian economic crisis, Chinese exports to the EU and US compensated for falling exports to Asian countries by rising 16% and 18% respectively. The EU overtook Japan to become China's second largest export market in 1999. The EU imported almost €50 billion and exported €20 billion worth of goods. China thus enjoyed a trade surplus of €30 billion in 1999 (Appendix 1). Meanwhile, European companies invested US\$4.5 billion in China that year, making the EU the largest foreign direct investor in China.⁸¹ The EU's relations with Japan are governed by the 1991 "Joint Declaration on Relations between the European Community and its Member states and Japan".⁸² As the EU's second-largest export market and a major investor in the EU, the EU's relations with Japan go beyond the purely economic, with an increasing cooperation on global and regional issues. This was expressed in the new "10-year Action Plan" adopted at the 2000 EU-Japan summit.⁸³

b) *The EU's political and security objectives*

In the late 1980s and 1990s, western Europe's relations with China and other East Asian countries changed from being derivatives of the Cold War and broader relations with the superpowers, and developed an "independent dynamic" of their

⁸⁰ European Commission, "Creating a New Dynamic in EU-ASEAN relations", COM (96)314, Brussels, 1996 and "Investing in Asia's Dynamism: European Union Direct Investments in Asia", Luxembourg: OPEEC/UNCTAD, 1996.

⁸¹ European Commission, "The EU's relations with China- An Overview", on http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/china/intro/index.htm, consulted 8 April 2001.

⁸² European Commission, "Bilateral Trade Relations" with Japan, July 2001, on <http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/bilateral/japan>.

⁸³ COM (2001) 469, p.13.

own.⁸⁴ The EU recognized from the 1990s that it had to engage politically the emerging powers of Asia as their economic power translated to geopolitical and military power. However, the dominant view of Europe's role in Asian security is represented by Michael Leifer's assessment that "Europe's ability to contribute directly and in a substantive sense to Asian security has become decreasingly possible because there is no military presence to speak of; nor are there any defence planning arrangements which may be taken off the shelf for a collective response to crisis." François Heisbourg notes that the EU retains a presence in various parts of Asia. However, in political terms, the European Union as such "hardly exists as such in East Asia."⁸⁵ From a military standpoint, the 135,000 personnel of the United States' Pacific Fleet and permanent deployment of nearly 80,000 US troops based in South Korea, Japan and Southeast Asia indeed dwarfs the European presence.⁸⁶ The UK and France are in fact the only European countries that either permanently station or periodically deploy troops in the region.

The contrary view, expressed by Paul Stares and Nicolas Régaud, is that "Europe's involvement in Asia-Pacific security has been growing, not diminishing, in recent years."⁸⁷ They argue that since over one-quarter of total EU trade is conducted with East Asia and that the EU exports as much to the region as does the US, Europe has substantial economic interests worth protecting. European powers – whether individually or collectively – could conceivably ignore a serious breach of peace in the Asia-Pacific. The EU has made an active contribution to peace and security in the region, eg. in its assistance for the establishment of democratic government in Cambodia and East Timor, support for refugees in and out of Afghanistan, support for inter-Korean dialogue and contributions to KEDO. The EU has also participated since 1994 (in the form of the Presidency and a Commission representative) at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). In a similar vein, Shin and Segal argue that "For Europe, defending a stable Pacific Asia that remains open and connected to the world economy is a vital interest and one worth defending with military power. The Europeans would

⁸⁴ Shambaugh, *China and Europe: 1949-1995*, p.2.

⁸⁵ Heisbourg in Maull 98:230.

⁸⁶ IISS, *The Military Balance 2001-2002*, pp.172 and 195-199

⁸⁷ Stares and Régaud, "Europe's Role in Asia-Pacific Security", *Survival* 39/4, Winter 1997-98, pp.117-139.

be foolish to free-ride on the US' willingness to defend an open and stable global trading system if a challenge arises in Asia".⁸⁸

While Europe's involvement in East Asian security has been growing since the end of the Cold War, the EU does not usually speak with one voice. It normally acts through specific member states that pull in wider EU funding and support for (usually) their ex-colonies or areas of particular interest. This was the case for the French push behind EU support for Cambodia's reconstruction in 1992-93, and French and British calls for an EU contribution (on top of their own national contributions) to KEDO. However the UK's role in the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA), French nuclear tests in the South Pacific in 1995-96 (against protests from both Asian and EU countries), and the presence of French military assets in their "overseas territories" in the Pacific and Indian Oceans are clear cases of unilateral national capabilities taking precedence abroad. Moreover, the repeated French and British démarches for separate seats on the ASEAN Regional Forum since 1994, rather than a single seat for the EU, do not augur well for a collective European voice in East Asian security.

Since the NAS in 1994, political dialogue with key partners in Asia has developed considerably, with new biennial Summit dialogues in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) from 1996, and annual summit dialogues with China (since 1995), India (2000), Japan, and the ongoing EU-ASEAN dialogue. The EU's contacts with ASEAN under the EC-ASEAN dialogue, and now with all the East Asian countries under ASEM, can be seen as "a means to regulate contact with other international actors".⁸⁹ The EU's High Representative for CFSP, Javier Solana acknowledged the utility of multilateral dialogues like ASEM in complementing bilateral dialogues such as the EU-ASEAN, EU-China and EU-Japan dialogues: "strong regional frameworks, such as the ASEAN, or the ASEM process, are gaining ground as the natural interlocutors for a more comprehensive and global dialogue... We should use these meetings to provide a new impetus across the full range of issues where we have shared concerns and interests."⁹⁰ The Commission is also increasing its presence in the region (Table 3.3) in line with its 2001 goals of developing its External Service, which had 128

⁸⁸ Stares and Régaud in *Survival* 39/1, 1997, p.125.

⁸⁹ Forster 99:744.

⁹⁰ "Future Relations between the European Union and Asia", fourth ASEM Asia-Europe Lecture by Javier Solana, High Representative for the EU CFSP, Singapore, 26 July 2000.

Delegations around the world at the beginning of 2003.⁹¹ From only one EC Delegation in Asia (Tokyo) in 1974, the Community's diplomatic network in the region has grown to 17 Delegations in 2003.⁹²

Table 3.3: Delegations of the European Commission in Asia, 1974-2003

Year opened	EC Delegations opened in Asia	No. of Delegations in Asia
1974	Tokyo	1
1979	Bangkok	2
1981	Canberra	3
1982	Dhaka	4
1983	New Delhi	5
1985	Islamabad	6
1988	Beijing, Jakarta	8
1990	Seoul	9
1991	Manila	10
1995	Colombo	11
1996	Hanoi	12
2002	Vientiane, Phnom Penh, Kathmandu	15
2003	Singapore, Kuala Lumpur	17

Sources: Compiled from Georg Wiessala, *The European Union and Asian Countries*, 2002, p.22; and European Commission, "European Commission Delegations in Asia", on http://europa.eu.int/external_relations/asia/delegations.htm, accessed 27 August 2003.

The EU's support for ASEM's creation could be seen as a consequence of three strategic concerns: a need to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War period by extending structured contact to new interlocutors beyond ASEAN; a need to restate the EU's credentials as a stakeholder in the region, thus legitimising European political and economic interests alongside those of other global actors such as the US; and an interest in a new post-Cold War agenda based on a commitment to defining acceptable economic and human rights standards as a precondition of privileged contact with the EU.⁹³ ASEM was also necessary to put life into the EU's relations with the region since the EC-ASEAN relationship had ceased to be a "success story" owing to deadlocked disagreements over human rights and conditionalities for a second-generation Cooperation Agreement.⁹⁴

⁹¹ European Commission, "The Development of the External Service", COM(2001)381.

⁹² COM (94) 314 final, Part II; see also COM (2001)469 final, p.14 .

⁹³ Anthony Forster, "The European Union in South-East Asia" Continuity and Change in Turbulent Times, *International Affairs*, 75/4, 1999, pp.743-744.

⁹⁴ Contrast the optimism in Mols 1990 and Nuttall 1990, with Forster 1999.

c) The EU and Human Rights

The Europe-wide concern for human rights can be traced to a shared determination never to allow the pogroms of the Second World War to recur on the continent. This concern led to the entrenchment of the norm of respect for human rights in Europe after 1945. European countries supported and played an active part in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1948. The Council of Europe made the respect for human rights and the rule of law a condition for membership.⁹⁵ As early as 1950 the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was available for signature and ratification. Between 1953 and 1973 virtually all western European states had accepted that individuals could file human rights complaints and had awarded jurisdiction to the European Court of Human Rights in these matters.

Until the end of the Cold War, most EU member states - the Netherlands and Denmark were the only notable exceptions - and the European Community as a whole did not emphasise human rights in their foreign policy or attach conditionalities to their aid or relations with third countries. The Netherlands had issued an extensive White Paper on human rights and foreign policy in 1979. The Dutch paper outlined in detail the dilemmas that governments face in attempting to put human rights at the centre of foreign policy.⁹⁶ Multilateralism served to legitimise human rights actions and provided information about the degree to which individual governments were likely to be isolated or supported in their respective stances. The Netherlands played an active role in the UN in developing a variety of human rights norms, such as those involving discrimination against women, persecution for religious beliefs, and the use of torture.

The Community's development of an external policy in human rights took a first major step in 1977 when the Commission, the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament adopted a Joint Declaration on the Protection of Fundamental Freedoms. A new "democratic condition" for entry to the Community was introduced in 1978: the Copenhagen European Council "solemnly declare(d) that respect for and maintenance

⁹⁵ Donnelly, *International Human Rights*, pp.107-114 and Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders*, p.49.

⁹⁶ Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders*, p.48.

of representative democracy and human rights in each Member State are essential elements of membership in the European Community.”⁹⁷ This made it incumbent on new members to contribute to and not undermine the EC’s identity as a democratic community that protected human rights. From 1984, a member of the General Secretariat was tasked to coordinate the EC’s human rights policy, and in 1988 a new directorate within the General Secretariat included a specialist on human rights to enhance intergovernmental cooperation among member states.⁹⁸

The human rights clause in EU Cooperation Agreements with third countries is, however, a recent development (from 1993), made possible only with the end of the Cold War. The main locus of effective decision-making on human rights issues in the European Union framework is the treaty-based Common Foreign and Security Policy. The Maastricht Treaty states that one of the goals of CFSP is to “develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”⁹⁹ and that “the Council shall ensure the unity, consistency and effectiveness of action by the Union”. The 1993 Copenhagen European Council set out in greater detail various criteria for enlargement.¹⁰⁰ References to human rights in the EU’s foreign policy initially became *de rigueur* in relations with the Central and East European countries which were seeking membership in the European Union. Then “conditionality” clauses on human rights were rapidly incorporated into all of the EU’s agreements with third countries and organisations.¹⁰¹

The perceived “imposition” of Western human rights standards by the EU on Asia, a continent with no regional human rights regime at all, was destined to create conflict.¹⁰² Nonetheless, the EU has established an important human rights dialogue

⁹⁷ See Clapham, “EU’s Human Rights Common Foreign Policy”, p.678.

⁹⁸ Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders*, p.49.

⁹⁹ Art. 11(1) of the consolidated Amsterdam Treaty, cited in Clapham, p.636.

¹⁰⁰ Membership requires that the candidate country “has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and the respect for the protection of minorities”. See Clapham, p.631.

¹⁰¹ See Christopher Hill and Karen E. Smith (eds.), *European Foreign Policy: Key Documents*, London: Routledge, 2000, p.443, and Bruno Simma, Jo Beatrix Aschenbrenner and Constanze Schulte, “Human Rights Considerations in the Development Co-operation Activities of the EC”, in Philip Alston (ed), *The European Union and Human Rights*, Oxford UP, 1999.

¹⁰² See Jack Donnelly’s *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989: and the revised edition, 2003 :130-31, 151-54 , which contrasts the complete absence of regional human rights regimes in the Middle East and Asia with the development of the strongest ‘enforcement’ regime in Europe between 1945 and 2000. Also Vitit Muntarbhorn, “Current Challenges of Human Rights in

with China, is actively supporting efforts towards the strengthening of governance and civil society participation in Indonesia, and encourages any opening towards democracy in Burma/Myanmar and Pakistan.¹⁰³ The EC is also bound by comprehensive cooperation agreements (including clauses related to the commitment by both partners to human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, and to the eventual suspension of the agreement) with five Asian countries – Nepal, Laos, Cambodia, Bangladesh and South Korea. Similar agreements (but without a “suspension” clause) govern the EC’s relations with India, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Macao. An older style of cooperation agreement is still in force with ASEAN and with China. EC relations with Japan, Australia and New Zealand are governed by Joint Declarations.¹⁰⁴ The question of the suspension clause was a thorn in the flesh in EU-ASEAN relations and not only prevented the signing of a second-generation cooperation as a result of the East Timor and Myanmar participation issues, but completely held the EU-ASEAN dialogue in abeyance from 1996 until an EU-ASEAN Ministerial meeting finally took place in Vientiane in December 2000.

A major and controversial focus of the EU’s human rights action is China, “the most complex and multifaceted dialogue on human rights” which the EU has with any country.¹⁰⁵ In dealing with China, the EU has suffered from conflicting interests and coordination problems between the General Affairs Council (GAC), the Member States, the Commission and the European Parliament (EP). After the French-led defection in 1997, a new European approach to human rights in China was decided by the GAC and codified in the Commission’s March 1998 strategy paper, “Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China” (Chapter Four). As the shock of Tiananmen faded away, the GAC and larger Member States have tended to pay lip service to human rights in order to cultivate good political and economic relations with Beijing. An activist External Relations Commissioner is necessary to keep human rights on the agenda of EU-China relations. Commissioner Chris Patten, known for his strong views on human rights in China since his days as the last British Governor-general of Hong Kong, has listed

Asia”, in Dilys M. Hill (ed.), *Human Rights and Foreign Policy: Principle and Practice*, London: Macmillan Press, 1989.

¹⁰³ COM (2001) 469 final, p.11.

¹⁰⁴ COM (2001) 469, p.12 (fn10).

¹⁰⁵ Chris Patten, “China’s candidature for hosting the Olympic Games in 2008”, Commission statements in urgency debates, by External Relations Commissioner in the European Parliament, Plenary Session, Strasbourg, 5 July 2001, SPEECH/01/33.

constructive engagement, multilateral cooperation, and the promotion of human rights, good governance and the rule of law, as three basic objectives of the EU in its relations with East Asia.¹⁰⁶

Aside from common actions taken under the CFSP and coordinated by the Commission, individual governments raise human rights concerns in their discussions with Chinese leaders. In practice, the leading actor within the EU in promoting human rights in the world has been the European Parliament (EP). It has since 1987 made regular and public criticisms of the Chinese human rights record, especially on Tibet, arbitrary detention, capital punishment, religious and political freedoms. The EP's involvement in the Community's external relations was enhanced through its powers over the EU overseas development assistance budget. The GAC in May 1999 supported the EP's 1994 initiative to streamline a series of budget headings under a single chapter of the EU budget (B7-70) in the "European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights" (EIDHR).¹⁰⁷ The EP's budgetary power over the EIDHR, which concentrates on developing a coherent strategy in the field of EU external assistance in cooperation with NGOs and other international organisations, gives the EP added oversight of the Community's external relations. The EP thus holds the Commission and GAC accountable for developments "on the ground" for the continuation of, for example, the EU-China dialogue.¹⁰⁸

Aside from its powers over external assistance, the EP has leveraged on the political prestige and international publicity it can confer on foreign personalities embodying human rights or independence struggles, eg. opposition leaders in Burma (Aung San Suu Kyi) and pre-Independence East Timor (Ramos Horta). The EP infuriated the Chinese in 1996 when it awarded Wei Jingsheng – then China's most celebrated dissident - the Sakharov prize for Freedom of Thought.¹⁰⁹ Then it invited the Dalai Lama to address a session in Strasbourg in October 2001. In the spring of 2003, the EP's Liberal, Democrats and Reform (ELDR) Group attempted to invite Chen Shui-

¹⁰⁶ Chris Patten, "What does Europe's Common Foreign and Security Policy mean for Asia?", Speech by Commissioner for External Relations at Japan Institute for International Affairs, Tokyo, 19 July 2000.

¹⁰⁷ European Commission, *The EU's role in promoting Human Rights and Democratisation in Third Countries*, COM (2001)252 final, Brussels, 8 May 2001; European Commission, "The EU's Human Rights and Democratisation Policy: Overview", last updated December 2001, on www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/intro.

¹⁰⁸ European Union Annual Report on Human Rights, 1998/99:24-25 and 2002:131

¹⁰⁹ Nathan, "China and the International Human Rights Regime", p.155.

bian, Taiwan's President, to address the European Parliament in Brussels (France had refused to issue a visa for the address at the EP's building in Strasbourg). However, Belgium caved in when the Chinese Embassy threatened that Belgium-Chinese relations could be "set back 10 years" if the Belgian government proceeded to issue the visa to Chen. The decision to refuse the visa was then presented as a veto by the GAC, despite support from the Foreign Ministers of Belgium, Sweden and Denmark.¹¹⁰

III Interplay between French and European foreign policies

The overview of French "national" and collective "EU" policies above demonstrate that EU policy and French policy are not distinct, separate spheres of action. National and collective EU foreign policies in East Asia are intimately related in a dialectical process of continuous, iterative adjustment and cannot be neatly dissociated. This leads to the prime feature of the France-EU interaction in East Asia: the continual and ironic necessity for France to invoke and engage *European Union* prestige and resources, even when it wants to play a *national* role in the region.

Paris occasionally still makes attempts at a *national* great-power role in East Asia commensurate with its self-image as a global power, as in the Dumas-brokered talks leading to the Paris peace agreements on Cambodia in 1991.¹¹¹ However, French prestige and power in Asia pale to what is enjoyed within the French-speaking international organisation the *Francophonie* or in Africa, where France remains a major economic and military player, commands clout as an "African" power and holds annual summit meetings with African leaders. For East Asia, the EU is more often than not necessary, even critical, to under-write French initiatives in the region.

ASEM, the link that gave France an opportunity to make a more institutionalised and permanent return to political and strategic affairs in the region, is on the surface a clear example of France "projecting" its national preferences onto the European platform and Europeanising a *French* initiative. Interpreting ASEM from this

¹¹⁰ Interviews with Mr Graham Watson, MEP and Leader, European Liberal, Democrats and Reform (ELDR) Group, 25 March 2003; and Singapore Ambassador to the European Communities, 28 March 2003. See also "Brussels ban for Taiwan leader", *Financial Times* 17 March 2003.

¹¹¹ Interview with Quai d'Orsay CFSP Director, Paris, September 1999, who noted that the French position on Cambodia at the Paris Peace conference in 1991 was one of the occasions France took an important international position *without* consulting its EU partners.

perspective, we can trace ASEM's lineage to the French government's search for a means to assert a political and economic presence in a region where France was weak (Part I of this chapter). Balladur thus quickly seized upon the Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong's proposal for a summit-level meeting of leaders from Europe and Asia, mooted in September 1994 in Paris and Brussels. As the Asia-Europe link needed collective EU support, France thus "Europeanised" this Franco-Singaporean initiative by using extant processes in the EU Foreign Policy-making system (Asia Working Groups, COREPER, Council of Ministers, the EU Presidency and the Troika system, etc). France gave "strong encouragement" before, after and during its EU presidency (in the first half of 1995) to inscribe this initiative on the EU's agenda up to the inaugural 1996 summit meeting in Bangkok.¹¹²

Yet, ASEM can also be read as a Commission or wider *European* initiative and achievement, since Singapore was responding (as we saw in Part II of this chapter), to the Commission's "New Asia Strategy" paper of that summer, itself inspired by Germany's 1993 "Asian policy".¹¹³ Therein lies the rub: where exactly does the "national" end and the "European" begin in the foreign policies emanating from western Europe? Even foreign leaders implicitly acknowledge the mixed nature of European foreign policy-making today by *de rigueur* including Brussels (and the capital of the member state holding the rotating EU presidency) in their European tours, and making their big proposals at *both* European and national levels.

One could argue that East Asia in the 1990s was exceptional because of the need to leverage on the larger political and institutional resources of the EU in such a large and diverse region – something beyond the resources of any EU member state acting alone. As France had in recent times a relatively low economic and political profile, French and EU objectives overlapped on most issues out of necessity and this overlap was coincidental and cannot be expected to be permanent. I would argue that serious differences (in goals, means and approaches) did exist, but that EU actors were forced by EFP procedures and external expectations to work out these differences and to try to reach common positions, if sometimes only compromise positions that lack

¹¹² Michael Leifer, "Europe and Southeast Asia", in Maull 1998:199 and MAE, "La France et l'Europe en Asie".

¹¹³ See also Council for Asia-Europe Cooperation (CAEC), *The Rationale and Common Agenda for Asia-Europe Cooperation*, Tokyo: CAEC, 1997.

conviction and commitment. The most evident of these differences was on human rights (which we shall see in greater details in later chapters), where France was at variance with the mainstream of EU opinion. In the 1990s, France put economic interests as a primary objective in East Asia, buttressed by closer political and security relations with East Asian states. Human rights came a poor third in the French scheme of things. In contrast, the general mood and trend in the EU was for a more assertive CFSP and human rights stance in the world, including East Asia. For the Commission, the European Parliament and several EU member states such as the Netherlands and Denmark, human rights were a critical objective just below, if not equal, to the economic objective. Political considerations came in third as many member states did not see the need to engage East Asian countries, aside from Japan, on an equal footing.

By and large, however, the vast majority of interests identified in Paris in the 1990s were similar to those defined in Bonn/Berlin, London, Rome or Brussels. First, France, Germany, Britain and the Commission were interested in the economic opportunities offered by East Asian countries. This economic imperative was made clear in the Commission's 1994 and 2001 NAS papers and reaffirmed in the slew of Country and Regional Strategy Papers (CSPs) concerning eg. China, Japan, India, Indonesia, South Korea, ASEM and ASEAN) from 1995. Second, the leaders of EU member states were becoming convinced of the need for Europe to be engaged in East Asia politically and strategically, both in multilateral fora such as ASEM, as well as bilateral dialogues between individual East Asian and EU countries. Third, human rights were being championed by several EU member states through EU structures. The Commission, the Parliament and several EU Presidencies (notably the Dutch and Danish) also took the initiative in the post-Cold War, post-Tiananmen era to champion human rights and attach political conditionalities in their aid and relations with East Asian countries. These three sets of objectives were shared by practically all EU member states (although intra-EU economic competition and quarrels over human rights approaches were evident in countries like China), whose leaders are devoting more time and attention to the whole Asian region. The rise of Asia's political profile in Europe - noted in a research paper by a senior Quai d'Orsay official assessing France's Asia policy from 1995 to 2002 - is evident in the increased number of visits to the region by the leaders of the four largest Member States ([Tables 3.4a](#) and [3.4b](#)).

Table 3.4a: Visits of French, British, German and Italian Heads of State/Government to Asia

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002 01.01-30.04
France	0	Chirac : 2 (9d) Singapore Thailand (ASEM) Japan	Chirac : 3 (7d) China Malaysia Vietnam	Chirac : 2 (5d) India Japan Jospin : 1 (3d) China HK	Jospin : 1 (3d) Japan	Chirac : 2 (6d) Japan South Korea (+ASEM) China	0	0
United Kingdom	0	Major : 1 (6d) Thailand (ASEM) Korea HK	Major : 1 (6d) India Bangladesh Pakistan Blair 1 (1d) HK (retrocession)	Blair 2 (10d) Japan China HK	0	Blair : 1 (3d) Korea (ASEM)	Blair : 1 (2d) Pakistan India	Blair : 1 (6d) Bangladesh India Afghanistan Pakistan
Germany	Kohl : 1 (10d) China Vietnam Singapore	Kohl : 2 (12d) Thailand (ASEM) Indonesia Philippines Japan	Kohl : 1 (4d) Brunei HK	0	Schroeder : 2 (8d) China Japan	Schroeder : 1 (3d) South Korea (ASEM)	Schroeder : 1 (6d) Pakistan India China	0
Italy	0	Dini : 1 (3d) Thailand (ASEM)	Prodi : 2 (12d) China South Korea Indonesia Singapore Philippines Japan	Prodi 1 (4d) India Bangladesh	0	Amato : 1 (3d) South Korea (ASEM)	Amato : 1 (3d) China	0

Table 3.4b: Visits of French, British, German and Italian Foreign Ministers to Asia

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002 01.01-30.04
France	0	Charette : 3 (12d) China HK Indonesia Japan	Charette : 1 (3d) Singapore (ASEAN & ASEM)	Védrine : 1 (2d) China HK	0	Védrine : 2 (5d) India Philippines China	Védrine : 2 (4d) China (ASEM) India Pakistan	Védrine : 1 (1d) Afghanistan
United Kingdom	Hurd : 1 (8d) Bangladesh India Pakistan	Rifkind : 3 (18d) HK China Pakistan India Sri Lanka Japan Mongolia, Vietnam	Rifkind : 1 (3d) Singapore (ASEAN & ASEM) Cook : 1 (10d) Indonesia Malaysia Singapore Philippines	Cook : 1 (4d) China	Cook : 1 (2d) Japan	Cook : 1 (6d) India Thailand Nepal	Straw : 1 (2d) Pakistan	Straw : 2 (2d) Afghanistan India
Germany	Kinkel : 1 (5d) Japan Cambodia	Kinkel : 1 (6d) China Mongolia	Kinkel : 4 (14d) Malaysia India Singapore (ASEAN & ASEM) HK (retrocession) Thailand South Korea Japan	0	0	Fischer : 5 (16d) : India Philippines Thailand Japan South Korea Indonesia Singapore China	Fischer : 2 (4d) China (ASEM) Pakistan	0
Italy	Agnelli : 2 (4d) India (with President Scalfaro) Indonesia	Agnelli : 1 (2d) India Dini : 1 (8d) China South Korea	Dini : 3 (12d) Singapore (ASEAN & ASEM) HK (retrocession) Japan China	0	0	Dini : 4 (12d) China North Korea Vietnam South Korea India China HK	Dini : 3 (6d) Singapore Japan China (+ASEM)	0

N.B. Multiple consecutive visits in several countries are counted as one visit; Visits made in the context of a non-Asian multilateral meeting are not included - G8 in particular, neither are visits by Foreign Ministers accompanying their Heads of State or Government in Table 3.4a.

Key: (x d) = visit lasting x days; HK = Hong Kong; the annotation (ASEM) after a name = the minister visited the country to participate in an ASEM meeting; (+ASEM) = the minister made a bilateral visit in addition to participating in an ASEM meeting.

Source: Based on René Dorient, "Un septennat de politique asiatique: quel bilan pour la France?", *Politique Etrangère*, 1/2002, 2002.

The inter-connectedness of both national and EU policies exerts a homogenising effect in both directions. Even the Quai d'Orsay, one of the last bastions of Gaullist national independence, observes that France's "nouvelle frontière" Asia policy since 1993 is closely related to the EU's 1994 "New Asia Strategy". Its statement explaining France's Asia policy notes that this rests on three pillars: bilateral partnerships (of which the bilateral agreements signed with China, Japan and India in 1996-98 are the most significant); collective "European action"; and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) dialogue process.¹¹⁴ Although the first aspect is indicative of continuing Gaullist presumptions of bilateral "special relationships", security cooperation and partnerships with Asia's great powers, even this is closely related to the EU's objectives and interests defined in the Commission's series of country strategy papers for each of these states from 1995.

Conclusions

Habits of cooperation, consultation and coordination on common EU policy in the East Asian region are relatively new and not well established. Even so, the general overview above suggests that France's East Asia policy has undergone convergence with other EU states and the Commission. France adapted its economic strategy from 1993 in China and the greater East Asia region under the impetus of the strategic initiatives launched by Germany, Britain and the Commission. Although on human rights France changed from being a hardline member state in 1989 to a conciliatory "constructive dialogue" position on Myanmar, Indonesia and China, it has always defended its actions in the larger "EU interest" and sought to negotiate compromise positions with its EU critics.

Most of the examples above and in the case study chapters to follow may lead to the interpretation of EU foreign policy as an agent of change, with French policy often having to adjust to policies made in Brussels. Indeed, had the EU not existed, the incentives for France to seek compromises or allies to narrow differences of interests between itself and other member states, would have been far weaker. This counterfactual can be readily applied to the 1997 French defection from the common position

¹¹⁴ Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (MAE), "La France et l'Europe en Asie", updated 20 January 2003, on <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/actu/article.asp?ART=31657>.

on human rights policy vis-à-vis China, then convergence from 1998 with the EU mainstream position debated at the Council. Similarly, French protectionist policies towards Japan would have probably lasted longer without the moderating effects of the Commission in the early 1990s.

On the other hand, EU foreign policy is not always a straightforward independent variable affecting national foreign policies. The national representatives of Member States are deeply involved, through Commission and Council deliberations, in the formulation of EU policies. Thus, national interests are aired and national representatives often seek concessions and safeguards in accepting Commission-led decisions, eg. on the WTO positions taken at the Uruguay Round, or agreement to lift import quotas on Japanese cars.

National and collective EU foreign policies are thus related in a process of continuous and mutual adjustment, with both acting at different times as dependent or causal variables. What is conceived as eg., “French”, “German” or “Dutch” foreign policy is often perceived by the target state to be representative of “Europe” as a whole. Where dissonance between the “national” and the “European” occurs, the target state has often taken advantage of national rivalries within the EU until member states closed ranks on the common objectives, policies and actions to take on particular issues in particular areas of the world. This closing of ranks is a process symptomatic of the Europeanization of national foreign policies, especially Dimension I (national adaptation and policy convergence). This Europeanization process takes place in an increasingly coordinated and normative - if by no means always smooth or harmonious - environment of inter-state and inter-elite interaction for the general “European good”. This was most stark when the French approach on the trade-human rights linkage (which we shall see in later chapters) was at variance with the mainstream of EU objectives.

Increasingly, French objectives and foreign policy in East Asia cannot be easily separated from EU objectives and foreign policy, ie. they are fundamentally and inextricably enmeshed as part of Europe’s “External Relations System”, as part of

European Foreign Policy (EFP).¹¹⁵ What were the extent and limit of Europeanization? Were they a top-down or bottom-up process, or did this vary from issue to issue and from country to country? The next three chapters will examine in detail in the country studies of China, Vietnam and Japan, the impact of EU institutions on French national foreign policies, the extent to which French policies in these countries have been Europeanised, and the reasons for variations across countries and issue areas.

¹¹⁵Following Christopher Hill's "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role", *JCMS* 31/1, 1993, pp.306-328.

Chapter Four

China *A Gaullist Partner?*

China is today the key country in France's and the EU's Asia policy. It is not only the most populous country on earth, but boasts the fastest growing major economy and is seen as economically, politically, militarily and even culturally strategic to French interests. Many post-1964 analyses have tended to privilege the "Gaullist" interpretation (see chapter three) of French objectives and policies with regard to China. Some scholars even see it in terms of a "special relationship" of two medium, independent powers with China as a fast-rising power.¹ Gaullist French foreign policy is characterized by a pronounced national independence, and activism in foreign affairs. There is an abiding desire to maintain rank with the major world powers, to preserve an equilibrium among blocs of states, and to pursue a policy of active involvement, if not intervention around the world². Often France is prepared to "go it alone" if its partners (whether EU or other Western allies) are thought to be "out of step".³ Recent French academic and policy-makers' references to the US as an "*hyper-puissance*" that needs to be balanced by other powers – in particular the EU and China – have updated this essentially Gaullist perspective in which China is perceived as the most promising, if not sole rising power capable of challenging continued US hegemony in the 21st century.⁴

A second, related perspective explains French policy in China as being driven by essentially "low politics" economic motives. The economic explanations portray China as a vast economic opportunity and potential market of over one billion consumers. In this "Eldorado" image, China is a colossal market for French goods and services. This

¹See Alain Peyrefitte's *La Chine s'est éveillée*, Paris: Omnibus, 1997, and *Quand la Chine s'éveillera... le monde tremblera*, Paris: Fayard, 1973; also Patricia Wellons, "Sino-French Relations: Historical Alliance vs. Economic Reality", in *The Pacific Review*, 7/3, 1994; and Bridges and Domenach, "Challenges in Asia", in La Serre, Leruez and Wallace (eds), *French and British Policies in Transition: The Challenge of Adjustment*, London: RIIA, 1990, pp. 186-87.

² Stanley Hoffmann, "La France face à son image", *Politique Etrangère*, 51, 1986, pp.25-53; Alfred Grosser, *Affaires Extérieures: La politique de la France, 1944-1984*, Paris: Flammarion, 1984, p.195.

³ Mark Wise, "France and European Unity", in Aldrich and Connell (eds), *France in World Politics*, London and New York: Routledge, 1989, p.39.

perspective tends to explain French policies towards China as short-term and overly dependent on the personalities of the leaders involved, principally in the attitude of the French President. Such an explanation argues that in the 1980s and 1990s, bilateral relations underwent severe swings under the presidencies of Mitterrand and Chirac because these leaders brought to bear idiosyncratic values, assumptions and goals vis-à-vis China in the pursuit of short-term (essentially economic) goals⁵. On the flip side of China as an economic opportunity and the challenge of re-establishing an active French economic presence in the country, is the image of China as an economic threat and the challenges of coping with the penetration of Chinese exports.⁶

Map of China

showing major cities and geopolitical situation in Asia



Source: CIA, *The World Factbook 2003*, on <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ch.html>, as of 1 August 2003.

⁴ See Hubert Védrine, (1998), "De l'utilité de la France", (Interview with Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine) in *Politique Internationale* 78, 1998, pp.41-64; and "Hubert Védrine, France's voice in the world", *Economist* 11 November 2000, p.74.

⁵ François Godement, "Une politique française pour l'Asie-Pacifique?", *Politique Etrangère*, 4/95; Aron Shai, *The fate of British and French Firms in China, 1949-54: imperialism imprisoned*, Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996.

⁶ Bridges and Domenach, p.175; Eric Chol, "Chine: on s'est trompé d'eldorado", *L'Express*, no.2678, 31 October-6 November 2002, pp.72-77; and Godement 95.

Which perspective better explains the record and evolution of French policy in the 1990s? In the 1990s, the economic explanation replaced the Gaullist perspective as the dominant account of French and policy in East Asia, and in China in particular.⁷ French policy is often explained as being inspired by French mercantilist ambitions in a rapidly growing China whose economy quadrupled in size between 1978 and 1995. However, this economic account by itself is too one-dimensional and does not capture a complex relationship that included major disagreements over, inter alia, human rights, strategic arms sales to Taiwan, and the appropriate security role of France and EU states in East Asia. This chapter proposes that a more accurate understanding of French (and EU) objectives and policies in East Asia necessitates analysing the multiple facets and inter-relationship of the economic, political and human rights objectives of the East Asian region to French and EU interests. This chapter discusses these three domains after a short history of French perceptions of and relations with China up to de Gaulle's diplomatic recognition of the PRC in 1964. The key argument is that the national, Gaullist perspective still provides a compelling general explanation for French attitudes and policies towards China. However, French policy-makers' manoeuvring space is continually being challenged by Europeanization pressures which undercut French leaders' powers, and shape their preferences and options. This is especially so in the case of human rights, but is also evident in trade and economics, and encroaches on French political and strategic interests in China.

From Enlightenment Fascination to Contempt and Anti-Communism

First, a short history of French contacts with China up to Mao's establishment of the communist People's Republic of China in 1949 is in order. French attitudes towards China have mixed fascination with fear, adulation with loathing. French intellectuals have long tended to form a "utopian image" of a China in which the similarities of a strong and centralized monarchy, its old bureaucratic system, and its agrarian sector were highlighted.⁸ The first official contacts were in the middle of the 13th century, when King Louis XIII and the Pope tried to convince the Mongol Empire to fight

⁷ Godement 95; Patricia Wellons, "Sino-French Relations: Historical Alliance vs. Economic Reality", in *The Pacific Review*, 7/3, 1994, pp.341-348; and Miguel Santos Neves, "Towards a Common China Policy for the EU: a Portuguese Perspective", in Richard Grant (ed), *The European Union and China: A European Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, London: Routledge/RIIA, 1995.

⁸ For an analysis of the role of French physiocrats in shaping idealised Western images of China, see Rupert Hodder, "China and the World: perception and analysis", *The Pacific Review* 12/1, 1999, p.61-65.

against the Ottoman Empire in Asia Minor.⁹ The popularity of China as a philosophical subject began only five centuries later with the “rediscovery” of China by the Jesuits. French elites have for over two centuries been fascinated by China. French Enlightenment philosophers such as Voltaire and Rousseau idealized China for its centralized control, bureaucracy, arts and literature. Napoleon had famously predicted that “when China awakes, the world will tremble”.¹⁰

Most eighteenth-century French Enlightenment attitudes towards China were informed by positive writings and images propagated by Jesuits such as Matteo Ricci (who lived in Ming China from 1583-1610). For centuries, the chief “sinologists” in Europe were clerics and missionaries, whose works were the predominant sources available to European scholars and philosophers to “think China”. At a time when French society was dealing with major social and political changes, with the intellectual class pitted against the monarchy and the Church, China represented an idealized world, rich in dogmas and religions yet secular. Voltaire recommended the emulation of China to fight the dominance of the Catholic Church. *La Description de l'Empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise* (1735), a four-volume work by Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, reflected this period. 1750 is usually taken as the turning point in which sinophobia replaced sinophilie, when the writings of voyagers and traders portraying a despotic China became dominant.¹¹ Montesquieu invented the phrase “Chinese despotism” in 1748, and François Quesnay developed this image in his *Le despotisme de la Chine* (1767). Diderot cast doubts on China as a model and its prospects for positive evolution; Rousseau criticized “the autocratic Chinese system”.¹² McCartney’s 1793 mission to the Qing court under Emperor Qian Long aroused much fascination in its failure to open a formal diplomatic mission and trading relations between Britain and China. After the French Revolution, while Chinese arts and paintings continued to fascinate the French, China’s feudal system became began to look more and more antiquated.

⁹ See Godement and Serra, “French Policy towards China: A Redefinition”, in Santos, Neves and Bridges (eds), *Europe, China and the two SARs: Towards a New Era*, London: Macmillan Press, 2000, p.4. About 100 French missionaries were dispatched to China after France received confirmation of the existence of the Silk Road and of China.

¹⁰ This inspired the title of former Gaullist minister Alain Peyrefitte’s best-selling book (over a million copies sold) on France’s relations with China under de Gaulle, and perspectives on the country, *Quand la Chine s’éveillera... le monde tremblera*, Paris: Fayard, 1973.

¹¹ Michel Cartier (ed), *La Chine entre amour et haine*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998, pp.7-14. Commodore Anson’s *Voyage around the world in 1740-44* (published 1748).

By the second half of the 19th century, fascination for China was replaced by a sense of contempt for the Qing court's inability to modernize, especially when compared with Japan. Intra-European competition for lucrative trading privileges in China led to a scramble for "concessions". French incursions into a weakening Chinese empire followed the British pattern of exacting territorial concessions after the First Opium War (1840-42), by which Hong Kong was ceded. France joined Britain in the Second Opium War (1858-60), and at the same time strengthened its position in Indochina by invading Vietnam in 1858. Shortly after capturing Saigon, the French colony of Cochinchina was established in south Vietnam in 1863, together with a protectorate over Cambodia (Chapter Six). Following the Second Opium War, a French legation was established in Shanghai in 1860, and France gained concessions in Canton and Tianjin (1861). The French were also active in the southern Chinese provinces bordering or near Tonkin in north Vietnam: Yunnan (for opium cultivation), Guangxi and Guangdong (for overland and maritime trade), as well as shipbuilding in Fuzhou, Fujian. Meanwhile moves to extend French influence northwards of Cochinchina into Annam precipitated conflict with China, which considered Annam a tributary state. In the 1885 Franco-Chinese war, the French destroyed in just 40 minutes the entire Chinese navy of 11 warships at Fuzhou – ironically a navy which the French had helped to build since 1869 at the then-largest shipbuilding dock in China.¹³ Tonkin was recognized as a French protectorate by China in the 1885 Tianjin Treaty. By 1893, the French had consolidated French Indochina, and acquired a secure coastal trading route on top of the Mekong route into China by incorporating Annam and Laos.

At the dawn of the 20th century, French policies had nurtured a perception in China of France as another rapacious, Western colonial power. Like Britain, France had imposed unequal treaties, carved out colonial concessions and exacted indemnities on China following the Opium Wars, the 1885 Franco-Chinese war and the 1896-1900 Boxer Rebellion. France was one of the eight allied powers in the 1900 siege of Peking¹⁴ that yielded a major French concession in Shanghai. Finally, the French

¹² Godement and Serra 2000, p.5.

¹³ Christophe Dubois, "L'Arsenal de Fuzhou et la Présence militaire française au Fujian (1869-1911)", in Jacques Weber (ed.), *La France en Chine, 1843-1943*, Nantes: Ouest Editions, 1997, pp.91-102. See also Yoshiharu Tsuboi, *L'Empire Vietnamien face à la France et à la Chine, 1847-1885*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987.

¹⁴ The others were Britain, Japan, Russia, Germany, Italy, the US and Austria. A French Occupying power was present in China (mainly in Peking and Shanghai) until 1945. See Amaury Verron, "La

military alliance with Russia (1894-1914)¹⁵ served to complicate the relationship between France and China, as Tsarist Russia's territorial expansion eastwards had been accelerating in the 19th century at China's expense. In 1943, de Gaulle in the name of Free France announced the termination of France's traditional privileges in Shanghai and their relinquishment to Chiang Kai-shek. By 28 February 1946, a treaty renouncing French extraterritorial rights in China was signed by France and Chiang's Republic of China.¹⁶ When the Communists established control over mainland China in 1949, a large proportion of the French companies active in China (centred in Shanghai) were still involved in public utilities and banking, the very sectors in which the new Communist regime was determined to take direct and immediate control.¹⁷ While the new Chinese regime made attempts to take over French enterprises at an early stage between 1949 and 1954, Beijing did not attempt outright confiscation as it was still interested in trading with France.

The Gaullist legacy in France-China relations

The essential elements of General de Gaulle's national security doctrine and foreign policy were national independence in decision-making, a search for grandeur and rank, and the primacy of the nation-state. These three elements combined into foreign policy behaviour that included a persistent refusal to accept subordination to the US, and an emphasis on an independent national defence.¹⁸ This "Gaullist" foreign policy emphasised national grandeur and an independent role for France in world affairs. Similarly, China in the 1960s had been disappointed by its troubled alliance with the Soviet Union. China desired prestige and status as a great power in its own right, and began to adopt defence and foreign policies independent of Soviet tutelage. Mao welcomed closer relations with the country which had introduced many of China's leaders to Marxism, and whose revolutionary past had served as a model for the Chinese

des Boxers et le Corps français d'occupation de Chine (1901-45)", in Weber (ed.), *La France en Chine, 1843-1943*, pp.145-159.

¹⁵ Anne Hoegenhuis-Seliverstoff, *Une Alliance Franco-Russe: la France, la Russie et l'Europe au tournant du siècle dernier*, Bruxelles: Bruylant, 1997.

¹⁶ Shai 96:88; François Chabot, "La fin de la présence politique française à Shanghai (1937-1943)", in Weber (ed.), *La France en Chine, 1843-1943*, pp.233-45.

¹⁷ Shai 96:87.

¹⁸ Philip H. Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993, p.3 and Epilogue.

Revolution (some had taken the Paris Commune as a model).¹⁹ From 1919 to 1924, over one thousand young Chinese students went to France on the “work and study” movement.²⁰ There they became acquainted with the seamy underside of industrial capitalism while studying the French revolution. Among them were men who later assumed top leadership positions in communist China: Zhou Enlai, Chen Yi, Deng Xiaoping and Wang Ruofei.

As the first major Western country to exchange Ambassadors with the People’s Republic of China (full diplomatic relations were established in 1964),²¹ when the Republic of China (Taiwan) still occupied a permanent seat in the Security Council, France portrayed itself as laying the foundations for a special political relationship with China. The conventional wisdom on France-China relations is that during the Cold War they were founded on a conjunction of Gaullist and Chinese ambitions to be independent from the two superpowers,²² and that this understanding unravelled with the end of the Cold War. Patricia Wellon argues that de Gaulle and Mao were brought together by a convergence of worldviews and a shared desire for their countries to become strong and independent powers. This action was a symbolic gesture to underline French ambitions to act independently of the United States.²³ I would add that it also underlined the mood of that time: French and Chinese leaders felt they had “arrived” as full-fledged great-powers with indigenously developed atomic weapons (in 1960 and 1962 respectively) and the prestige then associated to nuclear-power status.²⁴ De Gaulle himself alluded to the demographic, cultural, and *strategic* weight of China as the “weight of evidence and of reason” in his 1964 press conference announcing the

¹⁹ *Le Monde*, 7 June 1964. Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping were the most important personalities among this generation of Chinese leaders which had studied or worked in France.

²⁰ See Frédéric Girard, “Les Etudiants Chinois en France, 1919-1937”, in Jacques Weber (ed.), *La France en Chine, 1843-1943*, Nantes: Ouest Editions, 1997, pp.119-128

²¹ Britain, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries had recognized China in 1950. However London and Beijing exchanged only Chargés d’Affaires in 1954; following Nixon’s visit to China, ambassadors were appointed in 1972 (the year West Germany established diplomatic relations with China). See David Shambaugh, *China and Europe*, London: Contemporary China Institute, SOAS, 1996.

²² Alain Peyrefitte, *Quand la Chine s’éveillera...le monde tremblera*, Paris: Fayard, 1973.

²³ Overtures towards the Soviet Union in 1959 and France leaving the NATO integrated command structure in 1966 were the more obvious gestures. See Charles G. Cogan, *Oldest Allies, Guarded Friends: The United States and France since 1940*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1994; Wellons 94.

²⁴ See Avery Goldstein’s *Deterrence and Security in the 21st century: China, Britain, France and the enduring legacy of the Nuclear Revolution*, Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000 for an analysis of nuclear thinking in France and China.

establishment of diplomatic relations with China as reasons to recognize the PRC.²⁵ From the Chinese perspective, diplomatic relations with France were a breaching of the wall of US-led Western sanctions, and a welcome European ally in the context of tense relations with the USSR. The stress on political relations with “Europe” was thus biased towards France, the politically dominant member of the original EC-6.²⁶

In practice, as Françoise Mengin elegantly argues, there was no coherent French policy on China for 30 years. The ziz-zags in the France-China relationship up to 1994 were symptomatic of de Gaulle’s effective “One China-One Taiwan” policy.²⁷ First, de Gaulle’s attitude towards China was complicated by his friendship with and respect for Chiang Kai-shek, leader of Nationalist China since 1935 whose Kuomintang forces had fled to Taiwan in 1949 after a bloody civil war with Mao’s Communists. After the formal establishment of the People’s Republic of China on mainland China in October 1949, Paris had decided to adopt the American policy of recognizing Chiang Kai-shek and not Mao Zedong as China’s legitimate national leader (as opposed to Britain which recognized Mao’s PRC in 1950). The close links between France and Taiwan continued after 1964 and continue to be an issue in France-China relations.

I Trade and Investment Relations

France had severely scaled back its presence in China since French firms began closing their operations in the early years of the Communist regime.²⁸ Unlike the British who held on to their strategic colony of Hong Kong and continued actively trading with China after Mao’s Communist forces took control of the government of China (excepting the island of Taiwan) in 1949, French economic presence in China declined drastically in 1949 and especially after the French colonial retreat from Vietnam in 1954.²⁹ Despite the fillip to political relations after the 1964 French diplomatic recognition of China and the exchange of ambassadors under de Gaulle and

²⁵ *Charles de Gaulle: Discours et Messages vers le terme janvier 1964-décembre 1965*, Paris: Plon, 1970. See also Peyrefitte 97:285.

²⁶ France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. See Kunming Liao, *La Politique de la République populaire de Chine à l’égard de l’Europe occidentale*, Ph.D thesis, Institut d’études politiques, Paris, 1989, p.8

²⁷ See Françoise Mengin, “Relations France-Chine, quel anniversaire s’agit-il de célébrer?”, in *Rérelations Internationales et Stratégiques*, 14, été 1994, pp.29-34.

²⁸ Shai 96, ch.6.

²⁹ Shai, *The fate of British and French Firms in China, 1949-54: Imperialism Imprisoned*, 1996.

Mao, economic relations were not significantly boosted.³⁰ Since China's opening in 1978 under Deng Xiaoping, Germany, Britain and Italy moved to make China a priority and have dominated the top tables of EU trade exchanges with China (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 EU Trade with China (Percentage shares of largest EU Traders)

	Exports					Imports				
	1978	1988	1989	1992	1993	1978	1988	1989	1992	1993
Germany	52.1	41.1	35.6	42.7	43.0	30.2	31.9	33.7	38.5	40.1
Italy	9.8	19.2	17.9	17.1	18.3	16.4	18.5	18.4	14.3	12.5
UK	9.2	10.8	9.9	8.6	8.3	17.6	10.2	9.5	8.6	9.6
France	10.4	13.7	22.5	16.1	11.9	18.6	18.7	18.8	18.0	17.7

Source: Richard Grant, (ed), *The European Union and China: A European Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, London: Routledge/RIIA, 1995. p.93. NB: Figures for the UK above are artificially low as they exclude trans-shipment trade through Hong Kong.

What were the perceived interests and strategies adopted by French governments in their economic relations with China in the 1980s and 1990s, and to what extent have these objectives succeeded or been moderated by larger foreign policy objectives or European-level interests? Three sets of factors seem to perpetuate a continued weak French presence in the China market.

First, since Deng's reforms, attempts to increase French economic presence in China have been predominantly driven by singular large-scale *grands contrats* signed by the French and Chinese governments. French economic initiatives tended to be launched in fits and starts, and have failed to coax small and medium sized French enterprises out of their caution in making investments in China. Unlike their British and German counterparts, French businesses are generally unconvinced of the wisdom of making China a priority country in their international or even regional (ie. Asian) strategies. As of 2002, China is still a second-tier recipient of French FDI, receiving far less French FDI than the other EU member states' economies, the US and even Singapore.

Second, French economic initiatives in China tend to shadow policies spearheaded by Germany, and to a lesser extent Britain and the European Commission. French governments have made a strong political push to "catch up with the Germans" and have tried copying the "German Model" of strong economic and political relations

³⁰ Shai, *British and French Firms in China*, 96; and Wellons 94.

with China. Unlike Germany, however, the social effects of French companies moving production overseas and human rights questions - championed by the French media, civil rights and academic circles since the Tiananmen massacre in 1989 - continue to dog economic relations and the large-scale transfer of French production to China.

Third, French economic policies in China are hamstrung by domestic politics and by competing industrial interests. This is no doubt true of French economic strategies in the rest of Asia (see chapter three) but they are worsened in the case of China as a result of especially strong pressures on French government exerted by high-tech French military industries – which finds a lucrative market in Taiwan – and the demands of aerospace, infrastructure and communications industries, which find in China their most important potential market.³¹

a) The French lag and caution in China

The first set of reasons behind the comparatively weak French economic presence in China is the lack of French business confidence in profitability and China's continued long-term stability. There is in France a deeply rooted tradition of scepticism regarding the vitality and future of the Chinese economy, and regular predictions of an imminent economic catastrophe each time China meets a difficulty.³² French economic analyses on China tend to advocate a prudent attitude because of the "state of transition of China's economic framework, whose outlines remain vague, particularly with respect to legislation on foreign investments which fluctuate greatly, and whose organization is marked with divisions, or even contradictions."³³ French businesses that went into China soon after its opening in 1978 discovered that the promise of a vast potential market was taking many years to realize. China would become a great exporting nation before it became a nation of consumers for French-made luxury products such as cars, perfumes and wines.³⁴ According to a Chinese marketing study, the number of Chinese consumers able to buy goods that are imported or produced in Sino-foreign joint-

³¹ Godement 95.

³² R. Guillan, *Dans trente ans la Chine*, Paris: Seuil, 1965; J. Hubler, and PX Meschi, "European direct investment in China and Sino-French joint ventures", *Asia Pacific Business Review*, Spring 2001, Vol.7, No.3, p.157.

³³ Hubler and Meschi, "European direct investment in China and Sino-French joint ventures", p.158.

³⁴ Eric Chol, "Chine: on s'est trompé d'eldorado", pp.72-77

venture companies is just over 60 million, around 5% of the population.³⁵ French businesses would have to be prepared to stay the long term in China before they could turn a profit.

Bilateral trade has been dominated by singular *grands contrats*, often political in character and hostage to fluctuating political relations. For example, in 1981-83 French agricultural exports - primarily wheat - increased dramatically to constitute one-third of all French exports to China, but then collapsed to less than 2% in 1984.³⁶ During the first term of the Mitterrand presidency (1981-88), French governments did not consider China a priority but instead focused efforts in the rapidly growing Asian region on Taiwan³⁷, Japan and the Asian NICs. By the end of the 1980s, the French presence in the Chinese market was under-sized compared to its status as the world's 4th largest exporter, accounting for 6% of world trade. In the mid-1990s, French economic and trade relations with China were criticized by the Chinese for being short-sighted, by other EU member states for being mercantilist and anti-European³⁸, by French sinologists as unprincipled for consigning human rights to secondary importance³⁹, and by economists as lacking in foresight, staying power and adaptability to local business culture.⁴⁰ Meanwhile attempts made in concert with the Commission and under the EU umbrella have been more successful in delivering the appropriate market-opening responses from China. One logical step taken by France was to work under the EU umbrella in order to promote national economic objectives in China.

Levels of French-Chinese trade and investment have been disappointing in relation not only to French economic objectives, but also to the traditional strong French presence in Vietnam (chapter six), the large and bold French investments in Japan

³⁵ G. Cui, "Qui sont les consommateurs chinois", *Problèmes Economiques*, No.2557, 1998, p.26, cited in Hubler and Meschi, p.168.

³⁶ Gilles Guiheux, *France-China Economic Relations since 1979: Assessment, Policies, Debates*, paper presented at the conference "The Role of France and Germany in Sino-European Relations" Hong Kong, 22-23 June 2001, p.5f, as cited in Markus Taube, "Economic Relations between the PRC and the States of Europe", in *China Quarterly*, No.169, March 2002, p.83.

³⁷ Françoise Mengin, "Relations France-Chine, Quel Anniversaire s'agit-il de célébrer?", in *Rérelations Internationales et Stratégiques*, 14, Summer 1994, pp.29-34 and "The Prospects for France-Taiwan Relations", in *Issues and Studies*, 28/3, March 1992.

³⁸ Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "Paris-Pékin: Un Dialogue sans Complexes?", in *Politique Internationale*, 75, Spring 1997, pp.335-352.

³⁹ Bridges and Domenach 1990, op cit.; Domenach, "Paris-Pékin, un axe à Redessiner", in *Libération*, 20 October 2000; Marie Holzman, "Chine: Requiem pour les droits de l'homme", *Politique Internationale*, printemps 1997, pp.369-83

(chapter five) after the 1997 Asian financial crisis, and the inroads made by Germany and Britain in China. In 1993, while Europe occupied some 14% of the China market, the French share was miniscule (1.4%), behind that of Germany, Britain, Italy and even the Netherlands. French exports to China amounted to less than one-third of the German level in 1993 (Table 4.1). The French government under Balladur in 1994 thus set itself a clear objective to recover its pre-Tiananmen share of the Chinese market and to catch up with the other EU countries.

The negative experience of flagship Sino-French joint ventures has also coloured French business attitudes and reactions to direct investments in China. In contrast to the positive attitudes towards direct investment in China in Western countries such as the US and Germany, the French attitude tends to be cautious and negative. The Guangdong Peugeot Automobile Company (GPAC), which on its foundation in 1985 was one of the first major joint ventures between a Chinese and a foreign company, collapsed after 12 years of losses when Peugeot sold its 22% interest in GPAC to Honda and withdrew from Guangdong in 1997.⁴¹ Reasons for Peugeot's losses included the wrong choice of province (Guangdong has no real industrial tradition) and the wrong Chinese partners (who faced conflicts with central authorities and could not keep accounts, distribute or market professionally). In 1996, Peugeot occupied only 1% of China's small market for private cars whereas Volkswagen had cornered 50% of this market, with a virtual monopoly in Shanghai.⁴²

From the French government's perspective, China is one of the foci of French attempts to re-establish an economic presence in Asia. Various French governments since 1988 have tried different strategies to engage France in the rapidly growing Asian economies. The push has been to increase market share in Asia's largest potential market, China, which was booming 10 years into the modernization programme launched by Deng Xiaoping. Under conservative governments in the 1990s, the French sought to translate the French position as the fourth largest exporter in the world to China, where it ranked as the 10th. French business interests were lured to the Chinese market by the stereotypical image of "Eldorado" – a vast market and opportunity for

⁴⁰ Hubler and Meschi, pp.157-188.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp.164-167.

⁴² Ibid., p.166.

French products requiring little effort to make a “fast buck”. Although bilateral trade has been growing strongly, French exports have stabilized at just over €3 billion since 1997 while French imports from China have continued to grow at a brisk pace (Table 4.2), resulting in an ever-widening trade deficit that reached a record €7.6 billion in 2001, the largest trade deficit that France has with any extra-EU trading partner.

As in the 1980s when France was confronted by a rising tide of Japanese imports, the French have resorted to using the European card. They have worked through the Commission, eg. in demanding market access and negotiating hard for reciprocity in China’s accession to the WTO (in December 2001), and in pushing for common EU trade promotion programmes in China.

Table 4.2 French Trade with China, 1993-2001 (in €million)

Year	French Imports	French Exports	Trade Balance
1993	3281	1382	-1899
1994	3514	1827	-1687
1995	4045	2010	-2035
1996	4751	1891	-2860
1997	5942	3013	-2994
1998	6551	2967	-3584
1999	7731	3072	-4659
2000	10501	3227	-7274
2001	10928	3258	-7643

Source: French customs, in *L'Express*, no.2678, 31 October-6 November 2002, p.77.

b) Copying or Europeanising the “German Model”?

In the mid-1990s, Germany alone accounted for nearly 40% of total EU trade with China, over twice as much as Britain, China’s second largest EU trading partner.⁴³ In China and the dynamic and important East Asian economies - Japan (chapter 5) and the NIEs of South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore, the French share of each country’s trade was only 1-2% in the mid-1990s; this weak presence paled in comparison with that of Japan, the US, even Germany, the UK and the Netherlands, and in relation to the 6% French share of global trade. In Asia, the French were active and successful only in

⁴³ The total value of EU trade with China in 1994 was \$46 billion. Germany’s share was \$16.7 billion, UK, \$6.7 billion (including trans-shipment through Hong Kong), France, \$5.7 billion, Italy, \$5.5 billion. Figures from Shambaugh, “China and Europe”, p.21.

Indochina (chapter 6) and Taiwan. China was in the throes of economic semi-isolation during the Cultural Revolution and traded mainly with its Asian neighbours and countries in the Communist bloc.

Germany's policy towards China since 1992 had been founded on three principles: silent diplomacy (and hence no confrontation on human rights); change through trade (premising political liberalization in China on economic development); and a strict "one-China" policy".⁴⁴ The success of the "German model" was evident in its enhanced trade position. German exports to China practically doubled between 1992 and 1994, from DM5.7 billion to DM10.2 billion. The UK (+71%), Italy (+71%), Netherlands (+146%), Spain (+226%) also witnessed significant export growth to China. In contrast, French exports only grew 22%⁴⁵ in the same period as a result of the double fallout of Tiananmen and Taiwan. After Tiananmen, it was Germany which most systematically and successfully depoliticised economic relations with China. Germany recognized the significance of Asian new markets when EC trade with East Asia overtook EC-US trade for the first time in 1992. Germany took the lead in formulating its "Asian policy" in October 1993. The central ideas of Germany's Asian policy were "to strengthen economic relations with the largest growth region in the world",⁴⁶ restore high level visits to Beijing and stop applying pressure on human rights.⁴⁷ In December 1993, Chancellor Kohl returned from a visit to China with a pile of contracts and letters of intent. A few months later, Bonn was the first Western capital to host a visit by Chinese Premier Li Peng, in spite of Li's close association with and responsibility for the Tiananmen crackdown.⁴⁸

The success of the "German model" seems to have had a demonstrative effect on other EU countries' policies. Michael Heseltine, the British Secretary for Trade and Industry, visited China in 1994 accompanied by 130 businessmen.⁴⁹ The German model also influenced French willingness to deal with pragmatically with China. France-

⁴⁴ See Christoph Nesshöver, "Bonn et Paris face à Pékin (1989-1997): vers une stratégie commune?", *Politique Etrangère* 1/99, p.95.

⁴⁵ Nesshöver, p.9.

⁴⁶ German Asian Policy, Botschaft der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Peking, 1993, p.5, as cited in Yahuda and Zhang, "Europe and China", in Maull, Segal and Wanandi (eds), *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, London: Routledge, 1998, p.194.

⁴⁷ Cabestan, "Sino-Western European Relations", p.42.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.42.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p.43.

China relations were normalized and a joint France-China communiqué was issued in January 1994 during Prime Minister Balladur's visit. The 1994 communiqué committed France to recognise one China and to refrain from selling new arms to Taiwan. French Industry Minister Gérard Longuet followed this up by visiting Beijing and Hong Kong in mid-1994 to launch "Ten initiatives for Asia".

In 1995, Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette announced that Asia would receive special attention as the "*nouvelle frontière*" of French diplomacy. French leaders' visits to China began to take on a pattern of political dialogue on international developments, accompanied by announcements of contract signatures. Chirac himself played an active role in promoting French exports and industries in China and announced the goal of tripling the French market share in China to 6% within ten years.⁵⁰ During his May 1997 state visit to China, Chirac was accompanied by some 200 French industrialists and CEOs. By some accounts this delegation was the largest group of French businessmen ever assembled for an overseas visit. In the event, the Chinese agreed to buy 30 new Airbuses worth \$1.5 billion, and together with other contracts on power stations and car production, the visit resulted in \$2 billion worth of contracts. The Department of External Economic Relations (DREE) in the French Ministry of Economy, Finances and Industry has since increased the number of officials working in its East Asian departments; the Ministry has also increased its activities promoting trade and spent much time consulting with Chinese and other Asian colleagues during the Asian crisis.⁵¹

China in the late 1990s became the developing world's top recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and was for the first time ahead of the United States as the world's top FDI recipient (\$53 billion) in 2002.⁵² Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, the US and the EU are the top international investors in China. Among EU member states, Britain and Germany have been the most bullish on China. French companies have however not made China a priority and have exhibited a cautious attitude towards China. In 2001 China ranked only as the 33rd destination for

⁵⁰ *Le Monde*, 28 February and 1 March 1996. Interviews with Quai d'Orsay officials, Paris, March 1996 and Chinese Embassy in Paris, September 2000 confirmed the French determination to match the German presence in the China market.

⁵¹ Dorient 2002:180-81.

⁵² "Special Report on China's Economy", *Economist* 15 February 2003, p.75.

French FDI (€180 million). This amount was far smaller than the French FDI flowing to Singapore (€1187 million, 15th position), and just ahead of Hong Kong (€123 million, 37th) and India (€92 million, 41st).⁵³

In contrast to the situation in Vietnam where France easily ranks among the (mostly East Asian) top investors and in the context of China where the EU's economic presence is small in relation to its global economic strength, France trails Germany and Britain in cumulative investments. At the end of 2002, French cumulative investments in China only represented 1% of total FDI in China. It was the 8th largest investor in China, far behind Hong Kong (50%) and Taiwan, but also behind Japan, the US, Singapore, the UK (2.7%) and Germany (1.7%).⁵⁴ French investments have been concentrated in three areas – Shanghai (the traditional area of French interest), Beijing, and the southern province of Guangdong.⁵⁵ The perceived link between relocating overseas and the loss of jobs remains strong in France. Mitterrand himself was critical of French companies moving to Asia.⁵⁶ French companies remain reluctant to relocate from France to low-cost venues outside Europe, even China.

c) Taiwan and Competing Industrial interests

The third set of reasons for the weak French presence in China is the issue of Taiwan, and the related trade and investment disruption caused by competing industrial interests. Big infrastructure and transport companies such as Suez, Airbus and Alstom lobby the French government to help them penetrate the China market while defence and high-technology companies such as Matra and Dassault press the government to favour Taiwan, one of their most important markets. French businesses interests in the latter camp seized upon the ambiguous Gaullist legacy on the question of Taiwan to concentrate French investment and export efforts (especially expensive military hardware sales) on Taiwan rather than China. This state of affairs, especially between

⁵³ French Embassy Mission Economique de Pékin, *Chine: Investissements Directs Etrangers et présence français*, 1 September 2002 edition, p.2

⁵⁴ French Embassy, Mission Economique de Pékin, *Chine: Investissements directs étrangers*, p.2, on www.dree.org/chine/infopays.asp.

⁵⁵ The French industrial presence in Guangdong is centred on a 15-year agreement in 1987 to build nuclear power generators in Daya Bay and Ling Ao, and in investments in the Special Economic Zone of Shenzhen. See French Embassy, Mission Economique de Pékin, *Investissements directs étrangers dans le Guangdong et présence économique française en Chine du sud*, 6 September 2002, p.1

⁵⁶ Dorient 2002.

1989 and 1993, led to Chinese reprisals that hurt the first camp, eg. excluding French firms from lucrative infrastructure contracts.

The French share of China's total trade had declined between 1989 and 1993 as a result of the acrimony generated from French activism on Tiananmen and worsened following the 1992 sale of French arms to Taiwan. The Chinese took punitive diplomatic, political and economic measures against France. The economic consequences of Chinese reprisals contributed to a shrinking French share of the Chinese market.⁵⁷ Although French exports to China continue to rise in absolute terms in 1993, the French share of EU exports fell from 16% to 12%. After normalisation in 1994, a series of French government initiatives was launched to encourage a greater French commercial presence in Asia, with China as the cornerstone. French leaders tried to emulate Kohl's success. However, the Chinese did not put the Mirage affair totally behind them and were slow in warming to France. Prime Minister Balladur's April 1994 fence-mending visit to Beijing only gained promises that French companies would *soon* be awarded contracts for the development of power stations, telecommunications, high-speed trains, and sales of wheat. President Jiang Jemin's visit to France in September 1994 finally turned the corner when trade agreements worth \$2.5 billion were signed.⁵⁸

Another brouhaha erupted when the French government approved the sale of an observation satellite by the French-British company Matra Marconi to Taiwan in 1999, despite Chinese protestations that the satellite would be used for military purposes.⁵⁹ During Chirac's October 2000 visit to China, Jiang Zemin warned that France should handle bilateral ties with "strategic perspectives", proceeding from the "long-term and fundamental interests of the two countries".⁶⁰ This dispute was blamed for the exclusion of French companies Gaz de France and Total Fina Elf from the public tender for the construction of a gas terminal in southern China.⁶¹

⁵⁷ According to Peyrefitte 1997:301, the French share shrank from 4% to 1.5% while the West German share rose from 3% to 5% between 1981 and 1990.

⁵⁸ Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders*, p.159.

⁵⁹ *Libération*, 24 December 1999.

⁶⁰ *Beijing Review*, 6 November 2000. The German government had cancelled an export license for a similar German-made satellite to Taiwan following official protests during Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's visit to Beijing.

⁶¹ *Le Monde*, 23 October 2000. The Chinese were also unhappy with the high profile accorded to the Dalai Lama's visit to France in September 2000.

d) EU alternative to national efforts?

France has supported few attempts at pan-EU cooperation in China. Instead, there are many examples of cut-throat competition between French (often state-supported “national champions” such as Alstom) and other European companies at winning contracts by employing a whole arsenal of political and economic incentives that often undercut agreed EU policies (notably common human rights positions, covered later in this chapter) on China. In this “two-track approach”, France has deployed national efforts in tandem with EU-level efforts to increase its economic presence in China. At the European level, coordination and cooperation of members states’ economic policies in China has been most pronounced in the negotiations led by the Commission (successfully concluded in May 2000) to pry open protected sectors such as insurance, telecommunications, aviation and infrastructure where European companies are strong. Coordination has developed over more than two decades of economic interaction between the EC as a unit and China.

The European Community as a whole was quick to develop closer economic ties with China in the post-Mao era following China’s opening in 1978. The 1980s witnessed a rapid expansion of relations with China,⁶² with member states’ economic relations with China initially governed by three EC framework of agreements with China. While France exercised caution in developing economic ties with China as seen in the preceding paragraphs, the Commission, supported by Germany and Britain, led the European charge. China concluded bilateral economic cooperation agreements with all but one of the nine Community members between 1978 and 1980 (Table 4.3). At the same time, economic relations between China and the Community as a whole were institutionalised with the establishment of three accords. The 1978 EC-China Trade Agreement was the most important accord. It opened the prospects of an upswing in trade relations, making the Community China’s second biggest economic partner after Japan.⁶³ The Textile Agreement, initiated in July 1979 and effective from 1 January 1980, allowed China to double its exports from 21,000 tonnes to 41,000 tonnes in two years.⁶⁴ The third major agreement was the Community’s decision to include China in a

⁶² A good account of this period is found in Harish Kapur, *Distant Neighbours: China and Europe*, London and New York: Pinter Publishers, 1990, ch.9 and 10.

⁶³ Kapur, p.149.

⁶⁴ Kapur, p.150.

preferential agreement with effect from 1 January 1980. Accorded unilaterally, it involved full exemption from customs duty for all industrial goods and for partial exemption for certain processed agricultural products exported to developed countries.

EC agreements have contributed significantly to expanding EC trade with China. The EC-China Joint committee created by the 1978 bilateral agreement and affirmed in the 1985 EC-China Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), quickly became the most institutionalised component of the EC's interactions with China, with the Commission playing the role of intermediary.⁶⁵ The cornerstone of the 1978 and 1985 Trade Agreements was the most-favoured nation (MFN) clause. The 1978 agreement was the first trade agreement concluded by the EC with a communist country and it placed China in an advantageous position compared to other communist countries.⁶⁶ When the Trade and Cooperation Agreement was concluded in 1985, Article 14 reserved the right of the member states to conclude bilateral economic arrangements with China.⁶⁷ In practice, the Commission has been the engine in developing various forms of economic cooperation. The number of bilateral agreements between the member states and China has declined since 1985.

Table 4.3 Economic Cooperation Agreements between China and EC members

Bilateral

Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union	27 June 1979
Denmark	14 September 1979
France	4 December 1978
Great Britain	March 1979
Ireland	-
Italy	23 April 1979
Netherlands	30 October 1980
West Germany	24 October 1979

EC-China

Trade Agreement	1978
Textile Agreement	July 1979
Trade Preferential Agreement	1980
EC-China Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA)	1985

Source: Hunglah Chiu, *Agreements of the People's Republic of China: A Calendar of Events 1960-80*.

⁶⁵ It organizes meetings of European and Chinese experts such as the Sino-EC business weeks.

⁶⁶ Der-Chin Hong, "The EU's New China Policy: The Dimensions of Trade Relations", in *Issues and Studies*, 34/7 July 1998, pp.91-92.

⁶⁷ Details of EU-China agreements are found in Wolfgang Bartke, *The Agreements of the People's Republic of China with Foreign Countries 1949-1990*, 2nd ed., Munich: Saur, 1992.

Since the mid-1990s, the EC has emphasised commerce with China over political or strategic relations.⁶⁸ In July 1995, the Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan unveiled the EU's new initiative, "A Long-term policy for China". The 1995 China strategy paper followed on the Commission's 1994 "Towards a New Asia Strategy" initiative but placed even more attention on China as a "cornerstone in the EU's external relations, both with Asia and globally." The 1995 paper recognized the "rise of China as unmatched amongst national experiences since the Second World War."⁶⁹

The 1994 and 1995 papers, drafted by the Commission and approved by the Council, followed roughly similar positions taken by Germany and Britain. All the papers emphasised economic relations and looked upon China as a "cornerstone" of the EU's "New Asia Policy" (NAS).⁷⁰ The European goal is to develop relations with China on a long-term and comprehensive basis. Four areas were defined as a "new focus" by the EU in future cooperation with China:

- a) human resource development - considered key to sustained economic growth and development in China;
- b) support for economic and social reform through promoting modernization and market-oriented policies in key economic sectors;
- c) business and industrial cooperation; and
- d) cooperation on environmental and rural development matters.⁷¹

Trade and WTO negotiations since China's 1986 application to join the GATT/WTO have further consolidated the Commission's role as the central actor in economic relations between Europe and China. Unlike the US, the EU was receptive to Chinese arguments to be treated as a *developing* economy and thus brokered China's agreement to accept commitments to an open market economy over a phased schedule. Based on objectives spelt out in the Commission's 1998 "Comprehensive Partnership" country strategy paper, External Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy reached an agreement with China on its WTO accession on 19 May 2000. Outstanding market

⁶⁸ See David Shambaugh, *China and Europe: 1949-1995*, London, 1996.

⁶⁹ European Commission, "A Long-term Policy for China-Europe Relations", COM (95)279 final, Brussels, 5 July 1995, Section A.

⁷⁰ Yahuda and Zhang, "Europe and China", p.194. The impact of Germany's Asian concept paper on Paris, London and Brussels was confirmed in interviews with the Office for the French EU presidency in the Quai d'Orsay (September 2000) and Cabinet of the Minister of Defence (March 2001)- the latter expressed that the "Asian policy" put forth in the German, French, British (Conservative Party) and Commission papers in 1993-94 "was essentially about China."

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp.194-195; "European Union and China to Maintain long-term Cooperation", *Beijing Review*, 2-15 February 1998, p.10.

access issues such as the liberalization of telecommunications, banking and insurance - sectors in which European companies are strong - were resolved after two years of intense negotiations.⁷² Despite the absence of a new TCA (stalled over China's objections to the inclusion of human rights conditionalities), trade between the EU and China continued to expand at a spectacular pace, from €17 billion in 1990 and €70 billion in 1999, to over €100 billion in 2001. Total trade increased over thirty-fold between 1978 and 2001.⁷³ In 1999, the EU overtook Japan to become China's second largest export market. European companies invested US\$4.5 billion in China in 1999, making the EU the largest foreign direct investor in China that year, and the second in 2000.⁷⁴ China is now the EU's 4th largest trading partner (Appendix 2).

Besides direct business relations, the EU has also invested in technical cooperation activities and training institutions. Development cooperation is one area in which the EU plays a major role as one of the largest donors to China. The 1998 paper undertook to continue helping China's economic reform, setting aside a budget of €65 million a year for cooperation projects to aid economic reform and development. Several research centres and institutes have been set up. These include the China-Europe International Business School in Shanghai, the China-European Bio-technology Centre, and the China-European Agricultural Technological Transfer Centre.

Overall Trends

French economic policies in China exhibit a dual track of national and joint European policies. On the one hand, French businesses have been strongly supported by the state up to Prime Ministerial and Presidential levels in promoting bilateral trade and in winning bids (often against European competitors) for lucrative projects such as inter-city high-speed trains, nuclear power stations and urban metro systems. On the other hand, since the 1985 EC-China TCA, member states have entrusted the External Trade Commissioner to conduct economic negotiations with China at the EU level in order collectively to exercise greater bargaining power.

⁷² European Commission, *Report on the Implementation of the Communication Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China*, COM (2000) 552, Brussels, 8 September 2000, p.8 (para C.1). Also *Le Monde*, 26 February 2000.

⁷³ European Commission, *The EU's relations with China- An Overview*, in http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/china/intro/index.htm; and *Bilateral Trade Relations: China Overview*, on <http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/bilateral/countries/china>, 1 September 2003.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* In the 1998 and 1999 Asian economic crisis, Chinese exports to the EU and US compensated for falling exports to Asian countries by rising 16% and 18% respectively.

Grid 4.1 European Economic Policies in China, 1985-2000

	85			90			95			2000		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
<i>F</i>		◆		◆	→			◆	→			◆
<i>GB</i>			◆			◆			◆			◆
<i>D</i>			◆			◆ ^b			◆			◆
<i>EC</i>			◆ ^a		◆	→			◆ ^c			◆

- = Cautious or anti-China policy by Government/EC

0 = Government passive, business community left on its own

+ = Pro-Investment and Trade policy by Government/EC

^aSignature of EC-China Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

^bGermany's pragmatic Asian Policy emphasizing trade with China rights is formulated and later formalized in 1993.

^cIssue of European Commission's *A Long-term Policy for China-Europe Relations*, COM (95)279 final, Brussels, 5 July 1995 emphasising economic ties.

The evolution of the French government's position from that of cautious bystander to pro-active promoter of French trade and investments in China is clear. Its position has become more "European" through a process of policy learning from Germany (sideways Europeanization) and coordination in Commission structures (top-down Europeanization). The EC-China economic agreements have encouraged policy convergence by providing a framework for EU member states to coordinate their overall economic strategies in China. At the level of individual companies however, competition to secure contracts remains fierce, and has sometimes been aggravated by member states' leaders lending political weight to securing deals for their "national champions". French trade with China remains over-reliant on bilateral and often politically negotiated *grands contrats* such as the sale of Airbuses. Attempts since 1993 to emulate the "German model" have not significantly raised French investments and economic competitiveness in China. French exports to China have not risen substantially despite improved relations since 1994 and almost a decade (and a full term of Chirac's presidency, 1995-2002) of excellent relations with the top Chinese leadership. Instead of reinforcing its trade presence in China, France has barely maintained its mid-1990s share of 2% of China's trade.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ In 2000, the French share of trade in China *shrank* to 1.7%. See René Dorient, "Un septennat de politique asiatique: quel bilan pour la France?", *Politique Etrangère*, 1/2002, printemps 2002, p.185.

II Political and Strategic Relations

Unlike French economic objectives which were hesitant and did not see China as a priority until the 1990s, French political goals vis-à-vis China were clearly spelt out early in 1964. De Gaulle's growing disenchantment with US power led him to appreciate first, China's utility as a power that aspired, like France, to forge an international role independent of the US and the USSR. France gave diplomatic recognition to China in defiance of US-led efforts to isolate Beijing. This Gaullist legacy retains relevance today as both desire multipolarity to replace the post-Cold War American dominance of international affairs. The bilateral relationship is one between two medium powers with ambitions to play larger roles in international politics. De Gaulle's recognition of China's legitimate "destiny" as a great power, whatever the political and value system of its leadership, finds echoes in the Chirac-Jiang Zemin Declaration of 1997. At the international level, French relations with China are centred on redressing perceived American arrogance and preponderant power with institutionalised countervailing forces. French criticisms of the American "*hyper-puissance*" and its policy in Iraq, for example, find ready sympathy in China.⁷⁶ However, this "Gaullist alliance" is tempered by Europeanization pressures arising from France's participation in an ever-more institutionalised structure of European foreign policy coordination and a common European foreign policy, not to mention French commitments to Western values and the Atlantic Alliance with the US.

At the best of times, French relations with China are characterised by pragmatism, great-power dialogue and fascination for each other's civilizations, and cooperation to build a stable multipolar world. At the worst of times, relations are marked by sharp East-West debates on human rights and values, xenophobic images of a "Yellow Peril", sanctions and petty reprisals. This section focuses on two periods: 1989-92, when a confrontational policy towards China was adopted by Mitterrand following Tiananmen; and from mid-1993 onwards, when French policy made a sharp u-turn towards engagement. The policy of confrontation (both bilateral and multilateral through, eg. the EU and G7) was abandoned for a policy of actively engaging China in a multi-faceted dialogue through a whole range of bilateral, EU-level, inter-regional

⁷⁶ See Dominique de Villepin, *Déplacement en Chine: Discours du Ministre des Affaires étrangères à l'Université Fudan, Shanghai, 10 January 2003.*

(Asia-Europe Meeting), and multilateral institutions ranging from the UN to ARF and KEDO. It is a special type of “constructive engagement” - distinct from US policies that tend to treat China as a student rather than a partner - that engages China through a dense network of interactions as an equal and valuable partner in shaping the world order. A related interest has been the expectation that good political relations would result in enhanced economic interactions and a larger place for French business and exports to China. To understand the turnaround in French political relations with China, it is useful to appreciate the context of the EC-China relationship and the opportunities and constraints of the EC-China relationship in which France operates.

a) EC-China Political Dialogue, 1975-90

At the beginning of EC-China official contacts in 1975, the EC was perceived in China as an eventual counterweight to the Soviet Union while the EC was defining its place in the world in relation to the great powers. The relationship between the EC and China for most of the post-1945 period until 1989 was heavily influenced by Cold War considerations, rendering it a “secondary relationship”.⁷⁷ In 1975, China became the first communist country to recognize the EC. An EC-China dialogue was established and several trade agreements, as seen in Part I of this chapter, were signed between 1978 and 1985. China’s importance to post-war Europe was however of low significance compared with that of the US or the Soviet Union. The EU and its constituent members were unable to determine the outcome of conflicts in Asia and the Chinese were similarly impotent in Europe.⁷⁸ In the 1950s and 1960s, the relationship was thus heavily constrained by bipolarity. The EC’s Declaration on European identity in December 1973 was an attempt to respond to new challenges by defining Europe’s place in the world in relation to the great powers and powerful international organizations such as OPEC.⁷⁹ The EC-9 states recognised the “major role played by China in international affairs” and resolved “to intensify their relations with the Chinese

⁷⁷ This argument is made by Michael Yahuda, “China and Europe: The Significance of a Secondary Relationship”, in Robinson and Shambaugh (eds), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

⁷⁸ Yahuda and Zhang, “Europe and China”, in Maull, Segal and Wanandi (eds), *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, London: Routledge, 1998, p.183.

⁷⁹ Henry Kissinger’s “Year of Europe” speech taunting Europe for its external weakness, the October 1973 Yom Kippur war and the subsequent OPEC oil embargo fed feelings that the EC was impotent in the face of global challenges and that EPC had to advance quickly from procedure to substance.

government and to promote exchanges in various fields as well as contacts between European and Chinese leaders”.⁸⁰

The potential utility of the EC to China as an additional counter-weight on top of the US to a belligerent USSR (China and the USSR had an armed conflict at their border in 1969) was recognized early on by the Chinese, who sought a political dialogue. China attempted to develop an anti-Soviet international united front⁸¹ and it envisaged a strong and united Europe as a useful counterweight against the Soviet Union. In 1979, Roy Jenkins was the first President of the European Commission to visit China. The declaration of China’s “independent” foreign policy by Premier Zhao Ziyang in 1982 following the end of imminent security pressures on China from one or the other superpower, led to the basis of relations moving towards mutual interests rather than being influenced by third parties. However, Cold War considerations still predominated: the main Chinese political interest lay in encouraging “the emergence of the EC as an independent centre in world affairs with a view to reducing the leverage of the superpowers in international affairs.”⁸²

In the late 1980s and 1990s, western Europe’s relations with China changed from being derivatives of the Cold War and broader relation with the superpowers, and “developed an independent dynamic of their own”.⁸³ Political relations were fully normalized, and the EC moved to engage China in the international community and to encourage its participation in international institutions. A Head of State or Government from every western European state visited China during the 1980s.⁸⁴ In 1988, a resident EC delegation was established in Beijing.

Although the June 1989 Tiananmen massacre strained relations and resulted in an EU sanctions policy on China (including the suspension of high-level talks), this

⁸⁰ Para 17 of “Declaration on European Identity by the Nine Foreign Ministers”, Copenhagen, 14 December 1973, in Hill and Smith (eds), *European Foreign Policy: Key Documents*, London: Routledge, 2000, pp.92-96.

⁸¹ Strong Chinese insistence on the need for Western unity against Soviet aggressiveness led to Alexander Haig dubbing China the “16th member of NATO” and being “more European than the Europeans”. See Yahuda, “China and Europe”, pp.268-69, and Gerald Segal, “Europe, China and the Soviet Threat”, in Shaw Yu-ming, *Europe and China in the Twentieth Century*, Taipei: Institute of International Relations, 1986.

⁸² Yahuda, p.272.

⁸³ Shambaugh, *China and Europe: 1949-1995*, p.2.

⁸⁴ Shambaugh, p.13.

common policy effectively fell apart even before the economic sanctions were officially lifted in October 1990. The main economic sanction imposed by the EC involved the freezing of all government-guaranteed loans to China. However, both Germany and France had defected from the common approach and agreed to grant soft government loans to China (against the Madrid sanctions) in order to help their national industries. In 1989, the German government released DM460 million in October for the construction of the Shanghai metro system, and the French government released FF830 million in December for a Citroën factory in Wuhan.⁸⁵ The Madrid sanctions depended on the cooperation of individual governments. They were largely symbolic and not intended to hurt substantive economic relations. As such, trade between the EU and China continued to grow steadily between 1990 and 1993 (Table 4.4). Except for the ban on weapons sales and military technology transfer, all the other sanctions were officially lifted in 1994.

Table 4.4 China's trade with the EC, 1990-1993 (in US\$ billion)

	1990	1991	1992	1993
*EU	15.1	15.9	19.1	28.0
World	115.4	135.6	165.5	195.7
Proportion of China's world trade	13.1%	11.7%	11.5%	14.3%

*EC-12 plus Austria, Finland and Sweden

Source: Zhang Yunling, "Europe and China", in Maull, Segal and Wanandi (eds), *Europe and the Asia Pacific*, London: Routledge, 1998, p.194.

After the Cold War and post-Tiananmen freeze on EC-China relations, political dialogue was upgraded in the 1990s, led mainly by Germany and France. The Community's 1994 "New Asia Strategy" paper (NAS, which defined China as a key country)⁸⁶, was published in July 1994. The relationship has been further institutionalised with the establishment of the EU-China meetings and the creation of a multilateral framework, the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). From a European perspective, the critical question concerning China as a rising power is the terms on which China seeks to deepen its engagement in the international community, and here it is thought that the Europeans could play a constructive role in engaging China through their three levels of foreign policy (*de facto* rather than by design): Community, CFSP

⁸⁵ See Nesshöver, "Bonn et Paris face à Pékin", p.93.

⁸⁶ Interviews with officials of the Quai d'Orsay (September 2000) and Cabinet of the Minister of Defence (March 2001) confirmed that the "Asian policy" put forth in the German, French, British (Conservative Party) and Commission papers in 1993-94 "was essentially about China."

and national policies. Hence in terms of engaging China, the European position is distinguished from the American one in being more consistently in favour of economic, political and multilateral engagement of China in institutions like the WTO and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), and having a more “pragmatic” and accommodating approach on the question of values and human rights. European governments are also less troubled than US administrations by domestic criticisms of China.⁸⁷

China has insisted on a good political relationship as a precondition for economic deals and is adept at exploiting the internal competition between EU member states. Some EU countries have been more successful at fending off China’s “divide and rule” discriminatory tactics. When the Chinese government threatened in 1994 to discriminate against the British in trade matters because of alleged British misdemeanours over Hong Kong, the EU Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan warned that the EU would not condone a member state being singled out in this way. Brittan’s warning staved off Chinese action against the UK.⁸⁸ Domestic pressures in Germany prompted the German government to host a conference for Tibetan dissidents in Bonn in summer 1996. German relations with China underwent a short period of crisis, but economic relations were unaffected.

b) Mitterrand’s early neglect then confrontation with China, 1989-92

Despite de Gaulle’s rhetoric of a special relationship with China and Mitterrand’s early support for French recognition of China⁸⁹, the Chinese did not put as much weight on the relationship. Mao had wryly remarked to the first French Ambassador in Beijing that France’s role in Asia had ended with the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu.⁹⁰ France by the 1980s was largely absent from China politically, economically, culturally and certainly militarily. This was quite remarkable in the context of increasing EC political relations with China over the decade. Mitterrand’s foreign policy (1981-95) incorporated several Gaullist principles - national independence, the balance of military blocs around the world – together with European

⁸⁷ Peter Ferdinand, “Economic and Diplomatic Interactions between the EU and China”, in Richard Grant (ed), *The European Union and China: A European Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, London: Routledge/RIIA, 1995, pp.26-40.

⁸⁸ Yahuda and Zhang, “Europe and China”, p.185.

⁸⁹ Mitterrand had written a tract in support of French diplomatic recognition of China, “La Chine aux défis” in 1961. See *Le Point*, 9 May 1983.

⁹⁰ See Domenach, “La Politique française au miroir de l’Asie”, in La Serré et al 90:229.

construction, the right of people to self-determination, and the development of poor countries.⁹¹ It was noteworthy for its neglect of Chinese affairs.⁹²

For most of the 1980s, China occupied a low rung in French priorities. France was content to let other European actors, especially Germany, Britain and the Commission, take the lead on political dialogue with China. Although Mitterrand visited China once as President (in 1983), the visit did not give rise to any significant initiatives. Bilateral political ties from the late-1970s to the mid-1980s were largely derivative of wider relations with the US and USSR. For example, Mitterrand's 1983 visit revealed a gulf on views between Paris and Beijing on détente, and on Soviet expansionism in Europe and Southeast Asia.⁹³ The French and Chinese governments were also experimenting with different macroeconomic models of modernization. France under its first Socialist President was nationalizing French industries in 1981-83. China was undergoing an economic revolution of effective privatisation under Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s. In the eyes of some idealistic sectors of the French Left which had often looked to China as a pure "Communist nirvana", this represented a "double treason" of the socialist ideal: China was accepting capitalism, but without making any progress towards human rights and western-style democracy.⁹⁴

The Tiananmen massacre in June 1989 sparked a radical policy shift and dramatically ended the French neglect of China. In its place a strident and confrontational policy was adopted. This policy was informed by general public outrage at gross human rights abuses in China, the ideological influence of the French Left, and a strategic calculation to take advantage of Chinese weakness to step up relations with Taiwan. Mitterrand and Foreign Minister Roland Dumas took a vociferous leading position and used the EC to project and Europeanise French condemnation of the Chinese government in the aftermath of Tiananmen. This confrontational position coincided with a tilt towards "democratic" Taiwan, a tilt

⁹¹ François Mitterrand, *Réflexions sur la Politique Extérieure de la France: Introduction à vingt-cinq Discours (1981-85)*, Paris: Fayard, 1986, p.3.

⁹² Hubert Védrine, *Les Mondes de François Mitterrand: À l'Élysée 1981-1995*, Paris: Fayard, 1996, a detailed "inside account" of Mitterrand's foreign policies towards different regions in the world, does not contain a single chapter on East Asia and mentions China only in passing.

⁹³ See *L'Express* 6 May 1983, *Libération* 3 May 1983 and *International Herald Tribune*, 2 and 4 May 1983 on Mitterrand's visit to China.

⁹⁴ See Peyrefitte 1997:288 and Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "Paris-Pékin: Un dialogue sans complexes?", in *Politique Internationale* 75, Spring 1997, p.336.

boosted by economic considerations – the protection of French military industries through arms sales to Taiwan.

Between 1989 and 1992, France-China relations suffered their lowest point since 1964. Despite the Gaullist myth of a “special relationship” between France and China, the reality was that there had been no significant political dialogue or cooperation between France and China. At first, the deteriorating relations followed the pattern of the West’s alienation from China after the Chinese government’s brutal crackdown on 4 June 1989 on the student-led democracy movement centred on Tiananmen Square. From China’s perspective, the French were particularly strident in their condemnation of China’s human rights record. Not only the media and NGOs, but also “political” personalities and well-connected human rights activists such as Bernard Kouchner (founder of Médecins sans Frontières), Danielle Mitterrand, and President Mitterrand himself denounced the Chinese government.⁹⁵ The substantive French reaction to Tiananmen was equally tough and confrontational. France imposed sanctions “freezing” relations, reduced French diplomatic representation in China, and suspended all political visits to China.⁹⁶ At French insistence, the ban on high technology military sales and transfer to China was added as the 10th EC sanction at the EC’s June 1989 Madrid summit.⁹⁷

While France-China relations were hamstrung by the emotional and high-profile French critique of China, they sank to an even more rancorous level from early 1990 as news of secret negotiations to sell six French Lafayette frigates to Taiwan came to light. Although diplomatic relations with Taipei had been broken off after Paris recognized Beijing in 1964, economic and substantive relations with Taiwan continued to grow so that between 1978 and 1994, there was a “virtual normalisation” of relations in the light of Taiwan’s rapid rise as an economic and trading power.⁹⁸ The \$4.8 billion frigate sale went through in September 1990 after the French government flip-flopped on selling the

⁹⁵ See *L'Express*, 4 April 1996 and Andrew Nathan et al (eds), *The Tiananmen Papers*, 2001, p.397.

⁹⁶ *Le Quotidien de Paris*, 8 June 1989.

⁹⁷ Françoise Mengin, “The Prospects for France-Taiwan Relations”, p.48.

⁹⁸ Françoise Mengin, *Les Relations entre la France et Taïwan de 1964 à 1994: Contribution à une étude des relations extérieures d'un non-État*, Ph.D thesis, Institut d'études politiques, Paris, 1994, calls this *la normalisation officieuse*.

frigates to Taiwan over Chinese objections.⁹⁹ These objections were placated after France offered a \$370 million loan to finance 5 projects in China.¹⁰⁰ There was also an understanding between Dumas and the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister sent to Paris to underscore Beijing's displeasure, that the frigates sale could proceed only on the condition that they were unarmed, and that there would be no further arms sales to Taiwan.¹⁰¹

In 1991 France was again enticed by Taiwan's offer to participate in its \$300 billion twenty-year development plan. French policy-makers saw in the Taiwanese arms market a major albeit risky opportunity to help bail out Dassault, the ailing French aeronautics company, from bankruptcy. They decided to promote the sale of Dassault's highly sophisticated and expensive Mirage 2000-5 fighters to Taiwan.¹⁰² Dassault had developed the aircraft specifically for export, but had failed to find buyers due to their high cost and the worldwide trend of arms reduction after the Cold War. Without the Taiwan contract, Dassault faced closure, leaving 5000 unemployed.¹⁰³ With France suffering from high deficit and high unemployment, the French government was faced with a dilemma of deciding between saving Dassault through the Mirage sale, or ensuring continued good relations with China.

The hardline French position was moderated by a short cooperative interlude in 1991. Recognising the need for China's cooperation in the UN following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, as well as China's role in the resolution of the third Indochina conflict at the Paris Peace Conference on Cambodia, Foreign Minister Dumas visited Beijing in April 1991 in a bid to lift the "freeze" in bilateral relations.¹⁰⁴ Then in 1992, the French and Taiwanese governments reached an agreement on the purchase of 60 Mirage 2000-5 fighter jets. The Mirage sale plunged bilateral relations into a sharp and long-drawn dispute. Beijing retaliated by closing the new office of the French

⁹⁹ The French government authorized the Directorate of Naval Construction on 3 January 1990 to respond to Taipei's appeals for tenders for the purchase of six frigates, revoked the decision six days later after the Chinese Ambassador protested to Dumas, but finally reinstated its approval. See Mengin, "France-Taiwan Relations", p.46. Dumas was subsequently charged for accepting bribes to allow Thomson CSF to proceed with the frigates sale. See *Economist*, 27 January 2000.

¹⁰⁰ A car-making joint venture, an airport, a power-generating plant, a water-processing plant, and a gas-regulating project. See Wellons, "Sino-French Relations", p.345.

¹⁰¹ Peyrefitte 1997:314.

¹⁰² See Wellons, "Sino-French Relations", p.345.

¹⁰³ Wellons, "Sino-French Relations".

¹⁰⁴ *Le Monde*, 29 April 1991.

Consulate-General and Economic Expansion Office in Guangzhou (Canton), and cancelled several large French contracts in China.¹⁰⁵ Many governments were adopting a cautious wait-and-see attitude towards the beleaguered government in Beijing but Paris was exceptional in daring to raise the strategic and commercial profile of its relations with Taiwan.¹⁰⁶ Egged on by the French military-industrial complex, the French government protested that the US was selling F-16s to Taiwan, and argued that they had a right to operate in the Taiwanese market as well. After all, the 1964 establishment of diplomatic relations had been based on rather ambiguous language: the French recognition of the *government* in Beijing, not the *state* of the People's Republic of China. Neither did the 1964 communiqué explicitly commit Paris to recognize only one China and nor to consider Taiwan a renegade province.¹⁰⁷

Not surprisingly, the Chinese were unimpressed by the French "betrayal" of the 1964 spirit.¹⁰⁸ The high-value French arms sales to Taiwan in 1990-92 underlined the absence of a clear policy with regard to political relations with China, consistency on the Taiwan question, and especially a weakness of the French trade position in the Chinese market.¹⁰⁹ The Taiwan episode put into sharp relief the fragile Gaullist underpinnings of bilateral relations. Beijing's shrill reaction forced French decision-makers to re-examine their triangular relationship with China and Taiwan. Following the 1992 Mirage episode and the Chinese reprisals, France lowered its profile on European sanctions and statements against China and moved towards a rapprochement in 1994 under a Conservative government.

c) Europeanising French cooperation with China, 1993-2002

A shift away from a confrontational policy towards China and towards a more "Europeanised" foreign policy of engagement began in 1993. This shift was prompted first by the election of a government dominated by the Gaullist party, which was more

¹⁰⁵ The Balladur government estimated at FF3 billion the value of contracts lost during the "freeze" in relations. The French employers' association put it at twice that value. See *Financial Times*, 7 April 1994.

¹⁰⁶ There were expectations by French analysts and China-watchers that the Chinese communist regime might not remain in power for too long, or would not survive Deng's death. See Peyrefitte 1997:294, 314; and Jean-Luc Domenach, "Chine: pour une politique démocratique", *Le Monde*, 29 March 1990.

¹⁰⁷ Mengin, *France et Taïwan*, p.94.

¹⁰⁸ See Peyrefitte's account of his meetings with two ex-Chinese Ambassadors to France, and with Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in Beijing, 12 and 18 September 1993, in Peyrefitte 97:309-16.

¹⁰⁹ Mengin, *France et Taïwan*, p.682.

attuned to good political and business relations with China. Second, the realization that France could better achieve its national objectives vis-à-vis China and the Asian region through institutionalised EU-based networks. Elected into office in April 1993 with an overwhelming majority, the new conservative government under Balladur moved the control of foreign policy in Paris away from an enfeebled President Mitterrand¹¹⁰ to the Matignon (Prime Minister's Office). Balladur resolved to change France's China policy to one of appeasing and "constructively engaging" Beijing. While French politicians complained of the "double standards" Beijing applied to France and the US over the Mirage affair, Foreign Minister Alain Juppé declared that long-term French interests lay in a China of 1.3 billion people rather than a Taiwan of 20 million.¹¹¹ The January 1994 joint communiqué which normalized relations thus for the first time officially committed France to a "one China" policy, as well as an undertaking *not* to sell *heavy* arms to Taiwan in future.

After bilateral relations were normalized in 1994, the French government worked on institutionalising a dense network of contacts between French and Chinese leaders. This network included not only diplomatic contacts but also trade, defence and cultural cooperation. This strategy was simultaneously projected onto the EU. Balladur's fence-mending mission in April 1994 improved atmospherics. It was however heavily criticized at home for being "humiliating", ignoring China's human rights record, and bearing no commercial fruits.¹¹² Although the Chinese made Balladur pay for the sins of the preceding Socialist governments, the visit was appreciated by the Chinese and was followed by a rapid succession of visits and contracts. Industry Minister Gérard Longuet visited Beijing that summer on a tour of Asia, ahead of President Jiang Zemin's state visit in September. Chinese Trade Minister Madam Wu Yi, who arrived four days before Jiang Zemin in Paris, announced the signature of contracts and letters of intention totalling FF17.5 billion.¹¹³

During Jiang Zemin's state visit to France in September 1994, Jiang proposed "four principles on Sino-West European ties": stable, long-term and friendly

¹¹⁰ Mitterrand's political position had been gravely weakened by scandals concerning corruption in the Socialist party, revelations of his Vichy past, his very poor health, and the fact that he was a lameduck president serving out his final years before the end of his presidential term in May 1995.

¹¹¹ Juppé, "Diplomatie Française: le deuxième souffle", *Politique Internationale* 61, 1993, pp.24-25.

¹¹² *Le Point* 16 April 1994.

cooperation for the 21st century, respect for each other and seeking common ground while putting aside differences, engaging in complementary trade and economic cooperation, and consultation and cooperation in international affairs.¹¹⁴ Balladur was quick to seize upon Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong's proposal of a regular APEC-style meeting of leaders from Asia and Europe¹¹⁵. The French government saw in this the perfect *European* vehicle to put a definitive end to the preceding 5 years of bilateral difficulties with China. ASEM could not only make up for the embarrassment over Taiwan, it would institutionalise regular cooperative contacts with Chinese leaders in a multilateral *European* framework which excluded the US (as well as Taiwan). France then worked closely with Singapore to persuade the other EU member states and the Commission to put the idea on the EU agenda. Working through its EU presidency in the first half of 1995 and presence in the Troika in the second half of that year, France lent critical support to the preparatory talks and officials' meetings that went into launching the inaugural Asia-Europe Meeting (a summit of EU and East Asian countries - ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea) in Bangkok in March 1996.

The Commission's July 1995 policy paper, "The Long-Term policy of the European Union towards China"¹¹⁶ placed for the first time the full breadth of Europe's ties with China within a single strategic framework. The strategy paper envisaged reinforcing and extending the established pattern of high-level meetings with Chinese ministers. The objective was to cover the complete range of political and economic issues, regional affairs, security issues, human rights and transnational questions such as the environment, and chart a course for EU-China relations into the 21st century. The strategy paper is impressive for the coherence and consistency of EU objectives towards China with the individual policies of member states. This coherence was an outcome of the many discussions, frequent and regular contacts between Commission officials and diplomatic services that enhance consultation and policy convergence.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ *Le Figaro*, 8 September 1994.

¹¹⁴ "Four Principles on Sino-Western European Ties", text of speech by President Jiang Zemin, Paris, 12 September 1994, in *Beijing Review* 37/38, 19-25 September 1994, pp.14-17.

¹¹⁵ Hill, "Closing the Capabilities-Expectation Gap?", in Peterson and Sjursen (eds), *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe?*, London: Routledge, 1998, p.32.

¹¹⁶ European Commission, "The Long-Term policy of the European Union towards China", COM (95) 279, Brussels, 5 July 1995.

¹¹⁷ Glarbo, "Wide-awake diplomacy", and Øhrgaard, "Less than Supranational, More than Intergovernmental", argue that frequent and regular contacts between national diplomacies have socialised them into becoming more "European" and taking a "coordination reflex" in their foreign

At the same time, the France-China dialogue was expanded in other sectors. The French Chief of Staff Admiral Lanxade visited Beijing in March 1995, the first European Chief of Staff to visit China since Tiananmen, and held high-level talks with Politburo, defence officials and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen. Lanxade declared that France was “normalizing political and military relations”, and had discussed China’s military modernization, nuclear proliferation in Asia, and the possibility of French warships paying ports of call in China with his interlocutors.¹¹⁸ After Jacques Chirac was elected French President in May 1995, relations between France and China took on the flavour of a “politico-commercial entente”. Human rights were marginalized as an issue of discussion. Commercial contracts and grandiose statements on a multipolar world order took centre stage.

In the area of political dialogue, France has been especially active since normalization in 1994 in promoting a comprehensive political and diplomatic engagement of China, at the bilateral, European and multilateral levels. There are several reasons for this. First, France sees itself as a great power with global responsibilities, one of only two EU states - together with the UK - that possess nuclear weapons and occupy permanent seats in the Security Council. Second and unlike the UK, France is uncomfortable with the US being the sole superpower in the world. France prefers to have a multipolar world order in which France can enjoy greater independence in foreign policy, and be able to exercise influence through a strong EU. Third, France was eager to catch up with Germany in the Chinese market. As detailed in Part I, the French viewed good political relations with the Chinese (following the German example) as a step towards achieving that goal.¹¹⁹

As the EU’s declared goals in its political dialogue with China dovetail with French goals (indeed the July 1995 paper reflected the political consensus of France and the other big EU states that the EU should engage China), France has not had major problems reconciling its national policy with EU policy. Except for a few minor derogations, eg selling low-level weapons to China despite the EC’s post-Tiananmen

policy-making. According to the French Defence Minister’s cabinet, policy consultation and coordination between officials in Paris, Bonn, London and Brussels in EFP was “significant”. Interview in March 2001.

¹¹⁸ *Le Figaro*, 24 March 1995 and *Le Monde* 25 March 1994..

sanctions prohibiting military sales¹²⁰, France has steadily pushed for increasing dialogue with China under the EU framework. Aside from political engagement, France established a high-level strategic dialogue involving defence ministers and senior officials with China in 1996.¹²¹ In some areas, France has been ahead of the game. Responding to Singapore's October 1994 proposal for a regular APEC-style meeting of leaders from Asia and Europe, the French immediately supported the proposal as a means, inter alia, of further institutionalising regular cooperative contacts with Chinese leaders.¹²² Despite an initial lukewarm response from the British and German governments, France used the offices of former EC President François Xavier-Ortoli and the French presidency of the EU in the first half of 1995 to push the idea in EU circles. It managed to use EU institutions to build a coalition of support from the other member states and the Commission to launch the first ASEM summit in March 1996, just 17 months after the idea was first broached in Paris.

The Commission's March 1998 "Comprehensive Partnership with China" initiative, which expanded on the earlier 1995 China strategy paper, drew inspiration from the 1997 France-China Declaration on a Global Partnership. Like the 1997 France-China declaration, the EU's 1998 paper envisaged a comprehensive partnership between the EU and China that included upgrading political consultation to annual summits, dialogue on human rights, support for China's accession to the WTO, and the promotion of bilateral trade and investment. The ASEM process has facilitated regular high-level contacts between Chinese and European leaders. The occasion of ASEM II in London in April 1998 allowed Zhu Rongji to make his first official visit abroad (to London and Paris) as the new Chinese Prime Minister. The first EU-China summit, was held in London immediately after ASEM II. Zhu's reception in Europe was positive. He was hailed by the media as a liberalising reformer and "Chinese Gorbachev".¹²³ Javier Solana, EU High Representative for CFSP, acknowledged the utility of multilateral dialogues like ASEM in complementing bilateral dialogues such as the EU-

¹¹⁹ In 1995, Chancellor Kohl proclaimed after his third visit to China in just over a year that Germany and China enjoyed a "special relationship". See Shambaugh, *China and Europe*, p.21.

¹²⁰ France (and Italy) justified their weapons transfer to China as contracts predating the 1989 sanctions. See Shambaugh, *China and Europe*, p.33 (fn.53).

¹²¹ "European Defence and Euro-Asia Security Relations," Speech by Alain Richard, French Minister of Defence, Paris, 19 February 1999. Strategic talks with Japan began in 1994, and South Korea in 1996.

¹²² Hill, "Closing the Capabilities-Expectation Gap?", p.32.

¹²³ *Libération*, 7 April 1998.

China dialogue: “strong regional frameworks, such as the ASEAN, or the ASEM process, are gaining ground as the natural interlocutors for a more comprehensive and global dialogue.... We should use these meetings to provide a new impetus across the full range of issues where we have shared concerns and interests.”¹²⁴

Overall Trends

Grid 4.2 European Political-Strategic Positions in China, 1985-2002

	85 ^a			90			95			2002		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
F		◆		◆				◆ ^c	→		◆	→
GB		◆	→	←	◆		←	◆ ^d	→		◆	
D		◆	→		◆				◆			◆
EU		◆	→	←	◆ ^b			◆ ^e	→			◆

- = Sanctions/Containment policy or Conflict with China

0 = Ambiguous or neutral policy on China

+ = Active Engagement with China

^a In 1985, most EC countries had good and improving political relations with China. Britain had in 1984 concluded negotiations with China on the return of Hong Kong, and Germany was expanding political contacts. The EC-China TCA had been signed between the Commission and China. Only the Netherlands had poor relations with China after the sale of Dutch submarines to Taiwan.

^b Madrid Summit sanctions on China issued, June 1989.

^c President Chirac and Prime Minister Balladur before him keen on mending fences with China, welcomed Chinese Presidential (1994 and 1997) and PM-level visitors (1995 and 1996). France championed the ASEM dialogue within the EU from 1994 to 1996.

^d Relations leading up to the 1997 handover of Hong Kong were tense

^e The Council approved the Commission's paper, *China A Comprehensive Framework*, which welcomed upgraded political and economic ties but was critical of China's human rights record.

The French government's position towards China evolved from neglect, through to confrontation (1989-92) then pro-active promoter of EU engagement with China between the 1980s and 2002. Over this period, the French position has become more “European” through a process of policy learning from Germany (sideways Europeanization) and exporting French ideas and initiative (such as ASEM) to the EU (projection or bottom-up Europeanization).

The Gaullist rhetoric of special relations between France and China notwithstanding, French policy makers have since 1993 skilfully played the European card to quietly and gradually increase French presence in Asian political affairs through a process of discreet diplomacy aimed at institution-building where France plays a role

¹²⁴ “Future Relations between the European Union and Asia”, fourth ASEM Asia-Europe Lecture by Javier Solana, High Representative for the EU CFSP, Singapore, 26 July 2000.

through the EU. French policy makers recognizes that “in this immense zone...where we are not the principal partner, interlocutor or protagonist, we do our work with perseverance to make links, create habits of consultation which did not exist before...and slowly but surely, I expect that this will bear fruit”.¹²⁵

III Human Rights

French human rights policy towards China underwent Europeanization in terms of policy convergence and policy projection because it coincided with the end of the Cold War and the rise of human rights as a priority issue in US and EU foreign policies. A vigorous French position on human rights was triggered by the crisis over the Tiananmen crackdown on 4 June 1989, with France playing a leading European and international role in support of the student demonstrators and condemning the Chinese government. The French government under President Mitterrand responded to public demands for Western governments to act firmly and in unison against China. Under President Chirac from 1995, a much more conciliatory and national human rights approach to China was adopted. The French “defection” from the common CFSP action at the 1997 UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR) session was the culmination of several years of a softening French approach towards China (Part II of this chapter). Nonetheless, it created a storm in the EU and led the following year to a major CFSP reversal. In the highly publicized conclusion of the General Affairs Council in March 1998, it was decided that neither the Presidency nor the member states should co-sponsor a draft resolution on China at the 54th UNCHR session in 1998.¹²⁶ This position has been repeated each year since then.

Part III examines the motivations behind first the policy convergence of EC governments in forging a common policy on human rights in China from 1989 to 1996, then the French-led defection from that consensus, followed by a new compromise consensus each year since 1998. As indicated in Parts I and II, the Europeanised common approach to human rights – of which France had been a leading protagonist -

¹²⁵ Foreign Minister Védrine’s speech at the 8th French Ambassadors’ Conference, Paris, 29 August 2000, as cited in Dorient 2002: 180. My translation.

¹²⁶ Andrew Clapham, “Where is the EU’s Human Rights Common Foreign Policy, and How is it Manifested in Multilateral Fora?” in Philip Alston (ed), *The European Union and Human Rights*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999, p.628.

broke down when it conflicted with the new French government's interests in improving French economic and political relations with China in the mid-1990s.

a) French Human Rights Policy and China

French policy-makers have long claimed that France has a "historic heritage" as the "cradle of human rights", with a special role in promoting these rights. In the 1980s French foreign policy discourse started to contain normative references to the defence of human and citizenship rights, democracy and the rule of law. Although French policy makers stressed that French political and diplomatic interests should be pursued in compliance with moral interests,¹²⁷ France in practice accorded little interest to human rights in its foreign policy. France tolerated and often supported repressive regimes in its former African colonies. Accordingly, until 1989 human rights in China were a low-priority issue for France.¹²⁸ The French government's interest in human rights in China was incidental and largely confined to individual cases involving French nationals. For example, French ministers interceded in the case of French diplomat Emmanuel Bellefroid who had been expelled in 1981 and his Chinese fiancée, sentenced to two years' "re-education" for Bellefroid's alleged financing and support for Maoist reactionaries.¹²⁹ The French government, like most other Western governments, by and large ignored domestic interest groups' demands to pressure the Chinese government on gross human rights violations and abuses in China, notably during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution.¹³⁰

French reactions to the Tiananmen massacre were in line with the mainstream international shock and horror at the bloody crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in June 1989. However, French Socialist leaders reacted more "emotionally" and with less restraint than those of other Western democracies in their

¹²⁷ Kessler, *La Politique Étrangère de la France: Acteurs et processus*, 1999, pp.160-61.

¹²⁸ Interview conducted in Paris, March 2001 with French diplomat based in Beijing in June 1989. He recounted that other EC members were surprised by France's "extreme action" and the leading role (*rôle moteur*) played by France in pursuing an EC sanctions policy. This contrasted with the muted French reaction to the Algerian government's massacre of hundred of students in 1988, on a scale "greater than Tiananmen".

¹²⁹ *Le Point*, 16 November 1991.

¹³⁰ See Andrew J Nathan, "China and the International Human Rights Regime", in Elizabeth Economy, and Michel Oksenberg (eds), *China Joins the World: Progress and Prospects*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999, p.148.

identification with and support for the student demonstrators.¹³¹ Paris particularly infuriated Beijing because it offered political asylum to the dissident student leaders. Not only were they given a special place in the bicentennial Bastille Day parade,¹³² Mitterrand publicly expressed sympathy for the exiled opposition and the French authorities allowed them to set up an organization, the Federation for Democracy in China (FDC) in Paris in September 1989.¹³³ France was a leading advocate in the coordinated EC “Madrid sanctions” on China, human rights dialogue, and holding China accountable in international fora such as the CHR.

The French position began to shift in 1994 under Prime Minister Balladur and the normalization of French relations with China. Relations had become frosty after 4 years of confrontation over Tiananmen and arms sales to Taiwan. The French approach moved towards a more pragmatic stance that emphasised economic exchange and implicitly acknowledged the validity of Chinese arguments that human rights could be culturally relative. The policy shift was reinforced by President Chirac’s philosophical-semantic approach to human rights in China from 1995. Finally, France in 1997 broke ranks with the EU practice since 1990 of sponsoring the human rights resolution on China at the CHR, one month ahead of Chirac’s state visit to China. Due to the fact that the French were so instrumental in the European position of 1989, the French policy reversal in 1997 was stunning. This was impelled essentially by national political-economic motivations to improve the atmospherics and substance of France-China bilateral relations. In effect, the French failure to project their new preferences since 1994 into a general EU position convinced them to break away (together with Germany, Italy and Spain) from supporting the annual EU sponsorship of the UNCHR resolution. Even so, the French sought to preserve a semblance of European unity despite this split, and defended their action in terms of serving the larger “European interest” through engaging China in human rights dialogue rather than ritually criticizing it at the UNCHR. From March 1998, a new European approach to human rights in China was codified in the Commission’s strategy paper, “Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China”.

¹³¹ I am grateful to Marie Holzman for pointing this out. Peyrefitte 1997:296 criticised the Socialist government’s post-Tiananmen China policy as based on the “*émotion du moment*”.

¹³² Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders*, p.117.

¹³³ Françoise Mengin, “The Prospects for France-Taiwan Relations”, pp.51-52.

b) The EU's Human Rights policy in China

In the area of human rights, interactions between France, the EC and China were non-controversial until Tiananmen. Periodic disputes on EC quotas and tariffs on Chinese goods occurred, and EC producers complained about Chinese market access obstacles, but the General Affairs Council was not involved in EC-China interactions. Tiananmen politicised the Community approach to economic relations with China. The introduction of sanctions, human rights and the UNCHR issues in EC-China relations shifted much of the discussions on China to the Council and CFSP structures. For example, the Commission which had hitherto refrained from political comments, issued a statement expressing “consternation” and “shock” at the “brutal suppression” in Beijing, and cancelled Foreign Trade Minister Zheng Tuobin’s scheduled visit to Brussels.¹³⁴

From 1989 to 1997, the EU policy on human rights in China lay principally in (i) the sanctions policy (effectively lifted in October 1990), (ii) dialogue between individual EU governments and China, and (iii) holding China accountable in multilateral fora, in particular the CHR by annually co-sponsoring with the US a resolution criticizing China’s human rights record.¹³⁵ All three approaches often invoked a vigorous response from the Chinese alleging foreign “interference” in China’s domestic affairs.

In a demonstration of swift and effective policy coordination and convergence, the 12 EC countries formed a collective human rights EU policy towards China that included sanctions. At its 27 June 1989 Madrid summit, the EC-12 announced that they would impose a package of 10 joint sanctions on China. The two key sanctions were the suspension of soft loans and a ban on military sales.¹³⁶ Other sanctions included the immediate suspension of high-level contacts and financial aid, reduction of cultural, scientific and technical cooperation, and extension of visas to students seeking asylum.¹³⁷ From Paris’ perspective, there were several benefits to the Europeanization

¹³⁴ Shambaugh, “China and Europe”, p.11.

¹³⁵ Some human rights activists consider this the most “symbolically important” EU policy in monitoring and moderating human rights in China. See Baker 2002.

¹³⁶ Roland Dumas, “Situation en Chine: Réponse de M. Roland Dumas, Ministre d’Etat des Affaires Etrangères, à une question écrite au Sénat”, 25 January 1990, Quai d’Orsay website (www.doc.diplomatie.fr).

¹³⁷ Wellons, “Sino-French Relations: Historical Alliance vs. Economic Reality”, p.342.

of human rights policy towards China, as well as coordination with other Western governments. First, it dovetailed with general Western consternation at the brutal crackdown of the Chinese authorities on unarmed student demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. Besides Mitterrand, US, British, Swiss, German and Australian leaders swiftly expressed their particular revulsion at the crackdown.¹³⁸ Second, the crackdown coincided with the bicentennial of the French Revolution, and France had decided to make human rights the main theme of the celebrations. There were popular and Socialist party demands for France to stand up for human rights as the originating country of the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Third, as Socialists, President Mitterrand and Foreign Minister Dumas were keen to portray themselves as defenders of human rights. They wanted France to be seen as still having a civilizing, universal and relevant mission in the world 200 years after the French Revolution. The Madrid sanctions were reinforced on 15 July with the agreement of Canada, the US and Japan at the G7 summit hosted by France.¹³⁹ Fourthly, a collective position allowed individual countries to gain strength in numbers and to spread out the risks of Chinese retaliation.¹⁴⁰ The EC-12 held together in supporting most of these sanctions from June 1989 to October 1990, the date when most of the sanctions were lifted (except the ban on military sales, which is officially still in force at writing).

The CHR approach was adhered to each year from 1990 to 1996, except 1991 because the US, Britain and France needed China's vote in the Security Council to endorse allied action against Iraq in the Gulf War. Although the resolution was always defeated by a no-action motion (except in 1995), the move was politically symbolic and significant in underlining the EU's commitment each spring to improvements in China's human rights record. However, mercantilist considerations chipped away the collective EC resolve and discipline so that EC countries were competing to get back into the Chinese market as early as the end of 1989. Almost a year before the EC officially lifted the economic sanctions in October 1990, both Germany and France breached the EC sanctions on financial aid and extended soft loans to projects undertaken by German and

¹³⁸ Andrew Nathan et al (eds), *The Tiananmen Papers*, 2001, p.397.

¹³⁹ Dumas, "Situation en Chine", op cit.

¹⁴⁰ This point was made by the British Embassy in Paris. Interview in March 2001.

French companies in China.¹⁴¹ In February 1990, France offered China new loans and authorized its export credit guarantee body to cover the China risk. This move was followed by Italy, then West Germany in April.¹⁴² The cracks in the material and symbolic aspects of the sanctions policy were partly a response to Chinese concessions (the Chinese lifted martial law in January 1990), but also a result of the perception that the US executive was not fully behind that policy. Although the EC-12 formally decided to retain the ban on military sales and military contacts at their October 1990 Luxembourg summit, further breaches in the common foreign policy occurred as Spain became the first to send its Foreign Minister to Beijing. These cracks widened because of China's perceived importance to global and regional order, especially with its role in the UN Security Council in the light of the Gulf War.

Aside from common actions taken under CFSP, individual governments raised human rights concerns in their discussions with Chinese leaders. During his visit to Beijing in April 1991, Dumas urged the Chinese government to grant amnesty to the Chinese dissidents, and to demonstrate respect for human rights.¹⁴³ The British worked hard to win assurances from China that basic democratic freedoms and rights would be respected after Hong Kong was transferred to Chinese sovereignty in July 1997. Meanwhile, the European Parliament (EP) has been the most consistent and vocal EU institution on the human rights situation in China. The EP has since 1987 made public, regular criticisms of the Chinese human rights record, especially on Tibet. In 1996, the EP even awarded Wei Jingsheng - China's most celebrated dissident - the Sakharov prize for Freedom of Thought.¹⁴⁴

c) The 1997 débâcle: French National Interests vs. EU Solidarity

Following the Japanese and German examples in abandoning human rights pressure on China so as to promote trade, the French government also set out to modify its human rights approach in order to regain its share of the China market. Commercial and political relations had suffered after France's initial hardline human rights stand in response to Tiananmen, and were further battered after the 1992 Mirage sale to Taiwan.

¹⁴¹ The German government released DM460 million in October for the construction of the Shanghai metro system, and the French government released FF830 million in December for a Citroën factory in Wuhan. See Nesshöver, "Bonn et Paris face à Pékin", p.93.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ *Le Monde*, 28-29 April 1991, *Libération*, 2 May 1991.

The victory of the French Right in the general elections in 1993 set the stage for a change in French human rights policy. The change was controversial in French intellectual and even government circles, but after 1996, Chirac's "philosophical-semantic" approach gradually became established French policy.

The Balladur-led normalisation of relations with China in 1994 sparked a heated human rights debate in France.¹⁴⁵ French "China hands" attacked the government by using the Chamberlain analogy to reprimand the Balladur government for "sacrificing" both France's moral position on human rights in a repressive China, and abandoning a democratising Taiwan. France was seen as being "discreet" on China's human rights record in the hope of commercial gain and appeasing China.¹⁴⁶ The accommodating French position towards human rights in China was further reinforced when Jacques Chirac – a Gaullist enamoured by East Asian civilizations, philosophy and art - was elected President in May 1995. Chirac's approach to human rights in China is pragmatic and accommodates the Chinese argument for cultural relativism. Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette had promised "discretion" rather than a "belligerent position during his visit to Beijing in February 1996. This approach went down very well with the Chinese, at the time engaged in a protracted quarrel with Britain over Governor Chris Patten's "unilateral actions" on constitutional reform in Hong Kong.¹⁴⁷ De Charette confidently declared that France-China relations were "cordial again".¹⁴⁸ At the inaugural ASEM summit in Bangkok in March 1996, Prime Minister Li Peng urged Chancellor Kohl and President Chirac to press for the dropping of the annual UNCHR resolution criticising China's human rights record, a resolution the EC had sponsored six times since 1990.

De Charette made it clear ahead of Li Peng's contentious visit to Paris in April 1996 that France was more interested in pragmatic economic relations with China. The French government agreed to Li Peng's demand that he should neither "see nor hear

¹⁴⁴ Nathan, "China and the International Human Rights Regime", p.155.

¹⁴⁵ For a defence of this normalization, see Interview with Foreign Minister Alain Juppé, "Diplomatie Française: Le Deuxième Souffle", *Politique Internationale* 61, 1993.

¹⁴⁶ See article by Jean-Luc Domenach, one of France's foremost sinologists, in *Le Monde*, 11 February 1996; *International Herald Tribune*, 12 April 1996; also Marie Holzman, "Chine: Requiem pour les droits de l'homme", *Politique Internationale*, Printemps 1997, pp.369-83.

¹⁴⁷ Percy Craddock, *Experiences of China*, new ed., London: John Murray, 1999, pp.272-285.

¹⁴⁸ *Le Monde*, 10 February 1996.

public protests.”¹⁴⁹ De Charette pointed out that what was important about Li Peng’s visit were the economic deals, including a definite sale of 30 airbuses, an agreement for Citroën to increase its car production in China, and a new joint venture project worth FF500 million.¹⁵⁰ Notwithstanding this understanding, Li’s visit was plagued by controversy and demonstrations by human rights and Tibetan as well as Taiwan independentists- albeit out of Li’s sight. An embarrassing “diplomatic incident” occurred when Li Peng kept his host Prime Minister Alain Juppé waiting for over an hour at an official dinner over Juppé’s refusal to remove references to the human rights situation in China in his toast. After frantic negotiations between the Quai d’Orsay and the Chinese Embassy, a compromise was reached in which both sides agreed to cancel their speeches since Juppé refused to drop the offending paragraphs.¹⁵¹ Chirac’s approach can be characterised as one which does not preclude the discussion of human rights, but only as a “private philosophical-semantic” discussion¹⁵². In de Charette’s words, it was “a new approach, constructive and dynamic, preferring constructive dialogue to confrontation”.¹⁵³

Jacques Chirac’s “constructive dialogue” approach to human rights in China was confirmed in the lead-up to his May 1997 state visit.¹⁵⁴ Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen announced in Paris in January that he was convinced that a “strategy of cooperation...would go further toward ensuring that progress is made than a strategy of confrontation”. De Charette was reported to have remarked that it was “preposterous for the West, which invaded and humiliated China in modern times, to ‘lecture’ China, a country with a 5000-year old civilization, on the Human Rights Declaration and the US Constitution, which are merely 200 years old.”¹⁵⁵ The new French position was brought to bear at the 53rd UNCHR debate in April 1997 in Geneva. Unable to persuade its EU partners and the Dutch EU Presidency to drop the resolution criticizing China, France

¹⁴⁹ Li Peng cancelled plans to visit Luxembourg and the Netherlands because they refused to guarantee a demonstration-free visit. See *Le Monde*, 9 April 1996.

¹⁵⁰Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders*, pp.193-194.

¹⁵¹ See *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*, 12 April 1996. A more detailed account of the incident and Li Peng’s aversion to human rights issues is found in Peyrefitte 1997:346-348.

¹⁵² This expression is found in *Libération*, 12 April 1996.

¹⁵³ Hervé de Charette, “Politique Etrangère de la France en Chine: Réponse du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, à une question écrite au Sénat”, 3 April 1997, on www.doc.diplomatie.fr.

¹⁵⁴ Many commentators drew a direct line between French UNCHR action and Chirac’s Beijing visit. See David Allen and Michael Smith, “External Policy Developments” in Geoffrey Edwards and Georg Wiessala, *The European Union 1997: Annual Review of Activities*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1988, p.85.

¹⁵⁵ *Beijing Review*, 26 May-1 June 1997.

decided to withdraw its support from the ritual EU sponsorship of the resolution. Instead France led the “airbus group” (France, Germany, Italy and Spain) in defecting from the common position. It was left to Denmark to draft the resolution, and the US and 14 other Western countries to co-sponsor it. With the split in EU ranks, the vote was 27 in favour of China’s no-action motion, 17 against and 9 abstentions, the most stunning repudiation of the UNCHR mechanism condemning China since the campaign started in 1990.¹⁵⁶ The UNCHR débâcle was celebrated as a spectacular victory by Chinese diplomacy. Meanwhile France was heavily criticized by many Western governments for “kowtowing to Chinese pressure”, putting short-term national economic interests over collective long-term EU interests and hence undermining the EU’s credibility and its own credentials as the birthplace of human rights¹⁵⁷. The stage was then set for Chirac’s state visit to China in May 1997, where a France-China joint declaration was issued. On human rights, it declared that both parties would “respect diversity” and take into account the “particularities of all sides”.¹⁵⁸

When Zhu Rongji visited France on his first bilateral visit as the new Chinese Prime Minister in April 1998, he declared that there were “identical views” on human rights between France and China.¹⁵⁹ Zhu was hailed by the French media as a reformer and “Chinese Gorbachev”, an almost triumphal reception compared to the ritual human rights, Tibetan independence and other demonstrations that ritually greeted visits by Jiang Zemin and especially Li Peng. Even under Chirac’s 1997-2002 *Cohabitation* with Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, the accommodating French position was maintained. Jospin’s official visit to Beijing in September 1998- “a necessary step, like Washington and Moscow” for presidential hopefuls- was noteworthy for its adherence to the Chirac policy on human rights. Jospin contented himself with emphasizing China’s importance to international finance in the context of the Asian financial crisis and kept to the “private philosophical-semantic” approach developed by Chirac in discussing human rights with Chinese leaders¹⁶⁰. This allowed Jiang Zemin to assert China’s “right to be different” during his state visit to Paris, in October 1999.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ *Beijing Review*, 5-11 May 1997.

¹⁵⁷ Interviews with Dutch, British and Chinese Embassies in Paris, April 1997.

¹⁵⁸ French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Déclaration conjointe Franco-chinoise pour un Partenariat Global*, Pékin, 16 May 1997. See also English translation in *Beijing Review*, 2-8 June 1997.

¹⁵⁹ *Libération*, 7 April 1998.

¹⁶⁰ *Libération* 25 and 27 September 1998.

¹⁶¹ *Le Monde* 30 October 1999.

d) *Compromise and EU Coordination from 1998*

The 1997 rift in EU solidarity at the UNCHR and Chinese retaliation against Denmark¹⁶² convinced the EU member states of the need to fine-tune and formalise a common Council position on China ahead of the next UNCHR.¹⁶³ The 14 March 1998 General Affairs Council agreed that at the upcoming 1998 UNCHR session, the EU would “neither propose nor endorse, either by the organization as a whole or by individual members” any resolution criticizing China.¹⁶⁴ In effect, the French position had won the day and the “hardliners” found themselves tied to an EU position projected by France. This Europeanised position not to co-sponsor (albeit with reservations expressed by the “hardliners”) the UNCHR resolution with the US has been reached at the Council each March since 1998. The Council has typically agreed that the EU should adopt the following approach at the UNCHR on China¹⁶⁵:

- If the resolution is put to a vote, EU members of the Commission will vote in favour, but the EU will not co-sponsor;
- EU members will vote against a no-action motion, should one be presented, and the EU will actively encourage other Commission members to do likewise, since in the EU’s view, the very notion of no-action is itself contrary to the spirit of dialogue.¹⁶⁶

The above approach can be viewed as a compromise convergence of EU member states’ preferences, between the pragmatic minimalist approach of the French-led “airbus group” and the idealist approach of the human rights “hardliners”. Since the EU-15 could not reach a consensus on outright support or abandonment of the resolution, it was felt that the EU should balance its non-sponsorship of the resolution with voting in support of the resolution and against no-action.¹⁶⁷ The 1998 position represented a classic intergovernmental compromise, managing to combine quite

¹⁶² The Chinese delayed high-level visits, cancelled contracts and suspended exchange and cooperation on human rights issues with Denmark. See *Beijing Review*, 5-11 May 1997. According to the British Embassy in Paris, the general reaction in the other European capitals was “thank goodness it’s not us!” Interview in March 2001. Relations between Beijing and Copenhagen were normalized in the autumn. See *The European Union 1997*, p.85.

¹⁶³ In my interview with the Quai d’Orsay CFSP directorate in March 2001, the analogy was drawn with the 1982 incident when the Netherlands was ‘punished’ by China (downgrading of diplomatic relations to Chargé d’Affaires level until normalization in 1984) for selling submarines to Taiwan. See also Mengin, “France-Taiwan Relations”, *Issues and Studies*, 28/3, March 1992.

¹⁶⁴ *Beijing Review*, 6-12 April 1997.

¹⁶⁵ Interviews with Quai d’Orsay CFSP directorate and British Embassy in Paris, March 2001.

¹⁶⁶ See EU General Affairs Council, *Human Rights - Conclusions*, General Affairs Council 2338th Council meeting, Brussels, 19 March 2001.

different preferences into a common position that is not altogether cohesive or coherent. In catalysing a change in the EU's CHR policy on China, France had Europeanised its human rights policy by "exporting its national policy model, ideas and details to the EU"¹⁶⁸ on not confronting China by supporting an EC-sponsored resolution. However, France was also subject to top-down Europeanization. It had to coordinate and harmonise its position with the other member states on voting in favour of a resolution.

Aside from the CHR approach, the Commission's 25 March 1998 paper on China stressed two main sets of activities: dialogue and cooperation projects. The EU-China dialogue on human rights forms the main component of dialogue activities. Initiated in January 1996 and interrupted by China after the EU tabled a resolution in the 1996 UNCHR session, they were resumed in 1997 only after French success in changing the EU's CHR policy. Held alternately in China and Europe, 9 dialogue sessions were organized between 1997 and 2000, providing a forum "to engage China on sensitive issues, channel EU concerns, provide arguments to the relevant Chinese authorities, and generate proposals for cooperation projects".¹⁶⁹ The existence of the human rights dialogue does not preclude the EU expressing publicly its concerns at human rights violations in China. In 1999 and 2000, the EU Presidency expressed serious concern at the human rights situation in China in its annual opening statements to the CHR session. China's recent tightening of political controls in 1999 arose from the regime's nervousness over the politically charged anniversaries that year, (eg the 1919 May Fourth Movement, 1949 Chinese revolution, 1989 Tiananmen). Chinese back-peddalling on its commitment to sign the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) prompted German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer to deliver an unusually sharp criticism of China's human rights record at the 1999 UNCHR session on behalf of the European Union.¹⁷⁰

In terms of cooperation projects (initiated by the Commission to support and complement the human rights dialogue), the flagship project is the EU-China Legal and Judicial Programme, launched in March 2000 and expected to last at least 4 years. A

¹⁶⁷ Interview with British Embassy in Paris, March 2001.

¹⁶⁸ Bulmer and Burch, "The Europeanization of Central Government", p.6.

¹⁶⁹ European Commission, "Report on the Implementation of the Communication 'Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China'", COM (2000) 552, Brussels, 8 September 2000.

contract worth €13.2 million was signed with a consortium led by the British Council, with the programme aimed at strengthening the rule of law in China through training and exchange schemes for Chinese legal practitioners. A Master of Law course in human rights is also being set up at the University of Hong Kong.¹⁷¹ China has also responded positively to various European governments' national initiatives to discuss on a bilateral basis human rights, the rule of law and legal frameworks. It was felt that to promote the rule of law, the EU should work to help China develop a "sound and transparent framework of civil and criminal law... helping Chinese citizens use the right that the increasing growth of the rule of law will provide, and training lawyers and judges".¹⁷² On civil society, "the aim here is to assist Chinese society itself by promoting grass-roots democracy, consumers' rights and the rights of ethnic minorities and other vulnerable social groups, not least through the provision of targeted co-operation policies in these areas."¹⁷³

Combined with high-level diplomatic exchanges and symposia, the EU-China human rights dialogue and cooperation projects were a means of responding to criticism of the EU's failure to sanction China because of intra-EU economic competition. These activities satisfied a desire among many Western officials to do something concrete in a country where much needed to be done. In the 1995 EU strategy paper on China that was unveiled by EC Vice-President and External Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan, it was hinted that trade concerns and China's capacity to react affected the EU's human rights policy. In a revealing passage, the paper stated that:

A commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms is at the heart of EU policy worldwide. ...The key criterion for pursuing human rights initiatives must be effectiveness, the impact that an initiative would have on the ground. For this reason, there is a danger that relying solely on frequent and strident declarations will dilute the message or lead to knee-jerk reactions from the Chinese government. To make progress, all the EU institutions should pursue human rights issues through a combination of carefully timed statements, formal and private discussions and practical cooperation.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Speech by Joschka Fischer, German Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of the EU Council of Ministers at the 55th session of the Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, 23 March 1999.

¹⁷¹ European Commission, "Report on the Implementation of the Communication 'Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China'", COM (2000) 552, Brussels, 8 September 2000.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ European Commission, "A Long-term Policy for China-Europe Relations", COM (95)279 final, Brussels, 5 July 1995. The Europeanization of the member states' human rights policy on China has

The convergence, or Europeanization, of the member states' human rights policies on China has arguably watered down the positions of some of the more hardline countries at key multilateral fora such as the UNCHR. A combination of the hard European Parliament and hardline governments' unilateral approaches combined with the conciliatory EU approach of "constructive dialogue" pioneered by France, could be viewed as a way of engaging China through a mixture of negative measures and positive incentives.¹⁷⁵ Even Chris Patten, a long-time critic of China, acknowledged that the "European Union-China Human Rights dialogue is actually getting somewhere....it is not just the exchange of pleasantries about the sort of world we would like to live in."¹⁷⁶

Overall Trends

Grid 4.3 European Human Rights Positions in China, 1985-2002

	85			89			96/97			2002		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
F		◆		◆ ^a				◆ ^c	→			◆
GB		◆	→	←	◆		←	◆ ^c			◆	
D		◆	→		◆			◆			◆	
EU		◆	→	◆ ^b			←	◆ ^f	→	←		◆

- = *Confrontational/critical policy*

0 = *Ambiguous policy or "silent diplomacy" with China*

+ = *"Constructive Engagement" with China*

^a Mitterrand-Dumas policy very critical of China's human rights record after Tiananmen, supportive of Chinese dissidents in France and democratisation in China.

^b EC policy on pressuring China on human rights at international fora agreed at Madrid summit, 1989.

^c Britain and the Netherlands defend the majority EU position criticising human rights in China at CHR, which conflicted with France's "constructive dialogue" and Germany (and Italy's) "silent diplomacy".

The record of French policy on human rights in China exhibits simultaneously all three processes of Europeanization. In the aftermath of Tiananmen in 1989, France was among the countries that worked hardest at cobbling together a set of common EC sanctions and policies to promote human rights in China, and advocated harmonizing member states' policies in this issue-area (convergence and projection Europeanization).

arguably watered down the commitment of some of the more hardline countries' positions at the UNCHR.

¹⁷⁵ Simma, Aschenbrenner and Schulte, "Human Rights and Development Cooperation", in Alston 1999, pp.578-80 define a positive approach as an incentive-based one which does not infringe on the sovereignty of the State. Positive measures constitute policies that support and are increasingly based on consensus and consultation through political dialogue.

¹⁷⁶ European Commission, Press Conference by Chris Patten, EU Commissioner for External Relations, Brussels, 16 December 1999, DOC/99/18.

Paradoxically, it was France that broke the EU consensus in 1997 and struck out on a new path (see Grid 4.3), backed by the “Airbus countries”.

Dealing with China on the subject of human rights remains a bone of contention within the EU, between member states who prefer making China publicly accountable at international fora, and those who prefer silent diplomacy or constructive engagement. While France chose a Gaullist tack in 1997, it is nonetheless constrained by the general EU consensus at the GAC that China’s human rights record is in need of improvement. French leaders can and often do in their bilateral dialogue gloss over or ignore human rights altogether with the Chinese. However, they are obliged to vote *en bloc* against a no-action motion should China resist a resolution at the CHR.

Conclusions

At the establishment of French diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level with a People’s Republic of China shunned by the US and most of the West in 1964, French relations with China exhibited the strong Gaullist trademarks of national foreign policy independence (*vis-à-vis* the US), a strategic “special” friendship with a growing Asian power that had just turned nuclear, and political rhetoric on building a balanced multipolar world. Although de Gaulle’s objectives were ambiguous and France in substance kept substantive relations with Chiang Kai-shek’s Republic of China on Taiwan, France made a bold diplomatic statement by being the first major Western country to recognize and build political relations with communist China. Georges Pompidou in 1972 was the first Western head of state to visit China officially, although by then France had been overshadowed by the US’ decision, under Nixon and Kissinger, to end its isolation of China. Today, French relations with China – as outlined in the Chirac-Jiang Joint Declaration - continue to exhibit Gaullist characteristics: political rhetoric on national grandeur, cooperation with China in building a multi-polar world order, and claims of a “special relationship”.

Notwithstanding the Gaullist political statements of Pompidou and Chirac, there has been little in terms of concrete bilateral cooperation between France and China amounting to a “special relationship”, aside from shared anxieties and opposition to US unilateralism. In fact, the age-old alternations between “romanticized” French views of

China as utopia versus views of China as a Yellow Peril and source of the “confrontation of two civilizations”, is still evident in French attitudes towards China.¹⁷⁷ Mitterrand’s neglect of China for most of the 1980s turned, following Tiananmen, into strident French exceptionalism, with France taking the human rights torch in criticizing China, extending moral support, and giving asylum to student demonstrators and other pro-democracy dissidents in the early 1990s. The Mitterrand-Dumas human rights approach was in many ways a manifestation of Gaullist activism in pushing an international ideological agenda, this time in confrontation with China and using the EU as an umbrella. The French Lafayette and Mirage sales to Taiwan were also policies related to Gaullist ambitions to make France a strategic player in Northeast Asia. The manufacture and delivery of the last of the 60 Mirage fighters, made only in 2001-2, gives the French military a long-term training, supplies and maintenance role in one of the most advanced air force establishments in Northeast Asia.¹⁷⁸ This lends credence to larger French claims to a continued global security role as a Permanent Member of the UNSC, and one of the guarantor countries following the Korean armistice, as well as the 1973 and 1991 Paris Peace Accords following the Second and Third Indochina Wars.

Compared to the Gaullist perspective, economic explanations of French policy in China are limited in their explanatory value. French economic exchanges with China were insignificant even in the first years after 1964 when France enjoyed for a short while the status as China’s largest Western trading partner (thanks to political *grands contrats*) until Nixon’s decision to visit China and China’s entry into the UN, in 1971. In economic and investment exchanges, France is but for the EU a minor player in China’s rapid economic development. It must rely on the EC to gain a voice in China’s affairs, eg. in WTO negotiations. France deploys high-handed political tactics and portrays French business as “European” (and hence appeals to China’s anxieties over an over-dependence on the US or Japan) in hard-nosed negotiations to win high-value and highly publicized *grands contrats* such as the delivery of Airbus to China’s airlines.

¹⁷⁷ Peyrefitte, *Le choc des civilisations*, 1970; Erik Israeliwicz, *Ce Monde qui nous attend: les Peurs françaises et l’Économie*, Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1997; Cabestan, “Paris-Pékin: Un Dialogue sans Complexes?”. See also Stéphane Courtois et al, *Le Livre noir du Communisme*, 1996, which contains a highly critical chapter on atrocities committed under China’s communist governments .

¹⁷⁸ A French Defence official noted that the Chinese were furious that France dared to act like a “mini US” in its argument that China should accord France the same right as the US in selling advanced weapons to Taiwan. He noted that France expected to be involved in Taiwan’s military for “at least 20 years.” Interview with Diplomatic Advisor, cabinet of Defence Minister Alain Richard, Paris, March 2001.

One may argue that in the 1990s, EU policy towards China has effectively been “Germanised”, in that Germany has succeeded in exporting its model of discreet diplomacy, change through trade and non-confrontation on human rights to the EU level. In other words, Germany has “Europeanised” what was originally a member state’s national China policy. This is most patent in the economic and trade issue-area, where the issue of human rights has been de-linked from trade.

Returning to the three variations of the Europeanization process proposed in chapter two, we see all three processes at work in French policy towards China. “Top-down” Europeanization, where France is increasingly constrained by CFSP agreements, EU directives, policy positions and coordinated actions in its approach to China, was seen paradoxically in the strong intra-EU reaction to France in 1997 breaking away from the agreed human rights approach to China at the Commission on Human Rights. With the progress of European integration and European foreign policy encroachment into French policy, France had to work hard to rally the other member states to a new compromise position from 1998. One might argue that France “Europeanised” its China policy in the first place in 1989 by projecting French preferences of confrontation with China onto larger European structures and processes (“bottom-up” projection Europeanization), then ran into stiff resistance when attempting to reverse what had become established EU policy by trying to export a more conciliatory national policy onto the EU.

France may continue to see in China a nation that it could deal with on Gaullist, often selfish national-interest terms, but the overall trend is a movement towards harmonization and convergence of member states’ policies towards China. In human rights, France may have defected from the specific agreed EU action of sponsoring a resolution at the CHR, but it had to redouble its efforts urging the Chinese government along other paths desired by the EU, eg. signing onto the ICCPR, resuming the EU-China dialogue on human rights, and in 1998 agreeing to a common GAC position to vote in favour of a resolution on China (albeit one not sponsored by the EU). Harmonisation was strongest when there was convergence of internal member states’ national goals and external demands for a strong and unified EU presence. This was the case in ASEM’s genesis, where EU member states and the Commission between 1993 and 1995 agreed on the need to engage China in a political framework, and Asian states

called on the EU to engage in a summit-level dialogue with East Asia in order to counter-balance perceived excessive US (and growing Chinese) influence in the region.

Since 1994 France has invested considerably in building a close political relationship with China: high-level political visits, “constructive dialogue” on human rights, annual consultations at presidential level, close consultation in the UN Security Council on international issues. It has championed forging a web of multilateral dialogue and engagement with China via the Asia-Europe Meeting and EU-China Dialogue. In the grids comparing the national positions of France, Britain, Germany and the Commission on China in the three issue-areas of economics, political-strategic interests and human rights, there is overall a more coordinated European position on China in 2000 compared to 1985, and certainly in relation to the defections from the common EC sanctions in 1990, and the disaccord in 1997 over the CHR debate. Even in the area of human rights, the common EU positions built from 1989 acted as a constraint and damper on the French defection in 1997. The French justified their behaviour as serving the larger “European interest” in promoting the cause of human rights in China more effectively through quiet diplomacy and dialogue rather than open confrontation. Over time, European policy-making elites can be expected to share even more coordination reflexes on foreign policy towards China. They have similar values and interests in China’s economic development, diplomatic-military power, as well as its political and social evolution. Having lost the last of their historical colonial staging posts and special privileges in China (as have Britain and Portugal since 1997 and 1999), EU member states will have to work together (and with the US and Asian states) in order to make any significant economic or political impact on developments in China.

Chapter Five

Japan

Beyond fascination and suspicion

References to contemporary France-Japan relations in scholarly studies are usually incidental and framed in Europe's *economic* relations with Japan or vice versa.¹ Very few books or detailed studies have been dedicated to France-Japan relations per se.² This chapter would argue that the two predominant themes in Paris' relations with Tokyo are fascination and suspicion. The fascination for Japan, led by French writers and painters such as Baudelaire, Loti, Monet and Toulouse-Lautrec, was confined primarily to exoticising Japan for its art and culture. It is evident in the century-long French love affair with *japonisme* (the movement of Japanese influences in Western art), which heavily permeated Impressionism and Art Nouveau from the second half of the 19th century.³ French cultural luminaries popularised *japonaiserie*, the craze in Europe at the turn of the twentieth century for Japanese objets d'art, propagating an "exotic-aesthetic" image of and fascination for Japan.⁴ On the flip side of this aesthetic image of Japan is an abiding fear and suspicion of Japan's political, military and economic ambitions. This has its roots in Japan's spectacular modernization and successes in the military field (defeat of China in 1895, Russia in 1905, over-running French Indochina in 1940 then taking over all the European colonies in Southeast Asia in World War II) as well as its economic superpower status by the 1970s.

¹ See Brian Bridges' *EC-Japanese Relations: In Search of a Partnership*, London: RIIA/JIJA, 1992; "Japan and Europe: Rebalancing a Relationship", *Asian Survey* 32/3, March 1992:230-245; and *Europe and the Challenge of the Asia Pacific*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1999, Ch.3; Peter Lowe, "Japan and Europe in the Occupation Period, 1945-52", in Bert Endström (ed), *The Japanese and Europe*, 2000; Kazuki Iwanaga, "Europe in Japan's Foreign Policy", in Endström (ed), *The Japanese and Europe*.

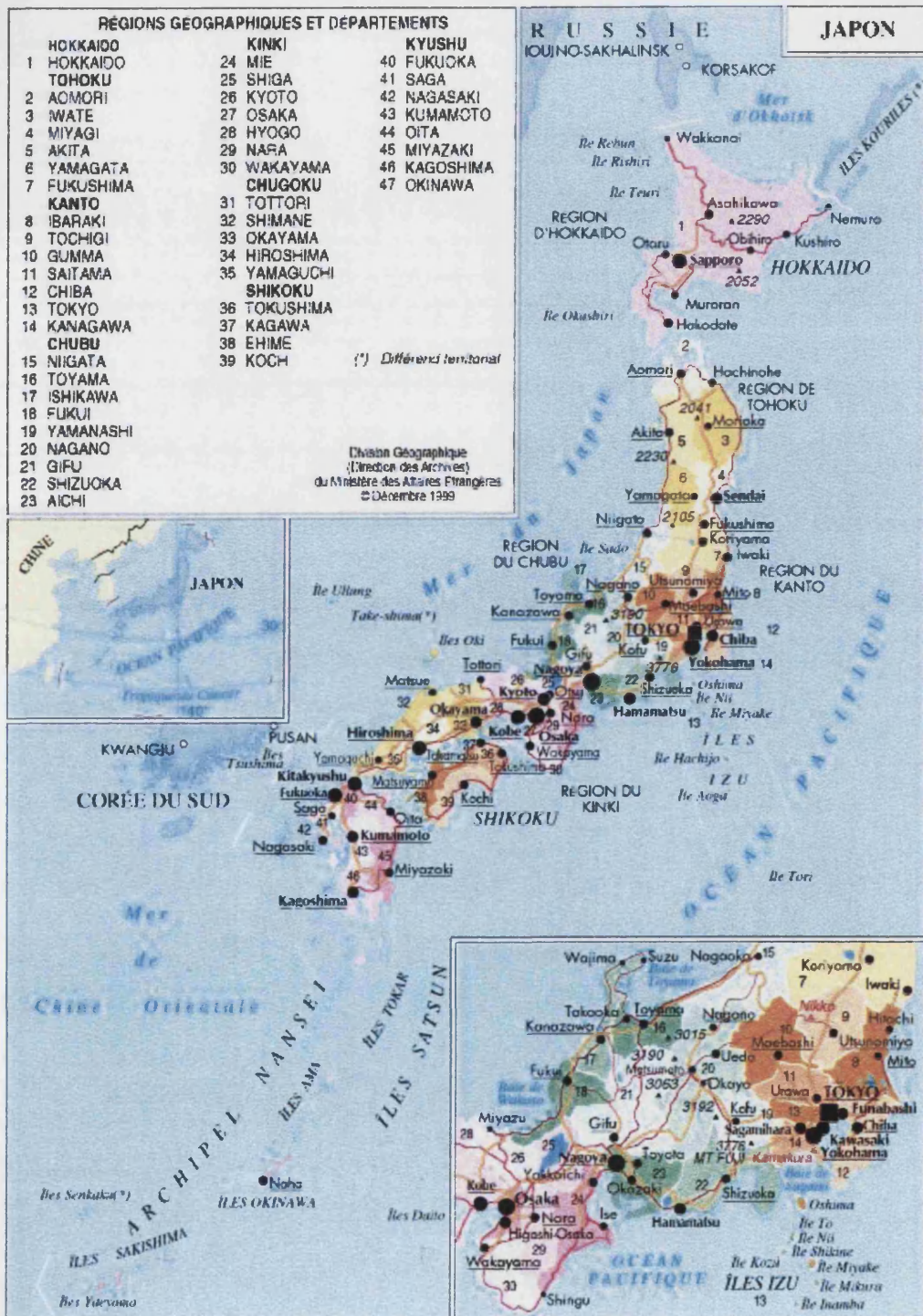
² The rare exceptions include Koïchiro Matsuura, *La Diplomatie japonaise à l'aube du 21^e siècle: Réflexions sur les relations du Japon avec la France et sur son rôle international*, Paris: Publications orientalistes de France, 1998; and to a lesser extent, Christian Sautter's *La France au Miroir du Japon: Croissance ou Déclin*, Paris: Odile Jacob, 1996, which compares France's economy with Japan's.

³ Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, *Le Japonisme*, Paris: Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1988, pp.16-32.

⁴ See Endymion Wilkinson's classic *Japan versus Europe: A History of Misunderstanding*, Middlesex, England: Pelican, 1983, pp.43-52; Ian Littlewood, *The Idea of Japan: Western Images, Western Myths*, London: Secker and Warburg, 1996; Matsuura 98.

Map of Japan

(showing prefectures, major cities and geopolitical situation in Northeast Asia)



Source: MAE, Division Géographique (Direction des Archives), as of December 1999, on <http://www.diplomatie.fr/actual/evenements/japon/carte.html>, accessed 1 August 2003.

The influential Wilkinsonian thesis of European attitudes and policies towards Japan running on outdated stereotypes and misunderstanding has been applied in particular to France. France-Japan ties are characterised as an “emotional love-hate relationship”.⁵ Some scholars argue that bilateral relations remain fragile and that the Japanese remain wary of France as the European country that could most easily turn “anti-Japanese”.⁶ The Wilkinson-Bridges thesis of France-Japan relations as “emotional” is right in highlighting the surprising lack of a stable, long-standing relationship between France and Japan compared, for example, to that which the UK, Germany and especially the US enjoyed with Japan. This perspective of an “emotional” relationship, however, has limited value beyond accounting for episodic bouts of “Japanophobia” and “Japanophilia” in France. It obscures a more complex relationship which included French involvement in building Japan’s navy in the 19th century, and French economists and leaders (including Chirac) holding up Japanese society and economic organization as a model.⁷

This chapter argues that explaining contemporary French attitudes and policies towards Japan requires understanding the interplay between France’s post-1945 obsession with great-power status, and Japan’s post-war economic, security and foreign policy dependence on the US (Japan regained its independence in 1952 at the end of the American occupation and was admitted into the UN only in 1956). French foreign policy’s Gaullist preoccupations after World War II with national independence and security issues, effectively ruled out close foreign policy coordination between the two countries. Japan’s security situation (it was not at peace with either the USSR or Communist China) and pacifist Constitution made it dependent on security guarantees from the US. Japanese foreign policy was limited to national economic recovery and growth. Japan was thus viewed as being of little political significance, “being closely allied with, and subordinate to the United States.”⁸

⁵ Also Wilkinson, *Japan versus the West: Images and Reality*, London: Penguin Books, 1990; Marc Rigaudis, *Japon Mépris...Passion: Regards de la France sur le Japon de 1945 à 1995*, Paris: L’Harmattan, 1998; and Bridges, *EC-Japanese Relations*, p.10. Littlewood (1996) and others argue that a large number of works on Japan produced in the West falls into the Orientalist tradition of *japonisme*.

⁶ Bridges, *Europe and the Challenge of the Asia Pacific*, p.47.

⁷ Christian Sautter 96; and Jean-François Delassus, *Japon: Monstre ou Modèle*, Paris: Hachette, 1970; A. Callies, *France-Japon: Confrontation culturelle dans les entreprises mixtes*, Paris: Méridiens, 1986.

⁸ Iwanaga, “Europe in Japan’s Foreign Policy”, in Endström (ed), *The Japanese and Europe*, p.213.

With the end of the Cold War, bilateral relations have developed rapidly in tandem with the EU's search for a common foreign policy and Japan's search for more foreign policy independence. Since the mid-1990s, Japan has been viewed in Paris as a major player in the post-Cold War world and a partner of the EU with similar foreign policy goals in East Asia and the wider world- political stability, economic growth and liberal democracy. France and the EU have begun to shift their treatment of Japan as a secondary member of the "West" and adjunct to the US, towards that of a key Western partner and Asian/global power on its own terms. As a member of the G-7, OECD, and even observer and financier in European security fora like the OSCE, Japan's wealth and influence make it a case apart from the typical developing Asian state seeking assistance from the EU. In this regard, Japan is often a partner for French and EU objectives, whether for development aid in Asia, Africa or Eastern Europe, in EC sanctions on post-Tiananmen China or Burma, or the transition to free markets and democracy in Russia or Southeast Asia.

The three parts of this chapter examine the evolution of French policies towards Japan in the economic, political-strategic and human rights arenas, asking whether and to what extent the European Union moderated, raised the common denominator or followed the French lead on Japan in each issue-area. France has a notorious reputation for being protectionist and resorting to EU structures to amplify its trade and investment policies, yet by the mid-1990s it was welcoming and becoming among the top recipients of Japanese FDI in Europe, as well as one of the largest sources of international FDI in Japan from 2000. This is the subject of Part I, which examines the domestic, European and international reasons for the French about-turn on Japan. Part II, on political and security relations, focuses on the mutation of French attitudes towards Japan, from neglect, to confrontation, to active collaboration after the Cold War. France has been one of the key countries actively encouraging a greater role and voice for Japan in international diplomacy and the fashioning of the international system. Part III looks at French and Japanese efforts in promoting human rights in international relations. The coordination of policies between Japan, and France and the EU, is examined in the context of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), linked to the promotion of economic and social rights, "constructive dialogue", and the death penalty. But before analysing the contemporary relationship, we need to trace the reasons behind France's misgivings concerning Japan's rise as a geopolitical power.

French Reservations about Japan's rise to power, 1895-1945

The French have historically been slow to engage Japan, and often had misunderstandings or conflicts of interests when they did deal with the Japanese leadership. The first Europeans to arrive in Japan were the Portuguese in 1543. They introduced Christianity and western muskets to the feudal lords on the southern island of Kyushu. The phenomenal success of Jesuit missionaries (by 1600 there were some 300,000 Christians, mainly in Kyushu's Nagasaki region), alarmed the central authority.⁹ Tokugawa Ieyasu, who established the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603-1867) in Edo (Tokyo) upon reunifying Japan, cut off Japan's contacts with the West. Japanese were prohibited from travelling abroad and foreigners were banned from the Japanese islands on pain of death. From 1637, trade was confined to Nagasaki and limited to the Chinese and Dutch, with some contacts with Korea allowed.¹⁰ Japan's two centuries of isolation were broken when US Commodore Perry's "black ships" in 1853 forced the Tokugawa government to open to Western trade and missions. Tokugawa Japan had observed China's humiliation and slow dismemberment following the First Opium War in 1839-42, and its leaders were determined to avoid a similar fate. France was among the Western powers (together with Holland, Russia and Britain) that jumped on the American bandwagon in forcing the Tokugawa to sign unequal commercial treaties.¹¹

The 1858 France-Japan Treaty of Friendship and Trade, the first treaty concluded between the two countries, granted France extra-territorial rights.¹² Second-Empire France under Napoleon III was initially favoured as the main model for adapting Tokugawa Japan's backward agrarian society to the West's dynamic industrial challenge. France was involved in the construction of an iron foundry in Yokohama in 1865 and a modern naval dock in Yokosuka, capable from 1865 of producing steam-powered steel warships. The French engineer L.E. Bertin designed the battleships which won the Sino-Japanese War. The Napoleonic legal system, French Army,

⁹ For a history of early Western contacts with Japan, see Jacques Gravereau, *Le Japon: l'ère de Hirohito*, 1988, pp.17-33; and Jean-Marie Bouissou, *Japan: The Burden of Success*, 2002, ch.1-2.

¹⁰ During Japan's self-imposed seclusion from the West (1637-1853), only the Dutch were allowed trading rights at Nagasaki, and *rangaku* ("Dutch studies") became the generic term for Western knowledge and science. Emperor Akihito visited the Netherlands in 2000 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of commercial exchange between their two countries. *Financial Times*, 23 May 2000.

¹¹ See Edwin Reischauer, *Japan: The Story of a Nation*, 4th ed., 1990, ch.6; *Economist*, "Special Report, 150 Years after Commodore Perry: Japanese Spirit, Western Things", 12 July 2003, pp.20-22.

¹² Matsuura 98:18-19.

democratic ideas, and even silk and textile industries were copied by Japan.¹³ The Tokugawa's concessions to increasing Western demands however fuelled regional unrest. France supported the Tokugawa shogunate with a military mission,¹⁴ while the disaffected lower samurai who launched the Meiji Renovation were backed by Britain. After the reformers took power in 1868, France was rapidly displaced by Britain and Germany as the preferred models for Japan's modernization during the Meiji period (1868-1912). The Meiji reformers, whose ultimate goal was to build a *fukoku kyohei* ("rich nation/strong army"), turned to Britain and unified Germany for inspiration, especially after France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. Japan's naval programme was modelled on the British navy, and Germany's 1871 Constitution was the basis for Japan's first Constitution, in 1889.¹⁵

On top of France backing the wrong horse in the Tokugawa-Meiji power transition, suspicions in bilateral relations were reinforced by French policies that conflicted with Japan's expanding colonial interests. While Britain abrogated its unequal treaty rights in Japan in 1894 and signed a series of Anglo-Japanese agreements from 1902 to protect British imperial interests in the Far East (it was the first Western power to sign an alliance with Japan)¹⁶, France resisted Japanese expansion. France's 1891-1917 alliance with Russia was the basis for its joint participation with Russia and Germany in the "Triple Intervention" that forced Japan to restitute some of the territory won after Japan's victory in its 1894-95 war with China.¹⁷ In the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, Japan defeated Russia and destroyed its navy, winning control over Korea, Port Arthur and Russian holdings in Manchuria. Fearful of future Japanese designs on French Indochina and the possible repercussions of an Asian victory over a European power, France recognised Japanese rights in Korea in exchange for Japanese recognition of French rights over Indochina in the 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth.¹⁸

¹³ Gravereau, p.26 and Matsuura, *Développement et perspectives des relations entre le Japon et la France: point de vue d'un Ambassadeur*, Paris: Publications orientalistes de France, 1995, pp.72-73; and Haruko Fukuda, "The Peaceful Overture: Admiral Yamanashi Katsunoshin (1877-1967)", in Hugh Cortazzi and Gordon Daniels (eds), *Britain and Japan 1859-1991*, London: Routledge, 1991, p.201.

¹⁴ Hugh Cortazzi, *Modern Japan: A Concise Survey*, London: Macmillan, 1993, pp.26-27.

¹⁵ Gravereau, p.27.

¹⁶ See Ian Nish and Yoichi Kibata (eds), *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations, Vol 1*, London: Macmillan Press, 2000. Britain and Japan in their 1902 treaty recognised mutual zones of influence – in China for Britain and in Korea for Japan.

¹⁷ See Georges Michon, *L'alliance franco-russe, 1891-1917*, Paris : Delpeuch, 1927.

¹⁸ Admiral Castex in 1905 had predicted in a sensational article, "*Le problème militaire indo-chinois: Jaunes contre Blancs*", that Japan would be a threat to French Indochina one day. Nicolas Régaud and Christian Léchervy, *Les Guerres d'Indochine*, Paris: PUF, 1996, p.91. Gravereau, pp.33-34.

Ambassadors were exchanged in 1906. In 1911 the unequal clauses in the 1858 Treaty were amended.¹⁹ Japan's support for the Allies against Germany in the World War I was rewarded with full participation in international politics as a great power in the League of Nations.²⁰ In the 1922 Washington Naval Agreement, Japan was recognised as one of the world's three greatest naval powers, with limits to the respective tonnages of the American, British and Japanese navies set at 5:5:3 respectively.

France, Britain and the US opposed Japanese expansion in Manchuria in the 1930s, and it was a matter of time before France was engaged in direct colonial confrontation with Japan (allied with the Axis powers from 1937) over Indochina. With France defeated and Paris occupied by the Nazis in June 1940, the French colonial administration in Indochina at first collaborated with Japan under a "dual administration" (see chapter 6). Then the Japanese *coup de force* in March 1945 completely disarmed and abolished French authority. Imperial Japan's installation of monarchs in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos allowed the Viet Minh to consolidate its positions ahead of the delayed resumption of French authority in Indochina in September 1945.²¹

Secondary Relationship and Suspicion, 1945-88

During most of the post-war period, relations between France and Japan were a secondary or even tertiary priority. Both were preoccupied with their own postwar reconstruction programmes, relations with the US, and their respective goals of institutionalising European cooperation, and pursuing economic growth. For almost half a century, the US' role as occupying power (1946-52) and security guarantor under the US-Japan Security Treaty (1951 and 1960), in addition to its position as Japan's most important market, had meant that the "US factor" not only predominated, but overwhelmed Japanese foreign policy.²² European nations were neither individually or collectively important to Japan's security or political and economic development. France (with Britain) was nominally one of the Allied Occupation powers in Japan, but

¹⁹ See Régaud and Léchervy, pp.91-94; and Matsuura 98:30.

²⁰ The Royal Navy was under the command of the Japanese Imperial Navy in the allied capture of Tsingtao (Qingdao) in 1914 from the Germans. Britain received Japanese naval support in the Baltic and Mediterranean from 1917. See Fukuda 1991: 204-5, 308 fn.5.

²¹ Jacques du Folin, *Indochine 1940-1955- La fin d'un Rêve*, Paris: Perrin, 1993.

²² Richard D. Leitch, Jr., Akira Kato and Martin E. Weinstein, *Japan's Role in the Post-Cold War World*, Westport: Connecticut, 1995, pp.30-31.

it was unable to influence policy or resist controversial decisions by General MacArthur, eg. to protect Emperor Hirohito from being tried for war crimes, and the “reverse course” in 1947-48 to re-arm Japan and hasten its economic recovery.²³ In the 1950s, the attitude of “punishing” Japan or at least withholding normal relations, predominated in European capitals. European leaders were unmoved by requests made by Yoshida Shigeru, Japan’s first postwar Prime Minister, for a Trade and Navigation Treaty during his 1954 European tour.²⁴ This had the effect of reinforcing the “Yoshida doctrine” which accepted the “dominant bilateralism” of Japan’s relations with the US, and adopted a passive stance on the existing international environment.²⁵

The normalisation of ties between France and Japan began only in the 1960s. France did not take Japan seriously and Japanese prime ministers were only interested in Europe primarily as a market for exports. When Japan joined the GATT in 1955, 14 countries (including Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands) invoked Article 35 of the agreement and refused to establish full GATT relations with Japan. As negotiations for an EC-Japan trade agreement in the 1960s failed, Japan worked on bilateral trade agreements. Its first agreement was with Britain in 1963 (this included safeguards allowing for the imposition of import restrictions when these “caused or threatened serious injury to domestic productions”). The British example was followed by France and the Benelux.²⁶ Japan did not seek strong ties with European countries aside from Britain, then the top priority in Japan’s European policy. An exception was Ikeda (1960-64), who negotiated trade agreements with individual European countries and won Japan’s membership in the OECD.²⁷ French interest in Japan was low under De Gaulle’s presidency (1958-69). De Gaulle had dismissed Ikeda as a “travelling transistor salesman” during the latter’s 1962 visit to Paris.²⁸ Georges Pompidou in 1964 was the first French Prime Minister to visit Japan, and annual consultations between French and Japanese Foreign Ministers were established after the visit. Scientific cooperation agreements were made in 1972 and 1974, but no major bilateral

²³ See Peter Lowe, “Japan and Europe in the Occupation Period, 1945-52”, in Endström (ed), *The Japanese and Europe*, 2000, pp.196-198, 206.

²⁴ Akira Matsui, *Mémoires d’un Ambassadeur du Japon né en France: vers un renouveau*, Geneva: JR, 1989, pp.56-58, 218-19.

²⁵ Iwanaga 2000:211, 222.

²⁶ Marlis G. Steinert, “Japan and the European Community”, p.39.

²⁷ See Iwanaga 2000:214-230.

²⁸ Bridges 1992.

breakthroughs resulted. France could not dislodge Britain as “Japan’s preferred European partner”.²⁹

While economic exchanges in the 1970s were intensifying in step with Japan’s growing international economic power, political relations did not keep pace to check the intensifying trade frictions. In 1973, Tanaka whose priority was ‘resource diplomacy’ in the wake of the oil crisis, made the first visit by a Japanese Prime Minister to Europe in almost a decade. Tanaka discussed cooperation schemes like joint ventures with Britain for North Sea oil, exploitation of Africa’s natural resources with France, and partnership with Germany in the Siberian energy projects.³⁰ As President (1969-74), Georges Pompidou made the first French attempt at cultivating a serious relationship with Japan (Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann visited Tokyo in January 1972 to prepare Pompidou’s state visit) but the President died before the visit could proceed.³¹ Under Valéry Giscard d’Estaing (1974-81), Tanaka was among the five leaders invited to the inaugural “Western” summit meeting of the world’s economic powers in Rambouillet in November 1975 (what was to become the G7),³² but Giscard did not consider Japan a priority and thus relations were left under-developed. It required Marshal Tito’s funeral in 1980 for a Japanese Prime Minister to visit Europe again.

A short period of flowering in France-Japan political relations occurred between 1981 and 1983 under François Mitterrand, the first French President to make a state visit to Japan.³³ Yet Mitterrand’s 1982 visit and Emperor Hirohito’s return visit in 1984 (the first by a Japanese monarch)³⁴, failed to reverse the tide of deteriorating relations, dominated by bilateral and EC-Japan trade disputes. While Britain and Germany were developing strong political ties with Japan from the mid 1970s,³⁵ France was viewed in Japan as a “hostile power” for its protectionist measures. Nakasone Yasuhiro, a vocal

²⁹ See Bouissou 2002:164.

³⁰ Bouissou 2002:212.

³¹ Jean-Luc Domenach, “La Politique française au miroir de l’Asie”, 1990, p.229. See also Georges Pompidou’s “Message du Président Pompidou au peuple japonais publié dans le journal *Yomiuri*”, 1^{er} janvier 1973, on www.doc.diplomatie.gouv.fr.

³² Eric Seizelet, “Japon: Contraintes et défis de la puissance”, in Frédéric Charillon (ed), *Les Politiques Etrangères: Ruptures et Continuités*, 2001:179; and Matsuura 98: 85.

³³ Domenach 90:230. Mitterrand was also the first French president to visit all the major Asian countries - China, Japan, India and Indonesia (during his first term, 1981-88).

³⁴ *Libération*, 12 January 1990. Hirohito had first visited Paris in 1921, as Regent. As Crown Prince, Akihito had visited Paris officially in 1953 as part of his 6-month tour of Europe and the US, timed with Queen Elisabeth II’s coronation on 2 June 1953. See Matsui 88:198-200.

³⁵ Queen Elizabeth visited Japan in 1975, Germany and Japan reached an agreement on scientific cooperation in 1974 and President Walter Scheel visited Tokyo in 1978. Bouissou 2002:213.

and charismatic prime minister, had in the early 1980s identified Japanese interests with the US and Europe against the Soviet Union, but another opportunity to forge a meaningful relationship was missed. Instead, relations deteriorated to a low point by the end of the 1980s so that the threat of trade wars became a real possibility.

I Economic and Trade Relations

As the world's second largest economy, Japan is an economic superpower and has since the 1970s ranked with the US and Switzerland as one of the three largest trading partners of the EC/EU. The France-Japan economic relationship has been a microcosm of the larger EC-Japan relationship. In the 1970s and 1980s, France (together with Britain and Italy) projected anti-Japan protectionism into EU policy. France-Japan economic relations in the late-1980s and early 1990s were a victim of the internal French debate on globalisation, the reform of the welfare state and the need for a Single European Market to increase competitiveness. Modernising French industry to meet the challenges of economic globalisation (of which Japan was a particular symbol) provoked a protracted internal debate.³⁶ By the 1990s, however, France found itself having to adjust and conform to new EU attitudes and trading policies vis-à-vis Japan. Part I examines how this change took place, from lowest common denominator policies (spearheaded by France and the Commission) regarding Japan, to a raising of the common interest and active collaboration at both the EU-Japan and bilateral levels.

a) The Commission: Beyond a Common "EC vs. Japan" Commercial Policy

Japan has been one of the priorities in the Common Commercial Policy because of the large and persistent trade deficit the EU has with Japan (Table 5.1, Appendices 1 and 2). The Commission has transformed in the 1990s from being a supporter of short-term confrontational approaches (advocated by France, Italy and Spain from the late 1980s) towards Japan, to being the champion of long-term healthy economic relations and partnership with Japan. EU commercial policy towards Japan has been on the whole successfully Europeanised. This process was an incremental one of top-down policy convergence, made possible by the prominence of trade issues EU-Japan

³⁶ Peter Karl Kresl and Sylvain Gallais, *France Encounters Globalisation*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2002, pp.1-16.

relationship which has given the Commission a great deal of manoeuvring room to take initiatives under the Common Commercial Policy.

Table 5.1 EC/EU Trade with Japan, 1980-1996

	EC imports from Japan (\$ million)	As % of total EC imports	EC exports to Japan (\$ million)	As % of total EC exports
1980	19680	2.55	6694	0.97
1985	22689	3.42	8049	1.24
1990	67506	4.37	30911	2.07
1991	72603	4.56	29464	1.98
1992	74936	4.55	28723	1.82
1993	66564	4.77	28790	2.00
1994	68982	4.35	34465	2.09
1995	76908	4.03	43040	2.14
1996	72022	3.69	44978	2.20

Source: IMF, Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook, 1987 and 1997 editions, in Brian Bridges 1999: 28.

As late as 1970, Japan was not a major trade competitor to Europe. Japanese exports of transistor radios to Europe amounted to no more than \$52.7 million, while cars were a paltry \$47.2 million. In the mid-1970s, the situation began to change dramatically. Between 1969 and 1977, Japanese exports to Europe increased by 620%, from \$1.4 to \$8.7 billion.³⁷ The Japanese were accused of “social dumping”. In a 1979 confidential paper, the Commission’s Director-General for External Relations described Japan as “a country of workaholics who live in what a Westerner would regard as little more than rabbit hutches”.³⁸ Japan on the other hand accused European countries of being “lazy” and having lost the Protestant work ethic. Although the leaked Commission report included a thorough and sober analysis of the situation which concluded that Japan was simply more competitive and that Europe should learn from Japan, Japanese political and media attention focused on the threat of selected import controls. The report created a storm of indignation in Japan and is still cited by the Japanese media and government today as an example of Europeans’ arrogance and failure to compete with Japan in the 1970s and 1980s.³⁹ The main defence mechanism to which European countries resorted in the 1970s and 1980s – particularly France,

³⁷ Jean-Pierre Lehmann, “France, Japan, Europe, and Industrial Competition: the Automotive Case”, *International Affairs* 68/1 (1992), p.41.

³⁸ Cited in Steinert, “Japan and the European Community”, p.40 ; Wilkinson 83.

³⁹ Interview with Kenjiro Monji, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission, Japanese Mission to the European Union, Brussels, 27 March 2003.

Britain and Italy - was to obtain bilateral agreements from Japan restricting exports in such areas as cars, television sets and video recorders.

Unlike in the EU's relations with China, India, Vietnam and Southeast Asian states where European powers with colonial ties or strategic presence in Asia had dominated, the Commission has long played a significant role in relations with Japan. Regular consultations were inaugurated between EC and Japanese foreign ministers in 1963 although negotiations for a common commercial policy towards Japan according to Article 113 of the Rome Treaty failed. In 1969 the Japanese, fearing further enlargement, took the initiative and closed a Long Term Agreement on textiles with the EC. In 1970 the Commission formally gained new powers to negotiate a common commercial policy. Japan was the first nation with which the Commission carried out trade negotiations, and a Commission Delegation was established in Tokyo in 1974.⁴⁰ In 1976, a *Keidanren* (Japanese Confederation of Industries) mission led by Chairman Doko Toshio to Europe was shaken by Europe's strong reactions to Japan's decision to redouble its export drive by devaluing the yen. This had followed the 1971 "Nixon shock" when the US devalued the dollar, and the 1973 oil crisis. The Doko mission's failure back in Tokyo to effect a breach in the consensus between MITI and Japanese industry to resist the EC's market access demands, led to the Commission allowing individual member states to impose Voluntary Export Restraints on a national basis.

At first, the common policies vis-à-vis Japan that resulted under the Commission's leadership were conflictual, lowest-common denominator outcomes. A major reason for launching the Single European Market idea in 1986 was to enable EC economies to enjoy economies of scale so as to better compete with US, Japanese and NIC rivals. The creation of the single market was presented as the solution to revitalize, re-industrialize, and regain global competitiveness for a Europe of sclerotic companies in the face of American economic prowess and the onslaught of the *défi japonais* (Japanese challenge).⁴¹

⁴⁰ Glenn D. Hook, "Opportunities and Constraints in Euro-Japanese Relations: A Multidimensional Approach", in Bert Endström (ed), *The Japanese and Europe: Images and Perceptions*, Richmond Surrey: Japan Library/Curzon Press, 2000, p.245.

⁴¹ Andrew Moravcsik, "Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interest and Conventional Statecraft", in Hoffmann and Keohane (eds), *The New European Community*, 1991, pp.1-40; and Lehmann, "France, Japan, Europe, and Industrial Competition: the Automotive Case".

Up to 1988, the Commission led the charge in confronting Japan over trade disputes. It accused Japan of unfair trading practices such as GATT-inconsistent government subsidies for Japanese industries, setting discriminatory standards for foreign products, and tolerating a complicated and anti-competitive distribution system. From the European perspective, images of the modern samurai or bushido warrior lurking behind Japanese business suits, bedevilled bilateral trade relations.⁴² In the 1980s, Commission threats to launch a complaint against Japan under Article 23 of the GATT to challenge Japan's economic system and "social dumping", led to Japan agreeing to "moderate" the export of ten "sensitive items" to Europe, including video tape recorders, colour TVs, forklift trucks and machine tools.⁴³ Then in April 1988, the EC Council determined that market access would henceforth be sought in parallel with cooperation with Japan. The Community's change of tack in the way it approached Japan was prompted by a change of heart in Thatcher's Britain. The UK had resolved its outstanding trade problems with Japan, and when Britain changed sides in 1988, the weight of opinion in the EC moved away from confrontation towards a cooperative dialogue with Japan on subjects such as science and technology, the environment and development aid policy.⁴⁴

Although individual EU states cannot compete with the US or other Asian states in trade importance to Japan, the EU as a trading group is today Japan's 2nd largest trading partner (Table 5.2) and collectively has leverage over policies such as market access and internal reform. Member states have rallied behind the Commission to negotiate on their collective behalf. In the 1990s, the nature of the economic dialogue began to change, from trade disputes to an emphasis on *partnership*. Council Conclusions in 1992 instituted the Trade Assessment Mechanism (TAM) and the new policy of industrial cooperation. The TAM enabled both sides to compare their respective trade performance on the basis of objective trade statistics, and was useful for problem-solving if indicators reveal significant under-performance by Japanese or

⁴²John Richardson, "EU-Japan Relations: Common Interests and Cultural Differences", in Godement and Shinya (eds), *France-Japan Political and Security Dialogue*, Les Cahiers de l'IFRI no.17, Paris: IFRI/JIIA, 1996, p.11.

⁴³Nuttall 96:106-107.

⁴⁴The UK had won the liquor tax panel in Geneva when the Japanese tax system which discriminated against Scotch whisky had been condemned; Japanese car exports to the UK were capped by a government-brokered industry-to-industry deal; British firms were shortly to be given seats on the Tokyo Stock Exchange; and the major industrial concerns of semiconductors and agriculture were of less importance to Britain than to other EC states. See Nuttall 96:100, Bridges 1992 and Abe 1999.

European companies in the other's market. The second purpose was to put trade discussions on an explicitly objective and reciprocal basis. TAM's third and most important purpose was to provide a permanent meeting forum for the Japanese and Europeans, without the need for debilitating and protracted negotiations to fix an agenda and meeting.

Table 5.2: Japan's Top Ten Trading Partners, 2000

Rank	Partner	%
1	USA	25.0
2	EU [Of which: *Germany 3.35%; France 1.69%; Italy 1.40%; UK, 1.72%]	14.6
3	China	10.0
4	Taiwan	6.3
5	Korea	6.0
6	Hong Kong	3.6
7	Malaysia	3.3
8	Singapore	3.2
9	Thailand	2.8
10	Indonesia	2.8

Sources: EC Delegation in Tokyo, <http://jpn.cec.eu.int>, accessed 13 November 2002; *French Embassy Mission Économique de Tokyo, *Le commerce bilatéral franco-japonais en 2001*, 29 March 2002, pp.1-2.

The issue of market access, considered a major reason for the persistent trade and current account deficit Europe suffers in its relations with Japan, continues to seize the Commission.⁴⁵ The Japanese government resolved to dismantle the myriad regulations that had for decades been part of the Japanese industrial scene and had hampered trade and foreign investment, but were becoming domestically unacceptable in a time of prolonged recession. The EU was quick to accept the Japanese government's invitation to its foreign partners to provide an input into the exercise, and obtained a permanent discussion forum in which the process of deregulation was to be kept under review.⁴⁶ Since 1995, the EU has participated actively in Japan's economic reforms in the Regulatory Reform (formerly Deregulation) Dialogue, chiefly through submitting deregulation proposals. As a result of the Commission's activities, two important agreements were recently concluded: the EC-Japan Mutual Recognition

⁴⁵ European Commission, *Japan: Bilateral Trade Relations*, July 2001, on EU website <http://europa.eu.int.comm/trade/bilateral/japan/japan.htm>, accessed 25 February 2002.

⁴⁶ Nuttall 96:112

Agreement (MRA, in January 2002), and an Agreement on Cooperation on Anti-competitive activities.⁴⁷ The MRA will permit acceptance of conformity assessment in four product areas, and the second Agreement is expected to facilitate trade and investment by securing a level playing-field between insiders and outsiders. These EU-Japan cooperative efforts have led to collusion between the EU and Japan on global trade issues. As such, joint statements such as the January 2000 EU-Japan call for the launch of a new round of WTO trade negotiations were issued.⁴⁸

The phenomenon of EU member states competing to promote their national industries in Japan- as seen notably in China – is also present in Japan, with Chirac and Kohl in the mid-1990s making regular high-level visits to Tokyo to expand French and German trade links with Japan, and Britain and France competing for Toyota's inward investments.⁴⁹ Alongside these national efforts have grown, however, EC-wide trade promotion efforts such as EXPROM (set up in 1979 to target specific sectors which were having difficulty entering the Japanese market) and the EC-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation (set up in 1987 to assist European investment and cooperation in Japan). EXPROM organized the Community's first "Gateway to Japan" programme in 1994, modelled on the British and French export promotion programmes.⁵⁰

As a result of Japan's protracted recession in the 1990s and the Asian financial crisis in 1997-98, Japan has undertaken structural economic reforms to stimulate domestic consumption, foreign investment and growth. This has allowed for increased foreign investment, especially in sectors that have undergone regulatory reform. Such sectors have included financial services, after the "financial bubble" collapsed, and a few areas in distribution. More dramatically, the recession of the Japanese car market and the large number of manufacturers has enabled US and EU companies to acquire or increase their stake in several Japanese companies. Over the 1995-1999 period, EU FDI flows into Japan picked up dramatically so that the two-way flows were almost equal. FDI jumped by 247% in 1999. The impact of "big-ticket" investments (such as Renault in Nissan, and Vodafone in Japan's telecommunications sector) has been significant:

⁴⁷ European Commission, "The EU's relations with Japan: Overview", August 2002, on http://europ.eu.int/comm/external_relations/japan/intro/indec.htm, accessed 23 October 2002.

⁴⁸ EU-Japan Joint Statement on the WTO, 11 January 2000.

⁴⁹ Julie Gilson, "Europe in Japan: A Growing Identity", in Hook and Hasegawa (eds), *The Political Economy of Japanese Globalization*, London: Routledge, 2001, p.77.

⁵⁰ European Commission, "The EU's relations with Japan: Overview", August 2002.

EU investment in Japan in 1999 amounted to half the opposite flow in 1997 and 1998, and in the boom year of 1999, the EU invested twice as much as Japan did in the EU. By 2001, the EU FDI stock in Japan amounted to half Japan's stock in the EU, compared to just one-sixth in 1992.⁵¹

b) French economic policy: from Conflict to Cooperation

As alluded to above, Japan's growing technological, economic and financial power was perhaps noted with greater alarm in France than in any other EC country. The French response was firstly, to work with like-minded countries such as Britain and Italy to project their anti-Japan preferences as protectionist EC policies. This was successful until 1988, when Britain changed its position, promoted inward Japanese investments and started becoming an advocate for cooperation with Japan within the Community. In the 1990s, France found itself in the minority together with Spain and Italy, in pushing for Community protection, and when the Commission in 1991 ruled on a phased elimination of car import quotas between 1993 and 1999. France was forced to rethink its economic policy. The transformation of French economic policy from protectionism to an active courting of Japanese business has been a spectacular volte-face in the 1990s which owes much to France accepting the need to adapt to global competition. This was critically promoted by supranational EU policies that forced French industries to compete or collaborate with Japan.

During the period of confrontation over trade and investment, France played the role of European spokesman ranting against Japan and globalisation. French strategies consisted first of calling attention to the threat posed by Japan and other foreign competitors, and encouraging the pooling of European resources in "Euro-projects" such as the Airbus and Ariane programmes. Second was the strategy of initiating and leading Community-wide protectionist measures, failing which national measures were taken. Third, France resorted to international fora such as the GATT in which to engage Japan. Pursuing the first strategy, Pompidou in 1973 issued a joint statement with British Prime Minister Edward Heath and West German Chancellor Willy Brandt calling upon European Community countries to cooperate closely in the development of new technologies (under programmes such as ESPRIT and Eureka) or run the risk of

⁵¹ European Commission, *Japan: Bilateral Trade Relations*, July 2001.

being dominated by the USA and Japan in a rapidly evolving world economy.⁵² Last, France resorted to protectionist measures such as standards and bilaterally negotiated quotas to stem the “Japanese invasion”. At the same time, the French government was making urgent and ultimately futile efforts to get Thomson, the French electronics company, to join forces with Grundig and Philips to produce “European” machines to counter the Japanese challenge.⁵³

Trade became practically the sole focus of relations between France and Japan after the France-Japan bilateral trade deficit had turned in Japan’s favour in 1965 and began to be serious from 1971. Many leaders in French government and industry deeply feared that Japanese financial and industrial strength could weaken or even eliminate vital sectors of European manufacturing. In the 1970s and 1980s Europe was suffering from ever-rising trade deficits with Japan and was feeling squeezed between the economic and technological superiority of Japan and the US above them, and the threat from the fast-growing NICs below. Although in the mid-1980s little more than 2% of French imports originated from Japan (compared to 4-5% each for the UK and West Germany),⁵⁴ the French held an exaggerated image of the Japanese as intruders and responded to Japanese economic power by calling for EU restrictions on Japanese imports, while steadfastly resisting internal change.⁵⁵ French leaders were justifying national quotas on Japanese imports, or threatening Commission retaliatory measures against Japanese “dumping”, and Japanese industry and leaders were taking steps to counter the expected creation of a protectionist “Fortress Europe”.⁵⁶ In the 1983 dispute over video cassette recorders (VCRs), France imposed an obstructionist customs policy which required all Japanese VCRs to be checked by a handful of customs officials in Poitiers. This made VCRs a much rarer and more expensive commodity in France than in other EC countries.⁵⁷ In this occasion, the EC chose the ‘lowest common denominator’ approach upholding the French action and adopted as Community policy the position of the most protectionist EC member states.

⁵² See Mark Wise, “France and European Unity”, in Robert Aldrich and John Connell (eds), *France in World Politics*, London and New York: Routledge, 1989, p.55

⁵³ Wise, “France and European Unity”, pp.42-43.

⁵⁴ Wilkinson, *Japan versus Europe*; Marlis G. Steinert, “Japan and the European Community: An Uneasy Relationship”, in Ozaki and Arnold (eds), *Japan’s Foreign Relations: A Global Search for Economic Security*, Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985, pp.33-46.

⁵⁵ Lehmann, “France, Japan, Europe, and Industrial Competition”.

⁵⁶ Kenjiro Ishikawa, *Japan and the Challenge of Europe 1992*, London: Pinter, 1990.

⁵⁷ Bridges, *EC-Japanese Relations*, p.7.

The car dispute provides another important example of French attempts to project anti-Japan economic nationalism as Community policy. The value of Japanese car imports in the Community had jumped 1,377% between 1970 and 1975 to \$650 million.⁵⁸ Up to the end of the 1980s, the French government and French car corporations were notorious in Brussels for acting through the European Association of Car companies (ACAT) for “driving European policy” on car import restrictions on Japan.⁵⁹ France also levied national quotas limiting Japanese car imports to 3% of the French market. In 1991 the Commission ruled in favour of free trade, backed in particular by Britain (which stood to benefit as it hosted a Nissan assembly line). Germany was neutral as its car industry was standing up to Japanese competition. Overcoming French, Italian and Spanish opposition, the EC undertook to remove all restrictions on Japanese car imports from January 1993 in return for which Japan would monitor exports until the end of 1999. The ‘car deal’ in July 1991 was thus a significant step forward from the 1983 deal struck between the EC and Japan on VCRs.⁶⁰

The domestic reasons behind France’s conflictual stance towards Japan can be traced to the domestic debate between traditionalists and modernisers on the need to adapt the “French model” of capitalism to new pressures and international competition. The traditionalists, represented by Cresson, argued that the Japanese model was alien and that France could and should “keep our social security, our holidays, to live like human beings as we have always lived.”⁶¹ But it was becoming clear that some drastic change in the *dirigiste* model of state-directed economic development had to take place after over a decade of despondent economic growth and ever-rising unemployment in France following the “*trente glorieuses*” (1946-75).⁶² French leaders and journalists were painfully aware that Japan-bashing in France would only result in Japanese investments in Europe being diverted to other countries, chiefly to Britain and the

⁵⁸ Lehmann 92:41.

⁵⁹ Interview with Mr Simon Nuttall, former Director for Far East (1988-95), European Commission External Relations Directorate-General (DG 1), in London, 12 March 2003. See also Lehmann, “France, Japan, Europe, and Industrial Competition”.

⁶⁰ Bridges, *EC-Japanese Relations*, p.7.

⁶¹ Cited in Littlewood, *The Idea of Japan*, pp.46 and 209.

⁶² Post-war French governments during the *trente glorieuses* planned and attained unprecedented rates of national growth. France transformed into an industrialised nation through state-directed finance and resource allocation, an industrial policy to promote national champions in “strategic industries”, and state predominance in the policy making process. See Jean Fourastié, *Les trente glorieuses: ou, La Révolution invisible de 1946 à 1975*, Paris: Fayard, 1979; Elie Cohen, “France”, in J.E.S Hayward (ed), *Industrial Enterprise and European Integration*, Oxford UP, 1995.

Netherlands. Economists advocating modernization argued that a “Meiji revolution” in French economic thinking was needed, and that France could learn from Japan’s success in combining almost full employment with high growth rates.⁶³ Japan was beginning to be viewed less as a menace and more as a model, and Japanese investment, a stimulus to the French economy and creator of employment.⁶⁴

After the failed 1981-83 nationalisation programme, the French Socialist government and looked to the European Community as a means to restructure its economy. Mitterrand had signed up to the 1986 Single European Act, and measures such as the Commission’s July 1991 car deal with Japan forced protectionist Member States such as France to make internal adjustments through a process of top-down policy convergence.⁶⁵ Sideways Europeanisation (ie. policy learning from the UK) was instrumental in changing French economic policy toward Japan. A more cooperative policy was signalled by Industry Minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn and promoted under the slogan *Le Japon, c’est possible* (1992-97), a campaign to promote French exports to Japan. Even Cresson climbed down from her confrontational stance over the proposed acquisition by NEC of a 5% stake in Bull, the French state computer company. She also changed her tune regarding Japanese investment in suggesting that France would be a good location for a future Japanese car factory.⁶⁶ The French export campaign was inspired by the success of earlier “Opportunity Japan” (1988-91) and “Priority Japan” (1991-94) campaigns launched by the British government to increase commercial awareness of corporate opportunities available in Japan.⁶⁷ The UK had in 1987-88 taken a conscious decision to change tack after a severe bout of trade friction and sabre-rattling at Japan. Foreign Secretary Howe returned from a trip to Japan in 1988 convinced that Japan should be drawn into a much wider ranger of consultations.⁶⁸ For the sake of industrial regeneration at home, Britain became a stout defender of Japanese investors, and a vocal advocate of the EU engaging in dialogue rather than confrontation with Japan.

⁶³ Fouchard 88:61

⁶⁴ Matsuura 98:53-54.

⁶⁵ Robert Ladrech, “Europeanization of Domestic Politics and Institutions: The case of France”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 32/1, 1994.

⁶⁶ Lehmann 92:42; Bridges, *EC-Japanese Relations*, pp.4 and 10.

⁶⁷ Bridges 92: 4 and 10. “Action Japan” ran from 1994-97. See Drifte 1998:103-104. The Dutch and Germans also instituted similar campaigns.

⁶⁸ See Bridges, *Europe and the Challenge of the Asia Pacific*, 1999:45-46; and Simon Nuttall, “Japan and the EU”, *Survival* 38/2, Summer 1996, pp.104-120.

Meanwhile, the anticipated “Fortress Europe” resulted in a massive influx of Japanese FDI in Europe’s manufacturing sector in the late 1980s. In the run-up to 1992, Japanese manufacturers feared that new barriers in the single market may be “broader, more systematic and more damaging than the scattering of measures that already hinder some aspects of trade”.⁶⁹ The first big wave of Japanese investments was concentrated in Britain, symbolized by Nissan’s establishment of a state-of-the-art car manufacturing plant in Sunderland, a plant that was lobbied for by British ministers up to and including the prime minister. In 1990, the EC accounted for 23% of total Japanese FDI, and Britain alone received more than did the rest of Europe.⁷⁰ As late as 1999, 40% of Japanese investment in Europe went to Britain, and many Japanese companies had set up their European headquarters in the UK.⁷¹ In return, Japan received Britain’s support in intra-EU debates. Japanese investors were also buying up companies in France and other EC countries, fuelled by the rising yen and increasingly sophisticated EC trade barriers such as “local content” requirements. By 1984, Japan was the second largest foreign investor in France.⁷² The annual value of Japanese investments in France reached a peak in 1990, and surged again in 1995 following French measures to deregulate foreign investment.⁷³ French public opinion was initially fearful and hostile to Japanese corporations and individuals buying up French industrial symbols, such as Bordeaux vineyards, the Lucas Carton restaurant and hairdressing chain Carita.⁷⁴ Gradually becoming aware of the industrial and technological benefits of collaboration with the Japanese, France and Italy - formerly the most hostile to Japan – joined the broadly favourable EU-wide welcome offered to Japanese investment, and even joined the competition to attract Japanese FDI. The volte-face from confrontation and hostility towards welcoming Japanese investments was epitomized by the opening of Toyota’s car factory in Valenciennes (in the Nord region) in 1999. Both Chirac and Jospin

⁶⁹ Ishikawa, *Japan and the Challenge of Europe 1992*, 1990, p.6.

⁷⁰ Bridges, *EC-Japanese Relations*, pp.5-6.

⁷¹ Itaru Umezu and Lord Howell of Guildford, “The Anglo-Japanese Relationship: Looking into the Future”, in Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation, *UK and Japan*, London, 2000, pp.99-100.

⁷² *Les Echos*, 15 July 1985. Cumulative Japanese investments were worth over FF700 million.

⁷³ Japanese Embassy, “France-Japan Relations: Economic Relations”, 1996, on <http://www.infojapan.org/region/Europe/france/index.html>, accessed 4 May 2003.

⁷⁴ Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, pp.238, 411; *International Herald Tribune* 31 August 1988.

presented top French state awards to Toyota's CEO and President, during their visits to Japan in 1998 and 1999, respectively.⁷⁵

Although France registered in the 1990s a continual trade deficit with Japan in the region of €3 billion a year, with the value of French exports to Japan about half the value of French imports (Table 5.3), it has been one of the rare countries to increase or maintain its export levels to Japan. This is mainly because demand for French luxury products has posted strong growth in Japan. Despite the recession and reduced spending patterns, Japanese consumption of luxury goods remains among the highest in the world.⁷⁶ Recent statistics have been encouraging. In 1998, France was the only country among Japan's top 20 trading partners to increase its exports to Japan.⁷⁷ France's exports to Japan continue to be led by its strong consumer sector, which accounted for 54% of total French exports in 2001. The surge in Japanese imports of French fashion labels, gastronomic products and even French cars, has compensated for the recent fall in high-value purchases and *grands contrats* (eg. Airbus).⁷⁸

Table 5.3 Value of France-Japan Trade, 1994-2001 (selected years)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	2000	2001
French exports (billion €)	3.9	4.3	4.2	4.3	5.3	5.4
French imports (billion €)	7.2	7.3	6.9	7.9	12.6	11
Trade balance (billion €)	-3.3	-3.0	-2.7	-3.6	-7.3	-5.6
French export/import ratio	53%	58%	60%	53.8%	42%	49%

Source: French Senate, *Les Relations Franco-Japonaises*, 1999, on www.diplomatie.fr and French Embassy Mission Économique de Tokyo, *Le commerce bilatéral franco-japonais en 2001*, 29 March 2002, pp.1-2. Figures before 1999 (in French francs) converted to euros by author based on €1=FF6.56.

c) Towards Industrial Collaboration and a French presence in Japan

While France-Japan trade figures are not particularly impressive, French FDI in Japan has made great strides since the late 1990s, buoyed by active French government lobbying and support. Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette had noted in 1996 that less

⁷⁵ According to Invest in France Agency (IAF) Japan, "Toyota Motor Manufacturing France", on <http://www.afi.fr>, accessed 3 May 2003, Toyota employs nearly 3000 workers in Valenciennes. Over two-thirds of the vehicles produced in the Valenciennes factory are exported. Jacques Chirac, "Allocution du Président de la République, lors de la remise des insignes de Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur à M. Shoichiro Toyoda", Tokyo, 27 April 1998; Lionel Jospin, "Allocution du Premier Ministre lors de la remise des insignes d'Officier de la Légion d'Honneur au Président du Conseil d'Administration de Toyota Motor Corporation, M. Hiroshi Okuda", Tokyo, 17 December 1999.

⁷⁶ *Le Monde* 30 November 2001.

⁷⁷ *Le Figaro*, 5 May 1999.

⁷⁸ Mission Économique de Tokyo, *Le commerce bilatéral franco-japonais en 2001*, pp.2-3.

than half of the top 100 French companies were present in Japan, while other European countries had a greater presence in Tokyo and other Japanese cities. De Charette felt that a France should launch a “new offensive” to conquer the Japanese market and that increasing French FDI and presence in Japan was the first step towards this goal.⁷⁹ The opportunities soon came when Japan was buffeted by the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis and as European confidence grew with the launch of the euro in 1999.

The French External Trade Department’s assessment is that recent French investments will embed France as a major player in the Japanese economy, and contribute to a more balanced trade relationship over the long term.⁸⁰ The tide of investments began to change directions as Japan’s recession drew on. French companies moved to buy into newly affordable Japanese companies with a huge wave of French investment into Japan in the mid-1990s (40% of French companies present in Japan today arrived in the 1990s). The latest wave, from around 2000, includes Carrefour and Renault.⁸¹ France was the largest source of foreign investment in Japan in 1999 and the second largest investor in 2002.⁸² With Japan’s recession dragging on and the 1997 Asian crisis prompting the Japanese government to relax rules on foreign ownership, French investors have turned the tables and bought over many Japanese corporations. In the most famous deal, Renault bought controlling stakes in troubled Japanese car-maker Nissan at a cost of ¥605 billion (FF31 billion). Nissan-Renault’s new president Carlos Ghosn, set the ambitious goal of making Nissan-Renault the 4th largest car-maker in the world, with an annual production of 6-8 million cars by 2010. Ghosn’s Nissan Revival Plan forecast that Nissan would return to profitability by the end of fiscal year 2000, achieve an operating margin of 4.5% of sales by 2002, and halve debt from ¥1,400bn to ¥700bn by the same year. In addition, five factories would be closed, 21,000 jobs would go, the number of suppliers would be halved, the brand restored and new products launched. At the end of 2000, Ghosn announced a full

⁷⁹ Interview with Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette published in the journal *France/Japon/Eco*, Paris, 1 October 1996, on MAE website archives (www.diplomatie.fr).

⁸⁰ Interview with Bertrand de Cordoue, Director (Asia), Department of External Economic Relations (DREE), French Ministry of Finance, Paris, 9 April 2003.

⁸¹ Air Liquide (1907) was the first major French firm to set up operations in Japan. The first wave of French firms arrived in the 1950s (Air France, Péchiney, Rhône-Poulenc, Michelin), followed by a second wave in the 1980s (primarily luxury companies Chanel, LVMH, Baccarat, Hermès). See *Présence Française/Profil: Une communauté d'excellence en osmose avec la société japonaise*, on http://www.ambafrance-jp.org/vivre-au-japon/presence/Profil_et_statistiques, accessed 3 May 2003.

⁸² Japanese Embassy, “Visite en France de Monieur Koizumi, Premier Ministre du Japon (29 avril 2003)”, 2 May 2003, on http://www.fr-emb-japan.go.jp/koizumi/03_koizumi.html, accessed 9 May 2003.

year operating profit of ¥220bn - twice its forecast - and that operating profit at the interim stage was ¥136bn, double 1999's figure.⁸³

The French entry into the Japanese market in such non-traditional industries radically changed the image of France from being merely a player in the luxury and gastronomic sectors into that of a serious industrial partner, with Ghosn feted in Japan as a sort of "national hero".⁸⁴ In the past, French producers were unsuccessful, apart from luxury, food and alcoholic products, in competing with the Germans and Americans in penetrating the heavy machinery, car and tools markets in Japan.⁸⁵ This changed with Renault's controversial takeover (and spectacular turnaround) of Nissan - the first time a Japanese enterprise employing over 200,000 people had agreed to let a foreign company acquire a controlling stake.⁸⁶ Renault's share in Nissan is projected to rise from 36.8% in March 1999 to 44.4% by 2004, while Nissan has taken a 15% share in Renault.⁸⁷

Overall Trends

Grid 5.1 Economic Policies in Japan, 1985-2002

	85			90			96			2002		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
F	◆ ^a			←	◆ ^b	→		◆	→			◆
GB	◆ ^a					◆ ^b			◆			◆
D		◆			◆	→			◆			◆
EU	◆ ^a				◆ ^c	→		◆	→			◆

- = Protectionist or anti-Japan policy

0 = Government passive, business community left on its own

+ = Pro-Investment and Trade policy

^a In 1985, both France and Britain (until 1988) adopted confrontational trade policies towards Japan. The European Commission's "lowest common denominator" approach justified, eg. restrictions on VCR imports and nationally imposed limits on cars imports.

^b Despite Cresson, trade relations between all EC countries (especially Thatcher's Britain) and Japan were improving in the 1990s.

^c EC-Japan Joint Declaration signed in 1991; "Car deal" (Quota Agreement) reached, by which quotas for Japanese car imports are gradually raised and completely lifted in 1999.

⁸³ *Financial Times*, 17 November 2000.

⁸⁴ David Magee, *Turnaround: How Carlos Ghosn saved Nissan*, 2003.

⁸⁵ Interview with Olivia Calvet-Soubiran, Japan Desk, Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 15 April 2003.

⁸⁶ French Senate, *Les Relations Franco-Japonaises*, op cit.

⁸⁷ *Le Figaro*, 30 October 2001.

Up to 1991, the French response to the “Japanese challenge”, like the “American challenge” before it, was to champion the hardline cause within the EU. Later, encouraged by the Commission, Japanese incentives, and policy learning from other EU states, French government and industry moved away from confrontation and tended to shadow British trade and investment promotion policies. The common denominator was that France acted *within* Community structures and used *Community* policies to achieve or amplify national economic interests vis-à-vis Japan. France was able to do so because of disproportionate French influence in the EC, particularly the Commission.⁸⁸ By the end of the decade, French had gained a new confidence in exporting to and making investments in Japan. The conflicts prompted Japan to seek better political and economic relations with France as a key actor in Europe, especially with the establishment of the Single European Market and the Euro, in 1992 and 1999 respectively. Britain’s appeal in attracting Japanese investment was refined and supplanted by the French government post-1999 with the launch of the euro. French companies realised that the Japanese economy was neither invincible nor impenetrable, and were quick to take advantage of new opportunities offered by Japanese economic reforms and market openings. Following on the privatisation of Air France and France Télécom, the Renault-Nissan merger was defended in the National Assembly as complementary and offering “real growth opportunities”.⁸⁹

The change in France’s attitude towards Japan could not have taken place without a revolutionary change of the French economic *dirigiste* mindset. We could attribute the change in French foreign economic thinking to the globalisation of economic liberal thinking, starting first within the EC and the 1986 Single European Act, then enlarged with its major extra-EC trading partners. However, the fact of France’s very close economic and political interactions with other EC member states and with the Commission was certainly instrumental in changing the protectionist reflex in the French mindset. The Commission’s role, not only among governing élites, but crucially in French industry and society, was key for example in 1991 when its lead in imposing liberal policies on the Member States effectively opened the Single Market to

⁸⁸ Compare this with French strategies used against the US in the Uruguay Round. See Youri Devuyst, “The European Community and the Conclusion of the Uruguay Round”, in Rhodes and Mazey (eds), *The State of the European Union: Building a European Polity?*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1995.

⁸⁹ See statement by Christian Pierret, “Conséquences du rapprochement entre les entreprises Renault et Nissan: réponse du Secrétaire d’état à l’Industrie, à une question d’actualité à l’Assemblée Nationale, Paris, 6 April 1999, on www.doc.diplomatie.gouv.fr.

foreign competition in previously nationally-negotiated protected sectors. Many arguments on the role of “Europe” in reforming the *dirigiste* French state have been made.⁹⁰ Suffice to say here from the evidence in Part I that the “Europeanization” of “domestic” economic policy was in this case crucial in France’s economic relations with Japan. Or from another perspective, “Europe” was necessary as an external force to change ingrained French economic habits and reflexes – the *exception française*.

II Political-Strategic Relations

France is usually perceived as a secondary partner for Japan in Europe, behind Japan’s close relations with the UK and Germany. Economic conflicts dominated bilateral relations in the 1980s and 1990s and stymied the development of political and security ties. More often than not, political ties were driven by and derivative of economic ties, with French ministers of External Trade, Industry or Finance, rather than Foreign or Defence ministers, taking the lead on bilateral relations. This was somewhat inevitable in the light of the French penchant for the Gaullist *grande geste* and show of independence from the US, and its view of Japan as a US dependent and one-dimensional economic power.⁹¹ France did not take Japan seriously as a political partner in the 1980s but it was a constant troublemaker because of its influence within the EC. France was also causing problems to Japan via its membership of the G7, NATO and UNSC.⁹² Yet by the end of the 1990s, France had metamorphosed from one of the most anti-Japanese EU member states to one of Japan’s most vocal advocates. Part II argues that the EU hardly played a role in this transformation, which was motivated by essentially national objectives.

⁹⁰ See Vivien Schmidt’s *From State to Market? The Transformation of French Business and Government*, 1996 and “French *dirigisme*”, in *Modern and Contemporary France*, 5/2, 1997, pp.229-41; Jacques Barraux, “L’Exception française”, *Les Echos*, 16 November 1998; “Nouvelle initiative commerciale franco-japonaise”, *Les Echos*, 29 March 2001. Elie Cohen, “France”, in J.E.S. Hayward (ed), *Industrial Enterprise and European Integration*, 1995.

⁹¹ Eric Seizelet, “Japon: Contraintes et défis de la puissance”, in Frédéric Charillon (ed), *Les Politiques Etrangères*, Paris: La Documentation Française, 2001, pp.179-96.

⁹² *Le Figaro*, 28 April 1992.

a) Taking post-Cold War Japan seriously

France started taking Japan seriously as a political interlocutor only after the Cold War. The change in French economic thinking from economic nationalism to collaboration, as covered in Part I, was a necessary factor in improving bilateral ties. But a “real rapprochement” between France and Japan, observed Christian Sautter in 1988, could not take place “until France had modernised its industries and Japan could assume its international responsibilities.”⁹³ Two other important motors were: Japan’s search for a higher profile in post-Cold War international diplomacy; and the personal role of the French President in driving French foreign policy.

Japan’s post-Cold War search for a greater international role has resonated with the French vision of a multipolar world order. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new threats, the Japanese leadership began to question its reliance on the US, to re-define Japan’s foreign policy, and to seek a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. The first official statement of Japan’s new internationalism appeared in the May 1990 issue of the *Gaimusho* (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs) journal, “Gaiko Forum”. A senior diplomat urged a trilateral international leadership among the US, the EU and Japan, as the “key to world peace and prosperity”.⁹⁴ Calls for Japan to play a more assertive and pro-active role in international affairs were redoubled after the 1991 Gulf War.⁹⁵ A more activist Japanese foreign policy took shape from 1990 after Japan was criticised internationally - despite making a massive \$11 billion financial contribution - for not contributing *militarily* to the war effort⁹⁶. In June 1991, the Japanese Diet approved the use of Japanese forces abroad in Peace-Keeping Operations. Inspired by the 1990 Trans-Atlantic Declaration, the Gaimusho pushed for the EU-Japan Joint Declaration, signed in July 1991. Japan’s rising internationalism coincided with progress in European integration with the 1985 Single European Act and the Common Foreign and Security Policy in 1991, which reflected Europe’s own quest for a global role. Among the states in the EU, the G8 and the UNSC’s permanent five, the

⁹³ See Christian Sautter, *L'État du Japon*, Paris: La Découverte, 1988, p.339.

⁹⁴ See Leitch et al, *Japan's Role in the Post-Cold War World*, pp.35-44.

⁹⁵ Leitch et al; Shintaro Ishihara, *The Japan that can say No*, Tokyo, 1991; A. Bennett, J. Leggold and D. Unger, “Burden-sharing in the Persian Gulf War”, *International Organization*, 48/1, 1994, pp.39-75.

⁹⁶ The reinstated government of Kuwait glaringly omitted Japan in the list of countries it thanked in a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*, and a monument constructed in Kuwait some months later for the same purpose flew the flags of all coalition nations except Japan’s. Leitch et al 1995:45.

French government is the most vocal supporter of a multi-polar world in which Japan would carry a greater weight than is currently the case.

French governments have encouraged a more assertive Japanese foreign policy and stronger bilateral ties. Efforts to build up strong political and cultural relations with Japan - thereby broadening the relationship away from a near-exclusive focus on trade and economics - have been sustained and consistent. France and Japan have found new avenues for cooperation on issues ranging from stabilising international exchange rates to combating terrorism. At an ASEM meeting in Kobe in January 2001, a controversial discussion paper ("Exchange Rate Regimes for Emerging Market Economies") jointly authored by the French and Japanese finance ministries, and appealing for a fresh approach to currency regimes, was released.⁹⁷ The improvement in relations among government élites has been buttressed by enhanced French images of Japan, which have moved beyond alternating between fascination and suspicion, to accepting Japan as a normal country. According to official surveys, the proportion of "opinion-makers" in France expressing confidence in Japan rose from 57% in 1993 to 62% in 1996 and 72% in 1998.⁹⁸ This political rapprochement was carried into the cultural arena with the opening of the Maison de la Culture du Japon in 1997 (officiated by Chirac and a visiting Japanese princess), 15 years after agreement on the project was reached at Mitterrand's 1982 state visit to Japan. High-profile cultural festivals (1997 was "Japan Year" in France and 1998 was "France Year" in Japan) have contributed to a "second wave" of *japonisme*.⁹⁹ Likewise, French management in Nissan and Japan's World Cup 2002 soccer team have contributed to a very positive image of France in Japan.

The change in the tenor of bilateral relations under the Mitterrand and Chirac presidencies is drastic. Mitterrand adopted a "hands-off" policy towards Japan and did not intervene in bilateral conflicts. Apparently displeased about broken promises and the delay on re-furbishing the French *lycée* in Tokyo, Mitterrand allowed his party

⁹⁷"Paris et Tokyo veulent une coopération renforcée sur les changes", *La Tribune*, 6 January 1999; and *Financial Times*, 16 January 2001. The discussion paper argued that a managed or pegged exchange rate (in which currencies move within a band centred on a basket of currencies including the yen and the euro) could best stabilise volatile exchange rates across Asia.

⁹⁸ French Senate, *Les Relations Franco-Japonaises*, op cit.

⁹⁹ Interviews with Tsukasa Kawada, Japanese Deputy Chief of Mission, Paris, 4 April 2003; and Atsushi Nishioka, Cultural Affairs and Information Director, Japanese Embassy in Paris, 16 April 2003 confirmed a markedly heightened interest and demand for Japanese language teaching, and appreciation of Japanese arts (ranging from cinema to sumo wrestling). See also Matsuura 98:61-71.

protégé and ally Edith Cresson to overshadow political relations in later years. In 1988-91, bilateral quarrels resulted in France being perceived in Japan as the “most racist and hostile” European country.¹⁰⁰ The “Cresson effect” so dominated bilateral ties that by the time she assumed the premiership, her short but tumultuous term over 1991-92 was marred by bilateral diatribes and threats of trade conflict.¹⁰¹ In June 1991, Peugeot’s Tokyo showroom was the target of anti-French graffiti while demonstrators marched outside the French Embassy.¹⁰² Relations improved towards the end of Mitterrand’s presidency under Bérégovoy and Balladur, and France received Emperor Akihito on a state visit in October 1994.

Under Chirac, however, Japan is recognized as one of the world’s seven great powers with “global influence” (China and India are named as the other Asian great powers).¹⁰³ French diplomacy under Chirac has been taking the initiative, both unilaterally and through the European framework, to create “strategic alliances” with Japan in order to balance the sole post-Cold War hyper-power, the United States. Chirac’s first Foreign Minister, Hervé de Charette, explained in 1996 that Japan was the second economic power and the largest ODA donor in the world. It thus played a primary role in Asia that dovetailed with Chirac’s designation of Asia as the *nouvelle frontière* of French diplomacy. France wanted to give a “special dimension” to bilateral relations with Japan.¹⁰⁴ A France-Japan Forum was launched in September 1996, chaired by former French and Japanese prime ministers Raymond Barre and Nakasone Yasuhiro. This Forum has been held annually and has served as a generator of initiatives for improving France-Japan bilateral relations and exchanges.

Chirac’s activism in stepping up high-level contacts between France and Japan has been a crucial factor in improved bilateral relations. Chirac has a singular familiarity with Japan unique among Western (or even Asian) leaders. Having visited Japan over 40 times in various capacities (as private citizen, Mayor of Paris, Prime Minister, etc),

¹⁰⁰ *Le Monde*, 12 January 1990; *Libération*, 12 January 1990.

¹⁰¹ Japan delivered a rare diplomatic protest by objecting to Cresson’s attacks on its trade practices. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs had summoned the French ambassador and warned that Cresson’s remarks were “inappropriate” and might “adversely affect friendly relations” between the two countries. *Financial Times*, 30 May 1991.

¹⁰² *La Tribune de l’Expansion*, 27 June 1991.

¹⁰³ René Dorient, “Un septennat de politique asiatique: quel bilan pour la France?”, *Politique Etrangère*, 1/2002, 2002, p.180.

¹⁰⁴ MAE, Interview with Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette with the journal “France/Japon/Eco”, Paris 1 October 1996, found on www.diplomatie.fr.

his long and close friendships with Japanese leaders have helped improve bilateral atmospherics.¹⁰⁵ The “Chirac factor” was instrumental in overcoming a history of bilateral relations fraught with misunderstandings since the start of the 20th century. Chirac and Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro (who addressed each other by first names)¹⁰⁶ signed in November 1996 a long-term bilateral agreement, “*20 Actions pour l’An 2000*”, to comprehensively develop their bilateral relations. This document provided a model for the EU’s own 10-year Action Plan in 2001 for EU-Japan relations.¹⁰⁷ Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, a close advisor to Chirac and the first fluent Japanese-speaking French Ambassador, was accredited to Tokyo between 1998 and 2002.¹⁰⁸ Chirac’s “Cohabitation” with a Socialist prime minister in 1997-2002 did not affect the rapprochement. Lionel Jospin’s visit in December 1999, which included meetings with the emperor and Prime Minister Obuchi, continued the new offensive to woo Japan.¹⁰⁹ The theme of political partnership initiated by Paris was reproduced in subsequent German and British bilateral agreements with Japan. Like the Franco-Japanese document, the 1996 Japan-Germany Partnership Action Plan and the September 1998 UK-Japan “Action Agenda 21” are “strategic partnerships” which rest on strong economic links and shared values on international issues.¹¹⁰

b) France-Japan Security Cooperation

In tandem with improving political relations and perceptions, French willingness to work with Japan on security matters has also made huge strides from the 1980s. At the G7 Williamsburg summit in 1983, Prime Minister Nakasone had to work hard to

¹⁰⁵ *Le Monde*, 20 May 1995 highlighted in a front-page article Chirac’s interest in Asia, “*les tropismes asiatiques du président*”. See also “Jacques Chirac veut attirer des entreprises japonaises à Paris”, *Le Monde*, 2 November 1993. Allegations of Chirac’s shady business dealings, and an illegitimate Japanese son, were recently published in a book by Guy Birenbaum criticising the financial and personal misdemeanours of the French political class. *Libération* 1 September 2003; *L’Express* 4 September 2003.

¹⁰⁶ The “Jacques-Ryu” entente recalled the “Ron-Yasu” relationship between Ronald Reagan and Nakasone Yasuhiro. It was however much more short-lived; Hashimoto was out of office by 1998. Jean-Pierre Lehmann, “Japanese Attitudes towards Foreign Policy”, in Richard Grant (ed), *The Process of Japanese Foreign Policy*, p.127.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Seamus Gillespie, Head (Japan Unit), European Commission External Relations Directorate General, Brussels, 26 March 2003.

¹⁰⁸ *Le Figaro*, 17 April 2003. The British Embassy in Tokyo, in contrast, has had a long tradition of fluent Japanese speakers among their diplomats. See Hugh Cortazzi, *British Influence in Japan since the end of the Occupation (1952-1984)*, Oxford: Nissan Occasional Paper Series No.13, 1990.

¹⁰⁹ “Mr Jospin goes to Tokyo: From carmakers to soccer coaches, the French are taking Japan by storm”, *Financial Times*, 16 December 1999. The *Financial Times* opined that France was launching a “drive to usurp the UK as Japan’s most favoured European nation.”

¹¹⁰ Hughes 2001:63; Umezu and Howell, “The Anglo-Japanese Relationship: Looking into the Future”, p.101.

convince a reluctant Mitterrand to agree to the wording of the final communiqué on the “indivisibility of Western security”, the first time Japan linked its security in such a public way with the West as a whole against the USSR.¹¹¹ France opposed Japan’s proposal of an informal arrangement with NATO in 1983, which led Nakasone to intensify consultations directly with the EC’s “big three” member states. When in 1990 Japan and NATO organised the first NATO-Japan Security Conference involving government officials and academics from both sides, France refused to attend because it felt that such a conference violated NATO’s charter. Likewise, Foreign Minister Nakayama Taro floated the possibility of Japanese involvement as OSCE Observer in Prague in May 1990, but French opposition persuaded Japan to shelve the idea then.¹¹²

Today, Japan is perceived in French strategic thinking as one of a very select core group in the Asia Pacific - including Australia, Singapore and South Korea - for the future security architecture of the Asia-Pacific.¹¹³ France has also welcomed Japanese participation in the evolving European security architecture through the OSCE.¹¹⁴ France has been keen to play a role in Northeast Asian security through the Korean Energy Development Organisation (KEDO). France and the UK clamoured to get involved in the US-Japan-South Korea initiative as members of the UN Armistice Commission and Advisory Group, apart from participation via the EU.¹¹⁵

On a bilateral level, France since 1994 (and Germany since 1996) started annual bilateral dialogues with Japan on a “two-plus-two” basis, involving both Foreign and Defence Ministries.¹¹⁶ On the ground, French and Japanese troops have cooperated in

¹¹¹ Yasuhiro Nakasone, *Japan: A State Strategy for the Twenty-first Century*, London: Routledge Curzon, 2002, pp.54-55.

¹¹² Drifte 98:86. The Director of Japan’s Defence Agency visits NATO occasionally, and Japan has been sending parliamentarians to the North Atlantic Assembly since 1980.

¹¹³ François Godement, “The US and Japan into the 21st century: New Geopolitical Thinking?”, August 2001, paper presented at Asia Pacific Security Forum, on <http://ifri.orf.fr>.

¹¹⁴ *20 Actions pour l’An 2000*, Chirac-Hashimoto statement, Tokyo, 18 November 1996, Action 16. Foreign Minister Nakayama Taro publicly floated the possibility of Japanese involvement as OSCE Observer when he visited Prague in May 1990, but mixed reactions from European countries – with France opposing – persuaded Japan to shelve the idea then.

¹¹⁵ France and Britain, the only European signatories to the 1953 Joint Policy Declaration on the Korean Armistice, have leveraged on this Cold War vestige to obtain *national* roles in KEDO. Paul Stares and Nicolas Régaud, “Europe’s Role in Asia-Pacific Security”, *Survival* 39/4, Winter 1997-98, pp.117-139.

¹¹⁶ Alain Richard, “European Defence and Euro-Asia Security Relations,” Speech by French Minister of Defence, Paris, 19 February 1999, on www.diplomatie.fr. Because of their arms supplies to Japan, Germany and Sweden also hold security-related discussions with Japanese officials. See also Alain Richard, “European Defence and Euro-Asia Security Relations,” Speech by French Minister of Defence,

UN Peace-Keeping Operations (PKOs), notably in Cambodia and in Zaire (to support Rwandan refugees) in 1994.¹¹⁷ Although France and Japan play at best only marginal roles in each other's security, Japan represents a potential source and lucrative market for helicopters and military high technology. Japan has the second highest military expenditure in the world, notwithstanding its pacifist constitution (Article 9) and limits on its defence capability.¹¹⁸ France tried to offer itself as a partner during the early-1990s at the height of Japan's internal debate about developing an autonomous defence industry, or *kokusanka*. The August 1994 Higuchi report on a security policy vision for the 21st century urged that joint research and development of weapons should be pursued "with other countries" (ie European countries) as well as the United States.¹¹⁹ The "European card" was evident in the highly publicised international strategic alliance between the Mitsubishi group and Daimler Benz in April 1990 (which sent shock waves through the US aerospace community in Tokyo). Throughout the FSX controversy when US doubts over sharing technology and whether Japan was an economic ally or challenger had fuelled Japanese *kokusanka* attempts to build an indigenous fighter plane, French aerospace companies made offers for joint development, with Dassault offering to help to build the FSX based on its Rafael fighter.¹²⁰ However, arms sales and military technological exchange between France and Japan to date are insignificant aside from helicopters, and limited by Japan's "Three Arms Export Principles".¹²¹

France has given diplomatic support to Japan's bid for the diplomatic-security forum of highest priority to Japan's foreign policy – the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). In July 1993, the Japanese government stated in an official response to the UN Secretary-General's enquiry about UNSC reform, that "Japan is prepared to do all it can to discharge its responsibilities on the Security Council".¹²² Other

Paris, 19 February 1999, on www.diplomatie.fr. See Stares and Régaud, "Europe's Role in Asia-Pacific Security", *Survival* 39/4, Winter 1997-98, p.122.

¹¹⁷ "Japan-France Relations", www.infojapan.org/region/europe/france/index.html, accessed 4 May 2003.

¹¹⁸ In 2001, the USA accounted for 36% of the world total, followed by Japan with 6% and France, Russia and the UK, with 4% each. See SIPRI 2002:13.

¹¹⁹ Green 95:148.

¹²⁰ Green 95:149 and p.180 n.65. See also Michael Chinworth, "The Technology Factor in US-Japan Security Relations", in Michael J. Green and Patrick M. Cronin (eds), *The US-Japan Alliance: Past, Present and Future*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999, pp.286-310.

¹²¹ Military technology exports to the US are however an exception to the export principles, clarified in a 1983 US-Japan MOU on Joint Military Technology Transfer. Green 95:84.

¹²² Cited in Reinhard Drifte, *Japan's Quest for a Permanent Security Council Seat: A Matter of Pride or Justice?*, London: Macmillan /St Antony's College Oxford, 2000, p.1.

statements expressing Japan's candidature for a permanent seat on the UNSC followed this. Japan has often been treated as a banker to finance the UN and UN peace-keeping operations (PKOs) – see [Table 5.4](#).

Table 5.4 UN and PKO Budget Assessment Ratios

	UN Budget share		PKO special contribution rate	
	1994	1997	1994	1997
USA	25.0	25.00	31.7	30.862
Japan	12.4	15.65	12.5	15.662
Germany	8.9	9.06	8.9	9.066
Russia	6.7	4.27	8.5	5.271
France	6.0	6.42	7.6	7.925
UK	5.0	5.32	6.3	6.568
China	0.7	0.74	0.9	0.914

Source: Reinhard Drifte 2000:76 and 1998:140.

Japan's efforts to win support among the P5 focused on the US, expecting France and the UK eventually to go along with the position of the US. French support for Japan's bid first expressed on the eve of French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé's visit to Japan in March 1994, and reaffirmed in Juppé's speech to the UNGA that same year.

France and Japan see eye to eye on most security issues save the notable exception of French nuclear policy. This came up against Japanese anti-nuclear sentiments during the 1995 French nuclear tests in the South Pacific. As the only nation to have suffered a nuclear attack, and surrounded by nuclear weapon states (China and Russia) or others on the verge of becoming nuclear powers (North Korea), Japan's stance and campaign for nuclear non-proliferation is a foreign policy matter of the utmost existential importance. It was one of the most vociferous international critics of France during Chirac's nuclear testing in 1995.¹²³ While the US-Japan Mutual Defence Treaty guarantees the defence of Japan, Japan has expanded incrementally but significantly its security role and the reach of its Self-Defence Forces (SDF) in the 1990s. A New Taiko (Defence Programme Outline) adopted in November 1995 to replace the 1976 Taiko shifted the emphasis of the security treaty from the defence of Japan to Japanese support for the US military presence and mission in the Asia Pacific.

¹²³ The Japanese Ambassador to France described as a "very serious divergence" the bilateral quarrel over nuclear testing in his interview in *France Japan Eco* (No. 65, winter 1995), in Matsuura 98:175.

The 1996 Joint Declaration issued after Clinton's visit to Japan envisaged an expansion of Japan's security role "in dealing with situations that may emerge in the areas surrounding Japan and which will have an important influence on the peace and security of Japan." Under the 1998 US-Japan Defence Guidelines, Japan's security role was enlarged to include providing logistics support for US forces, the operation of Japanese minesweepers in international waters, and the evacuation of Japanese citizens from trouble spots overseas.¹²⁴

Since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks however, the Western focus on China's key role in maintaining world order and fighting international terrorism, has somewhat reduced Japan's relevance to France and Europe as a security partner.¹²⁵ This has had the effect of pushing Japan towards greater collaboration with the West. In February 2003, Japan signed an MOU agreeing to logistical support for French, German and New Zealand military forces, a move hailed in Paris as a breakthrough in bilateral defence ties.¹²⁶

c) EC-Japan Political Cooperation and 1991 Joint Declaration

Commission officials who have worked on relations with Japan tend to bemoan the lack of a clear EU political strategy for Japan.¹²⁷ The EU-Japan relationship has often been a "weak link" in political terms and almost exclusively concerned with trade.¹²⁸ From the European perspective, Japan is often "pretty much an after-thought", in contrast to dense Europe-US and US-Japan relations.¹²⁹ Notwithstanding this relative neglect, the EC-Japan political dialogue is the EC's oldest dialogue with any Asian country, and is sometimes considered a "special" relationship.¹³⁰ EC-Japan political consultation began in the 1970s when the EC "held high level consultations" with Japan to discuss EC enlargement and shared concerns such as the Middle East and the oil crises. The two sides agreed on twice-yearly high-level consultations in 1973; the EC

¹²⁴ "China upset over US-Japan Defense Agreement", *Stratfor Report* 27 May 1998; "Japan Gains Access to Bases in Singapore", *Stratfor Report*, 3 May 2000.

¹²⁵ Interviews with Counsellor, French Embassy in London, December 2002, and with European Commission External Relations official (Japan Unit), 26 March 2003.

¹²⁶ "Exchange of Notes concerning the Contribution of Supplies and Services to the Armed Forces or Other Similar Entities of France, Germany and New Zealand", Tokyo, 28 February 2003, on <http://www.infojapan.org/announce/2003/2/0238-2.html>.

¹²⁷ Wilkinson 1983, 1990; Nuttall 1996, and Richardson 1996.

¹²⁸ See Bridges, "Japan and Europe: Rebalancing a Relationship", pp.230-245; Iwanaga 2000:208-235.

¹²⁹ Nuttall 1996:104-120.

¹³⁰ See Wiessala 2002:3 and Gilson 2001.

established a delegation in Tokyo in July 1974; regular European Parliament-Diet interparliamentary conferences began in 1978; and a separate Japanese delegation to the EC in Brussels was set up in 1979.¹³¹ In 1980, the first moves towards joint political cooperation were made when the Japanese and EC Ambassadors to Iran made a joint démarche to the Teheran government requesting the release of the US Embassy hostages, and Japan and Europe displayed a degree of solidarity on the issues of Afghanistan, Poland and even the Middle East (Japan supported the EC's Venice Declaration in favour of Palestinian participation in any Middle East peace talks).¹³² These meetings were used to provide mutual support for allies worried by the 1980s bellicosity of the Reagan administrations.¹³³ These early attempts at foreign policy coordination and timid joint declaratory diplomacy were, however, sporadic and not well followed-up. For example, the *Troika* Ministers and Political Directors' meetings with their Japanese counterparts, started in 1983, were held so irregularly that they did not even take place from 1986 to 1990.¹³⁴

Serious EC-Japan political cooperation began only at the end of the Cold War. In 1990 Jean-Pierre Leng was the first EC Ambassador accredited to the Emperor instead of the Foreign Minister in Tokyo; before that, the Japanese refused to accord the head of the EC Delegation full ambassadorial rank.¹³⁵ Gaimusho in late-1990 initiated ideas for a new dialogue with Europe, having noted the EC-US Transatlantic Declaration that autumn and feeling that something had to be done to strengthen EC-Japan relations.¹³⁶ The Japanese Government's White Paper in 1990 included an assessment of the political relationship with the Community ahead of the Maastricht Treaty, recognising that the EU could be both a political and economic force on the international stage. Foreign Minister Nakayama Taro told the Diet in 1991 that "Japan intends to take this opportunity to deepen its dialogue with the EC in political, economic, cultural and many other areas", and to further strengthen its cooperative relations, including cooperation in problems of global magnitude".¹³⁷ A "Joint Declaration on Relations between the European Community and its Member States and

¹³¹ Hughes 2001:59-60 and Hazel Smith 2002.

¹³² Hughes 2001:59.

¹³³ Hazel Smith 2002: 148-149; Steinert, "Japan and the European Community", p.42.

¹³⁴ Brian Bridges, "Japan and Europe: Rebalancing a Relationship", p.235.

¹³⁵ Christopher Piening, *Global Europe: The European Union in World Affairs*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1997, p.151.

¹³⁶ For a detailed study of the genesis and formulation of this initiative, see Abe 1999.

¹³⁷ Gilson 2001:76-77.

Japan” was signed in the Hague on 18 November 1991. It set out potential areas of cooperation, particularly in political dialogue to enhance the Japan-EC relationship and also restore some of Japan’s prestige, battered by its failure to contribute other than financially to the Gulf War in 1991. Negotiations for this Declaration were difficult because some EC politicians and officials felt that Japan was diverting attention away from core economic issues by stressing political cooperation, while the Japanese felt that some EC member state government, particularly the French, were trying to impose “managed trade” as the price for political dialogue.¹³⁸

The Joint Declaration was a breakthrough in seeking to strengthen a political relationship which was arguably even less institutionalised than the EC-ASEAN relationship. The 1991 Declaration instituted the first regular EU summit with an Asian country and supported the Japanese claim for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. The two sides agreed to work together on strengthening the UN, supporting democracy, human rights and market economies, nuclear proliferation, support for developing countries, transnational challenges such as international crime and the environment, support for central and eastern Europe and stability in the Asia-Pacific. The Declaration’s major achievement was to initiate a register of Conventional Arms at the UN, but it failed to bring about the political cooperation that had been envisaged.

The Commission’s 1994 New Asian Strategy (NAS) paper reaffirmed Japan as a priority country for the EU in Asia, but the 1995 Commission communication, “Europe and Japan: The Next Steps”, still bemoaned that the dialogue “has hardly proceeded beyond the level of exchange of views and information and there have been few examples of concrete cooperation”.¹³⁹ Recent moves to boost EU-Japan political cooperation and dialogue have been more positive. At the 9th EU-Japan Summit in Tokyo in 2000, a ten-year Action Plan was established to reinforce the EU-Japan partnership and to move it from consultation to joint action. Attempts were made to reinvigorate the political dialogue with the “Decade of Japan-Europe cooperation” at the tenth EU-Japan summit in 2001. In April 2002, Romano Prodi was the first Commission President accorded Head of State status when he addressed Japan’s

¹³⁸ Bridges 1992:11.

¹³⁹ European Commission, *Europe and Japan: The Next Steps*, COM (95)73 final, 8 March 1995, p.7; Smith 148-149.

parliament, a month after President Bush had spoken in the Diet.¹⁴⁰ Increased interaction resulted in Prodi and Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi meeting an unprecedented five times over the course of 12 months in 2001-2002.¹⁴¹ This has somewhat compensated for the relative European neglect of Japan since the 1997 Asian crisis. As *Le Monde* noted in June 2000, the level of European representation was telling at the funeral of Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo, who died in office. While the US and Asian countries were represented by their Heads of State or Government (including President Clinton), France and Italy only sent former Prime Ministers (Alain Juppé and Massimo D'Alema) and other European countries sent second-ranking ministers.¹⁴²

d) Security dialogue and partnership between civilian powers?

Following François Duchêne and others, it is useful to think of the EU-Japan relationship as one between “civilian powers”. This approach emphasises the use of economic leverage and a focus on issues such as environmental concerns and open trading - areas in which the EU and Japan are strong - rather than military power.¹⁴³

At the end of the Cold War, the EC/EU was quick to recognize that many of the “new” security issues- terrorism, environmental degradation, resource scarcities, drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime- required global cooperation for successful management. As non-military powers, the EU and Japan have by default been among the chief actors pushing this agenda. EC countries leveraged on Japan’s economic and financial clout to engage Japan in the reconstruction of post-communist Europe. In late 1989 the Japanese government joined the G-24 group of states to discuss multilateral economic assistance to Eastern Europe, and in May 1990 Japan became a founding member of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Japan held 8.5% of total shares and became the second-largest individual contributor after the US. Japanese aid to Russia had been hampered by the unresolved

¹⁴⁰ *Financial Times* 26 April 2002.

¹⁴¹ In December 2001: EU-Japan Summit in Brussels; in 2002: G8 Summit, EU-Japan Summit in Tokyo, Prodi’s visit to Japan and Diet speech, and 4th ASEM Summit in Copenhagen. Interview with Japanese Embassy to the EU in Brussels, 27 March 2003.

¹⁴² *Le Monde*, 10 June 2000.

¹⁴³ See François Duchêne, “The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence”, in Kohnstamm and Hager (eds), *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign-Policy Problems before the European Community*, London: Macmillan, 1973; Julie Gilson, *Japan and the European Union: A Partnership for the 21st Century?*, London: Macmillan, 2000, pp.169-170; Hans W. Maull, “Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers:”, *Foreign Affairs*, 69 (1990-91), pp.91-106; and Yoichi Funabashi, “Japan and the New World Order”, *Foreign Affairs*, 70 (1991-92).

territorial dispute over the Northern Territories, but in January 1990, following Kaifu's visit to Eastern Europe, Japan pledged almost US\$2 billion in economic aid to Poland and Hungary.¹⁴⁴

Japan's main utility to European interests in regional and international security has been its financial power. The EU has found in Japan a willing and financially generous partner in its post-Cold War aims of stabilising the ex-communist countries in central and eastern Europe via the OSCE, the UN and other institutions. The Balkans, the greatest area of security concern to the EU, has given rise to the greatest amount of EU-Japan security cooperation and allowed Japan via the OSCE to play a role in European security for the first time since the 1920s. During the 1991-95 conflict, the EU assumed both a "civilian power" role in attempts by the troika and various EU-UN mediators to broker a cease-fire in the summer of 1991, and a limited military role following the deployment of WEU and NATO forces in the Adriatic and Danube to monitor the enforcement of economic sanctions. Gaimusho sent a fact-finding mission to the former Yugoslavia in January 1994 and even considered, in response to the UN Secretary-General's special representative Akashi Yasushi's request, the dispatch of the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) to Macedonia on a UN preventative diplomacy mission. In the end, it was decided that Japan's contribution should be financial and civilian, and focused on humanitarian aid.¹⁴⁵ In April 1995, Japan had pledged a total of US\$140 million in aid to the states of the former Yugoslavia.¹⁴⁶ In the absence of a military role, the use of Japanese economic power in aid was seen as a boost to Japan's campaign for the UNSC. Japan again stood aside during the NATO campaign in Kosovo in 1999, but following the cessation in bombing, it pledged a US\$200 million aid package for humanitarian assistance and reconstruction in line with Obuchi's conception of "human security".

The "civilian" aspects of EU-Japan cooperation in the security field can also be seen in the reciprocity and cooperation arrangements in getting involved in each other's

¹⁴⁴ Hughes 2001:64.

¹⁴⁵ The proposal for a Japanese military contribution was quashed over reservations that deployment might contravene Japan's constitution, and by domestic opposition to sending SDF soldiers overseas. Hughes 2001:65.

¹⁴⁶ Drifte 1998:87. Akashi, a Japanese national, lobbied the Japanese government very strongly for economic and political support of the region.

regional security concerns. Prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) is very high on the agenda of Japanese foreign policy. An incentive for the EU's involvement in KEDO, set up in March 1995 by the US, Japan and South Korea, was the tacit understanding that Japan would offer assistance in the reconstruction of former Yugoslavia in return for a greater European commitment to activities in Asia. Some observers see in this apparent KEDO-Bosnia quid pro quo between Japan and the EU a "specific reciprocity" arrangement which reinforces their respective civilian power roles in seeking non-military solutions to regional problems.¹⁴⁷ In 1997, the EU decided to provide North Korea with \$69 million in food aid to alleviate the continuing famine in that country. It was the most generous response then to the world-wide UN appeal for food aid, and European Commission officials saw its benefits in both security and humanitarian terms.¹⁴⁸

Despite the community of security interests between the EU and Japan, any closer EU-Japan security cooperation is however, not on the cards. Japan lacks force projection capabilities, and the Cold War threats in its neighbourhood have not receded (North Korea remains a totalitarian and unstable communist regime threatening nuclear brinkmanship). Its security critically dependent on the US, Japan has supported Anglo-American intervention in Iraq in 2003, and even without a UN mandate sent its largest-ever contingent of SDF troops abroad to help the occupation forces.¹⁴⁹

Overall Trends

French political relations with Japan during the Cold War were framed within the larger context of EC-Japan relations. Bereft of special historical ties, France at first neglected Japan in the first postwar decades and failed to take Japan seriously. Yet from a Gaullist dismissal of Japan as an adjunct of the US, France has become probably the most enthusiastic supporter in the EU of an assertive Japan that pulls its weight as the world's largest ODA donor and receives the political prestige and trappings, in Védérine's formulation, of a "power of global influence".

¹⁴⁷ Gilson 2000:131 and 201-2, f.n. 35.

¹⁴⁸ Stares and Régaud, p.124.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Japanese Mission to the European Union, 27 March 2003; "Japan: to arms", *Economist* 26 July 2003.

Grid 5.2 European Political-Strategic Positions in Japan, 1985-2002

	85			91			96			2001		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
<i>F</i>	◆ ^a			◆	→		←	◆ ^c	→			◆ ^c
<i>GB</i>	◆	→			◆				◆			◆
<i>D</i>		◆			◆			◆				◆
<i>EU</i>		◆			◆ ^b	→		◆ ^d	→			◆

- = Confrontation or Conflict with Japan

0 = Ambiguous or neutral towards Japan

+ = Collaboration or Active Engagement with Japan

^a Bilateral relations deteriorated to over trade disputes throughout most of the 1980s. In addition, France opposed Japan's participation in Western security fora like NATO and the CSCE.

^b First EC-Japan Summit is held, and EC-Japan Joint Declaration is issued, The Hague, July 1991.

^c Relations turned frosty in 1995 as a result of French nuclear testing in the Pacific. Then in November 1996, Chirac and PM Hashimoto issued the "France-Japon 20 Actions pour l'an 2000".

^d The Council issued a 1995 Communication on *the EU and Japan: The Next Steps*.

^e This clearly convergent European position on political and security relations with Japan is tempered by France, Britain and Germany maintaining privileged *bilateral* security dialogues with Japan.

France-Japan political and strategic relations have been largely unaffected by the European Union. In 1988-91, France resisted policy convergence with other Member States and effectively blocked British attempts to promote EU political engagement with Japan. However, the EU-Japan rapprochement heralded by the 1991 EC-Japan Declaration provided the context for French leaders to mend fences with Japan. In good times (1996-2002), France has tried to keep many of its activities *outside* the ambit of the EU. Yet, the salience of France to Japan was and continues to be (aside from Japan's UNSC bid) France's place at the heart of European integration. The France-Japan cooperation agreement in 1996 even served as an inspiration for the 2001 EU document.¹⁵⁰ By 2000, French policy towards Japan converged with the European mainstream and the Commission, by default rather than by design (and sometimes despite Paris) because of the overwhelming need for the EU to find like-minded partners in the new post-Cold War world. France, whether on its own or with the EU, is not capable of seriously challenging Japan's relationship with the US. With or without the Europeanisation of French relations with Japan, the EU remains secondary to Japan's key foreign relationship.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with European Commission External Relations official (Japan Unit), 26 March 2003.

III Human Rights

Part III of this chapter - unlike in chapters 4 and 5 where human rights is an area of French and EU concern in China and Vietnam- will treat the issue of human rights in France-Japan relations as an issue for aid cooperation in *third countries* (especially in Asia). The US and Western institutions such as the EU have typically expected Japan as a liberal democracy to support Western conceptions of democracy, freedom and human rights. In the main, Japan has been treated as a member of the club of Western democracies, and as the second largest industrialized democracy after the United States. Identifying itself as a major 'Western' power but located in a region where non-Western institutions and values remain powerful and where memories of Japanese aggression are still very much alive, Japan is often faced with conflicting demands in the area of human rights.

Unlike China, Myanmar/Burma, Vietnam, Taiwan and South Korea under martial law (until 1989), and Malaysia and Singapore in leading the "Asian values"¹⁵¹ debate in the 1990s, Japan is virtually unique among Asia countries for not having any serious human rights disagreements with Western liberal democracies. It can of course be argued that Japan *is* in effect a Western liberal democracy, albeit one geographically located in Asia. French élites and public opinion have long viewed Japan as a "civilized" polity which respects and shares what in France are perceived as fundamental republican values of democratic government, secularism, non-discrimination (ie equality of the citizen), and freedom of expression. First, alone among the larger states in Asia (China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam), postwar Japan has not been a major target of human rights action or criticism by human rights groups and Western countries (aside from the gender lobby)¹⁵². Second, Japan is not a target state in French human rights policy. Neither Mitterrand's principled approach nor Chirac's pragmatic "constructive dialogue" approach has included Japan as a target state. Third, Japan's relevance to French human rights and democratisation objectives in East Asia (chapter 3) are twofold: as a partner to leverage on Japan's status as the richest and largest industrialized democracy in Asia and hence

¹⁵¹ "Les valeurs du Dr Mahathir", *Le Monde*, 1 October 1998.

¹⁵² Women's rights in Japan (eg. women's salaries and participation in Japanese politics) have been criticised as ranking among the bottom of all developed nations. See United Nations, *The World's Women 2000: Trends and Statistics*, New York, 2000, pp.151-76.

to cooperate on ODA and technical assistance programmes with Japan (ie. the promotion of “economic” rights).

a) East and West?

Beneath the surface similarities, there are of course many areas in which Japanese attitudes towards gender, the individual’s place in the community and nation, the rights and obligations of citizens, the treatment of ethnic minorities, foreigners, and capital and corporal punishment, would shock a European public. French leaders and the japanologist intelligentsia have a high regard for Japan’s position as a potential leader of pan-Asianism and hence, a different approach to democratic and human rights values as Western governments.¹⁵³ Granted, some French NGOs have criticized Japan’s human rights record on issues such as the treatment of prisoners and the conditions of detention in Japan.¹⁵⁴ The largest single issue of human rights contention between Japan and Western human rights NGOs (and some Nordic countries) is that of capital punishment, which (in common with some of the States in the USA and most Asian countries) is still practiced in Japan. Otherwise human rights NGOs have not noted major human rights violations in Japan apart from certain human rights abuses such as fingerprinting foreigners, including Koreans and Chinese who were forcibly moved to Japan during the war and had stayed; discrimination against the *burakumin* (the under-class minority); and the official oppression of the indigenous Ainu people which was lifted only in 1997.¹⁵⁵

Since the end of the Cold War, the EU as a whole has been more active and vocal in promoting democracy and human rights values around the world. EU pronouncements on Japan since the 1991 Joint Declaration have consistently stressed that the EU and Japan share the same values of “democracy, freedom, the rule of law and respect for human rights”.¹⁵⁶ Japan has generally subscribed to these values and objectives, although the content, priorities and pursuit of these objectives may vary significantly. Japan is keener on “second-generation” (social and economic) rights than

¹⁵³ “Vers un nouvel ‘asiatisme’ I.-Une prise de conscience regionale”, *Le Monde*, 2 December 1994.

¹⁵⁴ Patrice Bouveret and Belkacem Elomari (eds), *Ventes d’Armes de la France: tour du monde des pays acquéreurs*, Lyon: Observatoire des transferts d’armements, 1997, p.107.

¹⁵⁵ Takagi 95:99 and Ian Neary, *Human Rights in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan*, London: Routledge, 2002, ch.2 on Japan.

¹⁵⁶ See also Romano Prodi, “The New Europe and Japan”, speech to the Keidanren, Tokyo, 19 July 2000, on EU website archives, www.europa.eu.int.

“first-generation” political freedoms. The 10-year EU-Japan Action Plan, “Shaping our Common Future” of December 2001 contains references to human rights and the EU called on Japan early in 2001 to abolish capital punishment¹⁵⁷, but human rights do not form part of the core of the EU-Japan dialogue, in contrast to its prominent and controversial place in EU-China relations (Chapter 4).

b) Human rights and development: Taking the cue from Japan

Japan is interesting to French efforts to influence democracy and human rights conditions in East Asia through the instrument of ODA. France has since the 1980s been the world’s second to fourth largest source of aid to developing countries. French ODA is however overwhelmingly channelled to Africa (where standards of political and economic rights have often been ignored). Since 1989, Japan has been the world’s largest ODA donor, providing about one quarter of total world aid. Despite a prolonged and ongoing recession in the 1990s, Japan was the only country among the major aid donors to increase its ODA in the decade up to 1999 (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 World’s Top Ten ODA Donors in the 1980s and 1990s (US\$ million)

1985		1989		1995		1999	
1. US	9,403	Japan	8,965	Japan	14,489	Japan	15,302
2. Japan	3,797	US	7,677	France	8,443	US	9,135
3. France	3,134	France	5,802	Germany	7,524	France	5,494
4. Germany	2,942	Germany	4,948	US	7,367	Germany	5,478
5. Canada	1,631	Italy	3,613	Netherlands	3,226	UK	3,279
6. UK	1,530	UK	2,587	UK	3,202	Netherlands	3,134
7. Netherlands	1,136	Canada	2,320	Canada	2,067	Italy	1,750
8. Italy	1,098	Netherlands	2,094	Sweden	1,704	Denmark	1,724
9. Sweden	840	Sweden	1,799	Denmark	1,623	Canada	1,721
10. Australia	749	Australia	1,020	Italy	1,623	Sweden	1,634
	30,743		45,735		58,926		55,993

Source: OECD, DAC, Development Report, various years, cited in Saori N. Katada, “Japan’s Two-Track Aid Approach: The Forces behind Competing Triads”, *Asian Survey*, 42/2, March/April 2002, p.325.

French and Japanese accounts of the G7’s relations with developing countries, especially in the 1990s, tend to give more emphasis to poverty and development aid for the Third World.¹⁵⁸ The G7 Summit in Tokyo (1993) and Lyon (1996) and Evian

¹⁵⁷ Wiessala 2002:109

¹⁵⁸ Matsuura 98:103.

(2003) were thus presented as summits which stressed development aid. At the November 1997 Denver summit when the G7 was formally rechristened G8, Chirac and Hashimoto issued a joint letter as the leaders of the world's top two ODA donors urging the G8 to maintain levels of ODA to developing countries.¹⁵⁹ Asia remains the high priority for Japanese aid (over 60% goes to Asia). Since the mid-1990s France and Japan have been cooperating on aid projects in French-speaking Africa and in Indochina. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) officers undergo French-language training in France before moving to the field in Africa. Under the Chirac-Hashimoto "20 Actions" plan of 1996, joint aid projects were launched, beginning in Asia (Cambodia and the Philippines) and in Africa (health and sanitation projects in Djibouti and Madagascar).¹⁶⁰

France and the other EU states have often taken the cue from Japanese actions with regards to human rights aid and sanctions in Asia. Japan's human rights policy has largely been soft and symbolic. One reason for this self-conscious approach is the legacy of Japan's brutal imperial past; hence Japan's reservations in appearing to preach human rights in Asia.¹⁶¹ In addition, Japan (in contrast to Germany) is often seen as not having expiated its World War II war crimes because of its symbolic attachment to the Yasukuni war memorial, and the government's non-apologetic portrayal of the Pacific war in Japanese textbooks.¹⁶² The Japanese Prime Minister issued a written apology to South Korea only in 2001 for Japan's war crimes against its people.¹⁶³

Myanmar, China and Cambodia provide excellent case studies of the ambiguities of Japanese human rights policy in Asia, especially in relation to US and European approaches to pressure authoritarian regimes in the region. Edward Friedman notes that the Chinese government "especially enjoys trying to silence Japan by claiming that Japan's savage behaviour in its wars in Asia" in the first half of the 20th century disqualifies Japan from any right to a voice on behalf of victims of human

¹⁵⁹ Jacques Chirac, *Allocution du Président de la République, lors du déjeuner offert en l'honneur des membres du Forum de dialogue Franco-Japonais*, Paris: 12 July 1997.

¹⁶⁰ "Japan-France Relations", www.infojapan.org/region/europe/france/index.html, accessed 4 May 2003.

¹⁶¹ Seiichiro Takagi, "Human Rights in Japanese Foreign Policy: Japan's Policy towards China after Tiananmen", in James Tang (ed), *Human Rights and International Relations in the Asia Pacific*, London and New York: Pinter, 1995

¹⁶² Ian Buruma, *Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan*, London: Vintage, 1995.

¹⁶³ See Évelyne Dourille-Feer (ed), "Japon: Le renouveau?", *Notes et Études documentaires* No. 5147, Paris: La Documentation Française, February 2002: 176-77.

rights violations in China today. A second reason is Japan's mixed identity as both a Western and an Asian country with a penchant for projecting an image of itself as a leader in Asia. Japan resisted going with the Western tide of linking foreign aid and human rights until 1988, when it first attached political conditions to its assistance to Burma (renamed Myanmar in 1989). Japan took the unequivocal step of identifying itself with Western values of democracy and human rights at the G-7 Paris Summit in July 1989. Then in 1991 Prime Minister Kaifu announced four major Overseas Development Aid (ODA) policy principles¹⁶⁴ when deciding whether to extend ODA:

- (i) the recipient country's military spending;
- (ii) its arms exports and imports;
- (iii) its development and production of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear missiles; and
- (iv) its efforts to promote democratisation, ensure human rights, and move toward a market-oriented economy.

Of the four principles, the fourth has been seen as the new battleground for North-South confrontation in the post-Cold War era. The euphoria that greeted the December 1990 UN decision to convene a World Conference on Human Rights was soon dispatched by the "East Asian challenge" when several Asian governments sought to redefine the concepts of human rights by questioning the applicability of universal human rights in different cultural, economic and social settings. The April 1993 Bangkok Declaration, signed by over forty Asian governments ahead of the Vienna World Conference, suggested that universality should be considered "in the context of a dynamic and evolving process of international norm-setting, bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds." The Asian governments also sought to delink aid and human rights.¹⁶⁵ Japan was thus put under considerable pressure by Asian states to subscribe to a pan-Asian cultural relativist reading of human rights.

Human rights are a key area in which Japan tries to play the role of intermediary between East and West. On Western, notably American and European pressures for more attention to human rights and in particular humane working conditions, Japan has actually grown into the role of helping to *insulate* East Asian countries against outside

¹⁶⁴ Eiichi Hoshino, "Economic Sanctions against Myanmar", p.123.

¹⁶⁵ James Tang (ed), *Human Rights and International Relations in the Asia Pacific*, pp.1-2.

pressures. One example is the UN-sponsored Asia Regional Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference on Human Rights held in Bangkok in 1993. Japan signed the Bangkok Declaration with reservations because of the contradictions between its 1991/92 new principles on aid which linked human rights to ODA, and the Declaration which called for a separation of the two issues.¹⁶⁶ On this matter, the Japanese government came under strong pressure from other East Asian governments, and also domestically from a group of influential politicians, academics and business people who opposed the Western sponsored link between human rights and aid. At the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in May 1993, the Japanese representative Nobuo Matsunaga reiterated Japan's policy of linking ODA to human rights: "human rights should never be sacrificed to development. Rather development should serve to promote and protect rights...Convinced of this, Japan believes that development assistance should also contribute to the promotion of the rights of individuals."¹⁶⁷ On the Myanmar case, Hoshino Eiichi has dubbed the Japanese approach a "sunshine policy" in contrast to the US' "North wind policy". In August 2002, Kawaguchi Yoriko defied Western isolation of Myanmar and made the first trip by a Japanese Foreign Minister to Myanmar since 1983. She met both Aung San Suu Kyi and the ruling military and renewed offers of future assistance for democratisation and nation-building.¹⁶⁸

Cambodia has also been a testing ground between Western and Japanese approaches to human rights. In the 5-6 July 1997 coup launched by Prime Minister Hun Sen against First Prime Minister Ranariddh, Japan suspended aid and attached four conditions for its resumption. These included assurances of fundamental human rights and political freedom, and respect for the results of the 1993 elections. Yet on 26 July, Gaimusho announced the resumption of Japanese aid despite evidence of oppression and summary executions of Ranariddh's supporters, and before these four conditions were even seen to be agreed to.¹⁶⁹ With Japan's influence as the largest donor in Cambodia, the European Union and its member states soon followed suit.

¹⁶⁶ This argument made by Reinhard Drifte in *Japan's Foreign Policy for the 21st Century*, London: Macmillan Press/St Antony's College Oxford, 2000, pp.144-145.

¹⁶⁷ Cited in James Tang (ed), *Human Rights and International Relations in the Asia Pacific*, London and New York: Pinter, 1995, p.218.

¹⁶⁸ BBC News, "Japan urges progress in Burma" 5 August 2002, on <http://news.bbc.co.uk/world/asia-pacific>.

¹⁶⁹ *Human Rights Watch* 98:98 and 162-170.

c) *Constructive Dialogue à la japonaise?*

In this regard, the new “constructive dialogue” French approach to human rights in Asia under Chirac finds resonance with Japanese human rights approaches. This is in contrast to Japan’s rather reluctant start in linking foreign aid to human rights in 1988 and the strident French approach in the 1980s under Mitterrand and Dumas. Criticism was heaped on Japan for its mild response to the Chinese government after the Tiananmen massacre on 4 June 1989. Japan applied negative sanctions on China following the Tiananmen crackdown “under pressure from other Group of Seven (G-7) countries.”¹⁷⁰ However Japan and Germany were perceived as the pragmatic leaders of “silent diplomacy” in their early resumption of loans and normal trading relations with China, in spite of the G7 sanctions on China.¹⁷¹

Japanese actions (or non-actions) in the field of human rights in East Asia have provided a model and defence for a more pragmatic French approach in the region under Chirac,¹⁷² in contrast to what was earlier perceived as a “holier-than-thou” approach under Mitterrand. In the 1997 Commission on Human Rights, Japan was also one of the countries that decided not to co-sponsor that year the resolution criticizing China. In effect, Japan was acceding to a request made when Foreign Minister Ikeda visited Beijing in March 1997, to resume grants to China (suspended in 1995 over China’s nuclear tests); a February official request to the Gaimusho to set up a bilateral human rights dialogue.¹⁷³ Japan’s actions provided fuel to French arguments defending its controversial defection from the common EU position on China at the CHR (ref. chapter 4).

Japan’s soft approach towards human rights in China is manifest not only in its mild reaction to the Tiananmen massacre and the disregard for political asylum of Chinese in Japan. It has also pursued a pragmatic policy vis-à-vis Myanmar, one of the regimes most isolated in the world for its lack of respect for human rights and democratic legitimacy after it failed to honour Aung San Suu Kyi’s 1990 elections victory. The EU has even found in Japan a useful ally over differences in human rights

¹⁷⁰ Drifte, *Japan's Foreign Policy for the 21st Century*, London: Macmillan Press/St Antony’s College Oxford, 2000, p.159.

¹⁷¹ See Christoph Nesshöver, “Bonn et Paris face à Pékin (1989-1997): Vers une Stratégie Commune?”, in *Politique Etrangère* 1/99, 1999, pp.91-106.

¹⁷² Juppé 1994 and Védrine 2000.

¹⁷³ *Human Rights Watch* 1998: 199.

approaches with the US. This has been the case over US extra-territorial laws such as the Helms-Burton Act over business with Cuba, and laws banning trade with Myanmar. In contrasting Japanese sanctions policy with the US, Japan prefers positive sanctions, such as reward and inducement, and prefers to keep the door open rather than isolate the country. This is a significant policy difference that has a great impact on many countries as Japan is the largest aid giver in the world. In October 1998, the EU and Japan called for a WTO dispute panel on the Massachusetts Burma Law, which bars state agencies from making contracts with any US or foreign company doing business in Myanmar.¹⁷⁴

Overall Trends

Grid 5.3 European Human Rights Positions compared with Japan's, 1985-2001

	85			90			95			2001		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
<i>F</i>		◆		◆ ^a	→			◆ ^b	→			◆
<i>GB</i>		◆			◆		←	◆ ^b			◆	
<i>D</i>		◆			◆			◆				◆
<i>EU</i>		◆			◆		←	◆ ^b		←	◆ ^d	→

- = *Criticism of Japan's human rights foreign policy*

0 = *Neutral policy*

+ = *Cooperation with Japan in promoting economic rights and development*

^a France at first called for solidarity among the liberal democracies toward China after Tiananmen, and was critical of Japan's "soft approach", but later followed the Japanese and German leads in lifting economic sanctions (Ch.4)

^b Japan subscribed to the coordinated Asian position in Bangkok ahead of the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights; France was moving towards a more relativistic position on human rights.

^c Up to 1997, Britain, the Netherlands and the Nordic Member States led the majority human rights position in the EU criticising China and Myanmar, in contrast to the "constructive dialogue" approach of Japan and France.

^d Many EU member states are uncomfortable with Japan's "sunshine policy" in Myanmar and North Korea. The European Parliament remains critical of the death penalty in Japan.

The French in particular have since the mid-1990s adopted a highly tolerant and pragmatic view of human rights in third countries after the principled and publicly critical Mitterrand-Dumas approach which dominated French policy in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Instead of confronting and publicly criticising China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Indonesia over East Timor, etc, the French have undertaken an approach of quiet diplomacy and philosophising, an approach close to Japan's low-profile policy in East Asia in which it gives generous aid but no "lessons". In this

¹⁷⁴ Hoshino 2000:125, 147-148.

regard, French governments have developed a rather distinct national human rights policy which permits close cooperation and coordination with Japan over recent human rights and democratic crises in East Asia, eg. Myanmar throughout the 1990s, Cambodia in 1997, and the Commission on Human Rights debate on China in 1997.

Conclusions

Bilateral relations between France and Japan have improved significantly in tone and broadened substantially between 1988 and 2002. From a thinly veiled and sometimes outwardly hostile French role as “leader of the pack” in the EC against making any economic or political concessions to Japan, France has become one of Japan’s most willing and vocal partners in Europe, keen on a closer economic, political and security collaboration with Japan. French policies towards Japan have become closely aligned with the EU mainstream, and France under Chirac has achieved a position of trust on a more even footing with Britain’s and Germany’s traditional positions as Japan’s preferred interlocutors in Europe.¹⁷⁵

In economic policy, the Commission and other Member States (especially the UK) were instrumental in moving France away from confrontation and national/EC protectionist measures towards active collaboration and welcoming Japanese investments. During the worst phases of France-Japan conflictual relations in the late 1980s, France began to be increasingly isolated in a European Community which was subscribing to the dominant idea of free trade and opening its internal market to the free movement of goods, capital and services. Thus while we can trace the change in French attitudes to Japan to domestic trends such as the French acceptance of the need to adapt to globalisation after the Socialists’ 1981-83 nationalisation experiment, it is undeniable that policy learning from other EC member states (ie. sideways Europeanisation) also played a critical role. The demonstration effect of successful economic restructuring in Britain and the Netherlands, which received massive Japanese investments, prompted French leaders to reconsider their Japan policy.

France gradually Europeanised (via policy transfer and the imposition of Commission policies) its “economic nationalism” approach to Japan. The British model

¹⁷⁵ The UK-Japan “special relationship” had been “diluted” by recent Japanese cooperation agreements with Italy, France and Germany. Interview with Commission official (Japan Unit), 26 March 2003.

was emulated in the launch of “*Le Japon, c’est possible*” in 1992, and France agreed to the Commission’s 1991 “car deal” for a phased removal of import restrictions, and a comprehensive EC-Japan dialogue at the Hague meeting. The Commission also led in its involvement in reforming and dismantling barriers to the entry of European companies in the Japanese market. By 1999, France had become a leading economic partner and advocate for Japan in the EU, and was both a leading recipient of Japanese FDI and foreign investor in Japan, with Renault-Nissan and Toyota-Peugeot among the high-profile industrial collaborations. In effect, governments under Mitterrand had changed tack with ministers such as Dominique Strauss-Kahn and Prime Minister Chirac (86-88) “using” the EC as the main vehicle in pushing forward a difficult agenda of privatisation and competition. The EC/EU was critical, either as a constraint or opportunity (ie. top-down or bottom-up Europeanisation), to French economic policies vis-à-vis Japan.

French political attitudes towards Japan tended to be hostage to, and derivative of, French economic relations with Japan. Despite Japan’s long involvement in the West and re-insertion since 1952 in key Western organizations, French presidents since De Gaulle neglected addressing the lack of good political ties with Japan. Mitterrand even permitted economic conflicts to boil over to the political arena in the late-1980s in the Cresson phase. Political relations were properly redressed only in the 1990s through the role played by French leaders seeking a serious partnership with Japan. French policy evolved from mixed signals of suspicion and engagement (witness early French opposition to Japan’s involvement in NATO and the OSCE, while offering to help build the FSX) to consistent political and security cooperation. Foreign policy under President Chirac - the most “Japanophile” leader in the history of France-Japan bilateral relations¹⁷⁶ - has encouraged Japan to play a role in fashioning a post-Cold War multipolar world. Early criticisms of Chirac’s insensitivity to Japanese sentiments on nuclear testing at the start of his presidency¹⁷⁷ have been repudiated by very active and sustained French efforts in wooing Japan. While the occasional perception of Japan as

¹⁷⁶ Gaimusho’s webpage (<http://www.infojapan.org/region/europe/france/index.html>, accessed 4 May 2003) describes Chirac as “perhaps better informed about and more friendly toward Japan than any other politician in France... (he) probably knows more about Japan than any other politician outside Japan.”

¹⁷⁷ François Godement, “Une politique française pour l’Asie-Pacifique?”, *Politique Etrangère*, 4/95.

“enemy” has not completely receded from popular French consciousness,¹⁷⁸ French government thinking and policies towards Japan have outgrown the orientalist view, decried by Wilkinson, of Japan and its people as unfathomable “others” and economic animals fundamentally different from Europeans and inimical to Western interests. The recent “Francophilia” in Japan via the Ghosn and World Cup effects extend to industry and sports in Japan, and “neo-japonisme” in France, to the masses. Minus the Chirac factor, bilateral political ties can thus tap deeper into the larger cultural rapprochement in both populations, where positive images are more mutual and broad-based than at any other time in recent decades.

Japan in 1991 was the first Asian country with which the EU established regular summit-level consultations, and was again highlighted in the Commission’s 1994 and 2001 Asia Strategy papers as a priority country and key partner in East Asia.¹⁷⁹ The EC/EU provided the setting of a working EC-Japan partnership for improving France-Japan collaboration. The about-turn in France’s position as the main objector to closer EC-Japan political and security consultation in NATO and the OSCE to one of its main advocates, has allowed for diplomatic, aid and security coordination between Japan and the EU in trouble-spots such as the Balkans and North Korea. Security dialogues take place in the EU-Japan meetings as well as in the ARF (established 1994), KEDO (1995), and ASEM (1996).¹⁸⁰ In the past few years however, the prolonged sluggishness of Japan’s economy and the EU’s rethinking of its overall approach to Asia have contributed to what Brian Bridges calls a “by-passing” of Japan in favour of China.¹⁸¹ This trend has been accentuated by the increased importance of security and anti-terrorism cooperation post-September 11. Efforts to stimulate greater EU-Japanese contact and convergence may well have passed their peak. The relevance of strong bilateral ties between Japan and France as one of the EU’s “big three” will thus continue to be important to Tokyo.

¹⁷⁸ Marc Rigaudis, *Japon Mépris...Passion: Regards de la France sur le Japon de 1945 à 1995*, Paris: L’Harmattan, 1998, p.13.

¹⁷⁹ COM(2001)469 final, p.3 and Conclusions.

¹⁸⁰ Gilson 2001:81. In the case of KEDO, the EU established from the beginning the North Korean issue as a joint action of the CFSP, as a result of which, as a pre-ASEM gesture, the EU made a first financial contribution (US\$6.3 million) to KEDO in February 1996.

¹⁸¹ Bridges, *Europe and the Challenge of the Asia Pacific*, p.48

In the human rights arena (Part III), hardly any convergence Europeanization is observable. Policy learning took place in an international rather than European context in the evolution of France's human rights policy. France works on a *national* basis with Japan to promote their mutual interests in Africa and Asia. More often than not, French and Japanese interests in joint projects are political, economic and commercial, and the "human rights" they promote, if any, are predominantly economic and social rights, rather than the political rights dominant in Dutch, Scandinavian, US or recent British "ethical foreign policy". In Asia, French human rights policy has moved from a hardline position under Mitterrand and Dumas to a "soft" position of constructive dialogue under Chirac - similar to Japan's - on human rights in countries like China. France is aware of its inability export its model of "constructive engagement" to the EU level for every East Asian country in which it has interests, and often has to fall back on national means or joint efforts with like-minded partners like Japan.

French foreign policy élites recognise that France is but a middle power in the international system and that over the long term, its relative power will continue to decrease vis-à-vis the "giants" (in particular China and Japan) of East Asia.¹⁸² With a country that has over twice the population of France and three times its GDP, France's relations with Japan can become more equal and make more sense only in the context of France as an integral member of European Union, able to use the political and economic resources afforded by a larger entity in its dealings with external powers.

Of the three aspects of Europeanization (top-down policy convergence, bottom-up national projection and lateral policy emulation) in French policy towards Japan, the sideways transfer of ideas (Dimension III) and top-down policy convergence (Dimension I) were the dominant processes in the 1990s. Europeanization was not the sole or determining process for the change in French policy from confrontation to collaboration with Japan, except in the economic field where the homogenizing effects of the SEA, Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties on the French economy and its economic relations with third countries played a critical role. The overall underlying dynamic is a process of increasing engagement with Japan at the *EU* level, with national engagement taking its cue from EU-level initiatives and agreements.

¹⁸² Interview with H.E. Mr Michel Filhol, French Ambassador in Singapore, 7 February 2003.

Chapter Six

Vietnam: *Relations privilégiées in Southeast Asia?*

French policy in East Asia is often explained as driven by French mercantilist ambitions in the rapidly growing markets in the greater China area, the NIEs and in Southeast Asia (at least until the Asian economic crisis of 1997-98).¹ We have seen in the preceding two chapters that this account reflects an important facet of French relations with Japan and China, as well with the NIEs and economically dynamic states of ASEAN. However this economic account by itself is too one-dimensional even for the economic dynamism in East Asia. In the case of Vietnam, where the level of trade and investment exchanges is not significant, economic arguments are even less persuasive. More relevant than the economic account, France's relations with its former colonies in Indochina are characterized by a sense of affinity and shared history, and a desire to keep relations with Vietnam privileged, a weak kind of special bilateral relationship².

This is not to say that France-Vietnam relations are based on colonial sentimentality or attempts to exclude the EU, as in France-Algeria relations. Rather, French objectives in Indochina are informed first, by the larger "Asia Policy" of French governments since 1993 to expand French economic and political influence in East Asia³, using France's natural advantage in Vietnam as a familiar base, and the EU's resources and prestige - as well as other multilateral tools and France's UNSC status - as leverage. Second, this chapter wishes to argue that in the issue-areas of trade, human rights and political-strategic interests, there is minimal voluntary or conscious movement towards a top-down Europeanization of French policies towards Vietnam. Instead, France prefers to deal with Vietnam on a bilateral level (eg. through bilateral

¹ See François Godement, "Une politique française pour l'Asie-Pacifique?", *Politique Etrangère*, 4/95; Miguel Santos Neves, "Towards a Common China Policy for the EU: a Portuguese Perspective", in Richard Grant (ed), *The European Union and China*, London: Routledge/RIIA, 1995; Brian Bridges, *Europe and the Challenge of the Asia Pacific*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1999.

² Manners and Whitman (eds), *The Foreign Policies of European Union Member States*, 2000, p.11, define "special relations" and special issues within the EU as those which Member States seek to 'ring-fence' in order to keep them out of the EU's policy process.

³ See assessment of the Asia Policy by René Dorient (a French diplomat's pseudonym), "Un septennat de politique asiatique: quel bilan pour la France?", *Politique Etrangère*, 1/2002, Jan-Mar 2002, pp.173-188.

development cooperation and the French-dominated Francophonie). The third theme is that the end of Vietnam's isolation after the Cold War and the Paris Peace in 1991 have rendered increasingly irrelevant the close political relationship with France during Vietnam's 1980s isolation. Instead, international systemic developments and the external demands of Indochinese and ASEAN states give incentives to France to act *within and through the EU* in order the better to make an impact in Southeast Asia.

Establishing French Indochina, 1858-1954

Many historians explain French colonialism in Indochina, built from a series of conquests between 1858 and 1893, as an outgrowth of global colonial rivalry with the British Empire (then well established in India, Burma and Malaya), and keeping up with the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and Russians, all of whom had established empires in Asia towards the end of the 19th century.⁴ If "God, gold and glory"⁵ were the essential motivations behind European imperialism, the French were late converts to the colonial game in the Far East. French colonialism was neither inspired by a "grand strategy", nor a series of *faits accomplis* by imperial entrepreneurs leading to conquest and empire. But the siege of Paris in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 and the loss of two provinces (Alsace and Lorraine) to newly unified Germany were the most critical events in the national consciousness of the Third Republic (1871-1940). The national trauma of 1870 stoked French nationalism and energized renewed efforts at overseas expansion to compensate for domestic losses.⁶ In contrast to the clearly commercial goals of British and Dutch colonialists in Asia, a quest to recover French national pride and imperial glory in the aftermath of humiliation by Bismarck's Prussia and the rise of a unified Germany were important motives behind France's late push to establish colonies in Asia.

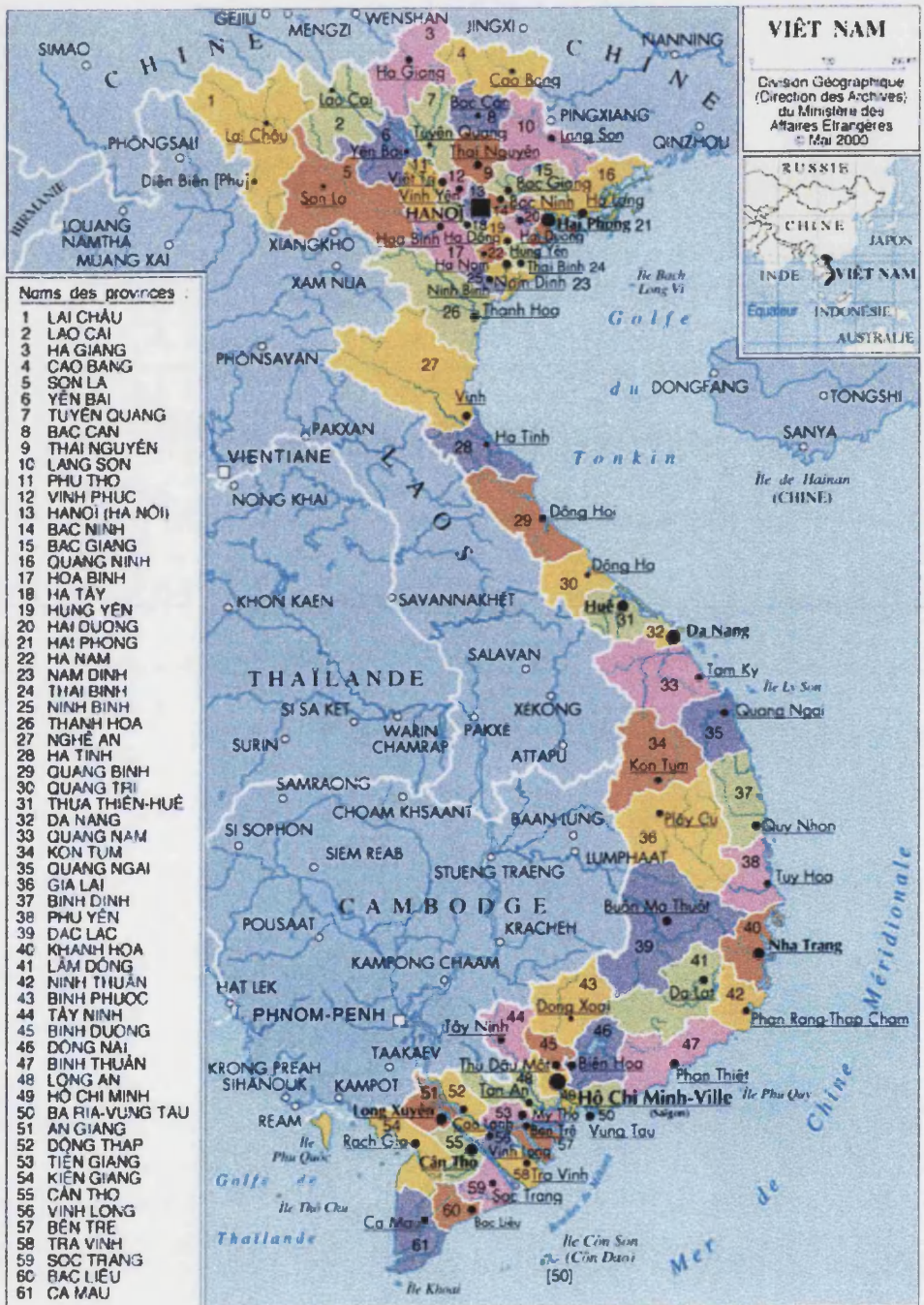
⁴Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hémerly, *Indochine: La colonisation ambiguë 1858-1954*, Paris: Editions la Découverte, 2001.

⁵ See Winfried Baumgart's incisive study of the ideological, economic and political motives and theories used to justify late 19th century colonial expansion in his *Imperialism: The idea and reality of British and French Colonial expansion 1880-1914*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

⁶ Agnes Murphy, *The Ideology of French Imperialism, 1871-1881*, Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1948; James J. Cooke, *New French Imperialism 1880-1910: the Third Republic and Colonial Expansion*, Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1973.

Map of Vietnam

(showing provinces, major cities and geopolitical situation in Southeast Asia)



Source: MAE, Division Géographique (Direction des Archives), May 2000, on <http://www.diplomatie.fr/actual/evenements/vietnam2/carte.html>, accessed 1 May 2003.

Aside from the rising and final burst of European imperialism mentioned above which especially affected the French Third Republic, French imperialism in Indochina was facilitated by the decline of Qing China and the concomitant re-arrangement of international relations in East Asia in the mid-19th century, and the regional rivalries between Dai Nam (Annam), Siam and Burma.⁷ The French already possessed an intimate knowledge of Vietnam gained from over two centuries of missionary work by French Jesuits (the most famous was Alexandre de Rhodes, who founded the Missions Etrangères and romanised the Vietnamese script from Chinese characters to *Quoc ngu*).⁸ French entrepreneurs were already present and active in Southeast Asia since the end of the 18th century. Nguyen Anh, who from 1790 fought a 12-year war to unite Annam in the centre, Tonkin to the north and Cochinchina to the south, had ascended to the throne of a unified Vietnam in 1802 with the help of French mercenaries. Renaming himself Gia Long once established as emperor (1802-20), the founder of the Nguyen dynasty kept the service of French advisors. Later Nguyen emperors who imposed a Chinese-Confucian system of court rule on their subjects were less tolerant of foreign influences. Ming Manh (1820-47) persecuted the fast-growing Catholic population in Vietnam and expelled missionaries from 1832. Napoleon III, keen to extract concessions from China along the model of Hong Kong's cession to Britain in 1842, seized on the persecution of Christians in Vietnam in the 1860s to expand French influence through his self-professed role as protector of the persecuted Catholic minority.⁹

The first military operations, launched in 1858 in Da Nang, lasted four years. Heading south to capture Saigon and the Mekong delta area, the French established an outright colony in Cochinchina, with a protectorate over the Khmer kingdom of Cambodia under the terms of the 1863 treaty. Through a series of military conquests, French rule extended from the south to the north along the South China Sea coast of the Indochinese peninsula. Third Republic moves to extend French influence northwards

⁷ Brocheux 2001, ch.1 *Dai Nam* was the Vietnamese name for the kingdom of *Annam* with Huê as its capital under the Nguyen dynasty from 1802. "Annam", the Chinese name, was used by the Europeans. The "emperor" in Huê ruled over Cochinchina in the south and Tonkin to the north, but paid tribute to the Chinese Emperor as a vassal state.

⁸ French missionary activities in Indochina pre-dated French colonialism by some 200 years. Between 1660 and 1858, France was represented in this part of the world chiefly by evangelising missionaries. See d'Ainval 2001:16; Cao 1993; Forest 2000; Cady 1954.

⁹ Between 1857 and 1862, 115 Vietnamese Catholic priests were executed, and more than a quarter of the 500,000 Christians in Vietnam perished through violence or starvation. See Guy-Marie Oury, *Le Vietnam des martyrs et des saints*, Paris: Le Sarmant-Fayard, 1988. At 8 million out of a population of 80 million, Vietnam today has the second largest Catholic population in Asia after the Philippines.

precipitated conflict with China, to which Annam was tied as a tribute-sending vassal state. In the 1885 Tianjin Treaty, China recognized Tonkin as a French protectorate, and granted French access to the southern Chinese provinces of Guangdong, Guangxi and Yunnan.¹⁰ With the acquisition of Laos as a French protectorate in 1893, France acquired a secure coastal trading route in addition to the Mekong route into China. French Indochina consisted of one full-fledged colony (Cochinchina) and four protectorates (Cambodia, Annam, Tonkin, and Laos).

The prevailing *Zeitgeist* of the age of imperialism was summed up by French statesman Jules Ferry's famous speech in 28 July 1885 in which he drew comparisons between France and the former Spanish empire, claiming that if France did not take part in the colonial rush which had seized Europe, "we shall meet the fate...which has overtaken other nations which played a great role on the world's stage three centuries ago but which today...are now third- or fourth-rate powers."¹¹ A burst of French colonial expansion concentrated in Africa and Asia in the 1880s tripled France's overseas territory and was justified by contemporary French advocates of colonialism as a *mission civilisatrice*.¹² Of course, there were economic objectives in French colonialism that predated the frantic last stage of imperialism beginning 1880. French traders had aimed in the 1850s to make Saigon a "French Singapore." The control of the river and maritime trade routes between India and China was thus a major goal. The earliest French traders had arrived in the trading port of Hoi An (Tourane) in Annam in the 17th century, but they had no major trading links in Asia except with China. French Indochina was to be the link to compensate for the loss of the last French possessions in India, and to act as a launch pad for French trade with China. During the French colonial period, roads, ports, schools and hospitals were built to service the imperial economic needs of France as an industrializing imperial power. Resources such as

¹⁰ Christophe Dubois, "L'Arsenal de Fuzhou et la Présence militaire française au Fujian (1869-1911), in Jacques Weber (ed.), *La France en Chine, 1843-1943*, Nantes: Ouest Editions, 1997, pp.91-102. See also Yoshiharu Tsuboi, *L'Empire Vietnamien face à la France et à la Chine, 1847-1885*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987; and Nicolas Régaud and Christian Léchervy, *Les guerres d'Indochine*, Paris, 1996, p.82.

¹¹ Cited in Baumgart 1982:73.

¹² Murphy 1948:15, 68, 158, 175, 204. Imperialism was legitimated by the 1885 Berlin Conference on Africa.

rubber and coffee were extracted using cheap local labour to export to the *metropole*. Many considered Indochina the “jewel in the crown” of the French empire.¹³

The First World War did not radically change colonial structures, but it allowed for the fermentation of growing Vietnamese nationalism, which found sympathy in China after the success of Sun Yat-sen’s 1911 revolution, as well as in successfully modernising Japan. After Paris fell to Hitler in June 1940, the Japanese Imperial Army took over Indochina from a pliant colonial administration that reported to Vichy France, and used it as a staging post for the Japanese conquest of Burma, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies and the Philippines. Indochina went into “dual administration” following the France-Japan Defence Pact in December 1941, then was completely annexed by Japan after a *coup de force* in March 1945 when the Japanese disarmed and interned French soldiers.

The Decolonisation Struggle, 1940-1954

French colonialism had introduced to Vietnam the French language and Western ideas of democracy and self-determination. Nascent Vietnamese nationalism, often led by French-educated local élites, had been rising in the inter-war period, inspired by the dramatic transformations in Meiji Japan and the 1911 revolution in China. However repressive policies such as forced military conscription, increased resource extraction and heavy taxation to serve metropolitan French efforts in two wars against Germany, the weakness of the French colonial government against the advancing Japanese, and some two million deaths in the famine of 1944-45 resulting from food mismanagement under the French-Japanese dual administration, inspired ordinary Vietnamese to take up armed struggle to drive out all foreign powers.¹⁴ The most well-organised group was the Viet Minh (Vietnamese Communists) - led by the wily and charismatic Ho Chi Minh.

The power vacuum created by the sudden Japanese surrender in August 1945 set the stage for a confrontation between the Communists goal of national independence

¹³ Springhall 2001:38. Jacques de Folin, *Indochine 1940-1955- La fin d'un Rêve*, Paris: Perrin, 1993, p.23 wrote that in 1940, “l’Indochine était la plus belle, la plus riche, la plus peuplée de nos colonies: 24 million d’Indochinois, 40 000 Français.”

¹⁴ Some 100,000 Indochinese soldiers and workers were sent to France to help in the First World War effort against Germany. In early 1939, Paris planned to recruit 1.5 million men from French Indochina for World War II. See Ngô Vinh Long’s condensed political history on “Vietnam”, in Allen and Long (eds), *Coming to Terms*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1991, p.18.

and determined French attempts at recolonisation, albeit in the context of a looser French Union.¹⁵ Following the terms of the Potsdam Agreement on the Japanese surrender, the Japanese were disarmed by British forces south of the 16th parallel, and by Nationalist Chinese forces in the north. After initial Chinese unease over the return of French colonial rule in Vietnam, the Chinese and French governments cooperated against Ho Chi Minh's plans for a strong and united Vietnam (Ho declared independence in September 1945).¹⁶ By the end of 1945, the bid by Fourth Republic France to recolonise Indochina formed part of a larger obsession to recover great-power glory and colonies, lost during the humiliating German defeat and occupation of France. Unlike Britain, France was unwilling to grant independence to its Asian colonies. Even though de Gaulle at the historic Brazzaville conference in February 1944 promised self-government to the colonies in a more humane and liberal post-war French Union, outright decolonisation and independence were not countenanced as acceptable solutions to the post-war French Empire. Few leaders of Free France – albeit grateful for the colonial contributions to the French war effort - were unwilling to fathom French colonies becoming “associated states” in a French Union. French leaders were deeply attached to the notion of “Empire”, and this was no less pertinent in Indochina. Gaston Monnerville declared in May 1945 that “sans Empire, la France ne serait qu’un pays libéré”. Echoing this sentiment, Governor François de Langlade expressed that “sans l’Indochine, la France n’est plus une puissance mondiale”.¹⁷

The desire to recover French imperial prestige was again a major factor in the French determination to recolonise Indochina after French weakness in the Second World War. Ho and his Viet Minh forces however, firmly entrenched in the north, viewed the returning French colonial authorities who had collaborated with, then capitulated to the Japanese as illegitimate. Ho agreed in March 1946 to the return of 25,000 French troops to Vietnam for five years as a stop-gap measure to ensure the departure of 200,000 Nationalist Chinese troops from the north. Ho Chi Minh gambled on accepting a full-scale but temporary French return in order to ensure the departure of

¹⁵ See Pierre Montagnon, *La France coloniale. [Vol. 2], Retour à l'Hexagone: Des premiers aspirations à l'indépendance aux inéluctables réalités de la décolonisation*, Paris: Pygmalion/Gérard Watelet, 1990.

¹⁶ Lin Hua, *Chiang Kai-shek, de Gaulle contre Ho Chi Minh, 1945-46*, Paris, 1994.

¹⁷ See Folin 1993:20.

the Chinese.¹⁸ The failure of the July 1946 Fontainebleau accords for limited Vietnamese autonomy within an Indochinese Union led to a long and bloody war (aided heavily from 1950 by the US with the onset of the Cold War in Asia). A ceasefire was agreed to as part of the Geneva Accords only after the ignominious French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954, which sounded the death knell for French imperialism in East Asia and resulted in the division of Vietnam into two halves at the 17th parallel.¹⁹

Although defeated and badly bruised and with another colonial war in Algeria looming, the French sought to maintain good relations with their ex-colonies of Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam. The quest for glory and prestige evolved after 1954 into a pursuit of a “special relationship” with Saigon, then with the Hanoi government of a reunified Vietnam since 1975. The French have consistently tried to play some political-strategic role in Southeast Asia throughout and after the Cold War, even amidst successive attempts by the US, China and the Soviet Union to dominate the region. The economic imperative has ebbed and waned, with the French putting more efforts in the neighbouring Chinese, Japanese and dynamic economies of Southeast Asia. The enduring legacies of French colonialism in Indochina, which inform present-day policies, are a concern for political and cultural prestige, economic benefit and religious and minority rights, in that order. As we will see in later in this chapter, the object of boosting national prestige and influence appears to be the dominating motive in France-Vietnam relations, with France preferring to use the EU as a vehicle towards the end of reinforcing its “relations privilégiées” with Vietnam. This has consequences for French readiness to pool resources with the other Member States and EU institutions for a common EU policy in Vietnam.

French exception vs. EU convergence in Vietnam

While the primacy of French national interests in the case of Vietnam may appear obvious, this chapter tests the argument presented in chapter three that a more accurate understanding of French objectives and policies in East Asia necessitates

¹⁸ Defending his action as a necessary step towards independence, Ho famously declared to his critics in Hanoi that he would prefer to “sniff French shit for five years than eat Chinese shit all my life”. Cited in John Springhall, *Decolonisation since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001, pp.44-45.

¹⁹ According to French government estimates in January 1955, French forces suffered over 92,000 dead and 170,000 wounded in the First Indochina War (1946-54), even more than the number of Americans killed in the Second Indochina War (1965-75). *Journal Officiel* du 12 janvier 1955, in Folin 93: 322.

analysing the multiple facets and inter-relationship of the economic, political and human rights interests in East Asia in which France *and* the EU have a stake. Chapter three and the case studies of China and Japan suggested that EU policy and French “national” policy are not always distinctive or easily separable. Notwithstanding the inter-penetrated character of French and EU policies in Asia, Vietnam presents an interesting case of a “special relationship”, albeit “special” from a more French unilateral – and somewhat paternalistic – perspective than a feeling of solidarity shared by both sides. First, colonial links confer on the relationship an intimacy Vietnam shares with few other Western states; second, the largesse of French economic and cultural assistance to Vietnam and other Indochina countries; third, consistent French *engagement* in Indochinese affairs throughout the 2nd and 3rd Indochina Wars up to its role as co-host of the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement. The French role in the resolution of the Cambodian conflict and the 1991 peace accords was in many respects a *rentrée politique* for French prestige and involvement in political affairs in Asia²⁰. President Mitterrand followed this up with a state visit in 1993 which preceded and prepared France for the end of Vietnam’s isolation, and its integration into regional and international clubs: the ARF (1994), ASEAN (1995), ASEM (1996), and APEC (1997).

This rest of this chapter examines the evidence for EU policy convergence and national projection in French policies in Vietnam. France still pursues a persistently national, bilateral track with Vietnam in areas where it enjoys a comparative advantage vis-à-vis other EU member states and can compete with strong non-EU states: trade and investment, education and technical training, state institution building and uniquely in Asia, a level of linguistic and cultural empathy (albeit less than with Cambodia and Laos). This is the subject of this chapter’s first section. The second section proposes that after its “return” as a player in Indochinese geopolitical affairs at the end of the 1980s, France resisted Europeanizing its relations with Vietnam and sought to maintain “privileged relations”. In the third section, on human rights, France plays the role of advocate for “constructive engagement” and quiet diplomacy on human rights abuses in Vietnam. Unlike EU policies towards Myanmar since 1990 and Indonesian conduct in East Timor (1975-2000), France inhibits a collective EU position that criticises human rights abuses in Vietnam.

²⁰ Godement 95:962.

I Trade and Aid

French economic and aid policies in Vietnam are intensely and consistently national in outlook, objective and implementation. They seek to maintain France's position as Vietnam's largest Western partner. Successive French governments and business leaders have long been at the forefront of Western countries doing business with Vietnam. After 1954 and despite the Cold War, France sought to protect its remaining assets in the North in the face of nationalisation, and maintained extensive holdings and economic relations with the economically dynamic South in the face of overwhelming American economic power.²¹ In late-1954 Paris irritated Washington and London by sending a high-level "trade mission" to Hanoi, and in turn received a North Vietnamese trade mission in April 1956.²² Pham Van Dong, North Vietnam's prime minister presciently noted in an interview with *Le Monde* that "France must choose between Washington and Hanoi, and only the latter policy will enable France to maintain political and economic positions in the Pacific".²³ In the 1960s, the French maintained strong economic ties with Saigon and tried to keep relations with Hanoi as cordial as possible. Between 1969 and 1972, Paris hosted peace talks for US withdrawal from South Vietnam. France had been one of the top investors and trading partners in South Vietnam even before the signing of the January 1973 peace settlement for the Second Indochina War.

The strong French economic presence in Saigon was an advantage the French hoped to capitalize on post-"American War" (ie. "Vietnam War" for the US), and in the subsequent reunification of Vietnam in 1975. In 1972, France ranked fifth as the supplier of South Vietnam and second as a destination for Vietnamese exports. France received 25% of South Vietnam's total exports (35% went to Japan, which replaced France as South Vietnam's top supplier in 1972).²⁴ French goods represented 5.6% of South Vietnam's imports (after 46% from the USA; 19%, Singapore; 18%, Japan; and 6%, Taiwan).²⁵ In June 1973, a French exploratory mission headed by François

²¹ See Marc Frey, "Creations of Sovereignty and the Waning of Influence: Southeast Asian-European Relations after Formal Decolonization", in Bunnag et al (eds), *Europe-Southeast Asia in the Contemporary World*, 2000, pp.20-34 ("France and Indochina").

²² Frey, p.23.

²³ *Le Monde*, 2-3 January 1955, cited in Frey 2000:21.

²⁴ Marianna Sullivan, "France and the Vietnam Peace Settlement", *Political Science Quarterly*, June 1974.p.319.

²⁵ Sullivan, p.320.

Missoffe visited Vietnam to report on future economic cooperation between France and South Vietnam. Based on the Missoffe report, the two governments signed an agreement in December 1973 whereby France would supply 100 million francs in economic assistance. In the 1970s, the French had already envisioned:

“(a) major effort to increase their trade with Asia in the next decade and Vietnam is the focal point. President Pompidou’s trip to China in September 1973 was also important in this regard.”²⁶

Paris established full diplomatic relations with the government in Hanoi in 1973 after the Paris Peace, and French governments kept a close watch on a unified communist Vietnam under Hanoi’s control after 1975. France was one of the few major western countries to trade and have political contacts with Hanoi despite the US-led international embargo on Vietnam (1975-1994). By the end of 1992, French companies had emerged as the third largest investors in Vietnam, after Taiwan and Hong Kong, with pledged investments worth US\$322 million.²⁷

a) Economic Ties: French Investment in Doi Moi

The French government’s economic thinking and policies in Vietnam since 1973 do not seem to have fundamentally changed in the 1990s. They continue to be based on certain assumptions about a “special relationship” between France and Vietnam and the attendant strategies to take advantage of this relationship. First is the assumption that historical and colonial ties translate into continued familiarity with and preference for French products, and could be used to good advantage in the Vietnamese market. Many French brand names are familiar to Vietnamese consumers and French businessmen aim at specific higher-end markets or levels of consumption for a future scenario of a large middle-class in Vietnam buying French for its prestige value.²⁸ Second, the reliance on good political ties to seal *grands contrats*. This has been the case for large-scale French projects in oil²⁹ and gas exploration as well as infrastructure. During Mitterrand’s 1993 state visit to Vietnam, he pushed the Vietnamese to favour bids by French industrial

²⁶ Sullivan, p.321.

²⁷ *Oxford Analytica*, “Vietnam: Economic Orientation”, 17 February 1993.

²⁸ I am grateful to Dr Eric Teo, former Business Development Manager, Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux Southeast Asia (1997-2000), for pointing this out. Some economists in the mid-1990s were confidently predicting that Vietnam would become the “fifth economic tiger” in Southeast Asia.

²⁹ Vietnam is estimated to have 600 million barrels of proven oil reserves. *Stratfor Report*, “Vietnam looks to France for Economic Boost”, 14 February 2002.

giants such as the Compagnie Générale des Eaux (CGE) and Thomson-CSF for Vietnam's lucrative infrastructure projects.³⁰ Third, there is a residual feeling that Vietnam could serve as a strategic bridgehead for the French economic presence in Asia, where France recognizes the need to recover lost ground vis-à-vis Japan, the US, Germany, and even the UK and the Asian NIEs. The sectors targeted are hotels and tourism, banks, telecommunications, food and beverage, luxury products and pharmaceuticals.³¹

France was among the most bullish investors in the first years of *doi moi* (economic renovation) reforms, announced in 1986 and made concrete when a liberal foreign-investment law was enacted in December 1987. With advice from the IMF, Vietnam introduced a strict monetary policy early in 1989, which helped bring down inflation. Reform spread from industry and agriculture to the banking sector as well. Agricultural reform was the most pronounced success; from repeatedly being close to famine in early 1988, Vietnam became the world's third largest rice exporter in 1989.³² Unlike French activity elsewhere in Asia (where Japanese, US and the NIEs are dominant), the French level of FDI in Vietnam ranks it among the strongest players in Vietnam, where it is the largest non-Asian investor (Table 6.1)

French efforts at making an economic impact in Vietnam have reaped qualified success. French exports to the East Asian region are strong in pharmaceuticals, luxury sectors (eg. fashion, cosmetics, wine), aeronautics, aerospace, weapon sales, and heavy infrastructure. These are mostly products that the Vietnamese are ill able to afford. Despite a population of 80 million (the second largest among the ASEAN-10 after Indonesia), the market for French goods in Vietnam is small (and practically non-existent in the rest of Indochina). The growing consumer market (motor-cycles, home electronics and appliances) has been cornered by Asian companies— chiefly from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and increasingly, China - which sell products better adapted to Vietnamese needs and tastes, and at lower costs compared to European companies,

³⁰ *East Asian Affairs*, "Coup de pouce de Mitterrand aux industriels français", 3 February 1993.

³¹ Henrich Dahm, *French and Japanese economic relations with Vietnam since 1975*, Surrey: Curzon/Institute of Asian Affairs Hamburg, 1999, pp.38-40, 71-74 and 128.

³² Masahide Shibusawa, Zakaria Haji Ahmad and Brian Bridges, *Pacific Asia in the 1990s*, London: Routledge/RIIA, 1992, pp.120-122. See also Gabriel Kolko, *Vietnam: Anatomy of a Peace*, London and New York: Routledge, 1997.

while the Russians have long been dominant in, and continue to dominate the Vietnamese arms market.

Table 6.1: Accumulated Foreign Investments in Vietnam, 1988-2000

(Licenses awarded and ongoing projects)

Country	No. of Projects	Licenses awarded (US\$ billion)	Percentage of Total
1. Singapore	236	6.7	18.4%
2. Taiwan	618	4.9	13.7%
3. Japan	301	3.9	10.7%
4. South Korea	260	3.1	8.5%
5. Hong Kong	208	2.7	7.4%
6. France	108	1.8	4.9%
7. BV Islands	101	1.8	4.9%
8. Russia	34	1.6	4.4%
9. Netherlands	40	1.2	3.3%
10. UK	33	1.2	3.3%
11. Malaysia	79	1.0	2.7%
12. USA	107	0.9	2.5%
Sub-Total	2125	30.0	84.9%
13. Others	494	6.4	15.1%
Total	2619	36.40	100.0%

Source: MPI-Vietnam Investment Review, and French Embassy Mission Economique de Hanoi, *Les investissements étrangers au Vietnam en 2000*, January 2001.

The first of the three inter-related assumptions underpinning French investment in Vietnam is that abiding historical ties and the force of habit would favour French companies. This is fuelled by the colonial factor of Vietnam having been an important trading partner and supplier of raw materials to metropolitan France in the past. Many French companies have relations that date back to colonial times, eg. Banque Indosuez, Banque Nationale de Paris, PSA Peugeot, Citroën, or never left the country, eg. Air France, Roussel, Uclaf, Rhône-Poulenc.³³ In the early 1990s, French companies assumed that past ties, including habits of buying quality French products, and the positive orientation of French-trained local élites (the *évolués*), would help them to regain an important place in the Vietnamese market. In addition, the *Việt kiều* (Overseas Vietnamese) community in France maintains close contacts with relatives in Vietnam and regularly exchange information and goods. Thus French products have always been

³³ Interview with Mr David Phan Than, President of Overseas Vietnamese Businessmen's Association (OVIBA), Ho Chi Minh City, 27 January 2003. See also Dahm 99:72-73.

available in Vietnam and kept a good reputation despite the wars and US-led Western embargo. In the pharmaceuticals industry for example, Roussel, Uclaf and Rhône-Poulenc never left the country and continued to produce antibiotics, anti-malarial and veterinary products which became dominant in the Vietnamese market. In 1979, just four year after Vietnam's reunification, a joint venture agreement was reached with the Ministry of Health's General Pharmaceuticals Company, with the equity at 51:49 in favour of the local partner. Due to their excellent reputation³⁴ and their early market entry, French companies have captured some 75% of the Vietnamese pharmaceuticals market. French government support for medical students to study in France and funding for the health industries such as the Heart Institute in Ho Chi Minh City, has helped to sustain a market for French drugs.³⁵

The second assumption - that Vietnamese decision-makers would favour French products and services - has been vindicated by fewer success stories. Qualified success has been seen mainly in the effective French leveraging of good political relations to seal *grands contrats*. The first foreign company to be granted an oil exploration license (in 1988) was French state oil company Total, which entered a joint venture with Petrovietnam.³⁶ This was however terminated after three unsuccessful years of exploration in the Gulf of Tongkin. The third assumption is the lingering view of Vietnam in some minds as a strategic bridgehead from which to conquer markets in Laos, Cambodia and the rest of Southeast Asia. French companies were among the first and largest investors in Vietnam. In 1988, four French companies invested a total of US\$63.3 million (26.5% of the total investment of all countries that year). The two largest foreign investments in Vietnam that year were by French state companies: an exploration project by the oil company, Total, and Bull's joint venture for hardware and software production.³⁷ Having failed to penetrate other markets in the Asia-Pacific, many French companies saw Vietnam as their best chance to build a presence in a dynamic and rapidly growing region in which they were weak. They hoped for "spill-over" effects to Cambodia and Laos, and viewed Vietnam as an important link in their

³⁴ The Vietnamese respect for French medical scientists and research is so high that the only street names in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City that have not been "Vietnamised" by the communists are those named after the French scientists Calmette and Pasteur.

³⁵ Dahm 99:127.

³⁶ Elf-Aquitaine tried to start oil exploration activities in Vietnam in 1982 but was rebuffed by the Vietnamese government.

³⁷ Dahm 99:89.

“return to Asia” strategy by making an early market entry.³⁸ French banks played a major role in bringing international capital to Vietnam, starting with a financing project for the Metropole Hanoi and later becoming banker and financial advisor to Nestlé, Perrier-Vittel, Elf Atochem, Novartis and Shell.³⁹ With tourism being one of Vietnam’s boom industries and France as one of the top sources of tourists to Vietnam, it is not surprising that French companies are investing heavily in major hotel and leisure projects. The French hotel chain Accor, one of the first foreign companies to risk a major hotel project in 1989- the historic five-star Metropole Hotel in Hanoi which opened in March 1992- and whose restoration and expansion was made possible by the finance of several French banks. French-Vietnamese cultural cooperation (Part II of this chapter), eg. the biennial *Festival Huê*, also brings in its wake important economic spinoffs for French economic interests in tourism, hotels, etc.

b) High Investment vs. Declining French Trade position

French economic activity in Vietnam is concentrated in the south. 78% of French investments are found in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) and the three surrounding provinces of Dong Nai, Binh Duong and Baria-Vung Tau.⁴⁰ Here, France ranks as one of the top foreign investors (Table 6.2). This region roughly corresponds to France’s first colonial presence in Southeast Asia region when it made Cochinchina a French colony in 1859. In November 2002, 130 French companies employing 10,000 people were found in the HCMC area.

Table 6.2 The Largest Investors in Ho Chi Minh City, 1988-2001

	US\$ million	Percentage of Total
Hong Kong	1773.20	19.45%
Taiwan	1726.40	10.49%
Singapore	1462.20	9.93%
France	888.10	6.69%
Korea	711.10	5.74%
Japan	640.20	5.49%
UK	552.20	5.01%

Source: French Embassy Mission Economique de Ho Chi Minh Ville, *Les Investissements directs étrangers dans la région de Ho Chi Minh Ville*, Version no.1, 15 February 2003, p.2.

³⁸ Dahm 99:73.

³⁹ Dahm 128.

⁴⁰ French Embassy Mission Economique de Ho Chi Minh Ville, *Les Investissements directs étrangers dans la région de Ho Chi Minh Ville*, Version no.1, 15 February 2003.

While French FDI in Vietnam compares favourably to other Asian investors, it is still very modest compared to the amounts of French FDI flowing into the economies of Vietnam's neighbours: Japan, Singapore, China, South Korea, and even Thailand (Chapter Three, Table 3.1). The bilateral trade perspective is sobering. In 1993, French trade with Vietnam was only about the level of French trade with Malta.⁴¹

Vietnamese exports to France were chiefly in three categories: food and farm products, leather products, textiles and clothings, and were buoyed by a series of EU–Vietnam trade agreements from 1991. Bilateral trade increased eight-fold from 1991 to €1.1 billion in 2001 and the trade balance - in favour of France up till 1995 turned to Vietnam's favour in 1997.⁴² French exports to Vietnam have *contracted* in recent years, partly as a result of the 1997 Asian economic crisis. The value of French exports to Vietnam fell by over 50% to FF1.8 billion in 1998. In 1998, France was the 8th largest source of imports into Vietnam, far behind Singapore (21%), Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Hong Kong (4.5%). Its position fell to 12th by 2001. In fact, the French share of Vietnam's trade fell from 4.5% in 1995 to 3% in 1998 and 2% in 2001.⁴³ The 1996 goal - declared in Singapore by Chirac - to increase the French share of Asian trade from 2% to 6% by 2006, has thus suffered a serious setback in what has hitherto been traditionally the strongest market for French goods and services in Asia.

c) French aid to Vietnam

France was at the vanguard in extending bilateral aid to Vietnam and is today its second aid donor after Japan. The *doi moi* economic renovation programme launched in 1986 by the Sixth Party Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) had been prompted by political and economic reforms in the Soviet bloc that reduced assistance to Vietnam. Following the collapse of Vietnam's economic dependence on the Soviet Union and COMECON and the demobilization of half a million soldiers after Vietnam withdrew its troops from Cambodia in 1989, France was the first major Western country

⁴¹ *Le Monde*, 14 September 1993.

⁴² France's trade deficit was FF1.3 billion in 1998. French Senate (Michel Caldaguès, ed), *Rapport fait au nom de la Commission des Affaires étrangères, de la défense et des forces armées sur le projet de loi autorisant la ratification de la Convention relative à l'Entraide judiciaire en matière civile entre la République française et la République socialiste du Vietnam*, Sénat No.282 (session ordinaire de 1999-2000), Annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 22 mars 2000, p.9

⁴³ French Senate (Caldaguès 2000), p.9; Dorient 2002:185; and MAE, "France-Vietnam: Données générales et relations bilatérales avec le Vietnam" 25/10/02 ed., on Quai d'Orsay website .

to resume aid to Hanoi.⁴⁴ France's resumption of aid (in 1989) was followed by Australia (1991) and Japan (1992).⁴⁵ French banks were active in Vietnam even earlier: they were among the few financial institutions to take the risk of confirming letters of credit issued in Vietnam since 1986, when Vietnam was still embroiled in the Cambodian conflict. Also in 1991, French banks and Standard Chartered in Singapore were the only banks to give (silently) confirmation to letters of credit after the collapse of the Soviet Union – Vietnam's chief source of foreign finance.⁴⁶

France attempted to amplify its influence in Vietnam from the late 1980s through policy leadership in a variety of multilateral financial channels, in particular the IMF and the Club de Paris. Vietnam's friendship with the Soviet Union and invasion of Cambodia in 1979 had been at the cost of good relations with China and the United States. When Soviet bankrolling of the Vietnamese economy ended with the collapse of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) in 1991, Vietnam was forced to look to the World Bank, IMF and the ADB for aid.⁴⁷ However, Vietnam had defaulted in 1985 on US\$138 million debt repayment to the IMF and had been classified as "insolvent" by the IMF.⁴⁸ Against the US veto in the IMF until 1993, Vietnam's status could not be raised in the international fund-raising market. This had the effect of blocking third countries from extending new loans to Vietnam. France unsuccessfully applied pressure on Washington to end the US embargo and veto on Vietnam receiving multilateral financial institutional credit. A French bank in 1993 organised a bridging loan to settle Vietnam's US\$145 million debt to the IMF. The "Club de Paris" of donor countries, and an inner "Friends of Vietnam" circle led by France and Japan held its first meeting in Paris in November 1993 to consider ways of helping Vietnam get around the US veto to spread out repayments and raise money for economic reforms.

France has been very generous in its bilateral aid programmes to Vietnam. French largesse to Vietnam is noteworthy and goes against the grain of two overall trends in French aid over the last decade: a shrinking Overseas Development Assistance

⁴⁴ *Oxford Analytica*, "Vietnam: Economic Orientation", 17 February 1993.

⁴⁵ French Senate (Adrien Gouteyron et al, eds), *Rapport d'Information fait au nom de la Commission des Affaires culturelles, à la suite d'une mission d'information effectuée en République socialiste du Vietnam, sur la francophonie et l'enseignement du français*, Sénat No.1 (session ordinaire de 1997-1998), Annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 1er octobre 1997.

⁴⁶ Dahm 99: 107.

⁴⁷ Udai Bhanu Singh, "Vietnam's Security Perspectives", *Strategic Analysis*, XXIII/9, December 1999.

⁴⁸ *Le Monde*, 15 July 1992.

(ODA) budget (which has fallen from 0.7% of French GDP at the start of the 1990s to just 0.31% in 2001), and a sharply decreasing budget for Asian countries. This anomaly can only be explained by the political importance attached to Vietnam. The generous aid is linked to publicly stated French *national* objectives in Vietnam: “solidarity, influence and economic presence.”⁴⁹ Vietnam is one of the highest-priority targets in French international aid, which is strongly biased towards ex-French colonies. In the first half of the 1980s, Vietnam was the only country to escape the budget cuts in the “scientific, cultural and technical cooperation” aid programmes of the Quai d’Orsay⁵⁰ - when Vietnam was still occupying Cambodia. Aid to Vietnam escaped budget cuts in the 1990s and Vietnam continued rising as a rising priority country for French aid. A 1994 report of the French Economic and Social Council, noting that France enjoyed strong historical links to mainland Southeast Asia (the Indochinese countries, Thailand and Myanmar), recommended that France should take advantage of the economic and social transformations linked to their market openings by increasing French exchanges with countries in the region. French assistance in the *domaines stratégiques* of government and legal cooperation, cultural and technical training were particularly stressed.⁵¹ The primary focus of these efforts was of course Vietnam.

The French ODA budget fell in both absolute and percentage terms, from nearly €7.2 billion euros or 0.64% of GDP in 1994 to under €4.5 billion 0.32% of GDP in 2000 (Chapter 3, Table 3.2). Despite these cutbacks that divided a smaller pie of French aid between more countries and with the largest chunk of aid going to French-speaking North Africa and sub-saharan Africa and only 9% to Asia, French assistance to Vietnam continued to grow in the 1990s.⁵² In addition, France gave Vietnam FF45 million worth of aid to build a new convention centre and sent 125 limousines to Vietnam for the 1997 Francophonie summit in Hanoi. France also set up bilingual (French-Vietnamese) schools and helped to train translators for the summit. It was then estimated that there were only some 50,000 French speakers in a population of 77 million - less than 0.1% of the population, and Paris aimed to raise this percentage to

⁴⁹ See section on “France” in EC Delegation in Hanoi, *European Union Development Cooperation Activities in Vietnam 2001*, p.57.

⁵⁰ Godement 95:965.

⁵¹ Jean Billet, *Les Relations Extérieures de la France avec le Vietnam, le Cambodge, Le Laos, la Thaïlande et la Birmanie*, Rapport du Conseil Economique et Sociale, No.CESX93001V, 12 March 1994.

⁵² China, India, and Indonesia had figured among the top 10 recipients of French development aid in 1988-89, but by 1998-99, Vietnam was the only Asian country remaining on that list. Dorient 2002:182-3.

5%⁵³. The French government paid for 1500 language training classes and opened the first French language schools in Vietnam since the last French lycées in Saigon were closed in 1975.

French aid to Vietnam is quite unapologetic in its stress on unilateral French efforts and *national* goals rather than a collective EU programme based on common European objectives such as the promotion of human rights. The five sectoral priorities in French aid to Vietnam are in judicial reform, modernization of Vietnam's research and higher education system, cultural cooperation, economic reform to promote interactions with French companies, and the reduction of poverty and social dislocation.⁵⁴ In 1997, Vietnam became the second recipient of aid from Paris⁵⁵. Vietnam was the largest recipient of French "scientific, cultural and technical cooperation" aid in Asia, and the fourth largest in the world after the three Maghreb countries.⁵⁶ With the absorption of the Ministère de la Coopération (ex-Colonial Ministry) by the Quai d'Orsay in 1998, the number of aid-receiving countries in the *zone de solidarité prioritaire* (ZSP) rose from 37 to 61. In 1999, Vietnam was promoted to ZSP status.⁵⁷ By 2002, Vietnam had become the largest recipient of French ODA in the world, ahead of even the Maghreb countries.⁵⁸

d) EU Trade and Cooperation Assistance to Vietnam

In contrast to generous French benevolence towards Vietnam, EU policies have concentrated on the humanitarian repatriation of refugees to Vietnam (early 1990s), market access and development cooperation (mid-1990s onwards). Diplomatic relations between the EU and Vietnam were normalized in November 1990. Between 1990 and 1995, the EU was represented in Vietnam by a Project Office whose main task was to repatriate 200,000 Vietnamese refugees who had fled the country. Between 1989 and 1996, more than €110 million was provided for this purpose.⁵⁹

⁵³ *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde*, 14 November 1997.

⁵⁴ Section on "France" in EC Delegation, *EU Development Cooperation Activities in Vietnam 2001*, esp. pp.57-58.

⁵⁵ *Le Monde*, 14 November 1997.

⁵⁶ See report by the Cultural Affairs Commission of the French Senate in Gouteyron 1997, op cit.

⁵⁷ The co-existence of economic cooperation activities, ZSP and Agence française du développement (AFD) programmes is exceptional and reserved only for the Maghreb countries, South Africa and Vietnam (EC Delegation, "France" entry, p.57).

⁵⁸ *Vietnam Economic News*, Vol.2/No.3, 14 January 2003, p.2.

⁵⁹ European Commission, *EC-Vietnam Country Strategy Paper 2002-2006*, Brussels, 15 May 2002.

Indochina is of negligible trade importance to the EU, and the work of the EC Delegation and other EC offices in Vietnam reflects an emphasis on development cooperation and humanitarian aid.⁶⁰ It was France that called for the EC to sign a cooperation agreement with Vietnam in 1995, similar to the one the EC had with ASEAN and China. (Vietnam formally acceded to the EC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement on 1 May 1999.⁶¹) The EC Delegation to Vietnam was officially opened in 1996 and since then, policy towards Vietnam has been led by development priorities. The switch of the EU's priority in Vietnam from refugee relief to the promotion of trade and development cooperation was heralded by the Commission's 1994 "New Asia Strategy" (NAS) paper. This outlined three clear economic goals of the EU in Asia:

- i) to benefit from the economic opportunities and to respond to the economic challenges in the region which contains the world's fastest growing countries, and which could represent a quarter and a third of the world economy by the year 2000;
- ii) to integrate into the open, market-based world trading system those Asian countries, such as China, India or Vietnam which are moving from state controls to market-oriented economies; and
- iii) to assist in the enormous problem of poverty alleviation.⁶²

The third goal was the immediate one applied by the EU to Vietnam. Financial and technical assistance for development in Asia (and Latin America) has only been available on a systematic basis since 1976 when the Community introduced a budget line for non-associated developing countries, designed to benefit the non-ACP states and those not covered by the financial protocols attached to the agreements with Mediterranean countries. In terms of the humanitarian aid budget, Asian states were allocated 123 million ECU in 1998, out of a global budget of 936 million ECU. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Vietnam and Pakistan were the chief beneficiaries.⁶³ Between 1986 and 1998, Afghanistan (€244 million), Bangladesh (€112 million), Vietnam (€91 million) and Cambodia (€74 million) received the majority of humanitarian assistance in Asia.⁶⁴ Aside from humanitarian aid, the EU is assisting Vietnam's market reforms, and promoting bilateral trade. European-level programmes

⁶⁰ Interview with Ambassador Frédéric Baron, Head of EC Delegation in Hanoi, 16 January 2003.

⁶¹ "The EU's relations with Vietnam: Overview", European Commission website, http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/Vietnam/intro/index.htm, accessed 16 February 2002.

⁶² See NAS 1994, section IV, pp.10-11.

⁶³ Hazel Smith 2002:207.

⁶⁴ Hazel Smith 2002:209.

have included the EU market transition programme in Vietnam. This is part of the larger EU effort at providing expertise and policy advice to the “ex-state trading companies of Asia which have embarked on structural reform, such as China, Mongolia, Vietnam or Laos, to assist them to set up the institutions, policies and laws to make a smooth transition to market-based economies”.⁶⁵

Following the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1990, the EC granted greater market access for Vietnamese goods through a series of EC-Vietnam Textiles and Clothing Agreements (1993, 1997 and 2000). The European Commission’s CSP on Vietnam for the period 2002-2006, has a budget of €162 million and focuses on two priorities: human development (rural development for the poorest provinces and education support) and the integration of Vietnam into the international economy by assisting reforms towards a market economy.

Table 6.3: EU Aid to Vietnam (Member States and Commission)

Country	Cumulative commitments ⁴		Cumulative disbursements ⁴		Disbursements 2001	
	€ thousand	% ¹	€ thousand	% ²	€ thousand	% ³
Austria	1,945	0.07%	1,527	0.15%	1,527	0.51%
Belgium	89,410	3.44%	51,724	5.22%	20,015	6.71%
Denmark	363,302	13.97%	147,226	14.85%	48,654	16.31%
Finland	145,914	5.61%	120,105	12.11%	5,006	1.68%
France	493,978	19.00%	179,755	18.13%	76,037	25.49%
Germany	417,978	16.04%	182,104	18.36%	25,425	8.52%
Italy	37,464	1.44%	4,242	0.43%	1,261.34	0.42%
Luxembourg	42,374	1.63%	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	143,536	5.52%	57,586	5.81%	24,894	8.34%
Spain	83,000	3.19%	26,855	2.71%	9,717	3.26%
Sweden	308,790	11.88%	132,218	13.33%	34,096	11.43%
UK	206,455	7.94%	25,629	2.55%	24,815	8.32%
Commission	266,894	10.26%	62,975	6.35%	26,875	9.01%
TOTAL	2,600,272	100%	991,587	100%	298,323	100%

(1) cumulative commitment per country/ Total of cumulative commitment

(2) cumulative disbursement per country/ Total of cumulative disbursement

(3) Disbursement 2001 per country / Total disbursement 2001

(4) On-going and pipeline projects only

Source: EC Delegation in Hanoi, *European Union Development Cooperation Activities in Vietnam 2001*, May 2002, Table 3 on p.3.

⁶⁵ NAS, 1994, p.16.

The EU accounts for almost 20% of all ODA to Vietnam. In terms of cumulative commitments, the EU is the third largest donor in Vietnam, after Japan and the World Bank. In terms of total disbursement up to December 2001, the EU is the second largest donor after Japan.⁶⁶ France's cumulative commitments to Vietnam make up one-fifth of total EU aid to Vietnam (Table 6.3), a share that has been increasing in recent years.

Overall Trends

To summarise, French economic policies in Vietnam since the mid-1980s have been based on familiarity with the Vietnamese market, an unbroken long-term presence (at least in the HCMC region) for up to a 100 years for some French companies, as well as politically motivated *grands contrats*. The French have invested heavily on the success and continued viability of Vietnam's mixed economy as set into motion by *doi moi* since 1986. There is also an element of post-colonial nostalgic sentiment which explains an unexpectedly high level of French government and MNC investments and representation offices in Vietnam, out of proportion to actual French assets in the country and in other countries in Southeast Asia.⁶⁷

French trade and investment levels in Vietnam are modest relative to France's total international trade and investments, and decreasing proportionately as a result of Vietnam's rapidly growing economy, exporting power and integration in the regional and international economy. Cognizant of Vietnam's rapid economic growth averaging 8% every year between 1991 and 1997 and trade with the world exponentially increasing since 1991, France seems to have placed its bets on Vietnam becoming the next Asian tiger. Vietnam weathered the Asian economic crisis very well and continued to post growth rates above 5% in 2000 and 2001. Although its per capita GNP was only US\$370 in 2000 (the World Bank puts Vietnam near the bottom, 167 out of 206 in the ranking of the world's poorest nations),⁶⁸ its purchasing parity power (PPP) in 2001 was estimated to be US\$1860.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ EC Delegation in Hanoi, *European Union Development Cooperation Activities in Vietnam 2001*, May 2002, p.8.

⁶⁷ Interview with Dr Martin Albani, Executive Director, European Business Information Centre (EBIC), Hi Chi Minh City, 28 January 2003.

⁶⁸ Frederick Z. Brown, "President Clinton's Visit to Vietnam", *Asian Update Series*, Asia Society, November 2000.

⁶⁹ MAE, "France-Vietnam: Données générales", 25/10/02 ed.

Grid 6.1 Economic Policies in Vietnam, 1985-2001

	85			90			95			99/01		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
F			♦ ^a			♦			♦			♦
GB	♦				♦ ^b	→			♦			♦
D		♦			♦ ^b				♦			♦
EU	♦				♦ ^c	→			♦ ^c			♦

- = Cautious or anti-Vietnam policy by Government/EC

0 = Government passive, business community left on its own

+ = Pro-Investment and Trade policy by Government/EC

^a The French government and business community have throughout the 1980s up to the present been consistently active in engaging Vietnam economically. They and their Japanese counterparts were the only major countries in the West to trade actively with Vietnam and give generous aid. Most other non-Asian countries waited for *doi moi* in 1986, Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia in 1989, or the lifting of the US embargo in 1994.

^b Britain and Germany were among the Western countries which entered the Vietnamese market after Vietnam's economic opening and 1989 military withdrawal from Cambodia.

^c EC-Vietnam Textiles Agreement signed in 1993, and Trade and Cooperation Agreement in 1995.

The convergence of economic policies between the major EU Member States and the Commission (Grid 6.1) after *doi moi* and Vietnam's diplomatic rehabilitation after 1989 is a result of common interest in encouraging Vietnam (as in China) along the path of market reforms, rather than an act of policy coordination or a conscious common policy. This is most evident with regard to aid policy. Vietnam is today the largest recipient of French ODA in the world. French aid has been especially generous in the fields of education, French-language training and agriculture. These ODA programmes are aimed at strategic areas related to national French objectives and the advancement of the over-arching objective of *relations privilégiées* with Vietnam. Hence other objectives pursued by other EU member states, eg. human rights by the Nordic Member States (Part III of this chapter), are quietly ignored by France.

II Political-security Objectives

Despite the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu and the Cold War, France has consistently sought good relations with Hanoi as the key power centre in Indochina since 1954. French governments have dealt extensively with the communist government in Hanoi for almost half a century. "Vietnam ghosts" did not bedevil French relations with Hanoi. The French preferred Hanoi to the pro-American Saigon regime under Ngo

Dinh Diem, and were prepared to deal with the communists, whom they expected to win in the event of the reunification elections scheduled for 1956.⁷⁰ The French tried between 1954 and 1975, in spite of the Cold War, to pursue a pragmatic, policy towards the two Vietnams. They maintained diplomatic missions in both Hanoi (raised to “Delegation-general” level in 1966) and Saigon. A friendly exchange of letters between De Gaulle and Ho Chi Minh, and De Gaulle’s extremely critical attitude towards widening US war aims in 1966, could not conceal France’s powerlessness in influencing the war, but France was quick to recognise the North in 1973 and to build ties with a post-1975 reunified Vietnam.

As seen in the first part of this chapter, nostalgia for the French colonial presence in *Indochine* and the desire to revive French cultural and economic influence in East Asia using Indochina as a familiar base, have informed French economic policy and generous French ODA programmes in Vietnam. The second part would argue that the positive though somewhat paternalistic French attitude towards Vietnam is also an essential component in political relations. This is seen in French efforts in portraying itself as Vietnam’s closest Western partner and ally in Vietnam’s internal reforms, and in assisting Vietnam’s integration in the *Francophonie* and the wider international community. Vietnam has also been critical to French attempts since the 1980s to carve out a diplomatic-security role in Indochinese (and wider Southeast Asian) affairs.

1979-1989: A Special Relationship during Vietnam’s isolation?

France and Vietnam appear to share a particular, close relationship characterised by warmth between national élites. This relationship is however, not ‘special’ in the sense that the concept is often used to characterize, for example, US-UK relations, as ‘two nations divided by a common language’. Such “special relationships”⁷¹ are underscored by shared historical roots, psychological proximity between the populace, social ties, and governmental policies that consistently express preference, cooperation and friendship. They are recognized and declared as ‘special’ by both parties, are long-

⁷⁰ Frey, pp.20-22.

⁷¹ The term “special relationship” was first used in contemporary international relations by Winston Churchill at his Iron Curtain speech in Fulton, Missouri in March 1946. In that speech, Churchill called for a special relationship between the British Empire and the United States, to prevent another world war. See John Bayliss, *Anglo-American Defence Relations 1939-1980: The Special Relationship*, London: Macmillan, 1981; Alan P Dobson, *The Politics of the Anglo-American Economic Special Relationship*, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1988.

standing, and have the power to endure crises.⁷² There is also a lack of extensive transgovernmentalism, involving the inter-penetration of policy-making between Hanoi and Paris.⁷³ After French colonialism in Indochina ended in 1954, US involvement in South Vietnam (up to 1975), and Chinese (up to 1978) and Soviet (up to 1989) involvement with the Hanoi government certainly made stronger cases for a “special relationship”. France-Vietnam relations lack just such a fraternal character, and do not possess the intimacy of a longstanding and mutually recognized special relationship between the peoples of both countries.

Aside from an unusually high level of French involvement in Vietnamese affairs during the latter’s decade of international isolation (1979 to 1989), Vietnam has not responded in kind. Nevertheless, there is long-standing habit by French statesmen to portray bilateral relations as a *partenariat privilégié*. French leaders often speak of a “special relationship” with Vietnam and a special role for France in Indochina. De Gaulle in his 1966 speech in Phnom Penh criticised the US’ policy of military escalation in Vietnam, called on the US to withdraw its troops from South Vietnam, and urged a political solution based on the 1954 Geneva Accords.⁷⁴ In the first presidential visit to Vietnam since 1945, Mitterrand declared in 1993 the aspiration for “special relations of the type France enjoys with Algeria”.⁷⁵ Foreign Minister Alain Juppé spoke in 1994 of intimacy, familiarity and an “affinity and complicity of spirit”⁷⁶ while Chirac in 1997 called for a *partenariat privilégié*.⁷⁷

For much of the 1975-1994 period, Vietnam was an archetypal isolated state, ostracized from most international political-diplomatic fora and denied full participation in international financial institutions because of the US embargo.⁷⁸ In the four broad areas of isolation identified by Geldenhuys - political and diplomatic, economic,

⁷² See Lily Feldman’s definition in her *The Special Relationship between West Germany and Israel*, Boston: George Allen and Unwin, 1984, pp.249-52, 272.

⁷³ Richard E. Neustadt, *Alliance Politics*, New York: 1970.

⁷⁴ “Allocution prononcée à la réunion populaire de Phnom-Penh”, 1 September 1966, in *Charles de Gaulle: Discours et Messages vers le terme janvier 1966-avril 1969*, Paris: Plon, 1970, pp.74-78.

⁷⁵ Patrice de Beer, “La visite du Président français au Vietnam”, *Le Monde*, 11 February 1993.

⁷⁶ Alain Juppé, “Allocution du ministre des affaires étrangères lors du dîner offert par le ministre vietnamien des affaires étrangères,” Hanoi, 22 November 1994.

⁷⁷ Jean-Claude Pomonti, “Jacques Chirac a appelé de ses vœux un partenariat privilégié avec Hanoi”, *Le Monde*, 14 November 1997.

⁷⁸ Deon Geldenhuys, *Isolated States: A Comparative Analysis*, Cambridge” Cambridge University Press, 1990.

military, and social-cultural⁷⁹ - Vietnam fitted the mould of a 'pariah state'.⁸⁰ In its immediate neighbourhood, it was shunned by anti-communist ASEAN, and enjoyed few trading links with its neighbours. From 1979-1990, Vietnam was shunned not only by the US, but was fiercely condemned by ASEAN, China and the EU over its invasion and occupation of Cambodia. The bridges Vietnam built with geographically distant but ideologically close countries, in particular the Soviet Union and COMECON, which provided most of Vietnam's political, military, economic and ideological support partially compensated for its isolation. In this context, the role of France as a 'bridge' between Vietnam and the wider Western world between 1975 and 1994 was thus significant. France acted as a special partner in Vietnam's relations with the international community outside of the Soviet-led communist bloc.

a) French post-colonial responsibility towards Vietnam

François Godement has noted that French interest in East Asia has waxed and waned several times since 1954. I would argue that while this may be true for the region in general, the French have long recognised Vietnam's strategic value and have been consistent in their relations with Vietnam. Unlike the US after 1975, France adopted a pragmatic policy and sought to build a privileged relationship with the government in Hanoi, even when the Vietnamese in 1975-78 opted for rapid unification and the socialist integration of South Vietnam, alignment with the Soviet Union and the establishment of quasi-total domination over the whole Indochinese peninsula. French criticism of the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia in 1979, encouragement of the Cambodian factions to use Paris as a venue for negotiations, and French pressure for a neutral and independent Cambodia, were conveyed without overly antagonising the leadership in Hanoi.⁸¹

The nostalgia, colonial history, and bridgehead factors presented in the previous section on French economic interactions with Vietnam, are also present in diplomatic relations. There is a post-colonial sentimental, almost paternalistic attitude towards Vietnam and the nostalgic idea of *Indochine* as a special French responsibility. Based on the relatively low levels of French trade and investment in Vietnam compared with

⁷⁹ See Geldenhuys, ch.1.

⁸⁰ See R.E. Harkavy, "The Pariah State Syndrome", *Orbis*; 21/3, 1977:623-649; and Richard K. Betts, "Paranoids, Pygmies, Pariahs and Non-Proliferation", *Foreign Policy*, 26 (Spring 1977), pp.122-146.

⁸¹ The Treasury even blocked a payment of FF200 million in aid to Vietnam in December 1981. Godement 90:190-91.

China, Japan and the rest of East Asia, it is clear that the economic imperatives usually associated with East Asia - and spelt out in the Commission's 1994 New Asia Strategy document (chapter three) - do not readily apply to French relations with Vietnam. In this regard, French political objectives in Vietnam are based on a more long-term assessment of Vietnam's current geostrategic and future economic significance as a buffer state connecting Northeast Asia (in particular China) to Southeast Asia and ASEAN. A senior Quai d'Orsay official writes that Vietnam is one of France's key interlocutors in ASEAN, one with which France enjoys close relations.⁸² Based on its population, economic potential and strategic location, its role as the key state in Indochina and in relations between China and Southeast Asia has been appreciated since French colonial days.

French efforts at developing economic relations with Vietnam were only limited by the international embargo imposed on Vietnam by the United States. While the EU supported ASEAN, China and the US against the Soviet Union on the issue of Cambodian representation at the UN and publicly condemned Vietnam after its invasion of Cambodia in 1979, the French moderated EU actions against Vietnam and maintained open channels of communication with Hanoi.⁸³ Just as de Gaulle criticized American military escalation in Vietnam after 1965, Mitterrand criticized the American embargo for no longer having a *raison d'être*.⁸⁴

During his state visit to Vietnam (timed to coincide with the sixth Francophonie summit in Hanoi) in November 1997, Chirac noted that the French presence in Asia was strongest in Vietnam, where the French share of Vietnam's trade was 9% compared to an average French share of under 2% in the rest of Asia. As *Le Monde's* Southeast Asia correspondent Jean-Claude Pomonti pointed out, the strategy was to make Vietnam the entry point for French interests in Southeast Asia, and France, that for Vietnamese interests in the EU:

*Le pari est donc clair: le Vietnam est destiné à être la porte de la France au sein de l'ASEAN tout comme la France sera la porte du Vietnam au sein de l'Union européenne.*⁸⁵

⁸² Dorient 2002: 181. Today, French navy ships make ports of call at both Chinese and Vietnamese ports.

⁸³ Dorient 2002: 173-174 and Godement 95.

⁸⁴ *Le Monde*, 11 February 1993.

⁸⁵ Jean-Claude Pomonti, "Jacques Chirac a appelé de ses vœux un partenariat privilégié avec Hanoi", *Le Monde*, 14 November 1997.

ASEAN is seen in Paris today as one of the “four poles” of power in Asia – together with China, Japan and India.⁸⁶ French policy in Southeast Asia, while long centred on Indochina and on Vietnam in particular, has consistently been strategic in using its “soft power” – augmenting its cultural influence throughout Southeast Asia via the promotion of the French language and education. François Godement notes that Mitterrand had a marked tendency in following the precedent of the Fourth Republic (1946-58) to attach a high importance to questions on Indochina. Mitterrand tended to consult Vietnamese leaders as his preferred interlocutors in Southeast Asia, often at the expense of ASEAN states - save Indonesia.⁸⁷ Manfred Mols noted in 1990 when ASEAN comprised six members:

French relations (with ASEAN) are in part a product of its long history in Indochina. The whole of Southeast Asia, beyond only the six ASEAN countries, has thus has a significant place in French foreign policy conceptions, including cultural policy as indicated by the successful activities of the Alliance Française.”⁸⁸

In Southeast Asia, France focuses on Vietnam as a strategic country from which to project French influence. Its strategic cultural policy in the region involves the active promotion of French language and culture among predominantly English-speaking élites. In this regard, Radio France Internationale (RFI) set up a 24-hour broadcasting facility in Hanoi, the first foreign station to be allowed to broadcast from Vietnam, in 1997.⁸⁹ The French government has also sought to boost its profile by sponsoring the broadcast of French-language TV programmes produced by TV5 and RFI in Singapore and Malaysia. A continuation of a strategic cultural presence is evident in the generous support France gave to Vietnam in the Francophonie. France was not only supporting Vietnam’s candidature at the 1995 summit, it also poured in material and personnel resources to help Vietnam host the Francophonie Summit in Hanoi - the first held in Asia – in November 1997. French cultural policy is intended to reinforce and promote an image of France as a cultural power and patron of the arts, beyond the use of the French language. In 2000 and again in 2002, French aid was critical in the Franco-

⁸⁶ Dorient 2002:7.

⁸⁷ Godement 95:962.

⁸⁸ Manfred Mols, “Cooperation with ASEAN”, in Edwards and Regelsberger (eds), *Europe’s Global Links*, London: Pinter, 1990, p.69.

⁸⁹ *Le Monde*, “Radio France Internationale émet en FM sur Hanoi et sa région”, 11 November 1997.

Vietnamese launch of the first biennial Huê Festival, a performing arts festival held in spring in the former imperial city –now a UNESCO world heritage site.⁹⁰

Of course, Vietnam's involvement in the Francophonie is not unproblematic. The Vietnamese government closed down the last French lycée in Hanoi in 1965, and the remaining lycées in Saigon upon reunification in 1975 as western schools were seen as corrupt founts of Western values and opposition to the communist regime. Many Vietnamese who had been sympathetic to French interests fled to South Vietnam or to France and Canada after 1954, and US sympathizers fled after Saigon fell to the Communists in 1975.⁹¹ Although Vietnam has participated in the *Francophonie* since the first summit in 1986, it was by then hardly a French-speaking country. Most of its leaders spoke Russian, English or Chinese as their second language. Vietnam's troubled recent history has made its leaders highly nationalistic and sensitive to suggestions of neo-colonial ties with France. At the first Francophonie summit in 1986, Vietnam was among the countries which objected to French domination, arguing for a "Summit of countries having in common the use of French" rather than *la Francophonie*.⁹²

French ODA's strong emphasis on higher education and training in Vietnam is symptomatic of the very clear national political goals and strategic principles pursued by France. First, it hopes to re-establish a French-speaking élite in Vietnam (on the assumption that this elite would be more sympathetic to French interests). There is a recognition that Vietnam is not and will never become a *francophone* (ie. French-speaking) country on the same level of French linguistic penetration in many of the African countries in the Francophonie. The early optimism at the beginning of the 1990s that Vietnam was "formerly francophone, and would soon become francophone again", had given way to more realistic goals of targeting specific local élite groups in society.⁹³ As such, French resources are deployed to carefully targeted (*ciblé*) groups of professionals and technicians who have the potential to become opinion and political leaders in Vietnam. Second, and related to the first principle is the policy of creating a *francophonie de niche*, a niche of French-speaking élites in key professions. These

⁹⁰ *Le Monde* 18 April 2000.

⁹¹ Louis-Jacques Dorais, "Vietnamese communities in Canada, France and Denmark", *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Jun 1998, Vol.11, No.2, pp.107-125

⁹² Robert Aldrich and John Connell (eds), *France in World Politics*, London: Routledge, 1989; Leruez et al 90:140

⁹³ Interview with Philippe Orliange, Cultural Counsellor, French Embassy in Hanoi, 21 January 2003.

groups include state officials (particularly in law and finance), engineers, lawyers and doctors. For example, half of the Vietnamese doctors trained abroad (3% of the total) receive their training in France. In the academic year 2000-2001, there were 1,472 Vietnamese students in French universities, of which over 30% (some 500) were on French government scholarships. Surveys conducted by the French Embassy in Hanoi revealed that French was still viewed positively as a “language of distinction and of cultural differentiation”⁹⁴.

There are four French Centres in the provinces outside the two metropolises of Hanoi and HCMC - Huê, Danang, Nha Trang and Can Tho. The Alliance Française de Hanoi was inaugurated in November 1991. In the decade 1991-2001, over 150 agreements/Memoranda of Understanding were signed between French and Vietnamese educational establishments and more than 3000 university scholarships were awarded to Vietnamese students. Discussions over the French proposal for a French-language university in Saigon (central Ho Chi Minh City) are ongoing.⁹⁵ The French have had to compete very hard with English-speaking countries to appeal to the growing number of middle-class Vietnamese seeking higher education abroad. Australia (which has an overseas Vietnamese community of some 140,000), the UK and even Singapore are beginning to attract increasing numbers of fee-paying students from Vietnam.⁹⁶

Finally, French relations with Vietnam must take into account the significant human element and reservoir of interest and goodwill among foreign policy élites in Paris. French benevolence towards Vietnam is not simply borne by post-colonial nostalgia. France is home to over 300,000 Overseas Vietnamese, the oldest and second largest *Việt kiều* community in the world.⁹⁷ As recently as the 1990s, Vietnam was the top source of children available to French families for adoption.⁹⁸ Many Franco-

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ A campus of five hectares had been earmarked in Saigon for this university, and the funding was supposed to be shared 50/50 between the French government and the Vietnamese private sector. However, representatives of the Overseas Vietnamese Business Association (OVIBA) told me that they were uncertain about the long-term feasibility of this project. Interview in HCMC, 27 January 2003.

⁹⁶ Philip J. Eldridge, *The Politics of Human Rights in Southeast Asia*, London: Routledge, 2002, p.191. Australia attracted 4000 Vietnamese students in 1999, over three-quarters of whom were on private funding.

⁹⁷ MAE, “France-Vietnam: Données générales et relations bilatérales avec le Vietnam” 25/10/02 ed., on Quai d’Orsay website; Dorais 98.

⁹⁸ Since the early 1990s, France received half of the Vietnamese babies put up for adoption. Between 1995 and 1998, 5133 Vietnamese babies were adopted by French families. *Le Monde* 4 July 2001. Jacques and Bernadette Chirac’s third daughter, Anh Dao, is among the thousands of Vietnamese “boat

Vietnamese have been successfully integrated into French society and occupy significant positions in French decision-making.⁹⁹

b) Vietnam as entrée for a French security role in Southeast Asia?

Historically, Vietnam's strategic position at the confluence of great civilizations and empires has made it a battlefield in the international relations of the region. After all, French colonialism in Indochina was founded on French strategic objectives in gaining a colonial foothold in the Far East in order to benefit from trade with China and Southeast Asia. Under the unequal treaties imposed on the Qing government following the 1900 Boxer Rebellion, the French had won concessions in and trading rights in four Chinese cities (Shanghai, Canton, Wuhan, Tianjin) but Indochina served as their permanent colonial trading base in East Asia. At the turn of the 20th century, the strategic position of Indochina was exploited by Sun Yat-sen's Chinese revolutionaries as a base for preparations leading to the 1911 revolution that ended the Qing dynasty. The Japanese used Vietnam as a launching pad in their conquest of European colonies in Southeast Asia, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) extended men and matériel to the Viet Minh in South Vietnam between 1949 and 1954, and the US saw communist Vietnam in Cold War terms as a front for the expansion of communism to the whole of Southeast Asia.

The French continue to see Vietnam as a strategic *tremplin* (launch-pad) in Southeast Asia. France has leveraged on its historical ties with Vietnam, by far the most populous state in Indochina, as a bridgehead for French interests in Southeast Asia. Despite losing the First Indochina War (1946-54) against the Viet Minh and the partition of Vietnam at the 1954 Geneva Conference, many French economic assets were maintained in Vietnam. France was an influential economic force in Saigon, de Gaulle spoke up strongly against superpower rivalry in Indochina, and France played a mediating role in the negotiations leading to the resolution of the Second Indochina War (1965-73 'Vietnam War') and Third Indochina War (1979-89, which ended with Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia and UN nation-rebuilding and elections in

people" naturalized in France. She was 18 when the Chiracs took her into their care in 1979. *Le Monde*, 15 February 2002.

⁹⁹ The current Head of the EC Delegation in Hanoi, Frédéric Baron, is a Frenchman who has Việt kiều roots on the maternal side of his family. Margie Sudre, the French Minister for the Francophonie in Alain Juppé's cabinet (1995-97), also traces Vietnamese ancestry.

Cambodia). Foreign Minister Roland Dumas in 1989 noted that France's geographical distance from Indochina and lack of direct interest in the region allowed it to play a leading mediating role in the Cambodian conflict.¹⁰⁰

In his visits to Hanoi in February 1990 and November 1991 before and after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, Dumas stressed to the Vietnamese leadership that France was committed to Vietnam's accession to ASEAN and its integration in the wider international system. France would support Vietnam in securing a solution to its IMF debt problem, and in "finding again a place on the international scene commensurate with its stature".¹⁰¹ Dumas and other French leaders urged the Vietnamese leadership to continue its *doi moi* policies on the path of economic reform.

President Mitterrand in February 1993 made the symbolic first state visit by a major Western leader to Hanoi since the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement, at a time when the US still called for an international embargo on Vietnam. A regular France-Vietnam political dialogue was started in 1993 (the only one Vietnam has to date with any European country).¹⁰² The need to shore up France's position in the Indochinese region explains the keen French interest in encouraging the integration of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in regional and international organizations like ASEAN, ASEM, APEC, the Francophonie, and the WTO. Mitterrand's visit sealed the reconciliation between France and Vietnam. By 1994 (ironically the 40th anniversary of Dien Bien Phu), Vietnam had become all the rage in Paris. A slew of artistically and commercially successful films released in 1992-93, inter alia, *Dien Bien Phu*, *Indochine* and *L'Amant*, recalled French colonialism in Vietnam in a romantic light. This "*engouement romantique*"¹⁰³ for all things Vietnamese was evident in French political, business and even academic communities. Historiographies and assessments of French colonialism were re-cast from earlier self-conscious apologies on imperialism to highlighting the

¹⁰⁰ Roland Dumas, "Statement delivered by Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, Co-President of the Paris Conference on Cambodia", Paris, 30 July 1989, in Acharya et al (eds), *Cambodia: the 1989 Paris Peace Conference: background analysis and documents*, 1991.

¹⁰¹ Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, "Toast pronounced at Lunch hosted by Foreign Minister Nguyen Man Cam, Hanoi", 25 November 1991. France doubled its aid to Vietnam in 1991.

¹⁰² Interview with Duong Van Quang, Deputy Director-General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Institute of International Relations (IIR), Hanoi, 17 January 2003. Vietnam also has political dialogues with Japan, China, ASEAN, Russia and India.

¹⁰³ Jean-Claude Pomonti, "La visite du Président Mitterrand: L'étrange engouement des Français pour le Vietnam", *Le Monde*, 9 February 1993. Also Jean Brunot de Rouvre, "Vietnam: L'an 1 du décollage. Un tremplin?", *Le Monde*, 14 September 1993.

positive contributions made by French colonialism to indigenous economic and social developments.¹⁰⁴

The year after Mitterrand's state visit, six French ministers and then-Mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac visited Vietnam in 1994. This tempo of high-level visits was maintained and widened to include major Asian countries after Chirac became president in 1995 (Chapter 3, Table 3.3). In return, President Le Duc Anh was invited in 1995 to Paris to attend the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Allied Victory¹⁰⁵, and President Tran Duc Luong made the first-ever state visit by a Vietnamese President to France, in October 2002.

In terms of hard security (military alliances and joint training, troop presence, etc), prevailing conditions do not seem to favour an increased French presence in Asia beyond current troop levels concentrated in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific in the French DOM-TOM (Overseas Departments and Overseas Territories in Réunion and New Caledonia— see chapter 3). The French military presence in Africa is a function of three factors- the high level of France's economic interactions and involvement, the number of French residents and the nature of relations between France and the national ruling élites.¹⁰⁶ These elements of close economic, political and social ties simply do not apply to France's relations with any Asian state, not even Vietnam. Unlike Taiwan and Singapore - the only Asian countries with which France enjoys a high level of military cooperation - Vietnam is unable to afford to purchase French weapons. Despite the end of the Cold War and Vietnam's integration into many regional and international organizations, it has maintained strong military links with Russia and continues to buy most of its weapons from that country. Most of the members of the CPV Politburo

¹⁰⁴ See for example Brocheux and Hémery's excellent historical tome, *Indochine: La colonisation ambiguë 1858-1954*, Paris, 2001; and Robert Aldrich, "Imperial *Mise en Valeur* and *Mise en Scène*: Recent Works on French Colonialism", in *The Historical Journal*, 45/4, 2002, pp.917-936.

¹⁰⁵ Bui Huy Khoat, "Impact of European Integration on Vietnam", in *Viet Nam Economic Review*, 7/61, 1999, p.4.

¹⁰⁶ Guy Martin, "France and Africa", in Aldrich and Connell 89:115. France is Algeria's largest trading partner, and there were 20,000 French residents in Côte d'Ivoire that had to be evacuated during the violence of 2002-2003. Small wonder that France is often called the "*Gendarme* of Africa". See Rachel Utlely, "Not to do less but to do better...': French military policy in Africa", *International Affairs*, 78/1, 2002, pp.129-146.

were Soviet-educated and Vietnam has not changed its long habit of buying weapons mainly from Russia, eg. the acquisition in 1995 of 12 SU-27 fighter jets.¹⁰⁷

After the end of the Cold War in 1989, the shrinking domestic markets for arms in the US and Europe obliged the major arms makers to concentrate their attention in new markets. France was already a major arms supplier to the four major arms markets in Southeast Asia which was dominated by US hardware - Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, but it was practically non-existent in the Soviet and Chinese-dominated Indochinese arms markets.¹⁰⁸ France made its first breakthrough in substantial military sales to an East Asia country when it won a deal to deliver Mirage 200-5 fighters to Taiwan (chapter four).

One might expect Vietnam to have an ideological resistance to the presence of foreign troops after its recent half-century history of repeated foreign interventions and protracted wars with France, the US, China, and its unpleasant experience with overbearing Soviet advisors and their military presence in Cam Ranh Bay (1979-2002). However, increased military relations between France and Vietnam cannot be discounted once Vietnam's economic weapons acquisition capability rises, and since the Russian navy has vacated Cam Ranh Bay – once the Soviet Union's largest foreign base outside the Warsaw Pact - after its lease ran out in May 2002.¹⁰⁹

c) *Leveraging on the EU*

In the security field, France found it more useful to leverage on the EU to extend aid to post-war reconstruction in Cambodia. Likewise, in security dialogues like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), where the EU is represented by the Commission and the EU Presidency (the French and British *démarches* for separate membership notwithstanding). Substantive French military relations in East Asia are much stronger with Taiwan and other Southeast Asian states. French defence equipment sales to Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia were gaining in importance in the 1990s. There have been

¹⁰⁷ See Sergounin and Subbotin, *Russian Arms Transfers to East Asia in the 1990s*, SIPRI Research Report No.15, New York: Oxford UP, 1997, pp.105-106.

¹⁰⁸ Russ Swinnerton, "The strategic environment and arms acquisitions in Southeast Asia", in Bates and Mak (eds), *Arms Transparency and Security in Southeast Asia*, SIPRI Research Report No.13, 1997, pp.35, 101-140.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with senior Vietnamese official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Institute of International Relations (IIR), Hanoi, 17 January 2003, who opined that military relations were still undeveloped because French weapons were "*trop chers*".

far more concrete military cooperation activities and contacts between French troops and Malaysian and Indonesian peace-keepers in Bosnia since 1995, and with the Singapore Air Force in southwest France since 1998.

In contrast to French activism in politically engaging Vietnam in dialogue, EU policies focused on containing and isolating Vietnam in the 1980s. One underlying objective of the EC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement in 1980 was to contain potential Vietnamese hegemonic ambitions in the Southeast Asian region, given that the defeat of the United States in 1975 and Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1979 had increased regional insecurity and raised the credibility of alternatives to capitalist free-market modes of development.¹¹⁰ Although diplomatic relations between the EU and Vietnam were normalized in November 1990, the EU's 2002 Country Strategy Paper hardly mentions Vietnam's political relevance to the EU.

The EU's support for the post-war establishment of democratic governments in East Asia have helped contribute to peace and security in the region. The largest two operations have been the UN mandates in Cambodia and East Timor, where the EU was heavily involved in finance, election monitoring, constitution-drafting, etc. The first EU-ASEAN ministerial meeting in recent years was held in Vientiane in December 2000.¹¹¹

French participation in the resolution of conflicts in Indochina has been indirect, either through diplomatic pressures on the parties concerned, or through the carrots of aid, regime recognition or election monitoring. In these instances, France has preferred to work in a larger framework of the EU where more resources could be raised and committed. In Cambodia in 1992-93, for example, the EU's role was not only in conflict prevention and crisis management, but also in post-war reconstruction and return to civilian life for the ex-combatants.¹¹² Even after the French role as host for the 1991 Paris Peace agreements ended, France continued to be an active player in Cambodian affairs. France was intimately involved in UNTAC's nation-building programme in Cambodia – two-thirds of French military cooperation funds in Asia are

¹¹⁰ Hazel Smith 2002: 200

¹¹¹ COM(2001), "Europe and Asia", p.14.

¹¹² Chris Patten, *Politique Etrangère*, July-September 2001, p.650.

today still channelled to Cambodia.¹¹³ In the stand-off after Hun Sen launched a coup d'état against First Prime Minister Rannarridh in 1997, Rannarridh sought refuge in France after the putsch while Sam Rainsy and leaders of other anti-Hun Sen Cambodian factions continue to lobby the government in Paris to bear directly and through the EU on Hun Sen.

The EU has begun attempts to speak with one voice to Vietnam. Since 1999, meetings between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EU "Troika" in Hanoi (ie. Head of EC Delegation+Ambassadors of current and former EU Presiding country). The EU Troika also meets with the Vice-Ministers of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Internal Security and Justice, to raise their concerns about human rights abuses in Vietnam.¹¹⁴ Excluded from these discussions however, are cases of clergy (whether Buddhist or Catholic) who "overstep" their bounds by engaging in political activities.¹¹⁵

Overall Trends

Grid 6.2 European Political-Strategic Positions in Vietnam, 1985-2002

	85			91			97			2002		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
F			♦ ^b			♦ ^c			♦ ^d			♦ ^f
GB	♦ ^a	→		←	♦	→		♦			♦	
D	♦ ^a	→		←	♦	→		♦			♦	
EU	♦ ^a	→		♦	→			♦ ^c	→		♦	→

- = Sanctions/Containment policy or Conflict with Vietnam
 0 = Ambiguous or neutral towards Vietnam
 + = Active Engagement with Vietnam

^a In 1985, EC countries had recognized the communist government of Vietnam but relations were tense during this phase of the "Second Cold War". The USSR has invaded Afghanistan and the EC was critical of Vietnam's treaty of friendship with the USSR and its military intervention in Cambodia.

^b France was exceptional in keeping very close relations with Vietnam during its decade of diplomatic isolation (1979-89). It kept open relations with all four Cambodian factions (including the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin/Hun Sen regime). Vietnam took part in the first *Francophonie* summit (Paris, 1986).

^c The resolution of the Cambodian conflict in 1991 led quickly to Vietnam's integration in the international community. Diplomatic relations with the EC were established in 1990. Mitterrand made the first-ever visit by a French President to Vietnam in 1993.

^d In 1997, Hanoi hosted the *Francophonie* summit (the first in Asia), and a state visit by Chirac.

^e EC-Vietnam Cooperation Agreement (1995); Vietnam in EC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement (1999).

^f President Tran Duc Luong made the first-ever Vietnamese state visit to France in Oct 2002.

¹¹³ Interview with Emmanuel Farcot, French Embassy First Secretary, Hanoi, 21 January 2003.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Ambassador Frédéric Baron, Head of EC Delegation in Hanoi, 16 January 2003.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Baron, and Michèle Sauteraud, French Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Hanoi, 21 January 2003. The case of Father Ly, a Catholic priest imprisoned for fanning dissent, was *not* raised by the EU. Interestingly, the Vatican chose to ignore Father Ly's case during DPM Vu Khoan's visit to Rome in 2002.

In summary, France throughout the 1980s and 1990s enjoyed a very strong bilateral relationship with Vietnam, reinforced by colonial history, longstanding economic interests, family ties, and nostalgic, post-colonial goodwill. Through mediating the resolution of the 1965-1975 “American War”, and 1979-89 Cambodian Conflict,¹¹⁶ the French were motivated by the goals of national prestige and ensuring a *rentrée* for French political, economic and cultural influence in Indochina. France has to a large extent succeeded in achieving these goals on its own, and is unlikely to submit its close political and security ties with Vietnam to an over-arching EU framework. Throughout the 1980s and along the lines of current French relations with Algeria, France enjoyed particularly close political relations with the Vietnamese government, and French economic interests in Vietnam were far greater than any other Western country save Japan. Paris maintained close relations with Hanoi when many other countries froze relations, and helped Vietnam to “break the ice” during its most difficult period of international isolation in the decade 1980-1990 when it could not access IMF, World Bank and ADB funds.¹¹⁷ The importance of France to Vietnam following Vietnam’s international integration since 1995 has decreased.

In contrast, EU Member States and the Commission have not been enthusiastic about developing political dialogue with Vietnam since the Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia in 1989. The EU established diplomatic relations with Vietnam only in 1990, and the EC-ASEAN relations established in 1980 were originally a united anti-Communist front against perceived Vietnamese and Soviet aggression. French support was instrumental in the passage of the EC-Vietnam Cooperation Agreement in 1995. Without French support, it is unlikely that a common political EU approach to Vietnam can be formulated beyond the least common denominator of declaratory diplomacy on good neighbourliness within ASEAN, cooperation in international for a such as ASEAN-EU relationship and ASEM.

¹¹⁶ The French and Vietnamese terms for the two wars are *Guerre d’Indochine américaine* (better known in the US as the “Vietnam War”) and the Cambodian conflict.

¹¹⁷ Interview with senior Vietnamese official, IIR, Hanoi, 17 January 2003.

III Human Rights

Part III of this chapter would argue that France has played a critical role in the elaboration of the EU's human rights position on Vietnam. First, France has adopted an "Algerian" approach by avoiding public confrontations with Vietnam over human rights abuses. This policy has been steadfastly adhered to since Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia in 1989, the last major diplomatic bone of contention between France and Vietnam. Second, although French governments and civil groups have historically been particularly concerned and vocal about the rights of religious groups and ethnic minorities in Vietnam, these concerns have in the 1990s been overtaken and deflected by the rapid economic growth facilitated by *doi moi*. Arguments put forward by Vietnamese governments that the goal of meeting economic and social rights are a major achievement of Vietnam over the last decade have resonance in Paris, even among the most vocal anti-Hanoi *Việt kiều* organisations.

a) French criticism of Vietnam's human rights

The French government's position on human rights in the Indochinese countries, as nowhere else in Asia, is informed by a large and vocal domestic constituency that follows human rights developments closely. The most consistently vocal foreign critics of the Hanoi government have been anti-communist *Việt kiều* (Overseas Vietnamese) organizations, especially those founded by disaffected Vietnamese forced to flee their homeland in 1975 and 1979 following the communist unification of the two Vietnams, and the anti-capitalist purges in 1978-79.¹¹⁸ The 300,000-strong *Việt kiều* community in France - the second largest overseas Vietnamese community in the world after the one million *Việt kiều* in the US - counts among its ranks some of the oldest, most well organized and staunchly anti-Hanoi *Việt kiều* groups. They have on several occasions been successful in mobilizing French public opinion and highly publicized demonstrations against political and religious repression in Vietnam.

For the first half of most the 20th century, France promoted human rights in the metropole but was dismissive of human rights abroad and in its colonies. Like Britain, the French resisted the ideas of human rights, nationalism and self-determination, for fear that they may "make the natives restless in their far-flung colonial domains." For

¹¹⁸ See Dorais, "Vietnamese communities in Canada, France and Denmark".

that reason, France and Britain they squashed a proposal made by Haiti at the League of Nations in 1934 for a treaty to guarantee the human rights of ethnic minorities.¹¹⁹ Conscious of having violated norms of human rights and just war itself during its colonial occupation and war with the Viet Minh, France refrained from taking a critical human rights position on Vietnam until 1975, when Vietnam was unified by the communists. The end of the Vietnam War was followed by the passage of the Declaration Against Torture by the UN General Assembly, which was inspired by the mass tortures in Chile under Pinochet.¹²⁰ In 1976, the twin Covenants of the UN entered into force and President Carter made human rights a US foreign policy objective in 1977.

In the context of these international human rights developments, the French government adopted a critical policy towards Vietnam's human rights record throughout the 1980s. This was not only because of the sizeable French Vietnamese community following developments in the newly united Vietnam. Socialist governments under Mitterrand were particularly interested in human rights and had made the promotion of Third World solidarity and human rights a major plank of their foreign policy (chapter three). Thirdly, French governments were faced with an international "boat people" crisis directly related to the Vietnamese government's post-reunification policies ("re-education" of officials linked with the Saigon regime, state appropriation of private property, persecution of Chinese-Vietnamese. etc), as well as Vietnam's invasion of another ex-French colony, Cambodia, in 1979. That year, the Vietnam Committee on Human Rights in Paris (Comité Vietnam), launched an international campaign in support of the Vietnamese "boat people", a human tragedy in which a million boat people perished in the South China Sea trying to flee economic hardship, political repression and "re-education camps" at home. This campaign was supported by French intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Raymond Aron, and became one of the focal points in the international outcry over Vietnamese government policies and conditions that had caused this massive exodus.

¹¹⁹ This was the only reference to the subject in the League's history before its demise at the onset of the Second World War. See Geoffrey Robertson, *Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice*, 2nd ed., London: Penguin, 2002, p.22.

¹²⁰ Robertson 2002:45.

To legitimise its position with the UN after its overthrow of the Khmer Rouge government in Phnom Penh, Vietnam acceded to the ICCPR, ICESR and the conventions relating to women, children, genocide and racial discrimination in 1981-82. However, its engagement with the UN human rights system was at best at “arm’s length”.¹²¹ It is no wonder that Foreign Minister Dumas lectured the Vietnamese leadership on human rights during two visits to Vietnam in 1990-91, and Mitterrand in his 1993 state visit, urged the Vietnamese leadership to adapt to a new post-Cold War world in which “liberties long suppressed were becoming expressed everywhere...and the respect of human rights has become a universal demand”.¹²²

The Vietnamese community in France comprises many members who are stridently critical of the communist-controlled country they fled in 1975.¹²³ Pressure groups like the Comité Vietnam and Reporters sans Frontières regularly organise demonstrations when Vietnamese leaders visit Paris. Occasionally, large demonstrations occur in tandem with developments in Vietnam.

Vietnam entered the Asian values debate in 1993 at the Bangkok Regional Preparatory Meeting to the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in the summer of that year.¹²⁴ Unlike the authoritarian governments in Malaysia and Singapore (the intellectual gurus of Asian values) – who were self-confident and justified their authoritarian methods as necessary for economic growth and social cohesion, however, Vietnam’s entry to the debate was a defensive reaction to popular demands for greater religious freedom and self-expression. A large Buddhist protest movement had grown in momentum since 1992, set off by the funeral of the United Buddhist Church of Vietnam’s (UBVC) Patriarch Thich Don Hau on 3 May that year. On 24 May 1993, a massive protest involving 40,000 Buddhists – the largest since 1975 – was held in the ancient capital of Huê when Thich Tri Tuu, head of a Buddhist temple in Huê, launched a hunger strike to protest against the authorities’ strong-handed tactics in ordering him to deny that a Buddhist had immolated himself at the temple.¹²⁵ The authorities were

¹²¹ Philip J. Eldridge, *The Politics of Human Rights in Southeast Asia*, London: Routledge, 2002, p.72.

¹²² *Le Monde*, 11 February 1993.

¹²³ *Le Monde*, 28 June 1993. The Vietnamese Embassy in Paris estimated that the Vietnamese community in France (including French nationals of Vietnamese descent) numbered over 400,000. Source: interview with Counsellor in Vietnamese Embassy, Paris, June 1996.

¹²⁴ Vo Van Ai 2000: 92 and 101.

¹²⁵ The most famous case of self-immolation was that by the monk Thich Quang Duc on 11 June 1963, which provoked worldwide protests against the US-supported Ngo Diem Dien government of South

unprepared for a popular challenge of such a magnitude, and a lively discussion followed with hundreds of articles on human rights in the media.¹²⁶ The France-based Vietnamese Congregation in Europe organised a demonstration at the Trocadéro in Paris in conjunction with Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet's visit in June 1993,¹²⁷ while the Comité Vietnam demonstrated at the Place de la Concorde.¹²⁸

Vietnam has always denied holding political detainees, maintaining that dissidents – mainly Buddhists and intellectuals who question the Communist Party's absolute monopoly of power – are common criminals. Among the first dissidents in the post-1975 era were twelve Buddhist monks and nuns who immolated themselves at Duoc Su Pagoda in Vietnam in November 1975 to protest against violations of religious freedom.¹²⁹

Non-governmental human rights groups and newspaper columnists have constantly drawn attention to the government's repression and discrimination of Vietnam's ethnic minorities, religious groups and political dissidents.¹³⁰ Human Rights Watch, for example released a report in April 2002 detailing continued religious restriction, land disputes and violence against the Montagnard people, a hill tribe of Dega protestants in Vietnam's central highlands. The Montagnards' grievances erupted into demonstrations in February 2001 which resulted in the authorities sending in troops.¹³¹ Human Rights Watch claimed that the government's own policy of encouraging large-scale migration by majority Vietnamese Kinh people from the overcrowded northern provinces to the Montagnards' ancestral homelands, has increased disputes over access to land and scarce resources.

b) Constructive engagement after 1994

In parallel with the French approach to human rights in China, the principled Mitterrand-Dumas position gave way after 1994 to a pragmatic *dialogue constructif*

Vietnam. See Kenneth Christie and Denny Roy (eds), *The politics of human rights in East Asia*, London: Pluto, 2001, p.114. The Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV), established in 1951 and prominent in the anti-war movement of the 1960s, was outlawed in 1981 when the government created the official Vietnam Buddhist Church as an umbrella organization for Buddhists.

¹²⁶ Vo Van Ai 101.

¹²⁷ *Le Monde*, 25 June 1993.

¹²⁸ *Le Monde*, 26 June 1993.

¹²⁹ Vo Van Ai, "Human Rights and Asian Values in Vietnam", in Jacobsen and Bruun, 2000:97.

¹³⁰ Olivier Todd and Van Ton Tran, "Indochine: Vive un Vietnam libre!", *Le Monde*, 10 February 1993.

¹³¹ *BBC news* website, "Vietnam criticized over hill tribe rights", 23 April 2002.

under-written by political and economic objectives. This policy change can be attributed to the new conservative government in France, especially after Jacques Chirac's election as President in 1995. It was facilitated by positive developments on the ground: the 1992 constitutional reform in Vietnam gave greater prominence to individual rights, and almost all known officials of the Saigon regime held continuously since 1975 without trial for "re-education", were released.¹³² Meanwhile, France may lack the moral authority after its about-turn on China in 1997 (chapter 4) and it has itself been the target of human right criticism by NGOs and even European institutions for serious human rights shortcomings, especially in its judicial process.¹³³

Chirac's approach to the human rights question in Vietnam is characterized by a "constructive approach" based on the "China model" (see chapter four) which consists of a philosophical dialogue on human rights with repressive regimes but no overt pressure for change. France had pressured Vietnam on human rights up to Vietnam's accession to ASEAN (in 1995), but this has since become a non-issue.¹³⁴ During his November 1997 state visit to Vietnam, Chirac argued that "globalisation leads to a certain harmonization of political ideas" and suggested that France need not lecture or put the human rights spotlight on Vietnam:

A long experience has shown me that there is a total incompatibility between mediatisation and efficacy....concerning human rights, it is not in making impetuous declarations, by arrogance, by humiliating others that a solution can be found. It is through the capacity of explaining and convincing, by the medium of dialogue....This is a capacity I have.¹³⁵

Interestingly, this sanguine expectation of peaceful change and political development in China and Vietnam is reminiscent of that held by senior statesman Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's ex-Prime Minister who is held in high esteem and regularly consulted as Chirac's "guru" on Asian affairs.¹³⁶

¹³² HRW 93:193.

¹³³ Amnesty International Report (henceforth AI) 2000:103-105. In 1999, the European Court of Human Rights found France guilty of torture and excessively long judicial proceedings, which breached international norms of preventive detention

¹³⁴ Interview with senior Vietnamese official, IIR, Hanoi, 17 January 2003,

¹³⁵ *Le Monde*, "Droits de l'Homme: On ne gagne pas par l'arrogance", and *Le Figaro*, "Visite d'Etat du Président français: Chirac se félicite de la confiance renforcée", 14 November 1997. My translation.

¹³⁶ See Lee Kuan Yew's views on developments in Asia in a detailed interview by Patrice de Beer, "Singapour: un entretien avec l'ancien Premier ministre", *Le Monde*, 12 June 1993.

Human rights issues threatened to overshadow Chirac's visit when five days before Chirac's state visit and the Francophonie summit in 1997, international attention was turned on the clash between 10,000 Catholic protestors and police in the southern province of Dong Nai over state seizure of religious lands.¹³⁷ French television channel TF1's celebrity news reporter Patrick Poivre d'Arvor ("PPDA") further embarrassed the French and Vietnamese governments by conducting clandestine interviews documenting human rights abuses in Vietnam. Filming was done in collaboration with the Director of Reporters sans Frontières, who accompanied PPDA to Vietnam, and featured interviews with former political prisoners as well as the wife of a professor then jailed for expressing contrary political opinions. PPDA's 4½-minute documentary was televised in France despite the Vietnamese authorities' confiscation of some of PPDA's footage.

This laissez-faire attitude in France is an important reason for the lack of human rights interest in Vietnam by the EU: there is no member state (especially a member state with strong historical ties) which consistently "champions" the cause of human rights in Vietnam. This is in stark contrast to the case of Britain and the Netherlands in Myanmar, Portugal in East Timor, or France (1989-1993), Britain, the Netherlands and several Nordic member states (especially Denmark from 1994) in China. The French approach to human rights in Vietnam has informed the EU's declared objective of "constructive engagement", which is juxtaposed with the imposition of negative sanctions and the American penchant for the application of raw power:

We are now firmly in a post-Cold War world. Countries cannot be put into boxes labelled 'communist' and 'capitalist'. Nor can all problems be resolved by the application of American power. European foreign policy does not define itself by ostracism, embargos and investment bans. We aim to engage in the hope of bringing about stability and sustainable development where they are not present.¹³⁸

Today, the French government does not make an issue of the human rights situation in Vietnam. This is despite the French Senate's recognition in a March 2000 report which noted that the rights to freedom of expression, the press, association, demonstration and religion in Vietnam's new Constitution of 1992 "still remained

¹³⁷ *BBC news* website, "France wants to return to 'Indochine'", 12 November 1997.

¹³⁸ Chris Patten, Tokyo, 19 July 2000, Speech 00/276.

theoretical even if some relaxation of limited effect occurred in the last two years in the domains of human rights and religious freedom...".¹³⁹ During President Tran Duc Luong's historic October 2002 state visit to France, human rights were "not at all discussed" in Luong's meetings with Chirac, the Presidents of the National Assembly and Senate, and Prime Minister Raffarin.¹⁴⁰

c) *The EU and constructive dialogue*

In the light of wanton human rights abuses in Vietnam documented by numerous NGOs, government and journalists, the absence of a clear EU human rights position in Vietnam, is conspicuous. The ban on NGOs and even human rights fact-finding mission in Vietnam, and the absence of a human rights regime - even of the declaratory kind in Asia - has made it incumbent on external state actors to take up the human rights cause in repressive countries such as Vietnam.¹⁴¹ While no international regime on human rights existed in 1945, by 1985, this had become a strong promotional regime underpinned by two important documents at the UN. The regional regime in Europe had developed into an enforcement regime by 1985, and is the most institutionalised human rights regime in the world, with strong monitoring and enforcement power. It is usually regarded as a successful example of regional cooperation over human rights protection by a group of like-minded states which share a common cultural tradition. The EU has even made the promotion of human rights world wide one of its chief foreign policy goals.¹⁴² The EC-Vietnam Framework Cooperation Agreement signed in July 1995 contained a Human Rights Article¹⁴³ (in contrast a third generation EC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement could not be concluded because ASEAN rejected the human rights conditionality).

¹³⁹ French Senate (Caldaguès 2000), pp.4-5.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with a senior Vietnamese official who was a member of Luong's delegation, Hanoi, 17 January 2003. MAE, "Visite d'Etat du président de la République socialiste du Vietnam, M. Tran Duc Luong", 06/11/02, reported that "a list of persons detained or under house arrest whose situation was of concern to France and the European Union" was transmitted to the Vietnamese authorities. This was probably done at a low level, and discreetly.

¹⁴¹ Human rights regimes can be classified as declaratory, promotional, implementation, and enforcement regimes. See Tang 95:191 and Jack Donnelly 89:224.

¹⁴² See Karen Smith's "The Instruments of European Union Foreign Policy", in Jan Zielonka, (ed), *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1998; and "The EU, Human Rights and Relations with Third Countries: Foreign Policy with an Ethical Dimension?", in Smith and Light (eds), *Ethics and Foreign Policy*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

¹⁴³ Commission of the European Communities, *EC-Vietnam Country Strategy Paper 2002-2006*, Brussels, 15 May 2002.

The EU's profile on the human rights situation in Vietnam is thus surprisingly muted in contrast to the positions it has taken on Asian countries such as China, Myanmar, Indonesia, East Timor and even Malaysia (in 1997 over Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's detention). The Vietnamese government is regularly cited by human rights NGOs as one of the most repressive regimes in the world. Although the Vietnamese defended their 1979 invasion of Cambodia as humanitarian and necessary to depose a very brutal regime (Pol Pot's), they have been extremely sensitive to foreign criticisms of their own human rights record. The CPV's Party Secretary Le Kha Phieu revealed much of the leadership's tough view on human rights when he stated at a party plenum in August 1999 that "any ideas to promote 'absolute democracy', to put human rights above sovereignty, or support multiparty or political pluralism...are lies and cheating."¹⁴⁴ The EU has been playing a very low-key role in human rights protection in Vietnam. It has limited itself to raising human rights concerns on issues of religious freedom and the rights of ethnic minorities, and refrained from criticising the Vietnamese government on the detention of citizens for political dissent.¹⁴⁵ To investigate an alleged human rights violation, the EU requires that at least two independent NGOs can attest to the alleged abuse, and that the Council of Ministers agrees on a common approach to deal with the matter.¹⁴⁶ The EU has also tried to tie its aid to progress on the human rights front, but has usually backed down despite evidence of human rights deterioration.

By projecting its national preference of a quiet approach to human rights in Vietnam to the EU arena, France has caused the "levelling down" of the EU's human rights position and effectiveness in Vietnam. Unlike the French turnaround on China at the UN CHR in 1997 (chapter 4), the EU has not had to face an acrimonious, publicized internal debate or outcry from NGOs and other state actors concerned with human rights on its compliant attitude towards Vietnam. However the stakes for many oppressed ethnic peoples, religious groups and political dissidents are just as high. Although Vietnam was in 1995 the first ASEAN country to enter into a third-generation Cooperation Agreement (ie. one containing human rights conditionalities) with the EU,

¹⁴⁴ *Human Rights Watch World Report* (henceforth HRW) 2000: 218.

¹⁴⁵ Chris Patten, "Religious Freedom in Vietnam", Commission statements in urgency debates, by External Relations Commissioner in the European Parliament, Plenary Session, Strasbourg, 5 July 2001, SPEECH/01/33.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Michèle Sauteraud, French Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Hanoi, 21 January 2003.

the EU has taken no concrete action on blatant human rights abuses in Vietnam over the last decade.¹⁴⁷

It has fallen on individual EU governments, especially those of the Nordic countries, and the European Parliament, to take up the cause of human rights in Vietnam. Denmark for example has made its aid conditional on human rights progress.¹⁴⁸ Since 1992, Vietnam has increasingly engaged in dialogue on human rights issues at inter-state level as well as with other parties, including the British Minister of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, the Human Rights Coordinator of the German Foreign Ministry, and the Executive Director of Asia Watch.¹⁴⁹ The Swedish government's intervention made possible a meeting between Amnesty International representatives and Vietnamese officials during a Vietnamese delegation's visit to Sweden in January 1999.¹⁵⁰ In June 1999, prior to a mid-term review of donor aid in Haiphong, the German Ambassador to Vietnam pushed on behalf of the EU presidency for economic and social reforms, and expressed concerns about political prisoners and restrictions on press and religious groups. Similarly, when Prime Minister Phan Van Khai visited Finland in September during the Finnish presidency, the Finnish prime minister raised issues of human rights, judicial reform, and treatment of dissidents.¹⁵¹

Several major steps backwards were taken by the government in 2000-2001, the 25th anniversary of Vietnam's unification. Concerns were raised by Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten in a meeting with the Vietnamese Foreign Minister in July 2001. Individual EU states also expressed their concerns, eg the Swedish Foreign Minister with CPV General Secretary Nong Duc Manh, over human rights and greater freedom of the press, during a visit in Hanoi that same month.¹⁵² He even broached the topic of a multiparty system. After an EC meeting in Hanoi in November, an EC spokesman said that Vietnam had made some progress on human rights conditions but still had a long way to go. Meanwhile several EU statesmen became the subject of some

¹⁴⁷ For critical analyses of the EU's human rights effectiveness in its common foreign policy and development cooperation activities, see respectively articles by Andrew Clapham (Ch.19) and Bruno Simma et al (Ch.18) in Alston 99.

¹⁴⁸ Andres Krab-Johansen, "Human Rights in Danish Development Aid", in *Human Rights in Developing Countries 1995*, The Hague: Kluwer Law/Nordic Human Rights Publications, 1996, pp.15-28.

¹⁴⁹ Maria Lundberg, "Vietnam", in *Human Rights in Developing Countries 1997*, Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1998, p.328. (pp.321-376)

¹⁵⁰ AI 2000:261.

¹⁵¹ HRW 2000:219.

¹⁵² HRW 2002:258, 2001:230.

controversy after visiting dissidents in Vietnam. Lars Rise of the Norwegian opposition Christian People's Party was detained and deported from Vietnam after visiting several dissidents. In June, Italian MEP Olivier Dupuis was expelled after he tried to stage a sit-in at the monastery where Thich Quang Do, a celebrated dissident, lived under house arrest.¹⁵³

The EU is Vietnam's second largest aid donor and has considerable potential leverage over the Vietnamese government. In July 2001, the EP adopted an emergency resolution on religious freedom in Vietnam and denounced the persecution of several religious leaders and ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands. Yet in East Asia, the Commission considers that only extremely authoritarian and anti-democratic countries such as Myanmar are deemed as "regimes whose behaviour towards their own people makes engagement impossible for us."¹⁵⁴

In their defence of curtailing individual liberties, the Vietnamese regime emphasizes its success in spectacularly improving economic and social rights over the last decade— a similar line of argument adopted by the authoritarian governments of ASEAN (eg. Malaysia and Singapore) in the 'Asian values' debate. EU governments find it difficult to criticize Vietnam on human rights grounds because of the success of Vietnam's economic transformation, which has lifted the country from abject poverty in the 1970s and 1980s to satisfying basic economic and social rights in the 1990s.¹⁵⁵

Overall Trends

At the end of the 1990s, the EU Member States and the Commission have not been able to coordinate their human rights policies towards Vietnam, despite calls from pressures groups, the EP and NGOs like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to pressure the Vietnamese government for its human rights abuses. The Nordic countries (chiefly Denmark and Sweden, which together give more ODA than France) are the only ones to have picked up the human rights cause in Vietnam, and they have stressed to the Vietnamese that human rights improvements are tied to their aid programmes.

¹⁵³ HRW 2002:264.

¹⁵⁴ Patten 2000.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Mark McLachlan, British Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Hanoi, 21 January 2003.

Grid 6.3 European Human Rights Positions in Vietnam, 1985-2001

	85			89			93			99/01		
	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+	-	0	+
<i>F</i>	◆ ^a	◆			◆		←	◆ ^b	→			◆
<i>GB</i>		◆		←	◆		←	◆			◆	
<i>D</i>		◆			◆			◆		←	◆ ^c	
<i>EU</i>	◆			◆			←	◆	→	←		◆

- = *Confrontational/critical policy*

0 = *Ambiguous policy or "silent diplomacy" with Vietnam*

+ = *"Constructive Engagement" with Vietnam*

^a Mitterrand-Dumas policy throughout the 1980s critical of Vietnam's human rights record and occupation of Cambodia, many demonstrations in Paris criticizing Vietnamese government and the tragedy of the "boat people".

^b June 1993 protests involving 40,000 Buddhists in Huế, the largest popular demonstration in Vietnam since 1975, spark off demonstrations in Paris during PM Vo Van Kiet's visit. French government calls for greater religious freedom.

^c German EU Presidency warns Vietnam against backtracking on human rights at Donor conference in Haiphong, amidst signs of human rights degradation and increased controls coinciding with the 25th anniversary of Vietnam's unification.

In the late 1990s and after 2000, French human rights and even anti-Hanoi *Việt kiều* organizations have lost much of their fervour and reason to criticise Hanoi since it has performed so well in achieving economic growth and general welfare. Some would argue that Vietnam has done very well in some aspects of human rights. It is highly regarded for the protection of children's and women's rights, as well as for its record on economic and education rights.¹⁵⁶ Many overseas Vietnamese, including those who fled after the fall of Saigon in 1975, are returning to Vietnam to take part in its economic boom.¹⁵⁷

Conclusions

The EU's impact on French policy in Vietnam is minimal. Political elites still cling to a notion of *relations privilégiées* with Vietnam and can demonstrate that France gains economic and political benefits from these close political ties. Half a century after Dien Bien Phu and 30 years after the 1973 Paris Peace Accords that ended America's Vietnam War and devastated South Vietnam's independence, the psychological trauma

¹⁵⁶ Christie and Roy 2001:122. The rate of Vietnamese women's participation in national politics ranks among the highest of any nation in the world. See United Nations, *The World's Women 2000: Trends and Statistics*, New York, 2000, pp.165.

¹⁵⁷ Christie and Roy 2001:121.

of French decolonisation in Asia has all but become a forgotten footnote in French history. France is again investing considerable political and economic resources on Vietnam as a strategic base for larger French political, economic and strategic interests in East Asia. France promotes itself as Vietnam's best friend in the West and unapologetically uses the EU and multilateral frameworks such as ASEM and the ASEAN-EU to pursue national goals. Although French policy makers accept that France is unable to play an independent role in Indochina as it did from 1979 up to 1991,¹⁵⁸ France makes generous investments in the promotion of the French language and culture in a country where hardly 1% of the population speaks French. They target specific sectors of a rapidly growing population where English has become the dominant foreign language not only in the universities, but also in Vietnam's dealings with its neighbours in ASEAN, in business, and with the wider world.

The weight of history, the large Overseas Vietnamese community in France, and a sentimental nostalgia for French Indochina make Vietnam a special priority case for French foreign policy, on a level similar to, though not as intimate or complex as French relations with the far more francophone Maghreb countries.¹⁵⁹ This sort of "privileged relationship" in Southeast Asia is of course, not unique to France. Britain maintains a nominal defence arrangement with Malaysia and Singapore (which includes Australia and New Zealand), and a strong economic presence in Hong Kong and Brunei. Portugal has maintained close links with Timorese leaders (then exiles) and supported an independent East Timor since the island territory's invasion and annexation by Indonesia in 1975. If a "special relationship" must involve reciprocal and long-term commitment and feelings of close affinity between both governments and populations, then France-Vietnam relations fall short of this definition chiefly because close relations were confined to the political-diplomatic sphere, lasted only some 10 years (1979-1989), and were driven by one side (the French). The utility of France to Vietnam has diminished after the Paris Peace Accords, and especially after its diplomatic isolation

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Sylvie Bermann, Director of Quai d'Orsay PESC Directorate, September 1999. Bermann opined that the French position on Cambodia at the Paris Peace conference in 1991 was "one of the last occasions" France took an important international position without consulting its EU partners.

¹⁵⁹ Unlike Indochina's status as French a colony, Algeria was absorbed as a French *département* and mass migration was encouraged. At the end of the Algerian War in 1962, over a million white French settlers (*pièdes noirs*) had to be repatriated to mainland France. The size of the Franco-Algerian population, estimated at 2 million, is about six times that of the Franco-Vietnamese. Chirac's visit to Algiers in March 2003 was the first state visit by a serving French president since Algeria's independence and the cheering welcome of half a million people that greeted him was described by *Le Monde*, 3 March 2003, as "triumphal".

was broken in 1995 when it joined ASEAN and established full diplomatic relations with the United States. In this regard, France has to compete in Vietnam with much stronger economic partners (Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, etc), and entities with far great political-strategic importance to Vietnam (ASEAN, China, the US, Japan). From Vietnam's perspective, its *partenaires privilégiés* are its largest trading, investment and strategic partners in the region, chiefly Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan.¹⁶⁰

As seen in Part I, Europeanization is very weak in the economic sector. French policies in Vietnam are formulated with very little reference to common EU goals and objectives. France has not sought to "Europeanize" its close relationship with Vietnam, preferring to build "privileged relations" with Vietnam and its other two ex-colonies in Southeast Asia. French commercial interests still try to maintain privileged relations in Vietnam in the belief that this would help them vis-à-vis Japanese, Asian, American and other European rivals. In contrast to other Asian countries where Germany is usually the dominant EU trading partner and the UK is the largest investor, France in Indochina is not only the largest European, but the largest Western source of trade, aid and investments. The only economic activities which are Europeanised are those under Community competences (eg WTO negotiations for Vietnam's entry and EU Cooperation Agreements).

French aid and investments are predominantly channelled to Vietnam on a unilateral level and aimed at achieving French national goals, with little or no EU involvement except in the case of giving Vietnam access to cooperation agreements under the EC-ASEAN framework or preferred access for Vietnamese goods to the EU market.

As seen in Part II, the EU's five major objectives in East Asia- engaging Asia politically and in security; strengthening trade and investment; poverty reduction; human rights and the promotion of democracy, good governance and the rule of law;

¹⁶⁰ *Oxford Analytica*, "Vietnam: Economic Orientation", 17 February 1993. The Vietnamese even invited Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew to act as Vietnam's economic adviser.

¹⁶¹ See Gill Bates and J.N. Mak (eds), "A de facto arms trade register for South-East Asia, 1975-96", in *Arms Transparency and Security in Southeast Asia*, SIPRI Research Report No.13, 1997, pp.101-140; and Russ Swinnerton, "The strategic environment and arms acquisitions in Southeast Asia", SIPRI Research Report No.13, p. 35.

and strengthening mutual awareness¹⁶²; are all goals that fit in with French objectives in Vietnam. Vietnam is however, not a priority country in the EU's economic or political objectives in East Asia and is not even specifically mentioned in the Commission's 2001 strategy paper. The EC's 2002-2006 Country Strategy Paper focuses on development cooperation activities and makes no reference to Vietnam's strategic relevance in the region or political importance to the EU. In this regard, French efforts balance the predominantly aid and development cooperation aims of the EU towards Vietnam. Communications with the leadership in Vietnam (as well as in Laos and Cambodia) remain open and familiar, even during times of crisis and international isolation. Most of the CPV Politburo members are Soviet-trained (some senior cadres were trained in the old East Germany). The French hope that their targeted aid in higher education and reforms of the state (especially judicial reforms) will in time produce a small corps of French-speaking *évolués*. The plethora of new fora in which France and Vietnam dialogue (ASEM, ASEAN-EU meetings, etc) reinforce the strong bilateral dialogue, *Viêt kiêu* and Francophonie links that the two countries already enjoy. The record of recent years, however, shows France preferring that *national* to the EU option. In the security-strategic field, it has been encouraged by its position as a major supplier to the four main powers in ASEAN: Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, and important inroads made in terms of defence links with, and high-technology transfer to, Taiwan and Singapore.¹⁶³

As argued in the third part of this chapter, the human rights issue has been stymied by France's "constructive engagement" with Vietnam. As a Pillar II issue, any major human rights position on Vietnam has to be decided by consensus between the Member States. An important difference between the EU's engagement policy with Vietnam and its confrontational policy towards Burma (both ASEAN member states cited by NGOs as among the most repressive states in the world) can be traced to the success of a major EU Member State in leading the issue and making its national policy common EU policy (in both cases led by its ex-colonial power). Also, Vietnam gets away with it both because there is no charismatic opposition figure akin to Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi, and because compared to the 1970s, Vietnam has been making

¹⁶² COM(2001)469 final, p.3 and Conclusions.

¹⁶³ Swinnerton, "The strategic environment and arms acquisitions in Southeast Asia", p. 35.

steady relative progress and has succeeded in raising the living standards of its people (and thus meeting economic and social rights) under *doi moi*.

French efforts since the 1980s in making a political and economic *rentrée* in Vietnam can be considered a qualified success. Over the 1990s, the evidence for converging French and EU interests and policies in Vietnam is weak. Convergence was strongest when there were external demands for a strong and united EU presence, eg in ASEM, in order to counter-balance a perceived excess of US (and growing Chinese) influence in the region in the evolving post-Cold War situation in Southeast Asia. Second, French and other European foreign-policy making élites were also beginning to view the region through more long-term and common lenses. French diplomats recognize that France does not have the means to play an appreciable role unilaterally in East Asia as the region is too large, too diverse and too far away. Asia continues to be a “second-priority” zone to French interests, albeit with Vietnam singled out as a first-priority country. Third and related to the point about limited French national capacity, the dynamism introduced to EU-East Asia relations under the umbrella of ASEM - one of the great achievements of French diplomacy in Asia in the 1990s - was realized only through the EU.

Vietnam’s impressive growth rates in the 1990s and its large population of 80 million make it one of the star economic performers in a Southeast Asia beset by economic woes since 1997. In the context of a fast growing Vietnamese economy averaging 7-8% per annum between 1986 and 1997, French trade and aid with respect to Vietnam are likely to become increasingly framed in the multilateral contexts of the ASEAN-EC dialogue and ASEM. If Vietnam does become an economic power like the NIEs and an important player in ASEAN, then the vested interests of individual EU member states and the EU as a whole in Vietnam would rise. This happened with Japan in the 1970s and China in the 1980s. Intra-EU conflict and the need to coordinate policy would then be correspondingly greater. In such a context, France will have to work within a more Europeanised policy-making sphere, that is, within a framework whereby France can leverage on the larger material and political resources afforded by the European Union.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

Asia in French Foreign Policy

If one of the major and consistent themes of postwar French policy – especially since De Gaulle – has been to reclaim the country's rank as a great power with a mission of projecting specific values, then East Asia with its huge and growing populations, rising powers and dynamic economies is one of the areas in which a French absence could not be permitted.¹ Yet half a century after Dien Bien Phu ignominiously ended French colonialism in East Asia, the region remains one in which the French presence is weak. Despite bold presidential declarations by De Gaulle in Phnom Penh (1966) and Chirac in Singapore (1996), comprehensive bilateral agreements with Japan (1996) and China (1997), the French economic, political and cultural presence in Asia still pales in comparison to that of the US and the regional powers China, Japan and even Australia.² Among the EU countries, Germany and Britain have been far more successful in their trade and investment relations with the East Asian economies, with France maintaining a lead (albeit diminishing) only in the three small Indochinese economies.

East Asia remains outside the three “circles of priority” of French foreign policy. While for Britain the myth of the Commonwealth, the US and Europe represented from Churchill onwards Britain's foreign policy priorities, France identified Europe, the Atlantic Alliance and the “*Francophonie*-Africa-Mediterranean” group (in which France's “Arab policy” and *Françafrique* policy operate) as *its* postwar priorities.³ In the 1990s, France's Asia policy ceased to be what Godement criticized as a “zigzag policy”.⁴ This involved a certain amount of change of direction as priorities varied and Asia grew in importance on the radar of French diplomacy.

1 Marie-Christine Kessler and Frédéric Charillon, “France: un ‘rang’ à réinventer”, in Frédéric Charillon (ed.), *Les Politiques Étrangères: Ruptures et Continuités*, Paris: La Documentation Française, 2001, pp.101-131; Charillon, “Peut-il encore y avoir une politique étrangère française?”, *Politique Étrangère* 4/2002, hiver 2002, pp.915-929; Roy C. MacRidid, “France: the Quest for Rank”, in *Foreign Policy in World Politics*, 8th ed., Englewoods Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1992, pp.32-67.

² Hervé Dejean de la Bâtie, *Où va l'Asie en 2002?*, May 2002, on IFRI's Centre Asie website, <http://www.ifri.org/f/Centre%20asie/articles/>, accessed 9 May 2002.

³ Kessler and Charillon, pp.113-124.

⁴ Godement, “Une politique française pour l'Asie-Pacifique?”, pp.964-966.

France is unable, by its own national efforts, to come anywhere close to matching the great powers in the region. For example, the United States is preponderant as a top investor and trading partner of all the dynamic East Asian economies from Japan to Singapore. Its military-industrial complex is committed to the region through a network of bilateral security alliances (intensified and widened following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001) and a permanent military presence of over 100,000 soldiers stationed in the region.⁵ It is also a “soft power” attracting the best students to US universities and where English-speaking élites are engaged through APEC. After the neglect of earlier decades, French governments in the 1990s actively built ties with countries in the region both bilaterally and multilaterally (primarily via the EU).

The dominant scholarship, portraying French foreign policy as nationalistic and independent, seems to be in need of extensive qualification, if not revision.⁶ This scholarship, embodied by Stanley Hoffmann since the 1960s, argues that French policy remains fundamentally driven by *national* interests, albeit interests packaged as being good for Europe as a whole. If there is any “Europeanization” taking place, it is limited only to the bottom-up variety, ie. the second-dimension “National Projection” (chapter two) process that seeks to export French preferences and policies onto a European platform. In other words, instead of converging towards a real European policy that expresses EU-wide goals, aspirations and objectives, any “European policy” promoted by France would essentially be an attempt to present the wolf of French interests in a European sheep’s clothing.

This perspective of France as an ambitious master of *Realpolitik* finds echoes in academic analyses and political declarations alike, that France should lead in deciding what is “good” for Europe and that France essentially seeks to dominate, if not “Gallicise” European Foreign policy.⁷ De Gaulle noted to his junior minister Alain Peyrefitte in 1962:

⁵ Dejean de la Bâtie, *Où va l'Asie en 2002?*, pp.11-12.

⁶ See Stanley Hoffmann’s “Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe”, *Dædalus*, Summer 1966; “Conclusions”, in Ross, Hoffman and Malzacher (eds), *The Mediterranean Experiment*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987; “The European Community and 1992”, *Foreign Affairs* 68/4 (Fall 1992); “La France dans le Monde 1979-2000”, *Politique Etrangère*, 2/2000, pp.307-317; also Alistair Cole, *French Politics and Society*, London: Prentice Hall, 1998, p.260.

⁷ Guyomarch, Machin and Ritchie, *France in the European Union*, London: Macmillan Press, 1998; Anand Menon, “France and the IGC of 1996”, in *Journal of European Public Policy* 3/2 (June 1996), pp.231-252.

What is the purpose of Europe? It should be to allow us to escape the domination of the Americans and the Russians. The six of us ought to be able to do just as well as either of the superpowers. And if France so orders matters to be the first among the Six, an aim which is within our reach, she can work this lever of Archimedes, and draw her partners after her. Europe is the means for France to regain the stature she has lost since Waterloo, as the first among the world's nations.⁸

“Europe” as a foreign policy instrument fits the National Projection meaning of Europeanization examined in chapter two. Admittedly, this bottom-up projection of national policy onto a multilateral institutional framework proved effective in the French use of the EU to amplify its influence in East Asia. All three case studies illustrated the utility of the EU as a “power multiplier” for France. Mitterrand and Dumas used the institutions of the EC to augment French national preferences, eg. in formulating collective EC sanctions on China in 1989, and in opening EU markets to Vietnam after 1991. French governments also used the EC as a cover for protectionist measures against Japan through the 1980s.

But the EC/EU did not provide France only with a convenient diplomatic shield or amplifier in its national policies in East Asia. The establishment of CFSP in 1991 intensified expectations of common European action, intensified policy coordination and favoured trends and procedures of convergence. Throughout the 1990s, French policies have had to be coordinated with collective Commission-defined Country and Regional Strategy Papers (CSPs) for Asia in 1994, 1995 and 2001. On a country-specific level, French political and human rights objectives had to interact with EU CSPs for Japan (1991 and 1995), China (1995, 1998 and 2001) and Vietnam (2001), while economic exchanges with China and Vietnam after their respective openings in 1978 and 1986, were facilitated by Trade and Cooperation Agreements the Commission negotiated. French policies have also been influenced by other EU Member States as well as other actors in the region (both internal and external): Germany's 1993 Asian Policy and “silent diplomacy” with regard to human rights in China in the early 1990s; UK-Japan rapprochement from the late 1980s; the intimate US-Japan political-security-economic relationship; and the strong economic and cultural presence of the Asian NIEs, Japan and ASEAN in Vietnam following the latter's opening in 1986.

⁸ Alain Peyrefitte, *C'était de Gaulle*, Paris: Editions de Fallois/Fayard, 1994, p.59 as cited in Mény and Knapp, *Government and Politics in Western Europe*, 3rd ed., Oxford UP, 1998, p. 369.

France's Asia Policy - what kind of Europeanization?

In the late 1990s, Quai d'Orsay officials could justifiably claim to have "Europeanised" a bilateral political dialogue with China by exporting outwards and upwards French models of regular high-level political contacts with Chinese leaders.⁹ After Chirac's May 1997 state visit, France called on the EU to engage in a dialogue with China rather than confront it over human rights (Chapter 4). The upgrading of France-China political dialogue, set out in the 1997 France-China joint declaration, provided a model for the EU-China dialogue.¹⁰ The 1996 Chirac-Hashimoto "20 Actions pour l'an 2000" agreement provided a blueprint for the Commission's own 2001 Action Plan, while France's consistent engagement with the Vietnamese regime in Hanoi since 1975 and throughout the 1980s was upgraded to the European level when the EU signed a TCA with Vietnam in 1995. "Europeanization" in France's political relations with East Asian countries could thus be interpreted as a bottom-up process of France projecting its preferences upwards.

While there is good evidence to support claims of French agency in the EU's Asia policy, and success in exporting its preferences in East Asia to the European level, I would argue that French policy in East Asia has in effect undergone significant *convergence* with the policies of other EU Member States and the Commission (the first dimension of Europeanization) and even some convergence of interests and identity (the third dimension) as laid out in chapter two.

First, French influence and presence in East Asia had been on a steady decline after 1954.¹¹ Militarily, the French were absent except for a dispersed presence on the peripheries of the region: in the South Indian Ocean (Mayotte, Réunion) and the South Pacific (New Caledonia). The French economic presence in Pacific Asia in the 1980s

⁹ See Hervé de la Bâtie, *La politique chinoise de l'Union européenne: en progrès, mais peut mieux faire*, on IFRI's Centre Asie website, <http://www.ifri.org/f/Centre%20asie/articles/hdb-ue-chine.htm>, pp.1-26, accessed 9 May 2002.

¹⁰ The EU-China dialogue was upgraded to annual Commission Presidency level summits in March 1998 - Jacques Santer's October 1998 visit to China was the first by a Commission President since Jacques Delors in 1986.

¹¹ France tried to retain as much influence as possible in Indochina after the 1954 Geneva Agreements., which recognized the independence of Laos and Cambodia within the French Union and permitted the continuation of 75,000 French Expeditionary Force troops in South Vietnam until Vietnam-wide elections scheduled for 1965. Military pacts with Laos and Cambodia allowed the continued presence of French bases in Laos and military advisers in Cambodia. However, the escalation of the Algerian War and US pressure rapidly whittled the French presence by 1960. See Frey, 2000: 20-34.

was so small that French leaders had to resort to *grands contrats* to boost statistics on French commercial and investment exchanges with the region.¹² Politically, France tried to be present in the “*grandes négociations politiques*” in the region, and there France met some success with its role in the negotiations for US withdrawal from South Vietnam in 1973, and Vietnam’s withdrawal from Cambodia in 1991.

Second, the EU’s role and presence in East Asia has grown, in contrast to the diminishing profiles of individual Member States and ex-colonial powers in the region. From 1991, France was unable to act as a national actor in its own right (witness its failure, along with Britain, to win a seat in the ASEAN Regional Forum). It had to work through the European Union in the ARF, in ASEM, and in the EU’s dialogues with ASEAN, Japan and China. The last European colonies in East Asia were returned to China in 1997 (Hong Kong) and 1999 (Macao).

The first two factors are related because the EU is progressively acting as a parallel (and sometimes substitute) actor alongside (and sometimes in the place of) Member States in the region. Europeanization has thus affected foreign policy autonomy. The EU’s China human rights policy at the UNCHR from 1998 could be interpreted as a “levelling down” from the perspective of the more hardline states (Denmark, Netherlands, UK), a “drastic self-imposed reduction of sovereignty for those states that might choose to table or co-sponsor a resolution.”¹³ It also committed the more accommodating “airbus group” (France, Germany, Italy, Spain) to voting against a no-action motion. But Europeanization also increased state autonomy by empowering states to pursue policies they could not engage in without the institutional protection offered by EU structures. In 1989, the EC-12 converged their policies and responded to the Tiananmen massacre with a collective sanctions policy as “Europe”. European governments had few policy alternatives in the face of outrage in their domestic constituencies, and were willing to risk Beijing’s displeasure because they found strength behind an institutional edifice.¹⁴ The Mitterrand-Dumas approach was to use the EC-12 and collective sanctions to express French outrage at the Chinese authorities. By committing the member states to a collective and individual sanctions policy on

¹² Domenach, “La Politique française au miroir de l’Asie”, in La Serre, Leruez and Wallace (eds), *Les politiques étrangères de la France et de la Grande Bretagne depuis 1945*, Paris, 1990, p.242.

¹³ Clapham, “The EU’s Human Rights Common Policy”, p.647.

¹⁴ See Peter Ferdinand, “Economic and Diplomatic Interactions between the EU and China”, p.31.

China, the EC served as an “umbrella to reduce the costs of individual sanctions, promote credibility and reduce the likelihood of cheating.”¹⁵

Trade

From the case studies of China, Vietnam and Japan presented in the preceding three chapters, top-down Europeanization has been clearest in the area of trade. The Commission took the lead in initiating and negotiating a Common Commercial Policy with East Asian countries, ranging from car import agreements with Japan (1991) to Trade and Cooperation Agreements (with China in 1978 and 1985; with Vietnam in 1995) to WTO accession agreements (with China in May 2000). Informed by the ascent of economic liberal thinking within the EC with the 1986 Single European Act, French foreign economic relations were obliged to adapt to new rules. The Commission’s role was key in 1991 in imposing liberal policies on the Member States, effectively opened the Single Market to Japanese competition in previously nationally-negotiated protected sectors such as VCRs and cars. “Europe” was necessary as an external force to change ingrained French economic habits and reflexes.

Of course, French economic positions are not influenced only from above by the Commission. There is a great deal of sideways policy learning from other Member States, notably from Britain and Germany.¹⁶ The economic weakness of France in Asia vis-à-vis not only the US and Japan, but also relative to Germany and Britain, was addressed only from the late 1980s. Under Chirac’s presidency, French trade policies continued moving towards collaboration and the promotion of French exports to Asia in tandem with *European* efforts. The dominant strategy continues to be politically motivated *grands contrats* involving high-value sales such as Airbuses and metro systems to China and Singapore, high-speed trains to South Korea, Mirage fighters to Taiwan, and military systems to these same countries. But France has also had to work through the EU, the Commission and private enterprises in order to encourage French SMEs – the weakest sector of the French economic presence in East Asia – to go to the region.

¹⁵ Lisa Martin, *Coercive Cooperation: Explaining Multilateral Economic Sanctions*, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992.

¹⁶ Jack Hayward and Jacques Leruez, “Nationalism and the Economy”, in La Serre et al (eds), *French and British Policies in Transition: The Challenge of Adjustment*, London: RIIA, 1990, pp.64-95 and Christoph Nesshöver, “Bonn et Paris face à Pékin (1989-1997): Vers une Stratégie commune?”, in *Politique Etrangère* 1/99, 1999, pp.91-106.

Edged on by policy-learning Europeanization from other EU states, France emulated Britain's cooperative attitude towards the *défi japonais*, and Germany's pragmatic attitude on delinking trade from human rights in relations with China. If France did not always change its attitude or ingrained definitions of its national interests (third-dimension Europeanization), it often saw the value of compromise (first-dimension Europeanization) and cooperation in promoting collective *European* interests as another means to the same end.

Political Relations

Before 1989, Asia was a very low priority in French foreign policy, which was concerned mainly with the Cold War, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa.¹⁷ China was an exception under de Gaulle when France became the first major western country to exchange Ambassadors with China, and had provided its good offices in the US-China rapprochement between Kissinger/Nixon and Zhou Enlai/Mao. Asia (and China in particular) became important to Gaullist foreign policy when it complemented the French desire to regain a role in world affairs independent of the superpowers after the triple humiliations of Dien Bien Phu (1954), Suez (1956) and Algeria (1954-62).¹⁸ By the early-1970s however, France had become a normal country with no special political, and still less economic privileges in China.¹⁹ France had been useful to China in the mid-1960s after its break with Moscow, and growing diplomatic isolation by the US as a result of the escalating war in Vietnam. But by 1975, China had recognised the EC (the first communist country to do so), and established diplomatic relations with all the major Western countries. Forced by its size to envisage its future within a wider European framework, French relations with China in the 1970s and 1980s were eclipsed by the US-China rapprochement, China's growing international integration and even China's dealings with the EC. The 1989 Tiananmen massacre and French arms sales to Taiwan resulted in a period of bilateral acrimony, and France was obliged to turn to multilateral structure such as the G7 and the OECD - but primarily the EU - to manage its disagreements with China.

¹⁷ Domenach, "La Politique française au miroir de l'Asie", pp.228-244.

¹⁸ Grosser, *Affaires Extérieures: La Politique de la France 1944-1989*, ch.4-5.

¹⁹ See Domenach, "Sino-French Relations: a French View", in Hsueh Chun-Tu (ed), *China's Foreign Relations: New Perspectives*, New York: Praeger, 1982, pp.87-98.

The development of common objectives and a common European political agenda in relations with significant and powerful external actors such as China and Japan could only come about with the gradual convergence of national objectives and policies, first between the EC-9 under EPC, then the EU-12/15 under the CFSP. Such a convergence of political objectives is evident in the EU's dialogues with China. Chapter 4 showed how the European consensus on "constructive engagement" with China in 1995 had evolved after two decades of EC-China relations. This consensus was rooted in Germany's initial pragmatic post-Tiananmen policy from 1992, and British and French policy emulation after 1993. It resulted in the first comprehensive EU strategy papers regarding China - the 1994 "New Asia Strategy" and the 1995 "Long-term policy for China-Europe Relations" which outlined a new European political agenda.

Towards Japan, stubborn French resistance in 1989-91 to developing closer political ties in the absence of balanced trade relations gave way, under the general consensus among other EU Member States and the Commission, to the view that a comprehensive dialogue with Japan was necessary in the post-Cold War world. Only in Vietnam was France a leading and consistent actor in initiating EU policies towards an Asian country. France used its influence as a leading member of other organisations, eg. the IMF, Francophonie and the UNSC to broker a peace in Cambodia and between Vietnam and its neighbours in 1991. With Vietnam, France pursues a "special relationship" with an ex-colony. Very positively regarded today, not only through rose-tinted lenses of nostalgia and sentiment as a member of the Francophonie (hence within the three "circles of priority" in French foreign policy) and with the humiliation of Dien Bien Phu half a century ago all but forgotten, Vietnam is also seen as a future economic tiger and strategic player in Southeast Asia and within ASEAN. Yet the utility of France to Vietnam and the unusually close relations in 1979-1991 rapidly diminished after the Paris Peace Accords, and especially after 1995 when Vietnam joined ASEAN and established full diplomatic relations with the US. In this regard, France can only compete with the major economic players (Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan), and strategic players (the US and China) in Vietnam by acting through the EU.

Human Rights

France is a relative newcomer to the pursuit of human rights in foreign policy. During the Cold War, French leaders turned a blind eye to gross human rights violations occurring in the Communist bloc countries. Vietnam (where a large overseas Vietnamese community agitated for French government criticisms, if not action against Hanoi) was a noteworthy exception that proved the rule. Left-wing French intellectuals, enamoured by Marxist, Leninist and Maoist ideas for more just and egalitarian societies, were often silent on China's human rights atrocities during the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward.²⁰ This is in part a reflection of the "general will" Rousseauian tradition in France, and the relative weakness of the liberal individualist tradition in French foreign policy.²¹

Tiananmen was the immediate and singular post-Cold War event that triggered a more pronounced and coherent French human rights policy. This was however more an emotional reaction than a reasoned, purposeful policy to promote human rights in China or indeed anywhere in East Asia or the wider world. Faced with the strong backlash from China in 1991-92, and against the backdrop of Germany and the UK continuing business-as-usual with China²², a *modus vivendi* balancing political, economic, human rights and security interests has been worked out since the normalisation of Franco-Chinese relations in 1994. The Europeanization of French human rights policy appears to have occurred in tandem with this understanding. In fact, France broke ranks in 1997 and the EU had then to reach a new compromise position on its human rights policy in China

From the mid-1990s, a new turn in French human rights policy occurred with the French emphasis on "constructive dialogue", including with repressive communist regimes such as those of China and Vietnam (chapters 4 and 6). While this approach may be criticised as an instrumental policy for French economic gains, it is nonetheless

²⁰ See Domenach 82; Jean-François Revel, *La Grande Parade: Essai sur la survie de l'utopie socialiste*, Paris: Plon, 2000; Stéphane Courtois et al, *Le livre noir du communisme*, Paris: Laffont, 1997.

²¹ In contrast, the Anglo-American tradition has stressed the rights of political and civil liberties in society as well as in international relations. See David Forsythe, *Human Rights and World Politics*, 1983, p.95 and Forsythe, "American Foreign Policy and Human Rights: Rhetoric and Reality", *Universal Human Rights* 2/3, July-September 1980, pp.35-54.

²² Britain (unlike France in 1991 or Denmark in 1997) was not singled out for retaliation, but British losses in trade with China on account of wrangling over Hong Kong in 1992-96, was estimated at £1-2 billion. Craddock 99:281.

clear that it represents an original and significant departure from the Dutch, Nordic and US human rights approaches which tend to be more principled but also more didactic. At a conference on democratisation in Warsaw in June 2000, Védrine criticised “Westerners” who considered democratisation a “religion” and that it was sufficient to “convert people”.²³

Such a pragmatic approach to human right issues has allowed for cooperation activities and policy coordination with like-minded powers, especially Japan (chapter 5), the major trading power and aid donor in the region. It has also allowed, in contrast to Mitterrand’s and Dumas’ principled stances on human rights in Vietnam, for high-level dialogues free from controversy with Vietnamese leaders in the Chirac presidency, with EU actors (apart from the Parliament) taking the cue from France in turning a blind eye to violations of political and religious rights in Vietnam.

Convergence vs. the logic of diversity

A key question raised in chapter one concerned whether Europeanization would lead to a convergence of the EU member states’ foreign policy trajectories and an emergence of shared notions of European interests. In the three case studies, there is remarkable evidence of French objectives converging with EU-wide perceptions and interests of East Asia.

Several factors have contributed towards this Europeanization of French policies in East Asia. First, there were external expectations that Europe could and should become a powerful unitary actor in world politics. China had in the 1970s and 1980s urged greater European integration as a counter-balance within NATO to Soviet expansionism and aggressive policies towards China. Japan in 1991 sought an enhanced EC-Japan political dialogue as it searched for its own post-Cold War role and manoeuvring room as a key member of the West, and a global economic power and Asian power in its own right.

Second, the EU provided a means for France to re-engage in East Asia. After its effective expulsion from the region following its defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954,

²³ Kessler and Charillon, “France: un ‘rang’ à réinventer”, p.111 (fn.39)

France had made several short-lived attempts (eg. in 1966 under De Gaulle, in 1981 under Mitterrand) to return as a player in the politics and economics of the region. But France failed to be recognised as a serious alternative to the United States or the Soviet Union by the main actors *sur place* – China, Japan and ASEAN. France was temporarily in the spotlight when it offered its good offices in the resolution of the Second and Third Indochina Wars (1964-73 and 1978-1991). However, it was through the vehicle of the Asia-Europe Meeting, launched in 1996 and effectively a summit meeting of EU and East Asian leaders, that France was able to re-engage in East Asia with *all* the countries in the region, in a forum that included political, economic and security discussions.

Related to the EU as a means or cover for French re-engagement in East Asia is the utility of the CFSP in affording a “politics of scale” to support French interests.²⁴ Under the “European” umbrella, France could play a key role in the 1993 and 1997 elections-monitoring in Cambodia, backed by the EU’s financial wherewithal and protected from accusations of neo-colonialism through actions taken under EU and UN auspices. France could credibly claim that it was a significant player in the region. This rested not only on its UNSC status and hence *formal* role in contact groups/fora like KEDO, UNTAC and UNTAET. By acting as an agent of *European* foreign policy (many of these large operations were not confined to CFSP, but required Pillar I resources and member states’ contributions, eg. peace-keeping forces) it could claim more credit for its dual national/European roles in Cambodia, East Timor, and discussions on North Korea.

Third, there is a great deal of bilateral, trilateral and other sub-EU levels of policy coordination and learning taking place with regard to East Asia. We saw in chapter 4 the policy convergence and coordination that took root in the intensive coordination and policy transfer between France and Germany on China. France succeeded in projecting its high-profile political dialogue with China into EU policy in 1998. Germany succeeded in exporting its pragmatic economics-based policy towards China to the EU in 1994, and confirmed it in 1995. Elite socialisation and a culture of consultation and consensus are discernible from the Commission’s 1994 and 1995

²⁴ Roy H. Ginsberg, *Foreign Policy Actions of the European Community: the Politics of Scale*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1989.

strategy papers. The papers are remarkable for the way in which they have incorporated ideas from the national diplomacies in Bonn, Paris, London and Brussels on comprehensive relations with China. In both cases, France and Germany initially worked unilaterally then enlisted the other country's support to change established EU policy. In seeking to Europeanise their national approaches, they needed support from powerful allies. For Germany, the task of achieving EU recognition of Asia's economic importance to EU trade took two years of quiet diplomacy, from 1992 to the Commission's NAS paper in 1994. French efforts to upgrade political dialogue with China required four years (from France-China normalization in 1994) and a crisis at the 53rd UNCHR in 1997, to spur the EU states into working out a comprehensive EU strategy in 1998, the Comprehensive Partnership paper.

Socialisation is also evident in that the frequent contacts and consultations between EU officials and national diplomacies on East Asia resulted in a European consensus on the need to fully "engage" China. Another example showing this process at work is the rapidity in which ASEM was launched. It took just 17 months, from its inception in Paris in October 1994, through the idea's inscription onto the EU agenda in the July 1995 strategy paper, to its launch in March 1996. Although the idea was broached by the Singapore Prime Minister in Paris (to Mitterrand and Balladur) in 1994, it quickly became a *French* "European initiative" to engage East Asia at summit level in the Brussels circuit.²⁵

Of course, these convergence processes are not irreversible or pre-determined. French foreign policy seems to have resisted being locked into a fixed path of identity and policy convergence. On China, France was one of the chief culprits in the intra-EU competition after 1990 that resulted in the rapid unravelling of EU cooperation on the Madrid sanctions. It was the leading defector in 1997 when French interests in improving political and commercial relations with China over-rode the common UNCHR approach to human rights. Identity Europeanization remains elusive in all three case studies. French policy is often contrasted to that of Germany, supposedly the

²⁵ Interview with Simon Nuttall, former Director for Far East (1988-95), European Commission External Relations Directorate-General (DG I), in London, 12 March 2003. See also Council for Asia-Europe Relations, *The Rationale and Common Agenda for Asia-Europe Cooperation: CAEC Task Force Reports*, Tokyo and London: CAEC, 1997, pp.3-30.

model of a “Europeanised” state with a European identity²⁶. Yet even Germany showed a clear preference for national interest over agreed EU policy in its recognition of Slovenia and Croatia in December 1991.²⁷ National interests, as defined by incumbent national élites, still play a decisive role in national foreign policy-making. But while national élites may resist the institutionalisation of EU practices and a reflex of working for the collective interest, changes in the international context, venues of decision-making (increasingly oriented towards Brussels) have incrementally altered even the definition of what constitutes the “European” or the “national” interest.

Commercial Policy is a prime example of this shift. The Commission’s 1991 “Car deal” with Japan undertook to dismantle over 10 years quotas for Japanese car imports in the protected markets of France, Italy and Spain. France shares with other EU member states the same interests of improving access to Chinese markets and entrusted the Commission to take the lead in multilateral negotiations with China, both for EC-China trade and for China’s WTO accession. Economic convergence is not limited to top-down processes proceeding from the Commission. The successful national policies of other member states are often copied. Britain’s success in attracting Japanese FDI, and Germany’s export success in China are two examples of policies emulated by French governments.

Despite the convergence in trade and political relations, France tries to keep a privileged political and cultural position for itself in Vietnam, regularly to enunciate preferences for an anti-hegemonic world order in its joint political declarations with China, and to upgrade previously neglected and acrimonious bilateral ties with Japan. Yet at the same time France publicly subscribes to common EU positions and common objectives as embodied in the Commission’s strategy papers towards these three and other countries in East Asia. Here the limit on Europeanization is the French state’s self-perception of its role in the EU and in the world. Even the most ardent advocates of CFSP coordination admit that ingrained national perception and foreign policy histories

²⁶ See Klaus H. Goetz, “Integration policy in a Europeanized State: Germany and the Intergovernmental Conference”, *Journal of European Public Policy (JEPP)*, 3/1, March 1996, pp.23-44 and Martin Marcussen et al, “Constructing Europe? The Evolution of French, British and German Nation State Identities”, in *JEPP* 6/4, Special Issue 1999, pp.614-633.

²⁷ Reinhardt Rummel, “Germany’s Role in the CFSP: ‘Normalität or ‘Sonderweg’?”, in Christopher Hill (ed), *The Actors in Europe’s Foreign Policy*, London: Routledge, 1996, p.62.

will not easily give way to “European” interests.²⁸ France has been singled out as one of a few “uncooperative” Member States, recalcitrantly refusing to give up their national foreign policy independence to support common European actions.²⁹ In Asia, a Gaullist President making the first French presidential visit to Beijing in 14 years (Chirac in 1997) was unlikely to adhere to the EU’s common UNCHR position. In a situation of incompatible state and European interests, powerful states such as France are likely to defect from EU policies which have limited effects on the target actor’s behaviour. France remains one of the few countries in the EU willing and able to pursue an independent course of action, and to try to bring the EU along with it.³⁰ French governments try to use EU institutions as a “power multiplier” rather than “influence reducer”³¹ to pursue their national interests. Although EU membership has meant that the chief “international and institutional context” in which national interests are defined and redefined is the EU,³² France is different from most other EU states in that it can still exert an independent influence apart from the EU. More importantly, it has to adapt its foreign policy as a state with special international responsibilities and a great power role. It is a permanent member of the Security Council, a nuclear power, and de facto head of the *Francophonie*. Its historical ties with the Indochinese countries, despite the continual marginalisation and diminution of French-speaking élites in Vietnam since 1954, and Cambodia and Laos since 1975, are tinged by nostalgia and sentimentality which incorporate these states into one of the three inner circles of French foreign policy.

Theories of rational-choice institutionalism admit that “institutions make a significant difference in conjunction with power realities.”³³ States may however withdraw from multilateral cooperation if the benefits accruing from cooperation do not compensate the costs incurred. Such a conception will lead us to think that CFSP actions have continually to contend with intergovernmental bargaining, coordination and the constant threat of collapse as the costs to each member state are variable. But the nature of even CFSP, one of the most inter-governmental of EU institutions, has

²⁸ Jan Zielonka, *Explaining Euro-Paralysis*, London: Macmillan Press, 1998.

²⁹ Hill 98:37

³⁰ Stanley Hoffmann, “La France dans le Monde 1979-2000”, *Politique Etrangère* 2/2000, 2000:307-317.

³¹ Hubert Védrine, “De l’utilité de la France”, *Politique Internationale*, 78, winter 1997-98, p.41.

³² W. Sandholtz, “Choosing Union: Monetary Politics and Maastricht” *International Organization* Vol. 47, Winter 1993, p.3.

³³ Keohane and Martin, “The Promise of Institutional Theory”, p.42.

over the last 30 years moved a long way from its original anti-*communautaire* approach towards a *reflexe communautaire*.³⁴ It is not just another rational-choice institution, but has become a critical sociological force and venue that shapes perceptions, structures policy choices, and privileges certain courses of national and collective action while constraining others.

France and the EU as a whole share the same economic and political interests in East Asia. Although the means and preferred methods may have sometimes differed quite dramatically, French national objectives largely coincided with EU objectives in East Asia during the 1990s. First, France, the Commission, and Member States such as Germany, Britain, Italy and the Netherlands were keen on engaging the economic opportunities offered by East Asia, until 1997 the most economically dynamic region in the world. This economic imperative was made clear in the Commission's 1994 New Asia Strategy paper and reaffirmed in the slew of strategy papers concerning individual states (China, Japan, Indonesia, Vietnam, etc.) between 1995 and 1999. Second, The leaders of EU Member States were becoming convinced of the need for Europe to be politically and strategically engaged in East Asia, both in multilateral fora such as ASEM, as well as bilateral dialogues between individual East Asian and EU countries. Third, human rights were being championed by several EU Member States through EU structures. The Commission, the Parliament and several EU Presidencies (notably the Dutch and Danish) also took the initiative in the post-Cold War, post-Tiananmen era to champion human rights and attach political conditionalities in their aid and relations with East Asian countries. These three sets of objectives were shared by practically all EU member states. It was the French *approach* to East Asia, and the priority of objectives France applied to East Asia, which varied from the EU mainstream, not the objectives themselves.

If the EU did not exist, the incentives for France to seek compromises or regional allies to narrow conflicts of interests between itself and other European states, would have been far weaker. French governments unconstrained by the institutionalised concertation of the Community and the CFSP, could be expected to have been even more aggressive in their pragmatic pursuit of *grands contrats* in the region. In the

³⁴ Jakob Øhrgaard, "Less than Supranational, More than Intergovernmental: European Political Cooperation and the Dynamics of Intergovernmental Integration", *Millennium* 26/1, 1997.

ferocious competition for a share in the dynamic East Asian markets in the 1990s (in trade, armaments, investments, services and intellectual property), the 1997 French defection from the common position on human rights in China would more likely have been the norm than the exception.

Despite habits of cooperation, consultation and coordination on the EU's policy in the region being relatively new and not well established, the findings in this thesis suggest that policy convergence with other EU states and the Commission, and even a degree of identity reconstruction has occurred in France's East Asia policy. Clearly, France adapted its economic strategy from 1991 (with regard to Japan) and from 1993, to China and the greater East Asia region based on the lessons learnt from initiatives launched by Germany, Britain and the Commission. Its volatile political relations with China (diplomatic "freeze" in 1989-1994) and Japan (confrontations over trade up to 1991 and nuclear tests in 1995) were moderated by interactions and the need for cooperation in the contexts of other "clubs": the UN Security Council, G7/G8, and OECD. Significantly, the new or intensified EU-level engagements in the 1990s: the EU-Japan and EU-China summits, KEDO, the ASEAN-EU Post-ministerial conferences, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the Asia-Europe Meeting, have given France a plethora of fora in which to engage the giants of Asia in ways which it could otherwise not have achieved on a national basis.

Towards a more "European" French policy?

The EU was valuable in enabling a legitimate form of post-war return for France in Africa and (especially) Asia, where at least until the 1980s, the withdrawal or expulsion of the European powers was an overwhelming tendency in international relations. France in many ways still prefers an EU with weak institutions. However, French foreign policy after de Gaulle has clearly become less nationalist and more "European". This development is partially explained by constructivist accounts of the impact of EU norms and values and the internalisation of Community interests among foreign policy élites. A notion of collective European interests increasingly informs and shapes "national interests" and preferences. The discourse on French foreign policy and the "national interest" has been infused with the notion of EU interests and common

European goals.³⁵ In 1997 for example, France defended its defection from the common EU position at the UNCHR in the name of serving larger, long-term European interests of promoting democratic change in China, arguing that dialogue would be the best means to this shared goal.

One could take the cynical view that France uses the discourse of European interests as a post hoc justification for pursuing selfish national objectives, and that these interests are intrinsically inimical to common EU policies.³⁶ Certainly, France is a long way from consistently according priority to the “European interest” – a concept even more inchoate and elusive than the “national interest” and likely to become murkier with EU enlargement – over national goals, foreign policy traditions and histories, as some European-idealists envision.³⁷

Nevertheless, an undeniable shift in mentality towards incorporating notions of the collective *European* good into the Gaullist “France first” foreign policy is taking place. Much of this shift is related to the obsession with “national decline” and attempts to shore up France’s position in the world through Europe.³⁸ Even in security policy, that other bastion of Gaullist sovereignty, notions of ‘autonomy’ and ‘independence’ are set largely in a *European* rather than a national context.³⁹ French co-leadership with Britain since end-1998 towards a joint European defence capability⁴⁰ is symptomatic of the French preference for collective EU initiatives, even in sensitive areas impinging on national sovereignty and security.

In many regions of the world, distinctly “national” French policies have gradually been eroded, moderated or negotiated to more “European” and multilateral policies. This may not always result in a consensus of all EU member states, as the divisions over the 2002-3 Iraq war showed. However, France is eager to present a united front of at least a coalition of like-minded EU states (with France at the centre)

³⁵ Henrik Larsen, *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis: France, Britain and Europe*, 1997.

³⁶ See for example, Eberhard Sandschneider’s conclusion in “China’s Diplomatic Relations with the States of Europe”, in *China Quarterly*, No.169, March 2002, pp.42-44; and Jan Zielonka, *Explaining Euro-Paralysis*, London: Macmillan Press, 1998.

³⁷ Zielonka, *Explaining Euro-Paralysis*.

³⁸ Pascal Boniface, *La France est-elle encore une grande puissance?*, Paris: Presses de SciencesPo, 1998.

³⁹ Philip Gordon, *A Certain Idea of France: French Security Policy and the Gaullist Legacy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993, p.182.

⁴⁰ Stanley Hoffmann, “Towards a Common Foreign and Security Policy?”, *JCMS*, 38/2, 2000, pp.189-98.

on all major foreign policy issues. From the French “Arab policy”, a more general EU “Mediterranean policy” and an *EU* approach to the Middle East Peace Process has evolved since the First EPC statement on the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the 1980 Venice Declaration, and the 1991 Madrid Conference. From the *Françafrique* myth of France as an African power with a special responsibility as the “gendarme of Africa”, there is a move away towards more policy coordination with Britain, even Japan, the US, and of course with the EU.⁴¹

In East Asia, the utility and impact of EU institutions on French foreign policy behaviour is more significant than is commonly imagined or admitted. French analysts recognise that Paris does not have the means to make a noteworthy difference in this huge and diverse region dominated by the US, China and Japan, and beset by major economic, political and security instability in recent years.⁴² The most important avenue open to France to make an impact of some significance, is the European Union. The effects of participation in EFP offers notable evidence of the creeping influence of EU membership on national foreign policies, even that of France. For French policy-makers, the objective conditions of France’s weak economic and political position in East Asia, as well as its near-absence in military terms, low expatriate and diplomatic visibility in East Asia until the 1990s, were all too evident. Their initiatives and achievements during the second Mitterrand and first Chirac presidencies have been forged on the anvil of “Europe”. The French may still retain a Gaullist relic in pursuing grandiose “declaratory diplomacy”, eg. in their discourse on multipolarity and anti-US hegemony in their relations with China. They continue to work extensively on a bilateral level with Vietnam (in aid, cultural cooperation, education, development projects to preserve “special relations”) in parallel with, and often duplicating collective European policies. But they are all too aware that the French *rentrée* in East Asia was set in *European* terms, with all the attendant EU structures, actors, benefits and restrictions entailed.

⁴¹ Kessler and Charillon 2001:119-125; Rachel Utley, “‘Not to do less but to do better...’: French military policy in Africa”, *International Affairs* 78/1, 2002, pp.129-146; Dosenrode and Stubjær, *The European Union and the Middle East*, 2001.

⁴² See Valérie Niquet (ed), “Asie: équilibres incertains”, *La Revue Internationale et Stratégique* 44, hiver 2001-2.

EU TRADE WITH MAIN PARTNERS 1999 (Mio euro)

<u>IMPORTS</u>				<u>EXPORTS</u>				<u>(IMPORTS+EXPORTS)</u>			
Rank	Partners	Values	%	Rank	Partners	Values	%	Rank	Partners	Values	%
	WORLD*	772.086	100,0		WORLD*	758.342	100,0		WORLD*	1.530.428	100,0
1	USA	158.708	20,6	1	USA	182.530	24,1	1	USA	341.238	22,3
2	Japan	70.231	9,1	2	Switzerland	62.525	8,2	2	Switzerland	115.371	7,5
3	Switzerland	52.846	6,8	3	Japan	35.314	4,7	3	Japan	105.545	6,9
4	China	49.476	6,4	4	Poland	28.871	3,8	4	China	68.773	4,5
5	Norway	28.924	3,7	5	Norway	23.146	3,1	5	Norway	52.070	3,4
6	Russia	25.904	3,4	6	Turkey	20.515	2,7	6	Poland	46.384	3,0
7	Taiwan	19.940	2,6	7	China	19.297	2,5	7	Russia	40.610	2,7
8	South Korea	17.950	2,3	8	Hungary	18.611	2,5	8	Hungary	35.949	2,3
9	Poland	17.513	2,3	9	Czech Rep	18.286	2,4	9	Turkey	35.544	2,3
10	Hungary	17.338	2,2	10	Canada	16.605	2,2	10	Czech Rep	35.089	2,3
11	Czech Rep	16.803	2,2	11	Hong Kong	15.623	2,1	11	Taiwan	31.761	2,1
12	Turkey	15.029	1,9	12	Russia	14.706	1,9	12	Canada	30.057	2,0
13	Canada	13.452	1,7	13	Brazil	14.194	1,9	13	South Korea	29.375	1,9
14	Malaysia	13.060	1,7	14	Australia	13.740	1,8	14	Brazil	27.109	1,8
15	Brazil	12.915	1,7	15	Israel	12.771	1,7	15	Hong Kong	26.222	1,7
16	Singapore	12.737	1,6	16	Singapore	11.825	1,6	16	Singapore	24.562	1,6
17	South Africa	10.798	1,4	17	Taiwan	11.821	1,6	17	South Africa	20.650	1,3
18	Hong Kong	10.598	1,4	18	South Korea	11.425	1,5	18	Australia	20.617	1,3
19	Thailand	10.035	1,3	19	Mexico	10.386	1,4	19	Israel	20.382	1,3
20	India	10.005	1,3	20	India	10.268	1,4	20	India	20.274	1,3

GEOPOLITICAL GROUPINGS

<u>IMPORTS</u>				<u>EXPORTS</u>				<u>(IMPORTS+EXPORTS)</u>			
Rank	Partners	Values	%	Rank	Partners	Values	%	Rank	Partners	Values	%
	WORLD*	772.086	100,0		WORLD*	758.342	100,0		WORLD*	1.530.428	100,0
(a)	NAFTA	176.833	22,9	(a)	NAFTA	209.521	27,6	(a)	NAFTA	386.354	25,2
(b)	AMLAT	36.391	4,7	(b)	AMLAT	45.583	6,0	(b)	AMLAT	81.974	5,4
(c)	CEEC	92.261	11,9	(c)	CEEC	118.094	15,6	(c)	CEEC	210.356	13,7
(d)	CIS	31.893	4,1	(d)	CIS	20.884	2,8	(d)	CIS	52.777	3,4
(e)	MED	47.076	6,1	(e)	MED	69.053	9,1	(e)	MED	116.129	7,6
(f)	A.ASEM	191.299	24,8	(f)	A.ASEM	96.800	12,8	(f)	A.ASEM	288.099	18,8

(a) USA, Canada, Mexico

(b) 20 pays de l'Amérique Latine

(c) Pologne, Hongrie, Roumanie, Bulgarie, Slovaquie, Estonie, Lituanie, Lettonie, R. Tchèque, Slovaquie, Malta, Chypre, Turquie

(d) Moldova, Bélarus, Ukraine, Russie, Géorgie, Arménie, Azerbaïdjan, Kazakhstan, Turkménistan, Ouzbékistan, Tadjikistan, Kirghizstan

(e) Malte, Jordanie, Turquie, Maroc, Algérie, Tunisie, Égypte, Chypre, Liban, Syrie, Israël, Gaza et Jéricho

(f) Thaïlande, Indonésie, Malaisie, Brunei, Singapour, Philippines, Chine, Corée du Sud, Japon, Viêt-nam, Laos, Myanmar

EU TRADE WITH MAIN PARTNERS 2001 (Mio euro)

IMPORTS

EXPORTS

IMPORTS+EXPORTS

Rank.	Partners	Mio euro	% World*	Rank.	Partners	Mio euro	% World*	Rank.	Partners	Mio euro	% World*
	World*	1.027.955	100,0		World*	982.570	100,0		World*	2.010.525	100,0
1	USA	195.627	19,0	1	USA	239.902	24,4	1	USA	435.530	21,7
2	Japan	76.308	7,4	2	Switzerland	74.760	7,6	2	Switzerland	135.546	6,7
3	China	75.914	7,4	3	Japan	44.920	4,6	3	Japan	121.228	6,0
4	Switzerland	60.786	5,9	4	Poland	35.681	3,6	4	China	106.012	5,3
5	Russia	47.686	4,6	5	China	30.099	3,1	5	Russia	75.647	3,8
6	Norway	45.113	4,4	6	Russia	27.961	2,8	6	Norway	71.268	3,5
7	Poland	26.623	2,6	7	Czech Rep.	27.674	2,8	7	Poland	62.304	3,1
8	Czech Rep.	25.136	2,4	8	Norway	26.154	2,7	8	Czech Rep.	52.810	2,6
9	Hungary	24.817	2,4	9	Hungary	23.878	2,4	9	Hungary	48.695	2,4
10	Taiwan	24.174	2,4	10	Canada	21.939	2,2	10	Turkey	40.483	2,0
11	South Korea	21.596	2,1	11	Hong Kong	21.533	2,2	11	Canada	39.932	2,0
12	Turkey	20.217	2,0	12	Turkey	20.266	2,1	12	Taiwan	37.437	1,9
13	Brazil	18.321	1,8	13	Brazil	18.313	1,9	13	South Korea	37.183	1,8
14	Canada	17.993	1,8	14	South Korea	15.587	1,6	14	Brazil	36.634	1,8
15	Algeria	16.034	1,6	15	Australia	15.531	1,6	15	Hong Kong	31.803	1,6
16	South Africa	16.018	1,6	16	Mexico	15.034	1,5	16	Singapore	28.530	1,4
17	Malaysia	15.770	1,5	17	Singapore	14.604	1,5	17	South Africa	28.510	1,4
18	Singapore	13.926	1,4	18	Israel	14.449	1,5	18	Saudi Arabia	26.315	1,3
19	Saudi Arabia	13.085	1,3	19	U.A.Emirates	13.781	1,4	19	India	25.521	1,3
20	India	12.911	1,3	20	Taiwan	13.264	1,3	20	Malaysia	25.086	1,2

IMPORTS

EXPORTS

IMPORTS+EXPORTS

	Partners	Mio euro	% World*		Partners	Mio euro	% World*		Partners	Mio euro	% World*
	World*	1.027.955	100,0		World*	982.570	100,0		World*	2.010.525	100,0
(a)	NAFTA	221.001	21,5	(a)	NAFTA	276.875	28,2	(a)	NAFTA	497.877	24,8
(b)	AMLAT	49.940	4,9	(b)	AMLAT	56.984	5,8	(b)	AMLAT	106.924	5,3
(c)	Candidates	134.087	13,0	(c)	Candidates	152.812	15,6	(c)	Candidates	286.900	14,3
(d)	EFTA	108.533	10,6	(d)	EFTA	103.301	10,5	(d)	EFTA	211.834	10,5
(e)	MED	68.109	6,6	(e)	MED	77.042	7,8	(e)	MED	145.151	7,2
(f)	ASEAN	66.231	6,4	(f)	ASEAN	42.732	4,3	(f)	ASEAN	108.963	5,4
(g)	Andean Group	8.547	0,8	(g)	Andean Group	7.765	0,8	(g)	Andean Group	16.313	0,8

(a) USA, Canada, Mexico.

(b) 20 Latin American Countries

(c) Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Czech Rep., Slovakia, Cyprus, Malta, Turkey.

(d) Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Liechtenstein.

(e) Malta, Jordan, Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Gaza and Jericho.

(f) Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar.

(g) Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela

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- Mr Christian Léchervy, Diplomatic Advisor in Cabinet of Defence Minister Alain Richard, 18 September 2000 and 28 March 2001.
- Mr Yves Carmona, Deputy Secretary-General for the French Presidency of the European Union, 11 September 2000.
- Mr Gérard Chesnel, Deputy Director (Asia and Oceania), Quai d'Orsay, 26 March 2001.
- Mr Jean-Marie Magnien, Director (Far East), Quai d'Orsay, 26 March 2001.
- Mr Stephan Heiss, First Secretary, German Embassy, 27 March 2001.
- Political Counsellor, Chinese Embassy in Paris, 27 March 2001.
- Mr Paul Arkwright, Second Secretary (Asia/Middle East Desk), British Embassy in Paris, 28 March 2001.
- Mr Jean-Luc Domenach, Academic Director, Institut des Sciences Politiques, 28 March 2001.
- Mr Tsukasa Kawada, Minister (Political Affairs) and Deputy Chief of Mission, Japanese Embassy in Paris, 4 April 2003 and 16 May 2003.
- Mr Hervé Dejean de la Bâtie, Deputy Director (Asia), French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, 7 April 2003.
- Mr Vincent Brossel, Head (Asia), Reporters sans Frontières, Paris, 7 April 2003.
- Mr Fumihiko Yamada, Japanese Foreign Ministry official on sabbatical as Senior Research Fellow in Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI), Paris, 8 April 2003.
- Mr Wu Zexian, Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission, Chinese Embassy to France, 8 April 2003.
- Mr Bertrand de Cordoue, Director (Asia), Department of External Economic Relations (DREE), French Ministry of Finance, Paris, 9 April 2003.
- Dr Marie Holzman, Human Rights activist and former Professor in Chinese Civilisations, Université Paris IV, 7 April 2003.
- Mr Christian Léchervy, Deputy Director (Southeast Asia), French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paris, 11 April 2003.
- Mr Jean-Marie Magnien, Diplomatic Advisor to the Chef d'Etat Majeur d'Armées, French Ministry of Defence, Paris, 11 April 2003.
- Mr Ding Toan Thang, Second Secretary (Vietnam-France Bilateral Relations), Vietnamese Embassy in Paris, 15 April 2003.
- Mme Béatrice Laroche, Human Rights activist formerly with Human Rights in China, Paris, 15 April 2003.
- Mr Roger Bacri, Head of Asia Desk, Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIP), 15 April 2003.
- Mme Olivia Calvet-Soubiran, Japan Desk, Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIP), 15 April 2003.
- H.E. Mr T. Jasudasen, Singapore Ambassador to France, Paris, 16 April 2003.
- Mr Jean Charbonnier, Priest and Specialist on Missions to Chinese-speaking countries, Missions Etrangères de Paris (MEP), 16 April 2003.
- Mr Nishioka Atsushi, Minister and Director, Cultural Affairs and Information Service, Japanese Embassy in Paris, 16 April 2003.
- Mr Baudouin Bollaert, Editor-in-Chief, *Le Figaro*, 16 April 2003.
- H.E. Mr Chiou Jong-Nan, Taipei Representative to France, Paris, 17 April 2003.
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- Mr Vo Van Ai, President, Comité Vietnam des Droits de l'Homme (CVDDH) and Vice-President, International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), Paris, 18 April 2003.
- Ms Penelope Faulkner, Vice-President, International Quê Me: Action for Democracy in Vietnam and Comité Vietnam des Droits de l'Homme (CVDDH), Paris, 18 April 2003.
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London

- Mr Stéphane Gompertz, Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission, French Embassy, 12 December 2000.
- Mr Nicolas Chapuis, former French Consul-General in Shanghai (1998-2001) and Counsellor in Beijing (1990), in French Embassy in London, 20 December 2002.
- Dr Truyen Dang The, former Advisor (Foreign Policy and Administrative Reform) to Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet (1991-95), in Vietnamese Embassy in London, 6 March 2003.
- Mr Simon Nuttall, former Director for Far East (1988-95), European Commission External Relations Directorate-General (DG 1), in London, 12 March 2003.

Vietnam and Singapore

- Mr Bui Thanh Son, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission, Vietnamese Embassy in Singapore, 13 January 2003.
- H.E. Mr Frédéric Baron, Head of EC Delegation in Hanoi, 16 January 2003.
- Dr Linda Yarr, Executive Director, Program for International Studies in Asia, George Washington University Eliot School of International Affairs, in Hanoi, 14 January 2003.
- H.E. Mr Tan Seng Chye, Singapore Ambassador to Vietnam, 15 January 2003.
- Dr Duong Van Quang, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Institute of International Relations (IIR), Hanoi, 17 January 2003.
- Mr Mark McLachlan, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy in Hanoi, 21 January 2003.
- Ms Michèle Sauteraud, Deputy Head of Mission and Political Counsellor, French Embassy in Hanoi, 21 January 2003.
- Mr Emmanuel Farcot, First Secretary, French Embassy in Hanoi, 21 January 2003.
- Mr Philippe Orliange, Cultural Counsellor, French Embassy in Hanoi, 21 January 2003.
- Mr David Phan Than, Chairman, Overseas Vietnamese Business Association (OVIBA), Ho Chi Minh City, 27 January 2003.
- Mr Nguyen Ngoc Thach, Board Member, Overseas Vietnamese Business Association (OVIBA), Ho Chi Minh City, 27 January 2003.
- Mr Adrian Quek, Attaché, Singapore Consulate-General in Ho Chi Minh City, 28 January 2003.
- Dr Tran Dinh Lam, Head, Office of International Relations and Research Affairs, Vietnam National University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh City, 28 January 2003.
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- Dr Eric Teo, former Business Development Manager, Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux Southeast Asia (1997-2000), in Singapore, 4 February 2003.
- Mr Nakamura, Counsellor and Director, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japanese Embassy in Singapore, 5 February 2003.
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Mr Graham Watson, Member of the European Parliament and Leader, European Liberal, Democrats and Reform (ELDR) Group, 25 March 2003.

Mr Seamus Gillespie, Head, Japan Unit, External Relations Directorate General, Commission of the European Communities 26 March 2003.

Mr James Moran, Head, China Unit, External Relations Directorate General, Commission of the European Communities, 27 March 2003.

Ms Donatienne Hissard, Administrator China Unit, External Relations Directorate General, Commission of the European Communities, 27 March 2003.

H.E. Mme Sylvie Bermann, French Ambassador to the Western European Union, 27 March 2003.

Mr Kenjiro Monji, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission, Japanese Mission to the European Union, 27 March 2003.

Mr Cyrille Pierre, Commercial Counsellor, French Permanent Representative to the European Union, 28 March 2003.

Mr Franz Eichinger, Director (Mediterranean, Middle East, Africa, Asia), Directorate-General "E" - External Economic Relations and CFSP, General Secretariat of the EU Council, 28 March 2003.

Ms Ana Ramírez Fueyo, Principal Administrator (Asia Desk) Directorate V, Directorate-General "E" - External Economic Relations and CFSP, General Secretariat of the EU Council, 28 March 2003.

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