

# Contested Narratives of Global Order

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November 1st, 2022

# Research questions 1

- « Debating Worlds. Contested Narratives of global order and modernity », with J. Ikenberry and D. Deudney, forthcoming Oxford U. Press
- Weakening of Western liberal order and plurality of « narratives of the global »
- Might global crises (pandemics, climate change..) trigger converging narratives of the global?

# Research questions 2

- Narratives in social sciences?
  - Economics: John Kay, Mervin King  
« Radical Uncertainty », Norton  
2020/ "The narrative paradigm"
  - International politics:
    - Narrative as factor in power  
politics: "battle of narratives",  
"narrative power"
    - Narrative as praxis in international  
and global issues

# Narratology

- Narratology traditions (mostly French literary critique and philosophy) :
  - making sense of complexity and uncertainty (Gérard Genette, Hayden White)
  - producing *vraisemblance* (Roland Barthes)
  - emplotting/*mise en récit* (Paul Ricoeur)

# Contested narratives of Asia

- China:

“century of humiliation”

search for “narrative power”

BRI and rise of civilizational  
narrative (//Turkey, Russia, India)

- Japan:

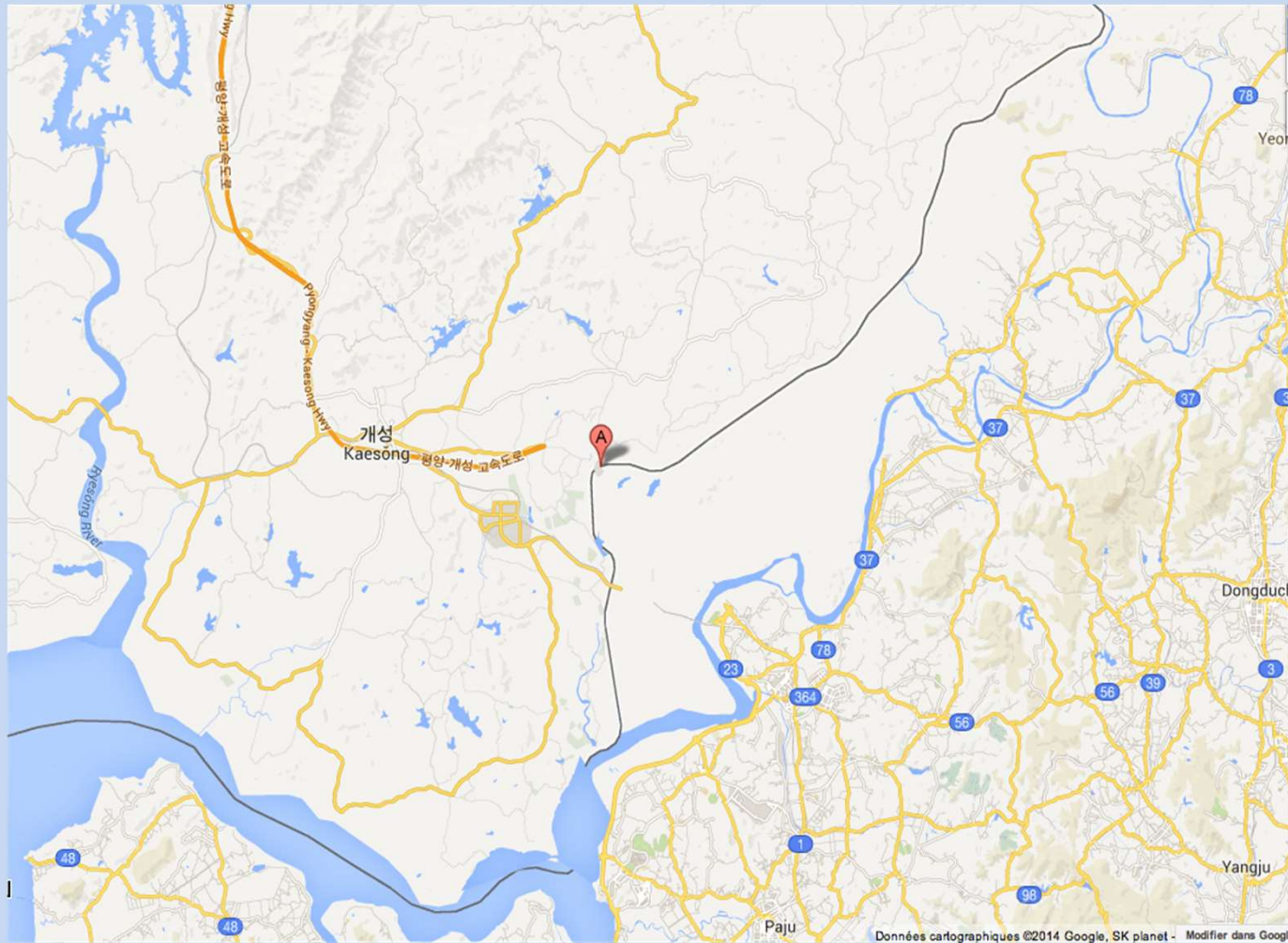
Post-1945 脱亜入欧

From « Asia-Pacific » to “Indo-  
Pacific narrative”

# Narratives of division in East Asia

- Narratives of contentious borders: N/S Korea, PRC/Taiwan, Russia/Japan
- Alternative narratives of borders as sites of cooperation: e.g. local development (common development of Northern territories/Kuril)
- In other words, can transnational crises change the

# Panmunjom by Google map



The great disconnection  
narrative

# Détente DMZ



Post-1998 « Sunshine policy » vision –  
classic narrative from Cold War  
repertoire



# DMZ as ecosystem



Korea's physical division as unique ecosystem & "eco-narrative": rich biodiversity, rare plant species and animals – UN supported

# From civil war to ecotourism



Former Beishan Broadcasting Station included in Kinmen  
(Quemoy) ecotour, Taiwan, 2014

# Global commons as shared global narratives?

"The 'Global Commons' refers to resource domains or areas that lie outside of the political reach of any one nation State. Thus international law identifies four global commons namely: the High Seas; the Atmosphere; Antarctica; and, Outer Space"

*UN Environment Law Division  
definition*

# « Commons » governance theory

Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*,  
1990:

- Commons produce flow of resource  
(fish, trees..), exclusion  
practically impossible (because of  
size, tradition)
- Sustainability is possible (no  
“tragedy of commons”) if diversity  
of historical trajectories &

# « Commons » narrative

- Commons discourse sustains normative/legal apparel, technique of governance
- Commons narrative:
  - transforms “tragedy” into success + happiness oriented story
  - showcases Nature as site of pluralist consensus

# Does it create commonality?

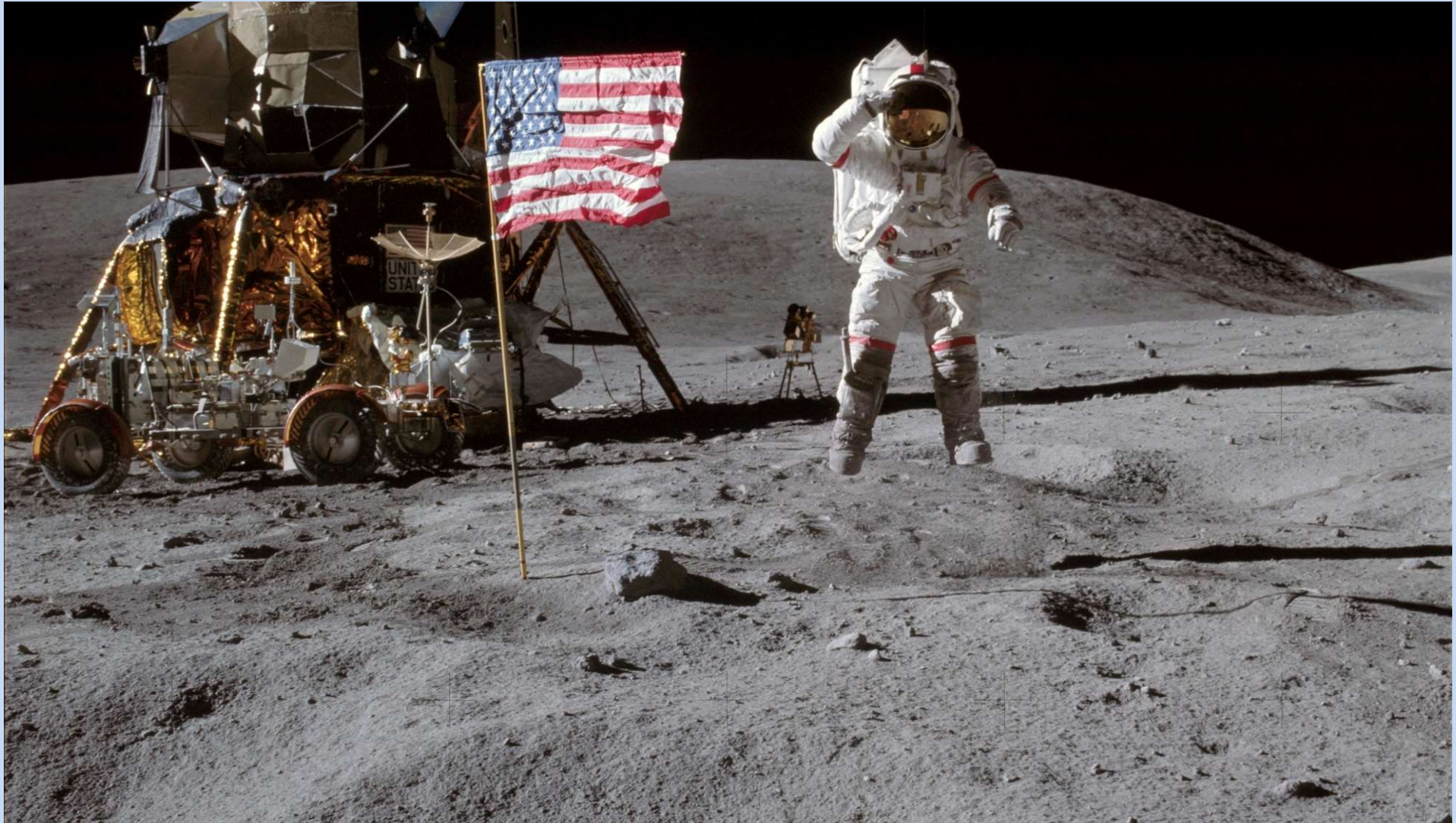
- DMZ, Taiwan Strait, Kuril islands development projects.. And more generally:
- Natural resource management as peace-building tool  
(Mekong River project, template for Tumen river project)
- Linking sustainable development with violent extremism:  
UN, EU programs for preventing or countering violence in Africa, Middle East, Southeast Asia // "human security"

# Limits to « One Earth » narrative

- Variety of development trajectories: e.g. Climate change conference in Marrakech 2016 (post-colonial debate)
- Variety of worldviews: people first, nation first vs nature first
- Variety of representations of « Earth »: anthropocene debate (being responsible, or not, for Earth) indigenous visions (Bachamama)



# Power and resilience of nation-state narrative



Statehood and (on?) the Moon



# Taking plurality seriously (beyond “one fits all” globalization)

- Takeaways from European experience?

The European Union as laboratory for  
the management of diversity of  
historical trajectories, socio-  
economic conditions, cultural  
traditions

- Area studies:

Interconnectedness = different  
experiences & perceptions,  
divergence of narratives of  
globalization