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# AT: Link

**Their interpretation of competitiveness makes “region” falsely synonymous with “nation”. A region is distinct from a nation – we don’t link to “regional competitiveness”.**

Martin, 5 – Professor of Economic Geography and Fellow of the Cambridge-MIT Institute. (Ron, “Thinking about regional competitiveness,” 26 October 2005, unibocconi.it//HO

However, regions are neither like firms nor nations. As Cellini and Soci (2002) put it, “regions are somewhere in the middle”. A region is not simply a scaled-up version of the individual micro firm, nor the simple aggregation of many such firms. Regions are not economic ‘actors’ in the sense that firms are (Bristow, 2005): they have limited direct control of the activities that take place within them, and the y have a lower level of organisational identity and, arguably, unity that firms and nation states. But equally, a region is not simply a scaled-down version of the macro- or national economy. Regions do not have their own currencies, and do not set their own interest rates and the like (some, in federal systems, have tax-raising powers, though these are alongside national level taxes). Rather, their economic prosperity can be significantly influenced by the macro level fiscal and monetary policies pursued by the nation-state (and, of course, supra-national bodies, such as the European Parliament, or the WTO). As with nations, and unlike firms, regions do not ‘go out of business’. But, unlike with nations, under certain conditions regional trade may well approach a zero-sum game. The more economically specialised a region, the more it is vulnerable to the rise of similarly specialised, direct competitor regions elsewhere, both within and outside the nation state. Unless the region in question is able to keep ahead of its direct competitors, for example through higher rates of innovation and by moving up the value-added chain in its particular specialism, or by switching into entirely new sectors and products, it can face long-term relativ*e* or even absolute economic decline. The British economic landscape is littered with industrial districts and clusters that have failed to adapt upgrade or restructure, and which as a result have experienced long-run decline. 3.4 And if the spatial structure of the national economy is such that economic, financial and political power is concentrated in a core or lead region, other regions may find themselves at a competitive disadvantage in retaining or attracting skilled labour, capital and even public investment, all of which may tend to accumulate disproportionately in the core region, thereby further enhancing its competitive advantage (in effect this process raises the full employment growth ceiling of the core region, at the cost of holding back the full employment growth ceilings in the non-core regions). In the UK, the regions compete with London and the South East for labour and capital, and on occasion for infrastructural and other public investment. National economic policy also emanates from London, and is often biased by the economic conditions in that part of the UK: thus in the mid-1960s, the late-1980s and in the 1990s, inflationary overheating of the London and South East economies resulted in the Government taking national deflationary action (raising interest rates) even though spare productive capacity still existed in the remaining regions of the country. The counterclaim is that the competitive success of London and the South East is not at the cost of the other regions, but benefits all: that the economic dynamism of this part of the country diffuses to all regions. In actual fact, is there is still no comprehensive or definitive analysis of the balance between these costs and benefits.

**The impact of their kritik is only unique to regions – consensus proves**

Martin, 5 – Professor of Economic Geography and Fellow of the Cambridge-MIT Institute. (Ron, “Thinking about regional competitiveness,” 26 October 2005, unibocconi.it//HO

At the same time, there is now overwhelming academic agreement, amongst not just geographers but also amongst many economists and business analysts, that as part of the process of accelerating economic globalisation, regions are becoming increasingly important - perhaps even displacing nation states – as the key arenas of wealth production and economic governance (for example, Ohmae, 1995; Storper, 1997; Scott, 1998; Porter, 1998, 2001; Scott, 1998). It is at the regional (subnational) scale that many of the increasing returns that raise the productivity of firms and workers are created and are self-reinforcing. It is also at this scale that the ‘soft’ factors now increasingly believed to exert a significant influence on the performance of economic activity – such as social capital, institutional thickness, cultural facilities, and the like – tend to be embedded and are most amenable to policy support.

# Competitiveness Good

**All nations benefit from competitiveness – provides a net-gain in the development of the world economy**

**Kelly, 99** – Associate Professor of Geography, York University. Ph.D. from University of British Columbia, MA from McGill, BA from Oxford. Areas of specialization include Economic Geography, among others. (Philip F, “The Geographies and Politics of Globalization,”1 September, 1999, Sage Journals, *Progress in Human Geography* pages 379-400//***HO***

The second caveat that must be applied to literature reasserting the state is that it implicitly accepts the conceptual separation of the State from, in particular, capital. To argue for or against the contemporary power of the State in the face of globalizing capital implies that the two are engaged in some kind of zero-sum game in which increasing power for one represents diminished power for the other. Two points can be made about this assumption. One is that it ignores the extent to which globalization is actually actively authored by states (Panitch, 1996). The World Trade Organization, the United Nations and its constituent bodies, the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investments and other regulatory frameworks for the globalization of economic and political activity are all the projects of nation-state governments, not the imposition of some global authority. They may indeed represent a particular model of development and economic ideology, and they may also benefit some states more than others, but the fact remains they are implemented by sovereign states. The other point to make regarding the state-capital zero-sum game is that it is predicated on a universalized but ethnocentric division of spheres. In many contexts the state is itself a capitalist or is heavily involved in the market economy (see, for example, Yeung (1998a) on government-linked corporations in Singapore). Thus to talk of liberalization and deregulation rather misses the point (see Hamilton, 1989).

**Competitiveness is good – forces good governing policies**

Hugé 10 – Department of Policy Research Centre for Sustainable Development & Human Ecology Department at Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Jean, “Achieving synergy between competitiveness, good governance and sustainable development through impact assessment: discourse and practice”, June 2010, <http://www.kadinst.hku.hk/sdconf10/Papers_PDF/p99.pdf>)//GS

Having explored the concept of impact assessment and having introduced three widely shared policy agendas, we now reflect on the linkages and synergies between them. Impact assessment being a process aimed at supporting decision-makers by providing them ex ante information, it is inherently suited to promote a wide range of policy objectives. This can easily be understood in a competitiveness context: analysing the possible impacts of proposed decisions on businesses’ competitiveness and on public authorities amounts to good practice in (economic) decision-making. Impact assessment is even more relevant in a sustainable development context: indeed, this requires an assessment of the future impacts of decisions on a wide range of societal aspects and dimensions, and thus emphasises the need for well-informed decisions in order to avoid mistakes and in order to foster truly sustainable development. Moreover, as impact assessment itself is ideally based on participatory processes meant to increase accountability, transparency and coherence, its application in itself contributes to the realization of the principles of good governance, that are also embodied both in the competitiveness and the sustainability agendas. Impact assessment can contribute both to the outcome and the process dimensions of societal objectives (Kirkpatrick & Parker, 2004). In summary, the outcome contribution of impact assessment can be assessed against the goals of economic, social, environmental and hence sustainable development; while the process contribution of impact assessment can be assessed in terms of the principles of good governance.

# Alt Fails

**No alternative solvency – empiricism is inherently competitive and cannot be circumvented.**

Neill, 99 – Professor of economic history at the University of Prince Edward Island. Former professor at Carleton University in Ottawa. Author of three books and over forty academic articles about the state of economic history and theory. (Robin, “Francis Bacon, John Rae, and the Economics of Competitiveness,” July 99, The American Journal of Economics and Sociology, Volume 58, Issue 3, pages 385-398//HO

By focusing attention on invention and innovation, the economics of competitiveness takes on a superficial likeness to the economics of John Rae, a likeness that covers over profound differences in the scientific attitudes with which the two economic positions are informed. The economics of competitiveness entails no formal acknowledgement of the problem of systematization, and does not proceed from any related critique of scientific method. Rather, it proceeds by way of pragmatic attempts to circumvent the problems of empiricism, without a formal (epistemological, as opposed to statistical) assessment of their character. It relies, in principle, either on a quantitative concept of knowledge or on a concept of knowledge to which an empirical, quantitative measure can be attached. To date, however, no empirical measure of productivity enhancing knowledge has been formally defined and generally agreed upon. Proxy measurements are found in dollar investment in knowledge presumed to be related to technological advance. Rae would account this as a measure of the input cost of capital, not as measure of the productivity of capital and, so, not as a measure of capital.

**Eco-industrialism doesn’t solve, kills sustainability and the impacts of competitive discourse the negative isolates will be replicated**

Wells & Bristow 05- (Wells)degree in Geography from Leeds University, and an MSc in Town Planning from Cardiff University, PhD on the subject of the socio-economic consequences of military R&D in the UK, (Bristow) BA (Hons) First Class: Economics, Cardiff University (1991). PhD, Cardiff University (Peter, Gillian, “ Innovative discourse for sustainable local development: a critical analysis of eco-industrialism”,  Inderscience Publishers, November 18th, 2005,<http://inderscience.metapress.com/content/3bae1q84xne61kjl/>)//EML

The most fundamental criticism is that the eco-industrial park is simply another manifestation or the most recently fashionable iteration of place competition and is therefore inevitably doomed to replicate all of the weaknesses and problems experienced with previous iterations. That is, there is nothing substantially new about the eco-industrial park, and at its most cynical it is nothing more than relabelling and rebranding of timeworn practices. Worse, the eco-industrial park concept subverts the hope and content of sustainability, reducing it to a slightly less wasteful form of ‘normal’ industrial development.

# Perm Solves

**Certain forms of competitiveness exist that solve for resilience**

Bristow 09- BA (Hons) First Class: Economics, Cardiff University (1991). PhD, Cardiff University (Gillian, “Resilient regions: re-‘place'ing regional competitiveness”, Oxford Journals, December 9th, 2009, <http://cjres.oxfordjournals.org/content/3/1/153.short)//EML>

This paper has argued that a more nuanced conception of competitiveness exists which accepts that competition is both inevitable and that it has some positive connotations where it is effectively balanced with co-operative networks and cognisant of context and place. This follows Patchell’s (1996) assertions that co-operation and competition typically co-exist in vibrant, successful regions such that ‘‘people in each region create their own kaleidoscopic economy through interacting with their neighbours’’ (Patchell, 1996, 504). In this regard, a more contextualised understanding of competitiveness will help address some of the limitations of de-contextualised competitiveness and help build resilience, particularly since competitive economic activity has an important role to play in regional vitality. Competitiveness and resilience thus relate in complex ways. As such, regional strategies will take a variety of forms with greater or lesser progress towards resilience (see Table 1).

# AT: Framework

**Competitive discourse analysis is flawed. Neoliberal economies do not pre- determine political policies. The results are filtered and strudglled over at the national level.**

Peck 1 – HSead of the Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin-Madison (Jamie “Neoliberalizing states: thin policies/hard outcomes” <http://spatialfix.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/peck-neoliberalizing-states-2001.pdf>)//AA

In the neoliberal imaginary, the frontiers of the state are subject to a relentless process of ‘rolling back’, in order to liberate those hitherto stifled market forces of the (historically and politically privileged) extra-state space beyond. A growing body of work in human geography has been concerned to critique, unpack, and reconceptualize this neoliberal vision of the shrinking state as an alien presence in an otherwise equilibrating economy (see, especially, Brenner, 1999a; 1999b; Cameron and Palan, 1999; Glassman, 1999; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999a; 1999b). Much of this work has sought to counter dominant conceptions of globalization-cum-neoliberalization as ‘out there’ phenomena, as something which is happening to national states, severely limiting/channeling their policy options right down to the usual stew of supply-side intervention, competitiveness narratives, and moralistic individualism. Of course, the generalized structural conditions of neoliberal globalism – or, more specifically, trade liberalization, instability in financial markets, intensifying cross-border economic relationships, the under-regulation of e-commerce, de-unionization and the extended commodification of labor, and so forth – do not (pre)determine the specific policy responses of individual national states. Rather, these policy responses are politically filtered, and inevitably negotiated, tweaked and struggled over, at the level of the national state (and indeed at other scales too). In contrast to the script of state powerlessness, governmental intervention and public spending may actually be stepped up in some areas (notably, the micro-management of the poor through such means as ‘welfare reform’/ workfare programming, immigration controls and the management of undocumented workers, incarceration and criminal justice, labor market flexibility initiatives, etc.), just as it is reduced or reorganized in others (notably, industrial and macro-economic policies, public infrastructure investment, and needs-based collective service delivery).

# Interdependence bad

**Economic interdependence increases risk of global conflict.**

Gartzke 2010 – Political Science Prof, UCSD

(Erik, Interdependence Really is Complex, 2010, http://dss.ucsd.edu/~egartzke/papers/complexinterdep\_02242010.pdf)

Diverse critics focus on the leverage economic interdependence provides to powerful interests.4 Realists see the effects of interdependence as at odds with the competitive logic of politics under anarchy (Carr 1939, Krasner 1976, Waltz 1979, Mastanduno 1998).5 Subsequent work emphasizes the problematic role of trade in terms of relative gains (Grieco 1988, 1990; Mastanduno 1991). Marxist and realists operate with an equivalent model of inequality as the precipitant of conflict, though with contrasting rhetoric (c.f. Hamilton 1791; Hobson 1938; Kautsky 1914; Lenin 1965; Waltz 1970, 1999). Dependency theorists also highlight the effect of inequality in engendering tensions among core trading states and their dependents (c.f. Prebisch 1959, 1963; Dos Santos 1970; Wallerstein 1974, 1980, 1988). The emphasis is on conflict between core and periphery, rather than among core “great powers.” Empirical research suggests as well that asymmetric dependence is associated with increased conflict (Hirschman 1945, 1977; Gasiorowski 1986; Barbieri 1996, 2003).6

# Not Zero-Sum

**Krugman is wrong – competitiveness is not zero-sum.**

Hay, 7 - professor of political economy at Sheffield. BA, MA from Cambridge, Ph.D. from Lancaster. (Colin, “What Doesn’t Kill You Can only Make You Stronger: The Doha Development Round, The Services Directive, and the EU’s Conception of Competitiveness,” 16 August 2007, Wiley//HO

If competitiveness is, in Paul Krugman’s (1994) now famous terms, a ‘dangerous obsession’, then the European Union (EU) has long suffered, as it continues to suffer today, from a particularly acute obsessive competitiveness disorder. In this article I reﬂect on the form of this contemporary obsession, establishing the distinctiveness of the European conception of competitiveness. I do so by considering two key events affecting the EU in 2006: the suspension of the multilateral trade round on the Doha development agenda (DDA) and the eventual adoption of a revised version of the Services Directive. In each I detect a highly conserved understanding of competitiveness, shared by EU trade negotiators, the Commission and even by a number of ostensibly dissenting voices. I show that this contemporary discourse of competitiveness is not in fact dangerous in Krugman’s terms – being predicated neither upon a zero-sum conception of trade nor on the assumption that competition between nations is analogous to that between corporations for market share.

**Absence of permanent state-of-war that characterized the pre-modern world proves we don’t live in a zero-sum economy.**

Wolf 07 -- British journalist, widely considered to be one of the world's most influential writers on economics. He is the associate editor and chief economics commentator at the Financial Times (Martin, “The dangers of living in a zero-sum world economy”, 12/19/07, [http://cocolog-yoshi.cocolog-nifty.com/blog/files/FT071218MartinWolf.pdf)//GS](http://cocolog-yoshi.cocolog-nifty.com/blog/files/FT071218MartinWolf.pdf)/GS)

Equally, a positive-sum global economy ought to end the permanent state of war that characterised the pre-modern world. In such an economy, internal development and external commerce offer better prospects for virtually everybody than does international conflict. While trade always offered the possibility of positive-sum exchange, as Adam Smith argued, the gains were small compared with what is offered today by the combination of peaceful internal development and expanding international trade. Unfortunately, it took almost two centuries after the “industrial revolution” for states to realise that neither war nor empire was a “game” worth playing. Nuclear weapons and the rise of the developmental state have made war among grea t powers obsolete. It is no accident then that most of the conflicts on the planet have been civil wars in poor countries that had failed to build the domestic foundations of the positive-sum economy. But China and India have now achieved just that. Perhaps the most important single fact about the world we live in is that the leaderships of these two countries have staked their political legitimacy on domestic economic development and peaceful international commerce.

**No zero-sum global economy – one countries development is another’s gain**

Klein 10 -- Associate editor at The American Prospect and writer @ the Washington Post (Ezra, “The global economy isn't zero-sum,” Washington Post, 6/3/10, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/ezra-klein/2010/06/the_global_economy_isnt_zero-s.html)//GS>

Matt Miller's got a very good [column](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/02/AR2010060202266.html) on education today that allows me to make an almost entirely unrelated point about the way China (and, for that matter, India) gets used in the domestic political conversation. Miller's column argues that we need to do more to improve America's schools than we're already doing. Most people, I think, would agree with that. But in order to arm his point with more urgency, he writes that "the real race we're in is not a 'race to the top' within the United States but a race to maintain middle-class living standards in a world where rising, hungry powers such as China and India now threaten them." You see this rhetorical move a lot. Barack Obama's State of the Union [pitch](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/remarks-of-president-barack-obama-address-to-joint-session-of-congress/) for clean energy used the same tactic. "We know the country that harnesses the power of clean, renewable energy will lead the 21st century," he warned. "And yet, it is China that has launched the largest effort in history to make their economy energy efficient." Polls and focus groups show that people go nuts for this sort of rhetoric. If you want the country to get behind your policy initiative, just tell them that China is beating us to the punch. But global economic growth is not a zero-sum game. Quite the opposite, in fact. If China and America both develop large and innovative clean-energy sectors, the result will be *cleaner energy*. If India graduates more engineers than we do, that means the world will have more engineers. If China gets a serious medical-research sector going, it will develop cures that will work on diseases that afflict Americans, too. Competitive language is used in service of worthy goals, but it's also dangerous stuff. We're telling Americans to fear the economic development of other countries, when what they should actually fear is the reverse. If China or India stagnate, that means they won't become huge markets for our exports, it means they won't develop new technologies that can better our lives, it means that they won't be geopolitical anchors in the way that only rich, stable countries can be. The global economy isn't a race so much as it's a relay.

**We live in a positive-sum world economy – the alternative is dictatorship, slavery, and sexism.**

Wolf 07 -- British journalist, widely considered to be one of the world's most influential writers on economics. He is the associate editor and chief economics commentator at the Financial Times (Martin, “The dangers of living in a zero-sum world economy”, 12/19/07, [http://cocolog-yoshi.cocolog-nifty.com/blog/files/FT071218MartinWolf.pdf)//GS](http://cocolog-yoshi.cocolog-nifty.com/blog/files/FT071218MartinWolf.pdf)/GS)

We live in a positive-sum world economy and have done so for about two centuries . This, I believe, is why democracy has become a political norm, empires have largely vanished, legal slavery and serfdom have disappeared and measures of well-being have risen almost everywhere . What then do I mean by a positive-sum economy? It is one in which everybody can become better off. It is one in which real incomes per head are able to rise indefinitely. How long might such a world last, and what might happen if it ends? The debate on the connected issues of climate change and energy security raises these absolutely central questions. As I argued in a previous column (“Welcome to a world of runaway energy demand”, November 14, 2007), fossilised sunlight and ideas have been the twin drivers of the world economy. So nothing less is at stake than the world we inhabit, by which I mean its political and economic, as well as physical, nature. According to Angus Maddison, the economic historian, humanity’s average real inc ome per head has risen 10-fold since 1820.\* Increases have also occurred almost everywhere, albei t to hugely divergent extents: US incomes per head have risen 23-fold and those of Africa merely four- fold. Moreover, huge improvements have happened, despite a more than six-fold increase in the world’s population. It is an astonishing story with hugely desirable consequences. Clever use of commercial energy has immeasurably increased the range of goods and services available. It has also substantially reduced both our own drudgery and our dependence on that of others. Serfs and slaves need no longer satisfy the appetites of narrow elites. Women need no longer devote their lives to the demands of domesticity. Consistent rises in real incomes per head have transformed our economic lives. What is less widely understood is that they have also transformed politics. A zero-sum economy leads, inevitably, to repression at home and plunder abroad. In traditional agrarian so cieties the surpluses extracted from the vast majority of peasants supported the relatively luxurious lifestyles of military, bureaucratic and noble elites. The only way to increase the prosperity of an entire people was to steal from another one. Some peoples made almost a business out of such plunder: the Roman republic was one example; the nomads of the Eurasian steppes, who reached their apogee of success under Genghis Khan and his successors, were another. The European conquerors of the 16th to 18th centuries were, arguably, a third. In a world of stagnant living standards the gains of one group came at the expense of equal, if not still bigger, losses for others. This, then, was a world of savage repression and brutal predation. The move to the positive-sum economy transformed all this fundamentally, albeit far more slowly than it might have done. It just took time for people to realise how much had changed. Democratic politics became increasingly workable because it was feasible for everybody to become steadily better off. People fight to keep what they have more fiercely than to obtain what they do not have. This is the “endowment effect”. So, in the new positive-sum world, elites were willing to tolerate the enfranchisement of the masses. The fact that they no longer depended on forced labour made this shift easier still. Consensual politics, and so democracy, became the political norm.

**One nation’s financial success translates to another nation’s financial success; trade is not zero-sum.**

Martin, 5 – Professor of Economic Geography and Fellow of the Cambridge-MIT Institute. (Ron, “Thinking about regional competitiveness,” 26 October 2005, unibocconi.it//HO

Drawing such an analogy between the national economy and the firm, he argues, is wrong, for two main reasons. First, nations are not like firms. Countries do not go out of business: they may be disappointed and concerned about their economic performance, but they have no well-defined ‘bottom line’. Second, whereas firms can be seen to compete for market share, and one firm’s success will often be at the expense of another, the success of one country creates rather than destroys opportunities for others: trade is well known not to be a ‘zero-sum game’. Instead, Krugman argues that if competitiveness has any meaning, then it is simply another way of saying *productivity*; that growth in national living standards is essentially determined by the growth rate of productivity.

**Competition is not zero-sum and benefits all parties involved.**

Lall, 1 – Former development economist, former professor of economics and fellow of Green College, Oxford University. Long-time researcher of foreign direct investment in developing countries and industrial competitiveness. (Sanjaya, “Competitiveness Indices and Developing Countries: An Economic Evaluation of the Global Competitiveness Report,” 4 April 2001, ScienceDirect//HO

Most analysts, however, use a broader definition of competitiveness and focus on structural factors affecting medium to long-term economic performance: productivity, innovation, skills and so on ([Fagerberg, 1996](http://www.sciencedirect.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/science/article/pii/S0305750X01000511" \l "BIB8)). This is the use Krugman criticizes: the analysis of structural competitiveness, according to him, repudiates the basic theory of comparative advantage. When economies trade with each other they do not (as firms do) compete in a confrontational manner. They engage in a non-zero sum game that benefits all parties: countries specializing according to their factor endowments do better than in the absence of trade.[7](http://www.sciencedirect.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/science/article/pii/S0305750X01000511#FN7)To focus on competitive gaps in particular activities is partial and misleading. Declining US competitiveness in TVs or textiles does not mean that the US economy is less competitive. The decline of these industries may be a manifestation of its changing endowments and a necessary part of resource reallocation from old to new areas of comparative advantage. In a general equilibrium setting only optimal resource allocation matters, not the rise or decline of particular activities. In this setting, therefore, there is no way to define “national competitiveness.” Some analysts use economic growth to measure competitiveness, but this is only a “poetic way of saying productivity that has nothing to do with any *actual conflict between countries*” ([Krugman, 1996, p. 18](http://www.sciencedirect.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/science/article/pii/S0305750X01000511" \l "BIB14), italics added).