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Just War and Just Battle

*Towards a New Concept
of Constructivist Geopolitics*

*Trump and the Image
of the United States in Latin America*

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Just War and Just Battle

The Examination of North Korea's Attack against the ROKS Cheonan Based on the Just War Principles

Kil Joo Ban

In March 2010, a North Korean submarine fired a torpedo against the South Korean ship Cheonan, which resulted in the deaths of 46 sailors. Is its surprise attack justified? The academic examination has rarely been made over whether North Korea's use of military force is justified in this battle. As the just war theory to date has dealt mostly with major wars, it also can guide us to judge whether this limited warfare is just or not. The just war principles are composed of three axes: before, in and after wars. First, North Korea's provocation had neither right cause nor right intension because it attacked the Cheonan preventively, not preemptively, and was intended to achieve its domestic objective, the stable succession of the Kim regime. Second, North Korea also did not observe in-war principles in the sense that it attacked and sank the Cheonan unproportionally to maximize the effectiveness of revenge. Third, North Korea was not interested in post-battle settlements but intended to aggravate tensions in the region, which is not compliant with post-war principles. The examination sheds some light on the need to expand the scope of just war principles from war to limited warfare and battles particularly in the sense that it helps restrain unethical warfare and maintain the rules-

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based international order. This expansion also will contribute to not only the richness of the just war theory but also further leading it to evolve into a grand theory of war.

Keywords: just war theory, the ROKS Cheonan incident, preventive strike, limited warfare, jus ad bellum, sea battle Kil Joo Ban

In March 2010, a midget submarine of North Korea secretly violated South Korea's territorial water in the West Sea (called the Yellow Sea by China) and fired a torpedo against the Republic of Korea Navy Ship (ROKS) *Cheonan*, which resulted in its sinking and the deaths of 46 sailors.¹ Could the North Korean military's method to attack an opponent ship be justified ethically, legally or militarily in terms of just war principles? When is the use of military force justified in general? If it had not been just, should the discourse of unjust warfare have been created back then? Surprise attack without the right cause and the proportional use of force is not justified by the just war principles. This examination itself matters because it can evolve into norms or even institutions that impose restrictions on the unjust behaviour of the state. The absence of a relevant restraint makes unjust behaviour more likely to continue. When a state is not restrained from initiating unethical warfare, even small sea battles, the rules-based order can be rubbed away gradually in international politics. Seen in this light, the *Cheonan* incident serves as a significant case to provide insight into the expansion of the just war principles.

The Civilian-Military Joint Investigation Group (JIG) revealed that North Korea attacked the *Cheonan*, and in June 2010, it submitted the report to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).² It was apparent that North Korea's attack on the *Cheonan* was not a justified military action. Thus, the international community condemned North Korea for the *Cheonan* incident. The concept of just warfare, however, had been paid little attention to scholarly and politically even in the post-investigation period as well as in the midst of this shocking incident. A lack of concern for just war ideas led to another unethical act of warfare, which was initiated by North Korea in the same year. In November 2010, North Korea bombed South Korea's sovereign territory, *Yeonpyeong* Island, which led to the deaths of two marines and two civilians.³ While there have been little effort to analyse the *Cheonan* incident with the just war principles, South Korea has been politically

divided over whether Pyongyang should be blamed for this Incident and this division continues to this day.⁴

The just war tradition has existed for thousands of years, from ancient scholars, such as Aristotle, Ambrose and Thucydides to medieval thinkers, such as Victoria and Grotius, to contemporary scholars, including Walzer.⁵ These philosophical or theoretical discussions have had an impact on the practical use of military force while contributing to the establishment of international norms or institutions, such as the UN Charter Article 51 and the UN's High-level Panel Report (HLPR) in 2014.⁶ The just war principles, such as a last resort, have contributed to constraining the ruthless use of military force and reducing war crimes. War has been diversified over the decades, though. Accordingly, the just war theory should expand its scope by examining legitimacy over the use of military force in general simply beyond wars, in an effort to achieve its practical synergy. Thus, this paper examines the *Cheonan* incident with the framework of just war principles as part of the effort to expand its scope.

Just war theory, its impact and war vs. battle

The literature of just war theory

There exist three views over the relationship between politics and war: war with no legitimacy at any time, war without hindrance and restraint in war.⁷ The school of just war theory has paid attention to the third perspective. In the 1960s, the ancient philosophy of just war began to be revived in the world of academia due to the emergence of a new international system and modern technology.⁸ Walzer (1977) served as the most influential scholar to revive the just war tradition while promoting the debate over the Vietnam War, which continued to another pioneering work in 1983, *Spheres of Justice*.⁹ The 9/11 attacks and the U.S's subsequent invasion of Iraq also encouraged the concept of just war to be paid more attention.¹⁰ Likewise, the emergence of global terrorism is examined from the viewpoint of the just war theory in a situation where terrorists kill many innocent civilians.¹¹

The just war theory is often asked over whether it needs to be in an academic area. Thus, O'Driscoll (2013) argues that the discourse of just war should be dealt with as a vocation based on personal beliefs, 'not as a purely intellectual pursuit'.¹² The just war theory is also often criticised due to its two different characteristics: one aspect is the restraint of war, and the other is its justification.¹³ There are scholarly attempts

to resolve these obstacles by articulating the just war theory. One proposes the language of 'just peace' instead of just war.¹⁴ Faced with the just war theory's inability to deal with military restraint or realities on the ground, the term of 'ethical peace' is also outlined.¹⁵

How to make the just war theory more practically applied is also a primary concern, and to that end, institutionalising its norm is proposed.¹⁶ Likewise, empirical inquiries are also one of their focuses in the field. A framework of just war is used to examine military interventions, such as the UN forces' role in Yugoslavia with three scenarios.¹⁷ The U.S., as an international hegemon, has intervened in many wars, and thus, its interventions, such as the War in Afghanistan, serve as key case studies.¹⁸ How armed forces use this theory on the ground is also explored in a more practical way.¹⁹ An intervention in Syria often serves as an analysis of just war theory.²⁰

The extant literature of just war theory to date is primarily philosophical or theoretical, although there has been some attempt to examine historical cases with its theory. More importantly, a single battle, not a war, is rarely explored from the viewpoint of the just war theory. Unjustified or brutal behaviour by combatants in a battle, which is part of the war, have been investigated, but sea battles, such as the *Cheonan* Incident, remain unanswered regarding the just war theory. Empirical inquiries should be expanded into a tactical level of a battle to make the just war theory richer and more applicable to the world.

War vs. battle

There are major differences between a war and a battle. 'Battle' is defined as 'a fight between armies, ships or planes, especially during a war' or 'a violent fight between groups of people.'²¹ 'War' is defined as 'a situation in which two or more countries or groups of people fight against each other over a period of time.'²² With these definitions in mind, a battle can be conceptualised as a military fight between two forces at a tactical level, whereas war can be defined as a large scale fight between two states at a political or strategic level. In addition, there is a difference in terms of duration. A battle can be short, even a few minutes, whereas a war can last more than ten years. Also, battle and war are different in terms of scope. Mostly, a war is composed of several battles. Similarly, war is a large scale of conflicts in which many combatants are required to engage, whereas a battle needs a relatively smaller scale of soldiers than a war.

Although there are many battles in a war, all battles do not always go to war. There are two ways in general: a battle could escalate into a full-scale war, or a battle could be finished without war escalation. How to restrain a single battle is important not to escalate into war. The *Cheonan* Incident was not a war but a battle between two Korea's forces, which occurred at sea. This incident has been dealt with primarily as an attack rather than a battle. This framing hinders this incident from being explored in various ways. This paper attempts to define the *Cheonan* Incident not only as an attack but also as a battle for two reasons. First, the West Sea has functioned as a battlefield due to the Northern Limit Line (NLL) friction between the two Koreas which led to the First and Second *Yeonpyeong* Sea Battles.²³ In particular, the North Korean Navy has initiated battles in the West Sea with the use of preemptive or preventive attacks over the decades. The *Cheonan* Incident shows that the same pattern took place in this sea in 2010. Second, the way the ROK navy responded in the event of being attacked allows this incident to be defined as a battle. When this incident occurred, all naval units under the Second Fleet were on the highest alert as part of conducting battles. In particular, naval forces had conducted anti-submarine operations on the spot to counter North Korea's attack.²⁴ To top it off, the ROKS *Sokcho* fired guns at an unidentified target moving fast in the vicinity of the *Cheonan*.

Unjustified military actions have been a part of concern vis-à-vis the just war theory. The U.S. invasion of Iraq has been discussed from a viewpoint of the just war concept, which turned out to be seen as illegal.²⁵ However, unjustified military actions in sea battles leave unexplored in terms of the just war principles.²⁶ This battle did not escalate into war but posed a serious threat to regional security. How to prevent provocations has something to do with how to restrain the use of military force. Thus, the discourse of just battle principles should be dealt with as equally crucial as the discourse of justness in major wars.

North Korea as the state actor in the concept of just war

North Korea attacked the *Cheonan* to achieve its political goal as the state actor, which implies that its provocation should be understood as a clandestine but official action. When dealing with foreign policy decisions, a state can be conceptualised in two different ways: a unitary actor and one state with multiple sub-actors. The former is based upon

the rational actor model which assumes a state as a single primary actor to achieve its one national goal.²⁷ The latter is centred on the presence of multi-actors under one state that attempt to maximise their individual or organisational interests.²⁸ North Korea's provocation is clearly seen as an action by a unitary state rather than by one of the multiple sub-actors in the North Korean regime.

After the incident, rumour has it that Kim Jong-un planned this attack to guarantee and consolidate his leadership in the North Korean regime without informing his father, Kim Jong-il, of his plan.²⁹ However, this rumour turned out to be less groundless as time went by. Through his book of memoir, *Smoking Gun*, Jong-hun Lee who served as working staff of the Blu House in the event of this unjust action mentioned that the incident was politically designed for Kim Jong-il to provide Kim Jong-un with a window of opportunity vis-à-vis leadership transition.³⁰ In 2018, Lee once again made it clear in a conversation with Co-Chairman of JIG, ROK Army GEN Jung-I Park, that Kim Jong-il was highly likely to be informed of this Incident.³¹ In September 2009, Kim Jong-un had already been designated as the next leader by Kim Jong-il and the transition process had been being made.³² In this process, Kim Jong-un needed a big event to show his assertiveness as the next leader. These provocations had taken place for Kim Jong-il to consolidate his leadership transition from his father, Kim Il-sung. In this regard, in 2010, Kim Jong-il's interest was inherently the same as Kim Jong-un's.

Similarly, in February 2018, South Korea's Defense Minister Song, Young-moo revealed that Kim Yong-chul, the then-Chief of North Korea's Reconnaissance General Bureau (RGB), played a primary role in sinking the *Cheonan*.³³ Since Kim Yong-chul was appointed as a spy-master of RGB by Kim Jong-il, he was in a position where he should report not only what he had planned but also what he achieved through this attack. Thus, it is more relevant to suppose that Kim Jong-il approved the attack plan and Kim Young-chul carried out this plan under the direct guidance of Kim Jong-un. In this aspect, the two Kims are not two actors but simply one actor defined as the Kim regime. North Korea as a state actor has aimed at achieving a single objective: the Kim regime survival. Multiple sub-actors are existential but they compete with a small portion of domestic affairs, not a regime change. This insight allows North Korea to be conceptualised as a single state actor when it comes to the decision of the *Cheonan* Incident.

The role of public opinion should also be taken into consideration. The impact of public opinion depends on a regime type: democracy or authoritarian. Decision making for foreign policy is more espoused by the public in democratic regimes than in authoritarian regimes. Seen in this light, a bottom-up theory is well-placed to be explaining foreign policy-making of the U.S., a representative state of democracy in terms of the public opinion's impact.³⁴ The North Korean authoritarian regime, however, is rarely espoused by the public. The North Korean public could ask for more food from the regime leader but rarely intervene in foreign affairs. In particular, in terms of decision making of military provocations, the North Korean regime behaves collectively as a single unitary actor. Even democracies attempt to respond to an enemy's provocations collectively because their action is a matter of national security. Thus, non-military foreign affairs decisions should be differentiated from kinetic-force-orientated national security decisions.

A unique characteristic of North Korea, centering on the Kim regime's survival, and a lack of functional public opinion under dictatorship, allow North Korea to be dealt with as a unitary actor in its action of the *Cheonan* attack. Meanwhile, the public, particularly democracies, can have impacts on creating and promoting discourses in time of peace or in the post-incident period on whether this warfare was just or not. What matters more is that North Korea is most likely to continue military provocations coherently as the state actor when the just war principles are downplayed on an international arena.

Just war principles

How can warfare be justified? There are three axes in the just war theory: *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, and *jus post bellum*. The first axis, *jus ad bellum*, attempts to answer the question to when the use of military force for war is justified. Thus, it is on the right to war that should be considered before going to a war with the following categories: right authority, open declaration, just cause, right intention, last resort, and reasonable hope.³⁵ *Right authority*, which is related to a sovereignty issue, is a principle designed to stress that a war is justified only when a legitimate authority, mostly a state, wages it.³⁶ When an improper authority kills opposing soldiers, it is not considered as an act of war but as murders or criminals. *Open declaration* suggests that the proper authority should declare a war publicly rather than wage secretly.

The notion of *just cause* shows when wars are approved legally and could be justified by international norms. The use of armed force for self-defense is legally justified, and humanitarian interventions could also be justified by the institutional norms. Article 51 in the UN Charter stipulates ‘the inherent right of individual or collective self defence’.³⁷ The just war theory and the international community mostly acknowledge a preemptive attack as justified legally and strategically.³⁸

A preemptive attack, however, is distinguished from a preventive strike in terms of two aspects: timing and motivation.³⁹ A preemptive attack is made to effectively strike first when an enemy’s attack or war is imminent or already underway. The preemptor expects that striking first will be better to win an unavoidable war in a situation where an enemy is about to attack.⁴⁰ By contrast, a preventive strike is aimed at destroying possible threats in the distant future based on guesswork or politically driven judgment rather than careful calculation to deal with unavoidable imminent war. The preventor is motivated to use this strike when the balance of power between two opposing states is changing, or is likely to shift.⁴¹ Thus, a preventive strike remains controversial legally as well as morally, unlike a preemptive attack.

The principle of *right intention* claims that when going to war, a state should be intended to restore and secure peace. Thus, it is not justified for a state to go to war aimed at seeking narrow self-interest. Likewise, any revenge is not allowed. *Last resort* suggests that the use of armed force should be the last option, not the first one. A state should first try to resolve disputes with non-violent options.⁴² When all options besides the use of armed force are exhausted, but a dispute is not still resolved, going to war is justified. Finally, the principle of *reasonable hope of success* suggests when there already exists a reasonable chance of success before going to war, the use of armed force is justified. The rational calculation should be made carefully before going to war if the use of military force were to be recognised as a justified option to resolve differences.

The second axis, *jus in bello*, often referred to as the just conduct of the war, is on the rules of warfare that should be followed by all participants, particularly combatants, during a war, with the following categories: proportionality and discrimination.⁴³ The principle of *proportionality* stipulates that a state should use its military force proportionally to achieve the desired objectives.⁴⁴ When a military force attempts to overly destroy an enemy more than the desired objectives,

it is not justified. Thus, this principle is designed to restrain the over-use of military force and minimise destruction. Under this principle, collateral damage is justified. This ethical rule stresses that a military force should not punish an enemy, and to that end, the minimum use of force is required. Meanwhile, defining the minimum use of force is tricky. The use of military forces should be inherently defensive as opposed to total destruction and lethal powers should be constrained to protect civilians and wounded soldiers under the principle of the minimum use of force. The international society based on Track II needs to begin defining the minimum use of force with the prospect of evolving into Track I.

The principle of *discrimination* stresses the immunity of non-combatants from war. Thus, it is not just to kill or attack innocent civilians intentionally. Similarly, it is not justifiable to retaliate even against prisoners of war (POWs). In addition, according to this principle, a military force should not be used to target not only non-combatants, primarily civilians, but also combatants who do not pose a threat to it. Soldiers who are injured or shipwrecked are immune to warfare. In this sense, this principle is also linked with humanity. Both proportionality and discrimination are designed to minimise violence in war and reduce harm.

The final axis, the most recent one, *jus post bellum*, refers to justice after war, primarily focusing on post-war settlements.⁴⁵ The end of the war should be directed to ensure peace. War should be terminated with just cause to ensure peace, ranging from a formal apology to rehabilitation.⁴⁶ An enemy threat should be removed on the ground. The post-war status should not remain unstable if a war were to be prevented from resuming at any time. The victors should respect the losers' human rights and differentiate between combatants and non-combatants when dealing with post-war issues. How to make a state functionally normal and maintain a peace system should be considered seriously rather than be left unresolved. Finally, maintaining postwar peace should be prioritised over taking revenge or asking for excessive compensation.

What Happened in 2010: Sea battle provoked by North Korea

In 2010, North Korea was under a lot of pressure from the international community due to its nuclear ambition. When Pyongyang conducted its first nuclear test in 2006, the UNSC passed Resolution 1718.⁴⁷ In

addition, after the second nuclear test in 2009, Resolution 1874 was passed in the UNSC.⁴⁸ These Resolutions were designed to compel Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear program through economic sanctions. Thus, North Korea was in serious economic difficulties. South Korea, as part of the international community, participated in these economic sanctions. In addition, South Korea's Sunshine Policy, which contributed to increasing economic assistance to North Korea, had been nullified in 2008 when a new administration took power. These situations made North Korea grumble.

One year before the *Cheonan* Incident, military tension stayed extremely high. In April 2009, North Korea launched a three-stage rocket over the Pacific, which was recognised as provocative by the international community.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, in November 2009, the Battle of *Daecheong* occurred as a North Korean boat crossed the NLL, and in response, South Korean ships fired warning shots. In this battle, North Korea was greatly defeated. There were no casualties on the South Korean side, whereas North Korean forces were seriously damaged.⁵⁰ North Korea was frustrated by South Korea's unilateral victory at sea. A few hours later, Pyongyang demanded an apology from Seoul.⁵¹ On November 12, Pyongyang, through its party newspaper, *Rodong Sinmun*, revealed its intention to avenge this battle while mentioning "The South Korean forces will be forced to pay dearly for the grave armed provocation."⁵² North Korea unilaterally declared a no-navigation zone near the NLL while conducting live-fire drills, which made military tensions higher.

The year 2010 was also a transitional period to North Korea itself domestically in terms of a political power change. Then, Kim Jong-un, was preparing to be designated as the successor of his father, Kim Jong-il. Thus, a big event was crucial for a young Kim to be recognised as a credible successor of the regime. Meanwhile, on 26 March 2010, the *Cheonan* was sunk by unknown shock, and 46 sailors were tragically killed in action. This navy ship was deployed for a routine patrolling mission around the NLL, the de facto sea demarcation line, in the West Sea.⁵³ The ROK Navy, which had already experienced several skirmishes, including the 2002 *Yeonpyeong* Sea Battle, responded to this incident with all possibilities on the table. Thus, when an unidentified object appeared on radar after the *Cheonan* Incident, the ROKS *Sokcho*, steaming nearby, fired hundreds of shots at the target, which reportedly turned out to be a flock of birds.⁵⁴ In this sense, this counteract, after

being damaged, could be regarded as one of the sea battles. On the day of the *Cheonan* Incident, the ROK Navy's Second Fleet Command recognised that a few North Korean vessels, including a submarine, had disappeared from its Nampo naval base.⁵⁵

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On 31 March 2010, the JIG was organised to make the investigation credible, and 73 experts attended it from five different states.⁵⁶ On 15 May, the parts of a torpedo, CHT-02D, were recovered from the sinking seabed and served as smoking gun evidence.⁵⁷ The JIG concluded that the *Cheonan* was sunk due to 'shock wave and bubble effect' following the explosion of this torpedo manufactured by North Korea.⁵⁸ On 9 July, the UNSC condemned the attack on the *Cheonan* through a presidential statement, although it failed to criticise Pyongyang openly.⁵⁹ Unlike the international community, China stayed relatively calm and was reluctant to condemn Pyongyang.⁶⁰

North Korea's attack on the ROKS *Cheonan*: Just or unjust?

The first axis (jus ad bellum): Unjustified in terms of the 'pre-battle' principles

The *Cheonan* incident shows that North Korea failed to comply with the following 'pre-battle' principles: right authority, open declaration, just cause, right intention, last resort and reasonable hope. First, North Korea as a state, neither bandits nor non-state terrorists, planned to attack the *Cheonan*. In this sense, the attacker might be justified according to the principle of the right authority. However, North Korea did not preserve other principles. Thus, to be more precise, this action was unjust warfare led by a state, which meant the state with the right authority intentionally made unjustified acts. Second, North Korea did not declare its military plan to attack one of the South Korean ships. Rather, Pyongyang secretly deployed a midget submarine to the southern part of the NLL and fired a torpedo against the *Cheonan*. In particular, a submarine used the night time for a secret attack not to be detected by the South Korean military. The attacker, Pyongyang, rejected Seoul's call for an apology even after a smoking gun was found on the seabed while arguing this incident was 'fictitious'.⁶¹

Third, the attack was not justified in terms of the principle of just cause. North Korea's attack was far from self defence. The UN charter stipulates the use of military force for self defence. However, North Korea made a surprise attack on the *Cheonan* rather than defended itself against imminent threats. Thus, Seoul regarded the attack as a vio-

lation of the UN charter.⁶² North Korea's action was a brutal attack on the ship which had no intention of using its weapons. How can North Korea's provocation to the *Cheonan* be explained: preemptive, preventive or neither? Its action is not assessed to be a preemptive attack because there was no imminent threat to North Korea by South Korea. North Korea's behaviour could be explained more as a preventive strike designed to win possible conflicts in the distant future politically as well as militarily. North Korea's asymmetric attack was chosen to offset the imbalance of naval forces between the two Koreas and to preventively obstruct South Korea's blue water navy strategy.⁶³ Considering that South Korea had always been defence-oriented, on the other side, North Korea's action could not be fully explained as a preventive strike alone.

Fourth, North Korea's attack had no right intentions in the sense that it sought narrow self-interest rather securing peace by successfully making a surprise attack. This provocation was intended to make the succession process from Kim Jong-il to Kim Jong-un more stable. Using military force served as a useful mechanism to deal with 'the potentially violent succession process' more effectively.⁶⁴ North Korea reportedly attacked the *Cheonan* to make the best of securing political power in the regime. Military victories under his belt could help Kim Jong-un guarantee succeeding his father, Kim Jong-il.⁶⁵ Kim Jong-un, who emerged as the heir apparent of the Hermit Kingdom, reportedly commanded this attack, similar to his father, who planned a series of provocations in the 1970s.⁶⁶ On 28 September 2010, following the *Cheonan* Incident, Kim Jong-un was appointed to two crucial posts, including vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, which meant he was officially acknowledged as his father's successor.⁶⁷ On 17 December 2011, when Kim Jong-ill was dead, Kim Jong-un took full power without hindrance. It could not be justified if a state were to wage a battle for domestic politics.

In addition, this attack on the *Cheonan* was intended to maximise the negotiating power by increasing military tensions. In 2010, the international community failed to provide economic aid to North Korea due to its nuclear program. Meanwhile, the Military-First policy, prioritising the military, was at the centre of North Korea's policies, which were adopted by Kim Jong-il. Thus, by increasing tensions through the use of military force, Pyongyang aimed to maximise the negotiating power and contribute to the regime's survival at the end of the day.⁶⁸

Furthermore, the principle of right intention strongly opposes military revenge. However, North Korea aimed to attack one of the ROKS ships asymmetrically to avenge its defeat in the 2009 *Daecheong* Battle.⁶⁹

Fifth, North Korea failed to exhaust all non-violent options before taking the military option. Thus, North Korea violated the principle of last resort. In a sense, Pyongyang chose the attack as the first option, not the last, in the sense that North Korea had continued a series of provocations without engaging with the international community. Despite a series of provocations, the international community was then reluctant to militarily punish North Korea to look for an opportunity to resolve North Korea's nuclear issue peacefully. The Six-Party Talks were expected to resume, and the prospect of an inter-Korean summit appeared to be bright.⁷⁰ Even the U.S. administration under President Obama adopted Strategic Patience rather than rushing to a military option. However, North Korea rejected any diplomatic engagement while continuing provocations. Rather, North Korea expected to achieve both political and strategic interests by making a surprise attack asymmetrically. In this regard, its attack on the *Cheonan* was the first choice of North Korea, not the last resort.

Lastly, when it comes to the principle of reasonable hope, North Korea appears to have seriously examined how its attack on the *Cheonan* could succeed. In this sense, North Korea's use of armed force could be mistaken as justified. Its military plan to attack it underwater, however, might have been more guaranteed for success tactically, not politically. Its brutal attack was not the most optimal option to resolve differences, which serves as a key criterion to judge whether an action is justified or not. The attack was not intended to resolve key differences, its nuclear program and economic sanctions as punitive measures, but to increase military tensions for achieving other objectives, including domestic politics. North Korea's brutal use of armed force served as a tragic case to invalidate the East Asian community that seeks to resolve contested issues by a norm, not by violence.⁷¹ Put it simply, the attack was far from the reasonable hope of resolving the issue.

The second axis (jus in bello): Unjustified in terms of the 'in-battle' principles

North Korea's attack on the *Cheonan* is also not justified from a viewpoint of the 'in-battle' doctrine with the following principles: proportionality and discrimination. First, the attack was not carried out

proportionally. As aforementioned earlier, North Korea attacked the *Cheonan* to revenge its defeat in the Battle of *Daecheong*. Any revenge is not permitted under the just war principles. Even if North Korea's behaviour is assumed to be a chain of action and reaction between two enemies, its military's attack was not proportional to its casualties in the Battle of *Daecheong*. In this previous battle, reportedly, one sailor was killed, and three others were injured on the North Korean side.⁷² The North Korean military, however, killed 46 soldiers through this brutal revenge. Revenge could be seen as the most effective when the opponent is damaged hardest. With this in mind, North Korea is assumed to have attacked its opponent ship unproportionally.

Likewise, North Korea's asymmetrical tactics were not proportional to its desired objective. The Battle of *Daecheong* occurred as a North Korean ship crossed down through the NLL and posed a threat to South Korea's security. What Pyongyang sent another military vessel to the southern part of the NLL to achieve its desired object of revenge was neither proportional in terms of a just war principle nor achievable towards its objective when faced with condemnation from the international community. The North Korean military overly destroyed the opposing force by sinking the *Cheonan*, which was more than its desired objective. North Korea did not attempt to restrain the overuse of its military force but rather to maximise the effectiveness of its attack.

Second, the *Cheonan* sinking is also controversial even regarding the principle of discrimination. Obviously, North Korea did not attack civilians, such as fishermen, at sea but only killed sailors who were on a military ship. This outcome, however, was made not because it tried to discriminate between combatants and non-combatants but because there were no civilians onboard. The principle of discrimination becomes applied significantly when both combatants and non-combatants are located in the same area. On 23 November 2010, when North Korea bombed *Yeonpyeong* Island, it did not attempt to differentiate between marines and civilians. Two civilians, as well as two marines, were killed by its shelling. Thus, it cannot be evaluated that North Korea had had the principle of discrimination in mind when attacking the *Cheonan*.

Moreover, the principle of discrimination objects to attacking soldiers who are disabled or shipwrecked. The *Cheonan* was not conducting a routine patrolling duty but was staying off the coast of *Baekryeong* Island to remain safe from bad weather when it was attacked.⁷³ In

this sense, the *Cheonan* was in a status of navigational inability similar to the status of a shipwreck. Rather than taking discrimination into account, North Korea used this opportunity of bad weather to make its asymmetric attack secretly and successfully. Thus, North Korea's attack was mean and brutal without any justification.

The third axis (jus post bellum): Unjustified in terms of the 'post-battle' principles

pyongyang failed to follow the third axis of just war principles. North Korea was not interested in maintaining peace after this battle, but even more provocative, which made situations more aggravated. In the same year of the *Cheonan* sinking, North Korea even bombed South Korea's direct sovereign territory, *Yeonpyeong* Island. One more military provocation was required to consolidate Kim Jong-un's succession process, and thus, in November, Pyongyang shelled *Yeonpyeong* Island.⁷⁴

In addition, the just war principle on the post-war lays out just cause after the warfare, including an apology. Despite the result of the JIG, Pyongyang did neither acknowledge its provocation nor make an apology. Even in the post-battle period, military threats have not been removed in the contested waters as North Korea continued to be provocative to achieve its nuclear program. In this sense, North Korea did not pay attention to post-battle settlements but to post-battle conflicts.

Both the *Cheonan* sinking and the *Yeonpyeong* shelling could be understood as the remnants of the unresolved Korean War in the sense that the NLL remains contested waters.⁷⁵ If North Korea were to assume that its attack was made as part of the Korean War, it could mean that Pyongyang had not complied for several decades with the just war principle on post-war, *jus post bellum*, where post-war settlements should be prioritised. Even if this attack were to be made independently of the Korean War, North Korea could not be said to be justified either because the end of a battle did not lead to ensuring peace but to aggravating security in the region. Such battles failed to resolve contested issues and, instead, made the contested waters be changed into a battleground.

Pound for pound, North Korea's provocation is not justified by all three axes of the just war principles. The in-depth examination, however, has rarely been made over whether North Korea's use of military force is justified in its attack of the *Cheonan*. This absence led to the

outbreak of another unjust warfare in the same year, the *Yeonpyeong* Island shelling, mentioned above, while playing no roles in restraining North Korea from taking another unjust provocation.

Conclusion

North Korea's attack on the *Cheonan*, explored above, proves that it was not only brutal ethnically but also unjustified in terms of the just war principles. At first glance, the *Cheonan* Incident seems to be a provocation, made by North Korea locally, without international implications. However, this analysis clearly shows how important it is to restrain the overuse of military force even in a single battle. Accordingly, the just war theory should expand its scope from war to a single battle and a small scale of limited warfare. This examination offers policy and political implications.

First, the expansion of the just battle principles could contribute to preventing brutal provocations from repeating and restraining the brutal use of military force more widely, including provocations even at peacetime. In the post-*Cheonan* Incident period, the discourse of just battle principles has been rarely made domestically in South Korea as well as internationally. The lack of concern for the concept of just battle has encouraged Pyongyang to continue provocations such as the most recent incident in September 2020, the brutal shooting of a South Korean official at the West Sea.⁷⁶ The pressure from South Korea and international society could derail the North Korean regime's brutal actions by coercing it to perceive the function of justness. The public pressure, made under a raft of activities including publishing human rights reports against the Kim regime, can allow Pyongyang to recognise disadvantages for its regime's survival when making itself be seen as a brutal regime.⁷⁷ To that end, the role of the public matters particularly in peacetime because a state actor is forced to be unitary in times of war. The post-incident period and time with no imminent at the moment provides the domestic public with a window of opportunity to play as one of the multiple actors in a state. The international public has more leeway to create this discourse because it serves as a different actor from a state actor. This leeway allows the international actor to create and promote this discourse in times of war as well as in peacetime.

More importantly, the growing concern for unjust war by the public contributes to reconciling different stances of each state on which is just war. Downplaying the just war principle allows every state to

define just war in its own preferable way and even excuse its brutal actions as being just for national security. The discourse creation can serve as a good starting point for reducing these gaps. Who has the authority to judge 'just or not' is also another important agenda. The UNSC needs to seize the initiative of establishing a sub-committee in charge of these affairs while cooperating with Track II professionals as well as governments around the world.

The results of these criteria, no justification of North Korea's attack on the *Cheonan*, should be shared by the international community. If this type of attack were to be left behind because of its tactical characteristics, not war-level strategic ones, war escalation is more likely in the world. Even a single battle, not wars, should be restrained by adding limited warfare to the just war discourse. The expansion of just war principles will allow possible damages to be mitigated and even will prevent military provocations from being made at peacetime by restraining the possible aggressors institutionally rather than militarily. Asymmetrical attacks could be more effective in achieving tactical goals. When the just war theory is expanded, however, their attacks are unlikely to lead to the achievement of strategic goals. Similar to Walzer's emphasis, when military attacks like the *Cheonan* Incident are recognised as unjustified more collectively, military provocations are expected to be restrained.⁷⁸

Second, expanded principles can help more audiences judge situations more fairly. The public's role is crucial to applying the just war principles to the real world. Although a multinational investigation revealed that North Korea was the attacker, some audiences, including journalists and professionals, are reluctant to believe the announcements of the South Korean government and the multinational investigation team.⁷⁹ Their reliance on conspiracy theories, not the official result of the investigation, encourages North Korea to evade its responsibilities. Meanwhile, the discourse of just battle has rarely been created or delivered over whether North Korea's brutal action could be justified or not. As a result, some audiences continue to be reliant more on conspiracy theories to this day. By providing a fair chance of thinking to such audiences, the expanded discourse of just war principles will help prevent the continuation of unjust situations like the *Cheonan* Incident.

Third, it contributes to the accumulation and even the evolution of the just war paradigm. Even a tactical provocation is most likely to link

to political or strategic intentions. Thus, when the scope of the just war theory expands a political outlook into a single conflict with a tactical characteristic, it is more likely to produce positive impacts synergistically by making the international community pay more attention to the importance of justness. Accordingly, it will be able to evolve into the military restraint theory simply beyond the justness of a war. In addition, the extant literature pays more attention to ethical or moral grounds when it comes to the just war theory. Thus, the realist school of International Relations (IR) has tended to neglect the importance of this discourse while regarding war as inevitable in the real world. When these principles are in the works even tactically, military experts and the realist school are more likely to rush to it, contributing to not only the richness of the just war theory but also further leading it to evolve into a grand theory of war.



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Towards a New Concept of Constructivist Geopolitics

Bridging Classical and Critical Geopolitics

Rebin Fard

'In Space We Read Time'!

This essay deals with the question to what extent perspectives of classical and critical geopolitical thought are suitable for analysing geopolitical structures of world politics. The following article discusses the potential that opens up a constructivist perspective for the conceptualisation of space and spatiality in geopolitics. This article is about links between geopolitics and international relations for a theoretical rebuilding of geopolitics. It focuses on the constructivist geopolitics and thus questions of power, space, politics and new political spaces; however, not only in a global and national context but also on a local and regional scale. According to the basic premises of constructivist geopolitics, geopolitical constructions and conceptions of space can be asserted as subjective and objective categories. From this perspective, it also shows that the geopolitical world order can be understood not only objectively but also subjectively in reciprocal interaction. These discussions are seen as an interrelated contribution to combine two different paradigms and to promote the synergy of scientific expertise to understand world politics and for the management of temporary global problems. Constructivist geopolitics attempts to conceptually rethink classical geopolitics and critical

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geopolitics together in a new way to enrich the subject of geopolitics as a possible approach.

Keywords: constructivism, constructivist geopolitics, classical geopolitics, critical geopolitics

Rebin Fard

One of the well-accepted narratives of our time claims that world politics is in the midst of a transformative change. With the end of the East-West Conflict and the years after the end of the bipolar world order, the unanswered question remains how new spatial structures of international relations and world politics have developed. From this perspective, a series of new geopolitical narratives, namely clash of civilisation, geo-economy and new bloc formation, claim to offer plausible discursive framings for changing global constellations of power.² Today's global politics go far beyond a simple model of the power-based interaction of sovereign states in an anarchic international system.³ At the global level, nothing illustrates this better than the Covid-19 pandemic and the challenge that climate change presents — especially the impact of fossil fuel emissions on an increasingly crowded planet. In this respect, the world faces two types of geopolitical impasse. One is the poor state capacity and the other is the poor market capacity.⁴ But the rising of this new world order is not yet completed, it is structurally between the Westphalian state system and postmodern statehood; historically between the certainties of a particular bipolar world order and the uncertainties of a world without a world order, and geographically between the end of the static 'ensemble world' and the emerging of the dynamic 'integrated world society'.⁵ Therefore, in order to recognise the structures of the emerging world order, the question is often asked how new geographical structures of international relations and world politics in the 21st century have developed, especially regarding its geographical perspective – Eurocentrism or Sinocentrism –, its shape – multilateral or asymmetrical multipolarity –, its tendency – universal interculturality or multicultural coexistence –, and its norms and values – competitive or cooperative multipolarity. But where this rising world order leads world politics in the 21st century remains controversial and constitutes the relevant reference point of the debates within political science, international relations, and geopolitics.⁶ This article seeks to make a further contribution to this debate from the point of view of a multi-theoretical approach in the context of constructive geopolitics.

In the tradition of geopolitical thought, space has always been seen as a relevant entity. Thus, the importance of geographical space for politics and its interrelations has always been the subject of political reflection.⁷ Political geographers such as Alfred Thayer Mahan (1897),⁸ Halford J. Mackinder⁹(1904), Karl Haushofer (1937)¹⁰ and Nicholas J. Spykman (1942)¹¹ have asked questions about typography, climate and others factors, in which they explicitly or implicitly speculated about the way strategy might influence the geography of world affairs.¹² Accordingly, it is less about the influence of the climate on the political constitution of political communities, but about how the global power structure can be shaped and changed for their benefit. Geopolitics unfolded at a time when the term 'World' was experiencing a boom.¹³ Thus, geopolitical thinking orientated itself on the global power structure. The heightened significance of the world as the basis of political thought and action had already been demonstrated by the fact that the world was perceived as fully developed.¹⁴ World politics and its order appear to have a clear and objective framework from which guidelines for political action can be derived.¹⁵ It is therefore about how the political reality of the world order is perceived and structured on the one hand, and on the other side how it flows into thought and action on the other. The spatial conceptions diverge depending on the perception of the spatial conditions. In this way, a different assessment of the world order, allowing for different interpretations, depends on the perspective of those who make the assessment.¹⁶ Thus, the world order can either be competitively interpreted or valued as a cooperative central policy option. In this sense, the new diversity of spatial images and spatial discourses have a high degree of dynamics.¹⁷ From a discourse-theoretical perspective among the competing conceptions of space, some conceptions become dominant and shape political interactions. The question of which spatial concept is used to analyse the geopolitical world order always reflects the hegemonic power relations in a specific histological, disciplinary and linguistic context.¹⁸

Since the beginning of scientific geography, space has been thought of as a given wholeness at the centre of its scientific discussion. This understanding of space was aimed at the identification and description of political and social processes and structures according to the laws and the givenness of an objective space.¹⁹ In doing so, classical determinists studied the influence of the natural and objective space as determinant factors on the behaviour of political actors. Spatial rela-

tions are subject to a direct influence on politics, in which a biological comprehension of space revealed itself.²⁰

From this one can distinguish a possibilistic point of view, which does not consider space as objectively given spatial structure. In contrast to the deterministic view, it considers space as a variable and subjective factor which can influence political reality.²¹ It emphasises that man is part of nature, but he can dominate nature through his wisdom, skill and technology. At the end of the 1960s, geographers criticised the objective given spatial patterns for explaining political and social processes and the spatial-scientific thinking in causal laws of space.²² In contrast to this objectivist understanding of space, some geographers focus on how spaces are produced and reproduced in everyday life and communication.²³ They assume that the construction of spaces is shaped by social practices and structures. At the same time, spaces are constructed as expressions and consequences of social practices and structures.

The connection between spatiality and social realities is radicalised in discourse-oriented approaches insofar as they assume that social structures or actors are never established, but always find themselves in a situation of conflict and fragility. Spaces cannot simply be an expression of a fixed and static social structure. But the production of spaces is always a constitutive element of the permanent (re-)production of the social processes.²⁴ With this critique of stable social power structures and the conception of autonomous actors, the negotiation processes for particular interpretive ways and identities as well as conflicts resulting from them are in the focus of the analysis²⁵.

Space, territory and borders have always been prominent and determining factors in the planning of the military and politics. The geography with its natural space factors is often considered objective in the tradition of the realistic school of international relations from which normative compulsions are driven to act, which are circumscribed using the terms geopolitics and geostrategy. With the end of the East-West Conflict, the years after the end of the bipolar world order and the elimination of political boundaries also meant the creation of intellectual freedom which developed a critical relationship to the traditional conception of geopolitics.²⁶ Political Geography always sets itself as a more theoretical understanding through which is no longer accepted the traditional positivist-scientist view of geopolitics and geostrategy. So the processes get social space construction in the fo-

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cus of interest, but the critical approaches do not become a substitute for classical geopolitical thinking.²⁷ Traditional thinking of geopolitics continues to coexist alongside emerging modern approaches.

Up to this time, as a legacy of classical geopolitics, the creation of difference through territorial metaphors has remained an essential part of many more recent approaches.²⁸ Geopolitical thinking is essentially interested in structuring space by drawing boundaries. In short, geopolitics is a form of spatial inclusion and exclusion. Geopolitics can be described as thinking in terms of spaces of power, zones of influence and areas of power.²⁹ Critical approaches, therefore, deal very centrally with which boundaries are drawn, where this happens, how divisions are legitimised and naturalised and which mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion are discussed. Since its inception, critical geopolitics has used other theories and approaches both methodically and theoretically. Integrations of other approaches may therefore have to be done carefully and taking into account the respective specificity. What can be methodologically and theoretically helpful in a discipline may be inspiring for critical geopolitics, but a congruent transfer raises problems. However, the focus is not only on the methodological and theoretical applicability but also on the fact that a comprehensive approach is excluded from the outset. Although this view leads to a large number of criticisms as a result - above all the accusation of arbitrariness - it also opens up the chance of alternative approaches and the option of dealing not only with unorthodox topics, apart from traditional approaches and regardless of possible sensitivities, but also to integrate methods and theoretical structures.

Mono-paradigm and monodisciplinary methods for the analysis of world politics and for the design and vision of world politics are limited and need to be re-discussed and redesigned. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to provide a new approach in the context of critical geopolitics to examine the geopolitics of world politics. After the introductory first part, the second part deals with the theoretical principles of the investigation. First, the most important theories of geopolitics are explained, and the development of geopolitical thinking is elaborated in order to specify these constants and to be able to establish a connection to constructivist geopolitics. After considering these debates and theories of geopolitical science, this new geopolitical approach will be further developed. The two approaches contain elements that are cited in order, by combining them, to develop the argument for geopolitical

thinking from the perspective of a constructivist approach and to understand world politics. From the perspective of a constructivist-geopolitical analysis approach, this study is based on three constants: firstly on the global geopolitical structure on which a state orients itself and on which its structure of interests depends, secondly on the domestic structure of a state, in which not only spatially relevant criteria but also its structure of values form a basis for policy decision-making processes, and thirdly on the spatial actions of states when pursuing their interests and goals in the international system. In order to specify these constants and to be able to establish a connection to constructivist geopolitics, this new geopolitical approach will be further developed after considering debates and theories of geopolitical science. With their help, a new geopolitical concept is systematically derived. Afterward, a convergence between classical and critical geopolitics is worked out for a new structural approach to geopolitics.

Against this background, this article presents first the most important theories of geopolitics and the development of geopolitical thinking are elaborated in order to specify their constants and to establish a connection to constructivist geopolitics. The constructivist geopolitics is developed in this study on the one hand based on constructivism theory by Alexander Wendt, and on the other hand, focuses on the reconciliation of classical and critical geopolitics. Afterward, the question of how geopolitical thinking developed in the post-bipolar world order is discussed. Based on this basic understanding, a look at geopolitical thinking and the current debates of geopolitics after the end of the East-West conflict, namely geo-economy, geo-culture, regionalism and the spatial turn, will be thrown out. Subsequently, a rapprochement between classical and critical geopolitics will be elaborated on this new constructivist approach to geopolitics. After considering these debates and theories of geopolitics, this new constructivist geopolitics will be further systematically derived.

Geopolitical thinking in the post-bipolar world order

Concerning globalisation and developments in world politics, geopolitical thinking has experienced a new change of perspective. Globalisation and the resulting consequences influence international politics³⁰ and lead the world of states to ever greater cooperation and internal solidarity. Accelerated global change through economic globalisation requires a new paradigm.³¹ As a result of globalisation, representatives

of a geopolitical paradigm shift argue that geopolitics should be replaced by geo-economics and geo-culture.³² Accordingly, they point out that world politics has entered the era of the geo-economy.³³ Economy and culture are the new driving forces for the spatial analysis of world politics. From this perspective, the primacy of the economy is emphasised. Besides, world politics is no longer geopolitically and politically characterised but is identified by an enormous dynamic economisation.³⁴ Based on the view that the geo-economy necessarily calls for international cooperation through cross-border capital markets and international peaceful trade,³⁵ representatives of the geo-economy and geo-culture point out that world politics has left behind the era of geopolitics and the resulting territorial and ideological conflicts, which involved power and influence politics as well as territorial conquest. Rather, geopolitics seems to be replaced by the geo-economy.³⁶ In geo-economics, world politics is shaped by economic cooperation and the logic of competition. Although advocates of the geo-economy note that the intergovernmental rivalries and the associated politico-military power politics as well as the threats of the 20th century - especially those of the Cold War - have been replaced by the geo-economy. However, some critics emphasise that geopolitics and political power conflicts are not replaced by the geo-economy but have shifted to economic and financial conflicts.³⁷ In this sense, they contradict the thesis of the geo-economy as an alternative paradigm to geopolitics.

Another perspective that provides the basis for a new orientation in geopolitics and that unfolds as a crucial space-related factor after the end of the East-West conflict is geo-culture. Geo-culture was developed based on Hegel's philosophy of history by Francis Fukuyama (1989)³⁸ in a paper entitled "The End of History?" Fukuyama formulates his thesis on the East-West conflict and considered it as the last struggle between two antagonistic ideologies. He argued that after the end of the East-West conflict, liberalism prevailed in the form of democracy and a market economy as a final model of world order. In this sense, Fukuyama proclaimed the victory of the culture of liberal democracy. In this context, he emphasises that liberal democracy is the only Geo-cultural and democratic model that, compared to other political systems, can make a universal claim to satisfy human needs within society, to give social recognition and to safeguard human freedom. With this, Fukuyama says that the end of geopolitics and the resulting rivalries and conflicts have come.³⁹

Against the thesis of Fukuyama Samuel Huntington (1993)⁴⁰ positioned in his contribution 'The Clash of Civilizations?' based on the view that world politics of the 21st century will no longer be marked by political, ideological or economic conflicts, but by conflicts between different cultural groups. In contrast to Fukuyama, he argues with the basic thesis that conflicts between different cultural areas - especially those of the western culture with the Chinese and Japanese as well as the Islamic cultural space - will determine the new world order. Accordingly, in his book entitled 'The Clash of Civilizations', he noted that world politics had become uni-multipolar and multicultural after the end of the East-West conflict. From this perspective, political-economic ideologies no longer determine world politics, but they are constituted by cultural spaces. Against this background, he contradicts the thesis of the victory of liberal-democratic philosophy and its universal validity and advocates that the West in the new world order cultural values of other actors must be considered to avoid potentially global conflicts. Unlike Fukuyama, Huntington argues that the dominance of Western civilisation is not based on its superiority in terms of universal ideas and values, as this superiority has been established not through the recognition of Western culture but organised violence. From this perspective, the future world order is determined by different cultures.⁴¹

Despite the innovative efforts of the theoretical approaches of geo-economics and geo-culture, which attempted to thematise world political contexts in terms of economy and culture according to the premises of a bipolar world order, their theoretical and methodological approach has been criticised because their treatment of geopolitical reality appears to be reductionist and unsatisfactory. The critics of the geo-economic and geo-cultural models assume that the end of geopolitics has not come⁴² and that the approaches presented are unable to replace the significance of geopolitics as an approach to analysing world politics.⁴³ In this sense, they emphasise that international geopolitics will continue to be determined by the political power struggle over the spaces.⁴⁴ Also, geopolitics is an action-guiding discipline that deals with power-political, economic and cultural factors to grasp the global political reality. Although the growing importance of economic and cultural factors in the age of globalisation is being pointed out for the analysis of world politics, geopolitics has not lost its significance and influence,⁴⁵ but its claim of scientific theory has even been rediscovered in terms of power policy aspects for the analysis of foreign trade

and world politics. Although culture and economics play crucial roles in international politics as spatial factors, geopolitics deals with these aspects even more comprehensively and, as a discipline with both its comprehensive perspective and its holistic approach, considers culture and economics alongside political power factors on scientific-theoretical and methodological analysis.

Spatial turn and paradigm shift of geopolitics

In recent decades, geopolitics has been marginalised and space has been displaced into oblivion.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the importance of geopolitics and the resulting concepts - such as space, identity and object - was hidden in scientific discussions. In recent years, the social and cultural sciences have experienced a 'Spatial Turn'. In this context, we discuss geopolitics and the 'Return of Space'.⁴⁷ In this sense, space, identity and culture concerning the concept of the Spatial Turn are placed at the centre of political and geopolitical considerations.⁴⁸ In this sense, the action-initiating character of geopolitics for the analysis of political reality should be emphasised not only in international relations but also in foreign policy.⁴⁹ Although geopolitics was taboo after the Second World War because of its impact on Nazi politics, its theoretical and methodological foundations were questioned and marginalised about space,⁵⁰ but geopolitics experienced a renaissance at the end of the East-West conflict and its action-initiating character became the focus of politics for spatial analysis of political reality.⁵¹ Thus advocates argue for geopolitics as a design-oriented and action-guiding discipline that deals with space, politics and power.⁵² Geopolitics captures spatial relationships and addresses the political reality in the context of politics and geography. Here, in respect of the Spatial Turn, it is argued that space and its significance are indispensable for the object of analysis of politics or foreign policy.⁵³

In the field of tension between hegemonic struggles and equilibrium politics, world politics is divided between different powers and spheres of influence between the major powers. From the point of view of Lacoste (1994),⁵⁴ geopolitics is a socio-historical discourse. In other words, it is 'a Mode of Representation of the World'. He assumed that we live in a time when the Marxist approach to the many conflicts in the world could no longer claim and provide a sufficient explanation for the conflict. According to the basic premise of his teaching in geopolitics:

'Geopolitics considers power rivalries to the extent that they are territorial, which is very often the case since the control (or possession) of the territory is a means the people and resources that are here to exercise power or influence. This not only refers to intergovernmental rivalries, which can revolve around spaces and very significant dimensions but also competitions between other forms of political forces, which may involve territories of relatively small dimensions'.⁵⁵

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Lacoste emphasises in his theorem that the geopolitical conflicts at all levels arise from historical developments and their socio-cultural backgrounds are to be addressed. Finally, from his point of view, geopolitics refers to the power rivalries for spaces, for the control of people and resources and the political problems in its geopolitical basis, not only on a global level but that it should also be perceived and analysed at a local level. In his view, it is taken into account that power factor and power politics continue to play a crucial role in geopolitics in current international relations.

Similarly, he argues that, after the end of the East-West conflict, global politics was determined by the geopolitical tensions between hegemony and power balance, which proved to be the basic pattern of current geopolitics.⁵⁶ Current international geopolitics results from both political rivalries and regional economic power competitions where regional coalitions and the integration of nation-states play a significant role together.⁵⁷ This geopolitical regionalism enhances the political and economic competitiveness of nation-states within a geographical region. Besides, regions' space for manoeuvres is guaranteed by the regional power and their increasing competition between them leads both to the regional balance of power and regional hegemony.⁵⁸ In a sense of power politics, the new basic structure of world politics arises from rivalries of the major powers through alliances, counter-alliances or regional power-building and counter-power formation between central actors in a political power and economic competition. National states are intensifying their influence policies in the form of regional structures to ensure their competitiveness in international relations.⁵⁹ By turning to regionalism, which primarily refers to the interaction between political power and the geographical environment, it is possible to look at the relationship of political actors in the international system, which is shaped by foreign policymakers in different

regions. In this sense, current geopolitics deals with power-political rivalries and competitions. It is about differentiated spheres of influence of both global and regional dimensions. In this context, geopolitics and its spatial analysis are hegemony, power balance and counter-power formation.

Constructivist approach of thinking in geopolitics

Constructivism is referred to as a meta-theory and an alternative explanatory perspective that has developed in the ontological examination of neorealism.⁶⁰ The constructivists assume that the 'Social Reality' does not open up to us directly, but is constituted by the shared ideas (social) about the world. Constructivism transfers the object of investigation from the epistemological level – as knowledge is constituted – to the ontological level – as the world is constituted. From a constructivist point of view, 'Social Reality' is the subjective ideas that are constituted by the interaction processes.⁶¹ The ontological objects are the focus of constructivism. Alexander Wendt is the most prominent reference theorist who has built up the basic premises of constructivism in international relations. Wendt focuses his theory on two basic assumptions: Anarchy is a socially constituted reality and not an exogenous given reality.⁶² The change of the international system can be explained by the change of identities and interests. Although Wendt (1994) developed his theory with the critique of neorealism, he adopts several neorealist basic assumptions.⁶³ In his main work 'Social Theory of International Politics', Wendt accepts the form of anarchy as constituted reality, which is embodied through the interaction processes of its content and structure. In this sense, Wendt says that international politics is anarchic and that states have offensive capabilities. Anarchy is what the states make of it. Where constructivists think it is so made of social relationships.⁶⁴

Constructivism starts from a fundamental ontological assumption that the social structure for the construction of social reality is at the centre of the investigation. Wendt points out that this social structure can only be perceived through the idealistic and material dimensions. This social structure is implemented through the actions of the actors and embedded in an interaction process and produced and reproduced over time. The ideal dimension of the social structure deals with the constitution of the identities and interests of the actors so that they are in a cooperative-reciprocal relationship with other actors. Based

on the structuring theory of Giddens, Wendt (1995) considered the basic premise of the 'Agency-Structure Problem' at the centre of his theory.⁶⁵ He argues that states are the key players in the international system. Still, the role of local-global actors such as institutions, NGOs and social movements should be taken into account. Therefore, Wendt argues that states, on the one hand, and the construction of world politics, on the other hand, have no fixed structural identities and interests. At the same time, the identity and interests of the states are taken from their interactions and actions. Wendt (1999) illustrates how the structures in international relations are constituted by social constructions. Wendt emphasises that the structures and the actors constitute each other.⁶⁶ The actors are influenced by the structures, and at the same time, the structures are changed by the interaction processes between the actors.⁶⁷ The central question of constructivism was how the change in international relations can be explained. For the answer to this question, Wendt referred to the various factors that depend on the structural change in international politics. Wendt expressed that the structural change in international politics is produced, reproduced and transformed by interactions between states. At the heart of constructivism are the changes in the structure of international politics and the changes in the interaction processes between states. Furthermore, constructivism represents an alternative explanatory approach for the description of states. Constructivism focuses on the 'Social Reality' of world politics, drawing on the categories of conflict, competition and the cooperation of political actors. Finally, the main question is the constructivist theory of how and under what conditions states constitute their actions and interaction processes in the international system and how they change.⁶⁸

The preoccupation with the social construction of space locates the present statements almost inevitably in the broader catchment area of geopolitics and international relations. Space-related constructivist research questions and their methodological approaches can be found in political geography as well as in political science since the late 1980s. At the centre of research interest of critical geopolitics stands geopolitical discourses and models as targeted to expose geopolitical constructions. ⁶⁹By revealing the role of language, one can not only be more transparent about its role in the social construction of space but at the same time make society sensitive to the working of language as the basis of all perception, evaluation and experience.⁷⁰

By referring to discursively mediated spatial representations and interpretations, the critical geopolitics approach is of particular interest for constructivist issues. In contrast to the traditional thinking of geopolitics and space-deterministic approaches, geopolitics is understood by critical geopolitics as a social phenomenon; the geopolitical discourse, represented by the actors of international politics.⁷¹ This means that geopolitics is losing its status as a prophet of almost natural truth. Conversely, it is understood as a discursive practice of international politics.⁷² Geographical knowledge is discursively produced and constitutes and legitimises spatial orders. The study of geopolitics in discursive terms, therefore, is the study of the socio-cultural resources and rules by which geographies of international politics get written.⁷³ Something can only arise and be perceived as existing if it is delimited from something else and constructed as existing at all. Boundaries are the basis of the structure of the social and natural environment.⁷⁴ Against this background, differentiation and normalisation between the 'own' and the 'other' is a crucial moment in geopolitical practice. The aim of critical geopolitics is not only to deal critically with classical geopolitics but also, and above all, thinking in dichotomies, binary demarcations and differences must be countered with (self)critical thinking that recognises the heterogeneity, diversity and the complexity of the 'other'.⁷⁵ The central question of critical geopolitics is accordingly how geopolitical worldviews are linguistically constructed in the discourse of the actors, how new political spaces are designed in the form of geographical regionalisation and delimitations and how these discursive concepts then develop their dynamics in the political arena. Critical geopolitics shows how political actors promote their territorial-political interests with the means of geopolitical argumentation, with a geographical context and separation rhetoric to ensure its supposed coherence and correctness. Geopolitical constructions including their cartographic representations are not perceived as objective entities, but rather as subjectively constructed for political purposes. In the sense of a constructivist ontology, deconstructivist approaches do not understand Political Geography and especially geopolitics as an objective description of the world, but rather assume that certain concepts of order and power relations are (re-)produced with geographical descriptions.⁷⁶ Inevitably, the critical geopolitics research approach thus thematises the relationship between geography, politics and power. Methodically, critical geopolitics is based on Foucault's archaeology

and genealogy as well as on interpretative text-analytical methods of literature and linguistics. Discourse analysis is used to formulate research questions, the deconstructivist geopolitical discourses. As can be seen from the brief sketch of post-structuralist geography, such research programs are compatible, in fact only possible if the assumptions of constructivism are supported.⁷⁷ Similar research questions, such as in critical geopolitics, are also investigated and justify recourse to social constructivist premises. From the previous explanations of the underlying theoretical understanding, it becomes apparent that constructivist approaches necessarily aim at texts, symbols, linguistic utterances and representations, and the mediation and representation of the events, therefore, move ahead of the events themselves.⁷⁸ Which narrative ultimately prevails, also because of the means used, is a question of connectivity, which ultimately enables assertiveness. With the discursive context of reality, it becomes clear that objective realities are only valid with reservations. Because the mediation and representation of whatever kind of space and categorisation are based on narratives, a multitude of narratives result from the discursive contextuality.⁷⁹ Which narrative version prevails after all is closely related to the question of power. However, this power is not tied to individual actors but rather is located in the discourse itself. Discourses allow certain representations and language acts and prevent others. A complete break out of discursive contexts is not possible, but individual statements can gradually change the discourse. It is essential, however, that actors cannot make the decision for or against a speech act in the discourse based on a generally valid and thus objective reality, but only in the context of discursive contexts and interpretations. Moreover, actors do not influence how the speech acts performed are received in the discourse.

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Critique of the postmodern constructivist understanding of critical geopolitics

The approach of critical geopolitics is not free from antinomies, discrepancies and inconsistencies. The problems range from fundamental, ontological objections to specific aspects of methodological implementation in empirical research. The subjective approach of critical geopolitics, due to the underlying postmodern ontology, does not want to claim absolute truth. The resulting potentially infinite possibilities of interpreting texts give the reader a wealth of options and

ideas but make it difficult to get an overview of problem areas and areas of knowledge. At long last, the only thing left to the reader is the certainty of reading just one more 'story'.⁸⁰ For a postmodern political science or geography, there remains the danger of sinking into insignificance due to obscurity and uselessness. The criticism of the reduction of multiplicity and the exclusion of the different⁸¹ also gives cause for complaint. The reduction should certainly not be accepted without reflection, but without a reduction in complexity, many aspects are hardly understandable, especially from the sometimes difficult to understand international relations.⁸²

A lack of alternatives, which can hardly be developed from internal logic, weakens the approach, at least for practical interest. Into the bargain, critical geopolitics is not concerned with factual criticism in such a deconstruction. Their goal is not the supposedly better reformulation of such a concept.⁸³ But still vibrating in the deconstruction, geopolitical models always include an implicit criticism that suggests an 'other' and has possibly found a better answer. An image of supposed objectivity emerges, especially through the reflexive use and recognition of one's subjective position. This positioning creates the impression of a superordinate meta-level with a prevalent perspective, which leads to a seemingly superior point of view.⁸⁴ Despite all the criticism of the discourses and the disclosure of hidden backgrounds and strategies, the approach remains just another discourse. A radical breakaway from given structures must remain an illusion. But the multitude of competing points of view also lead to criticism. To understand subjective spatial concepts and conflict views in the interplay of subjective interests and socio-political structures,⁸⁵ one would have to gain an insight into the thinking of the actors. This is not only denied to outsiders, but also the agent himself in the case of unconscious actions. Another point of criticism that critical geopolitics is often accused of is its focus on elites. The work of statesmen, politicians or influential personalities would be the focus.⁸⁶ However, with the expansion of the work in the area of critical geopolitics, this point of view can no longer be maintained without further ado. The origins of the critical geopolitics program, which undoubtedly mainly relate to the deconstruction of rulership structures, have now diversified.⁸⁷ The critical geopolitics approach is criticised for its too strong focus on taking nation-states as the primary level of analysis without adequately addressing it.

Besides, critical geopolitics understands itself as a representative of postmodern or poststructuralist approaches that explicitly avoid, basically even doubt the existence of, wanting to make normative statements. But that does not rule out an emancipated critical attitude towards everyday political business. In the public discussion, which demands that science provide statements that guide action, this attitude is met with criticism. On top of that, the approach does not have a clearly defined theoretical concept, which through the reference to postmodern or poststructuralist meta-references, must be denied anyway. The increasing number of publications on Critical Geopolitics and its theoretical background suggests that the debate will continue to expand in the future. What all geopolitical approaches have in common is their dealing with space. However, the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions differ significantly. While the classic understanding of geopolitics does not question the content of space as such, but only questions its relationship to politics, alternative approaches understand geopolitics and space as negotiable. As the above has shown, critical geopolitics is not one deterministic spatial science in the traditional sense. Rather, strategic political content hidden by discourse analysis should be shown to make the background to action more transparent. Here, the classic thinking in binary categories as opposed to an approach that does not negate the respective specific differences, but accepted them. Nonetheless, it is explicitly aware that the deconstruction is merely a different, further reconstruction that only contributes to an emancipated self-understanding, but cannot deliver an objective result.

The rapprochement between classical and critical geopolitics

Every scientific discipline has some basic concepts that help us to gain our knowledge of an object that underlies all objects of this science as a node. Science investigates the world on account of such concepts and perspectives. Geopolitics, like other disciplines of social science, knows these basic concepts and has occasionally tried to explain the specific events due to their view in international geopolitics.⁸⁸ Geopolitics has been outlawed since 1945 and neglected by the disciplines of international relations, political science and political geography.⁸⁹ Political scientists understand the term geopolitics as an analysis of political-economic phenomena,⁹⁰ which focuses on geographical causal factors and focuses on violent power politics and military-geostrategic interests.⁹¹

Concerning tectonic shifts in geopolitical structures of world politics and the consequent conflict-laden events following the East-West conflict, it is not only the end of geopolitical thinking that has come in geostrategic categories, but also the end of history.⁹² Against this background, the geopolitical conflicts on international politics are not completed, and political science and international relations can no longer claim or find any meaningful solutions.⁹³ At this time, it seems that the geopolitical approach as an alternative should be able to grasp the new world order, explain increasingly globalised world politics and address change processes of new geopolitical spatial structures when it comes to geopolitical conflicts in the global to theoretically get a grip on the scale because of its complexity and intertwining by the international relations and political science. Accordingly, political conflicts are rarely explained successfully on a disciplinary basis. Accordingly, an increasing dialogue between international relations and geopolitics is indispensable.

In this context, classical and critical geopolitics is at the centre of the discussion. Classical geopolitics is based on objective political reality and existing power structures and, on a theoretical level, complements the consideration of geographical factors and circumstances to explain the evolution and action of states in formulating their foreign policy.⁹⁴ In the face of this, classical geopolitics sought recurring geographic patterns in world politics. In this way, the contrast between land and sea crystallised and the question of which of these two spaces was more appropriate opened up the opportunity for global power projection. Global power and dominance would therefore depend on whether a country was positioned as a naval or a land power. Thus, the global rivalry between the land and sea powers forms a basic pattern of geopolitical thinking. To summarise, in classical geopolitics, thinking in global power structure occupies a crucial position whereby the domination of either the land or the sea is seen as a prerequisite for the exercise of global power. In doing so, it works in a reductionist, simplifying way, suppressing, simplifying and thus creating controllable geopolitical abstracts.⁹⁵

In a postmodernist way, critical geopolitics criticises the scientific-theoretical currents of classical geopolitics and questions their basic statements, which from a positivist point of view are indispensable for science. In this way, the main theorists of

critical geopolitics advocate a new kind of Enlightenment that links itself to a new understanding of science through the deconstruction of established science. Critical geopolitics turns the traditional understanding of geopolitics upside down. It assumes that the reality of world politics can no longer be explained from a naturalistic, objective given space and that space is by no means an objectively predetermined quantity for humans, in which the political space of the world of defined reality is unfolded⁹⁶ They postulate that space is constituted in a discursive practice through both human actions and the emancipatory potential of communication. In this sense, they reject the naturalistic concept of space and the resulting processes of objectifying cognition.⁹⁷

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In contrast to classical geopolitics, critical geopolitics is based on the idea that objective reality does not exist outside and independently of human consciousness.⁹⁸ Instead, critical geopolitics looks at reality from the subjective point of view of the viewer. From this perspective, the reality consists of plurality and diversity, which are constituted in different cultural, social and political spaces in manifold constructions and forms of organisation.⁹⁹ This starts from the view that space is constituted from a constructivist point of view as a social-cultural and political construction through linguistic mediation in specific discourses.¹⁰⁰ According to Foucault's philosophy, critical geopolitics tends to define geopolitics as a discursive process from a constructivist point of view, in that geopolitical world views and spatial constructions are not constituted by space, but instead as the result of a discursive practice unfolded through both linguistic mediation and socio-cultural and political actions of space, power and knowledge.¹⁰¹ Although critical geopolitics distinguishes itself from classical approaches to geopolitics and, according to its understanding of science, excludes space and its unfolding as an objective predetermined category in political reality.¹⁰²

Since this approach avoids all scientific knowledge of the political reality in the sense of a deconstructivist analysis, its position, and the resulting theoretical and methodological basis, remains controversial.¹⁰³ Furthermore, the basic premises of critical geopolitics, which involve the discovery of territorial power discourses and power relations are considered contradictory in neighbouring sciences. Geopolitics has dealt with the analysis of spatial power relations from the outset

about its theoretical starting point, while critical geopolitics questions the ontological premises of classical geopolitics and is characterised by a postmodern discourse.¹⁰⁴

However, classical and critical geopolitics are different in most respects. On the one hand, the classical approach takes on a decisive position with spatial thinking in global spaces of power and thus deserves attention as a contribution to international relations and foreign policy.¹⁰⁵ On the other hand, the critical viewpoint criticises the classical approach. According to the classical approach, the geographical position of a country affects its foreign policy. Classical geopolitics refers to its ontology and epistemology to a modernist aspect.¹⁰⁶ In contrast, critical geopolitics is based on a postmodern view.¹⁰⁷ The modernist ontological perspective of classical geopolitics regards spatial reality as an objective reality in the exterior that differs from the observer. In contrast, critical geopolitics is based on a subjective spatial-political reality.¹⁰⁸ From this context, however, it also follows that the political reality for description and analysis requires a theoretical perspective which allows for a greater technical ability and plausibility of the scientific-theoretical and fundamental maxims of geopolitics in international relations and foreign policy.¹⁰⁹ The question, therefore, arises as to what extent the perspectives of classical or critical geopolitics are suitable for describing world geopolitical structures and analysing the geography of world politics, and what the indications are for a new geopolitical approach. That is why a constructivist geopolitics theme is discussed here, and thus the questions of power, space and politics in the international system of states are conceived. For these purposes, both approaches are considered as a possible step to increase the technical ability of the basic science-theoretical knowledge of geopolitics. In this sense, political reality emerges from a combination of objective and subjective dimensions. Therefore, both approaches can complement each other in their theoretical and methodological foundations.

Towards a new concept of constructivist geopolitics

As early as the 1970s, some philosophers tried to emancipate science from normatively binding methods of scientific thinking. Their philosophical approach should free people from the tyranny of philosophical obscurants and abstract concepts such as truth, reality or objectivity. They emphasised that these abstractions can only be logically and comprehensibly derived if their contingency is integrated into the

original premises.¹¹⁰ True insights are thus degraded to a contextual decision that is always possible differently. The contingency of truths can be transferred to other levels of social action. Therefore, space as an absolutist category seems incompatible with postmodern theoretical approaches.

From this perspective, space, as an unchangeable leading category, must be critically questioned and rather presented as a socio-historical phenomenon. Boundaries that are taken for granted and other apparent facts are problematised. Postmodern approaches claim to deconstruct concepts and try to reflect on the contexts of power through discourse analysis to gain a new perspective on international politics. In doing so, not only are the drawing of boundaries, theoretical or ontological basic assumptions of other orientations or disciplines critically questioned, but one's hypotheses and embedding of power is also critically and reflexively accompanied.¹¹¹ This multidimensionality and openness can also be found in the analytical understanding of postmodern approaches. Such an understanding of postmodernism by John Gerard Ruggie and Alexander Wendt is represented¹¹² and after which there is ultimately a describable reality. Denying more radical views although not the existence of a reality per se, they do not regard its comprehensibility as immediately given, but only through the detour of language. Reality is always discursive reality. The real space in the world is the consciousness of the actors. All knowledge is therefore always relative, shaped by inevitable historicity, contextuality and contingency. While positivist approaches start from the possibility of objective knowledge that reveals seemingly irrefutable truths, the change to constructivist approaches brings about a change of perspective in the sciences.¹¹³ The construction and use of knowledge, of apparent, or at least temporary truth, move to the centre of scientific investigation. This makes these approaches interesting for the analysis of spatial order patterns. Geopolitics in particular is branded by the ideologically motivated use of objective facts, also apart from various ontological basic assumptions. On the other hand, post-positivist approaches are more radical in their assumptions and take neither ideas nor interests as given a priori. Because if there can be no objective knowledge, then this knowledge, which cannot be objective either, inevitably leads to aporia. Avoiding this infinite circularity and avoiding the need for an imperative subjunctive can only be successful if the constructivism debate does not focus on the concept of reality, but rather focuses on

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the knowledge, the perception of reality by the subject, the discursive production as well as the relationship between the subject of knowledge and the object of knowledge. Almost inevitable for a postmodern understanding of constructivism¹¹⁴ is the preoccupation with language as a central element in assigning meaning to social constructions.¹¹⁵ Ideal factors that are at the centre of a constructivist ontology are linguistic constructions, which explains the frequent recourse of constructivist approaches to discourse-analytical procedures.¹¹⁶ Linguistic statements are part of discourses and the analysis of linguistic representations therefore often refers to the level of discourse. Since discourses themselves only appear as producers of linguistic utterances, the post-positivist variant of constructivism can also be understood as constructivism focusing on language or as discursive constructivism. Language is not tied back to reality as such; rather, it is about discourses that appear as producers of this reality.¹¹⁷ This also means that language or the discourse with all the internal logic and mechanisms is the prison that determines the ultimate analysis. However, this also raises the question of which version of reality is understood as a linguistic-social construct that ultimately prevails and how this happens.

Basic ontological premises

In the geopolitical context, the global reference level is of crucial importance. The world thus turns out to be a primary geopolitical framework for action and orientation. Geopolitics helps us to understand global politics on a global level.¹¹⁸ Geography as a science that deals with the investigation of the interrelation of social and political relations and space is at the centre of its research subject on the three levels of human, space and interaction. Thus, geography is the material-ecological and social structures in which the identity of the actor is constituted. In geography, interaction couples space and man into a composite entity, because without these interactions effects no spatial forms and constructions are designed. The people, their space, and the interaction between them are situated in a certain place, which through the personalisation of the interaction causes the peculiarity of the space so that the constituted social identity in one space is different from another space. The population is assigned to states and these states identify themselves with a territory in which the views and beliefs of their population are determined.¹¹⁹ In other words, one belongs to a territorially determined community in which to live and

experience special but shared visions of meaning from a place in the world and the global system. This spatial identification of a community that belongs to a particular territory that is linked to a particular culture can be understood as origin and identity. People are socialised in different territorial sections, how they live, how they understand the information they receive and how they communicate through geographically specific institutions. With the turn to space and currently, the identity of a country is shaped. Rather, the identity of a country is shaped in its unique space, interpreted in its time by dominant and ruling institutions.¹²⁰

However, the new emerging transnational actors relativise the thesis of the meaning of territorial states or nation-states. Rather, in the process of globalisation and networking, nation-states are being sealed off across their borders.¹²¹ On the other hand, the objection is raised that states are in any case dependent on their external framework conditions and that the sovereignty of nation-states is not replaced in the process of globalisation, but that only the borders of nation-states have been exceeded. In this line, political-economic and social interactions have been located only in a transnational space.¹²² Starting from the view that space could also be understood as a container in which state and society act.¹²³ States have not been abolished by the process of interdependence and transnationality, but have been placed next to the space of nation-states in another space of transnationality.¹²⁴ Against this background, the territorial states and their political spaces and the spatial images and spatial concepts resulting from them as the object of political science as well as geopolitics are still in the centre. Moreover, when spatial thinking is taken into account, there are also transnational spaces in addition to nation-state spaces.¹²⁵

Space and dealing with it should, therefore, be regarded as a resource of political thought. Insofar as space is of interest as a component of geopolitical or political thinking, it is not about the space itself, but about how it is perceived on a conceptual level and included in the thinking. In this respect, space forms the categorical frame of reference to which scientific thinking and action have an explanatory-theoretical function. Space is thus seen as a factor determining policy. Here it is possible to distinguish between the possibilistic and the geo-deterministic approach. However, this can be differentiating forms, as far as once a geopolitical determinism is represented, which points to classical geopolitics. Classical determinists studied the influence of the

natural and objective space as determinant factors on the behaviour of political actors. Spatial relations are subject to a direct influence on politics, in which a biological comprehension of space revealed itself. From this one can distinguish a possibilistic point of view, which does not consider space as an objectively given spatial structure but considers it as a variable factor that can influence political reality. It emphasises that man is part of nature, but he can dominate nature through his wisdom, skill and technology. In the possibilistic school, the effects of social law, rather than natural law, on human habits play an important role.¹²⁶ With his dependence on nature, man becomes less and he remains aware that nature limits his possibilities. From the possibilistic point of view, the politics of a state can be arranged according to geographical categories. From the point of view of constructivist geopolitics, different conceptions of space and spatiality in Political Geography can be interpreted. The spatial conceptions diverge depending on the perception of spatial relations. In this way, a different subjective perception of the objective space takes place. In this sense, spatial images reveal a high degree of dynamic in the production of spaces, which is a constant constitutive element of the permanent production and reconstruction of the social. However, this is not only dependent on subjective considerations, but also the objective-material spatial structure.

The identity construction of each state is constituted in its geographical space. Into the bargain, the states are geospatial coverage of their national geography on the international stage. Space represents a social-cultural difference that shows us how one particular group identity is constituted in comparison to another group identity, and how different geographical landscapes reflect different identities. Space represents the extensive interaction contexts that provide the background for the constitution of different identities. Accordingly, the politico-spatial actors pursue the appropriate interests that correspond to their identity construction and result from their geographical space. It should be noted that the different political actions based on different cultural geographies are a series of actions that are taken by political actors in pursuit of their interests concerning the geopolitical space for power. States form their spatial identity with other states with three levels of scale at local, regional and global levels. How a country orients itself to the world¹²⁷ is its spatial identity or geopolitical mental maps. In this sense, geopolitical visions form a basis for the

understanding of world politics. They point to the geopolitical situation of a state in which its political space and the resulting structure of interests are recognisable. Based on these geopolitical maxims, a state orients its actions in its spatial relationship structures. This spatial identity presents the geopolitical actions not only of a state but also the actions of its population.

From this perspective, the constructivist geopolitics in this essay is an explanatory approach to the action of states in the context of space and power on a global scale in international politics. From this theory-oriented perspective, not only the idealistic material structures but also the spatial structure of states on the national-international level is examined. I assume that political reality has not only the social but also the spatial dimension. Rather, the identity and political action of states are primarily constituted in space and then constituted in social interaction processes. Each state is a spatial construction with different-specific characteristics compared to other states.

Turning to the constructivist geopolitics, geopolitical thinking can be shown on the one hand with 'spatiality', namely the influence of space on politics, and on the other hand in terms of 'temporality', including historical developments in spatial policy action and thought systematically reflects it. It becomes clear that the constructivist geopolitics and the investigation of the influence of space-relevant categories in a temporal framework are concerned with the geopolitical structures and the spatial actions of the political actors. Against this background, I assume two premises: First, the spatial factors or the geographic criteria as a basic pattern, and second the historical developments or experiences as temporal basic patterns have a decisive effect on shaping the geopolitical perspective of a state, and geopolitical world structure. Constructivist geopolitics is based on the structural view of the analysis of international politics. The inevitable structure of international politics has been generated by the interaction of actors, and the actors' actions are embedded in this structure and restricted. Constructivist geopolitics emphasises that anarchy derives from the distribution of power on the one hand and the condition of the individual dominant, shared ideas on the other hand. The political reality is characterised by the world order in which the political actor behaves, power-political competition and the distribution of power. The geopolitical world order and the resulting power competition have an important significance for the development of the foreign policy of

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a state and are regarded as a fundamental framework for the action of foreign policy actors in their spatial relationship structures. In contrast to the classical and critical geopolitical approach, which considers political reality or spatial-political processes either as objective spatial structures or as the result of subjective social structures, they are not a fixed concept and are changed by political actors. I put forward the thesis: Although the global political reality is usually shaped by certain political actors and changeable, they do not change so fast and have a relatively constant character. Regarding the geopolitical world order, I assume that the change in the spatial realities of world politics is occurring gradually and within the constraints of a long historical period called the geopolitical world order.

From this point of view, it is taken into account that power factor and power politics continue to play crucial roles in geopolitics in current international relations. Similarly, Werner Link argues that, after the end of the East-West conflict, world politics was determined by the geopolitical tensions between hegemony and power balance, which proved to be the basic pattern of contemporary geopolitics.¹²⁸ International current geopolitics results from power politics, countervailing power and power-economic competitions at the regional level, in which regional coalitions and the integration of nation-states play a significant role¹²⁹. It should be pointed out that the states are regarded as the main actors in international politics and that their foreign policy activities are embedded in the national-international levels. This means that the state, as a political actor, once constituted, on a national scale, its identity and interest structure and then in the pursuit of its objectives on an international scale. The structure of international politics is repeatedly produced and changed by the actions of states. From a theoretical perspective, both the idealistic foundations of political action and the material-spatial conditions can be considered to explain the construction of reality in geopolitical analysis and Political Geography.

Epistemological-methodological basics

Constructivist geopolitics assumes that our perceptions and insights about the world are constructed. Moreover, this world outside of our perceptions is constituted in a spatial dimension. From this perspective, the geopolitical world is, on one hand, opened up by the nature of a social-political construction - such as language, symbols and shared

ideas - and, on the other hand, the epistemology of constructivist geopolitics is concerned with how this social-political construction is constituted in a spatial construction. In other words, the constructivist view in geopolitics in knowledge production is how states act in international geopolitics through both experience and observation based on the scientific explanatory model of a causal of intersubjective shared ideas, which are based on the reconstruction of geopolitical reality from the discursive-historical processes in a constitutive understanding perspective. Constructivist geopolitics are the two explanatory and understanding perspectives for the analysis of the world geopolitical structure and the foreign policy action of the states in an epistemological viewpoint and focus on the geopolitical actions of political actors on the international scale, which as reality constructions of individual preferences, social rules and spatial relations are derived and constituted. From what has been said, a methodological spectrum of positivist-constructivist methods are to be undertaken. At the same time, the object of investigation and the question of geopolitics should be geared to a combination of quantitative-qualitative approaches, thereby establishing the specific research results and establishing validity about geopolitics.

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Conclusion

In summary, one of the most important characteristics of theory formation in Geopolitics is its close interaction with the neighbouring discipline of international relations, which, in line with its concepts and perspectives, can be brought about again in Geopolitics. It should be noted, although the two disciplines examine the same object of knowledge, international relations is challenged by geopolitics because of its space oblivion 'Raumvergessenheit'. It was shown how the action of states on spatial constructions in geopolitical models has been constituted. It, therefore, presents a possibility that overcomes the problematic separation between geopolitics and international relations through constructivist geopolitics. The Constructivist geopolitics in political geography is characterised by the fact that it focuses on the role and meaning and production of spaces for the production of political realities. Constructivist geopolitics thus makes an important contribution to the interdisciplinary debate between political geography and international relations. In this article, I have taken a position midway between rationalistic-classical geopolitics and post-modern

approaches - critical geopolitics from the perspective of constructivist geopolitics to combine the positivistic and poststructuralist approaches in Political Geography and to bridge these two perspectives with a scientific theory to build. I developed this perspective based on a systematic structure and tried to explain world politics from the structure of the international system as the basis for the actions of political actors. The world politics and the actions of political actors can be understood not only in the context of the objective but also on the basis of the subjective space.



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*Towards a New
Concept of
Constructivist
Geopolitics*

Trump and the Image of the United States in Latin America

Michael Haman, Milan Školník

In our research, we focus on the image of the United States in Latin America. We use mainly data from Latinobarómetro, and we analyse Obama's last year and Trump's first year in the presidency in 18 countries in Latin America. We use logistic regression to reach conclusions. We also analyse Trump's tweets to see his Twitter rhetoric. We find that Trump's election has strongly worsened the image of the United States in the public opinion of Latin America. However, we find that people that believe more in democracy, the free market and national political institutions are more likely to have a positive opinion of the United States. Also, we find that the more left-wing citizens are, the more likely they have a bad opinion of the United States. This article contributes to the theory of trust and research on the public opinion across nations. Also, this article offers insights into the topical research agenda concerning the influence of political ideology on public opinion.

Keywords: Trump, Latin America, anti-Americanism, public opinion, United States

'I will build a great wall - and no one builds walls better than me, believe me - and I will build them very inexpensively. I will make a great wall on our southern border, and I will make Mexico pay for that wall. Mark my words', Donald Trump said in his speech that launched his presidential campaign in 2015¹. His victory was undoubtedly a major event not only

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for US foreign policy but also for the perception of the United States as a whole nation abroad. In particular, Trump's discourse directed at the neighbouring Latin American country and at the Latin American immigrants who cross the US-Mexican border might have caused a decline in perceiving a US positive image not only amongst Mexicans but amongst citizens in other Latin American countries. A positive image is important for any country. If people from abroad perceive the state positively, they will tend to trade with it, visit it as tourists and above all, they will look up to it, which is extremely important in the case of a superpower that has the ambition to influence world events.

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We use data from public opinion polls that provide Latinobarómetro² for 2016 and 2017. We explore the impact of Donald Trump's election on the perception of the United States among Latin American people. Our research interest is to find out what variables are significant in explaining the opinion of the United States. We compare how Obama's administration was perceived amongst Americans compared to Trump's administration. The study does not only attempt to offer descriptive tables, but we use regression models to comprehensively explain the perception of the United States as a nation across Latin America and time.

We assume a worse opinion of the United States in Mexico following Trump's discourse related to constructing the Wall bordering Mexico, as well as his speeches and actions against Venezuela, Peru and other countries in Latin America such as Colombia that has been an ally of the United States in the war on drugs. We divided the article into four sections. First, we present a theory from the existing research and formulate hypotheses. In the second part, we introduce Trump's rhetoric addressing Latin America, as shown in his tweets, and the reaction of Latin American presidents. We also offer a descriptive statistic from opinion polls. While it is possible to see the changes in the opinion of the United States in descriptive tables, it is not possible to verify hypotheses while controlling other variables. Therefore, in the third section, we discuss methodology and present dependent, independent and control variables. In the last part, we interpret the results.

This article is a contribution to a literature that examines the opinions and views of nations about other nations^{3,4,5,6,7,8,9}. More specifically, this article focuses on the opinion of other nations about the United States^{10,11,12}. This discussion about Trump's policies and influence in politics is topical^{13,14,15,16} and this paper contributes to it.

Theory and hypotheses

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1/2021 We apply the concept of anti-Americanism and the theory of international trust to determine how the Latin American public opinion of the United States has changed with the election of Donald Trump as president.

We use the concept of anti-Americanism in the context of a negative opinion of the United States amongst the Latin American masses. Katzenstein and Keohane¹⁷ define it as a 'psychological tendency to hold negative views of the United States and of American society in general'. Anti-Americanism stems mainly from the special position of the United States in world affairs^{18,19}. The hegemonic aspirations of the world power, whether past or present, are a key factor in the negative view of the United States. In recent years, researchers have used multivariate analyses to study anti-Americanism. We also apply this innovative approach in this paper to contribute to this methodological debate on the subject^{20,21,22,23}.

It is not clear that anti-Americanism is the same as the general opinion of the United States. Beyer and Liebe²⁴ called it a shortcoming in operationalisation when researchers use anti-Americanism and public opinion interchangeably. Beyer and Liebe²⁵ find that the opinion of the United States is more a critique of US foreign policy. The foreign opinions of the United States are more influenced by the US policy than the opinions of Americans. Therefore, the opinion of Americans should be a better measure of anti-Americanism. However, the operationalisation of the opinion of the United States as anti-Americanism is a common practice in research^{26,27,28}. We proceed with caution and accept that we do not try to explain anti-Americanism among Latin American citizens, but merely their opinion of the United States that is more likely to correspond to US officials and their foreign policy. We include Donald Trump as an independent variable. However, due to the close relation of the anti-Americanism with the opinion of the United States, we use independent variables and control variables that use similar anti-Americanism research to explain an opinion of the United States.

However, anti-Americanism is not the only concept that we use with Latin American public opinion polls. We also include the theory of trust. The opinion is directly related to trust. It is not possible to build lasting bonds and strive for good relations without a positive opinion based on trust. The United States has experienced increased

mistrust, for example, in the context of the war in Iraq. Unfound weapons of mass destruction have caused great distrust among the citizens of foreign countries. Some of them have seen ulterior motives in the US foreign policy, and this fact undoubtedly has influenced the very view of the US and has greatly worsened it²⁹. Even though opinion and trust are not the same, they are very closely related. The theory of trust is a relatively popular theoretical approach among academics dealing with international relations. Researchers have used this theoretical framework in studies on international economic relations, and they have tried to explain how trust between business partners can be reflected in trade^{30,31,32,33}.

*Image of
the United States
in Latin America*

Brewer and his colleagues consider general trust in other nations as a key component of public opinion that shapes views on foreign or world affairs^{34,35,36}. They define trust in other nations and international trust as: 'generalized belief about whether most foreign countries behave in accordance with normative expectations regarding the conduct of nations'³⁷.

We consider the view of the United States as closely related to the opinion of the leadership of this country. It is the presidential system of government, as well as in Latin America, where the president is the head of government and the head of state. His actions and speeches articulate the views and demands of the American public. We assume that Trump's negative discourse was reflected in the opinion of the United States amongst the Latin American public.

H1: A Latin American citizen is more likely to have a worse opinion of the United States during Trump's first year in the office than in the last year of Obama's term.

Political ideology

Political ideology is very important when explaining the actions of citizens. They often follow suit of the political leaders of their favourite party and accept their opinions³⁸. For example, conservative leaders regularly pursue an isolationist discourse. Therefore, sympathisers of conservatism as an ideological doctrine are more sceptical in trusting other nations. On the contrary are cases of liberal parties and their supporters³⁹.

In the context of Latin America, it is crucial to distinguish where left-wing and right-wing regimes prevail. The United States, especially

through its political and economic system, can be perceived as right-wing, especially by socialist countries such as Cuba and Venezuela. In addition, historically, the United States has either supported right-wing regimes or tried to remove left-wing leaders. In the past, the United States argued that they were exporting democracy and trying to prevent the onset of undemocratic communist regimes. The United States still presents itself as a democracy by which others can be inspired.

Left-wing leaders in countries are also driving the anti-capitalist discourse towards the United States, and this affects the supporters of their left-wing parties. The democracy and business practices of the United States is one of the dimensions of anti-Americanism⁴⁰. Beyer and Liebe⁴¹, as part of their research on anti-Americanism in four European countries, include the political spectrum, democracy and market economy as variables to explain anti-Americanism.

H2a: The more left-wing a Latin American citizen, the worse opinion they have of the United States.

H2b: A Latin American citizen believing in democracy is more likely to have a better opinion of the United States.

H2c: A Latin American citizen believing in a free market is more likely to have a better opinion of the United States.

Interpersonal trust

People use their beliefs about other people and human nature to make decisions and create opinions in different situations and about a range of subjects⁴². Kaltenthaler and Miller⁴³ find that interpersonal trust is an important factor in shaping a positive attitude and promoting free trade agreements. In general, trust between people and groups contributes to positive attitudes⁴⁴. The social trust influences a citizen's opinion on world affairs⁴⁵. Citizens trusting others trust more nations than people that regard their fellow citizens as untrustworthy⁴⁶. From the afore-mentioned theories, we expect that respondents that do not trust their fellow citizens are more likely to distrust the United States. Therefore, they would not have a positive opinion of the United States.

H3: A Latin American citizen trusting his fellow citizens (interpersonal trust) is more likely to have a better opinion of the United States.

Political trust

Similar to social trust, people use political trust as an information shortcut for creating an opinion on a wide range of policy issues^{47,48}. Belief in government helps explain the opinion of citizens about a number of foreign policy issues^{49,50}. In addition, Brewer⁵¹ finds that citizens with higher trust in the national government have even greater trust in other nations. We expect that lower trust in national political institutions, which in our case expresses political trust, leads to less trust in other countries and our case, lower trust in the United States, and thus a worse opinion of the United States.

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H4: The less trust a Latin American citizen has in national political institutions, the worse the opinion they have of the United States.

Trump's rhetoric towards Latin America and reactions of Latin American leaders

'When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. They're sending us not the right people. It's coming from more than Mexico. It's coming from all over South and Latin America. And it's got to stop, and it's got to stop fast.' These are probably the most offensive passages from Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement Speech, referring not only to Mexicans but also to Latin Americans in general⁵².

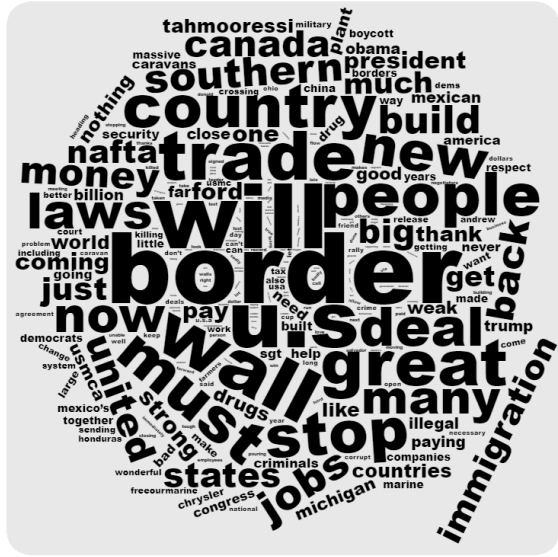
Figure 1 shows Trump's tweets that included keyword Mexico from 2014 to March 2019. It is possible to see that keywords such as 'wall', 'stop', 'pay' and 'illegal' are key in Trump's rhetoric. These keywords are not positive and have an impact on Mexican's opinion of Trump.

We present the results of opinion polls in a comparative perspective. Also, we summarise the reactions of presidents in Latin America to the election of Donald Trump and his subsequent statements and speeches. We focus on the presidents, because presidents are heads of states and the most important office in Latin American countries, and their discourse could influence their citizens.

The overwhelming majority of citizens in Latin American countries indicated worse opinions on the United States with the arrival of Trump. However, it was only a few percent for some countries. The biggest deterioration of opinion was expected, and was, from Mexico.

Figure 1. Word cloud of Trump's tweets

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Source: Twitter, a figure created by authors

Therefore, we dedicate a larger part of this chapter to Mexico than to other countries.

Unfortunately, Latinobarómetro does not offer data about the evaluation of the previous US presidents. Nevertheless, the Pew Research Center offers these data from previous years in the case of Mexico. Figure 2 shows confidence in the US President and the opinion of the United States in Mexico. In the case of George W. Bush at the end of his term, only 16 percent of Mexicans had confidence in him. This is not surprising, because citizens of many other countries had low confidence in Bush's administration. War in Iraq and unfound weapons of mass destruction had their toll all over the world⁵³. The confidence in the US presidency was not recovered until Obama's arrival. Barrack Obama convinced Latin Americans with the slogan 'Yes We Can'. After his election, the confidence in the US President raised from 16 percent under Bush to 55 percent. This figure was his peak, during his presidency around 40 percent Latin Americans had confidence in him, and it rose to 49 percent at the end of his presidency. There was a radical shift with Trump's administration, and the confidence in it amongst Mexicans fell to only 5 percent. Moreover, only 30 percent of Mexicans had a favourable view of the United States in 2017. Twice the number of Mexicans had a favourable view of the United States under Obama.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics - the opinion of the United States and the evaluation of Trump

Country	Good opinion		Bad opinion		Evaluation of Trump		
	2017	2016	2017	2016	Mean	Std. Deviation	Missinga
Argentina	48.5	54.1	41.1	30.1	2.17	2.48	14.9
Bolivia	47.2	55.6	42.1	27.1	2.89	2.67	28.5
Brazil	67.1	74.4	17.4	12.5	3.31	2.97	19.3
Chile	67.4	72.7	15.1	17.5	1.95	2.34	12.3
Colombia	78.6	76.8	17	15.9	3.32	2.64	16.2
Costa Rica	70.1	76.4	25.4	14.2	2.32	2.76	12.3
Dominican Rep.	83.5	87.4	11.4	7.2	2.55	3.22	8
Ecuador	82.4	79.4	13.2	12.8	3.1	2.54	10.4
El Salvador	80.1	83.3	16	9	2.69	2.49	11.4
Guatemala	67	75.8	25.9	18.2	2.43	3.04	22.6
Honduras	80.4	85.5	14.9	8	2.21	2.99	14.6
Mexico	47.9	75.7	51.6	14.6	1.64	2.42	7.3
Nicaragua	68.1	70.6	23.5	11.9	1.97	2.91	17.7
Panama	74.9	80.4	16.9	9.4	3.35	3.17	12.6
Paraguay	63	77.8	10.5	6.4	4.08	2.51	34.8
Peru	69.3	75	22.3	10.6	3.68	2.73	29
Uruguay	53.8	63.1	34.4	19.8	1.67	2.31	10.5
Venezuela	59.4	64.9	35.7	30.3	3.61	3.03	10.1

Image of the United States in Latin America

Opinion in percentage; Evaluation - 0 the worst, 10 the best

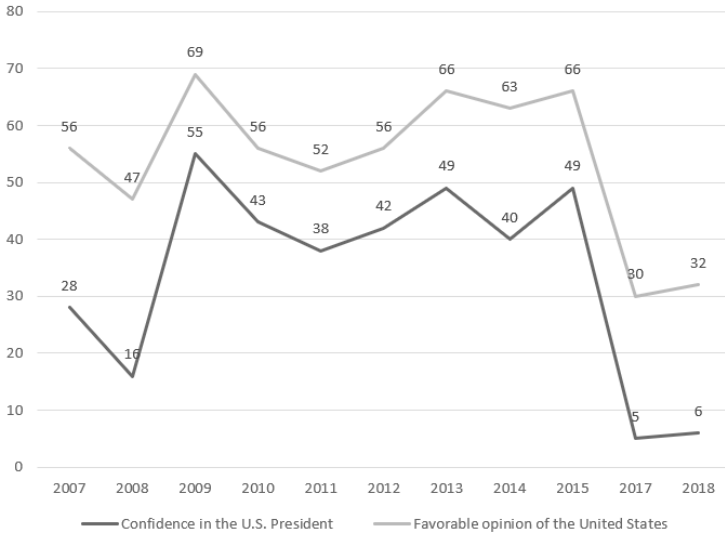
a percentage - No sabe (Do not know), No responde (do not respond), No conoce (do not know Trump)

Source: Latinobarómetro

Figure 2 clearly shows the correlation between the confidence in the US President and opinion of the United States. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.949 for these two variables. Therefore, the confidence in the US Presidents is strongly connected to the general view of the United States. In explaining foreign views of the United States, the US President is a key variable.

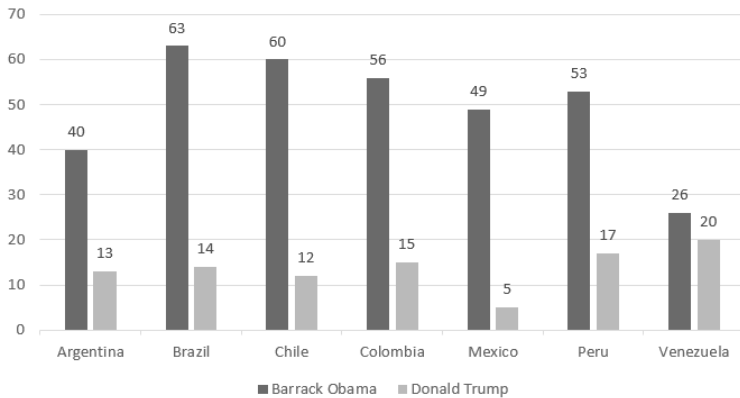
Figure 3 shows that in all countries the confidence in the US President fell under Trump's administration. Mexicans had the lowest

Figure 2. Mexico – confidence in the US President and the opinion of the United States



Source: Pew Research Center^{54,55}

Figure 3. Seven Latin American countries – confidence in the US president



Source: Pew Research Center⁵⁶; the survey was not conducted in 2016; data are from the following years: Obama – 2015 (Colombia 2014); Trump – 2017

confidence in Trump with only 5 percent. Venezuelans had the greatest confidence in Trump, and it was only 20 percent. Venezuela is also the only country that had low confidence also in Obama. Citizens of other countries had dramatically less confidence in Trump than in Obama. Three times as many people had confidence in Obama than in Trump in Argentina and Peru. In Brazil and Colombia, it was

almost four times as many citizens, and in Chile five times as many citizens.

Mexico was most affected by Trump's speeches. 'Build the Wall' was one of the most used slogans in Trump's presidential campaign. It was part of his policy concerning immigration from Mexico and other Latin American countries. Moreover, he said that the United States would not pay for the wall, but Mexico would pay for it. These speeches provoked a number of emotional reactions. For example, Vicente Fox, who was Mexican president between 2000 and 2006, said in the interview on Fusion in February 2016: 'I'm not going to pay for that fucking wall. He should pay for it. He's got the money' and 'This nation is going to fail if it goes into the hands of a crazy guy'. Trump visited Mexico a few months later. On August 30th, 2016, he tweeted: 'I have accepted the invitation of President Enrique Peña Nieto, of Mexico, and look very much forward to meeting him tomorrow'.⁵⁷ A day later Trump tweeted: 'Former President Vicente Fox, who is railing against my visit to Mexico today, also invited me when he apologized for using the "f bomb"'. Fox replied to him on Twitter: 'I invited you to come and apologize to all Mexicans. Stop lying! Mexico is not yours to play with, show some respect'.⁵⁸ Fox was one of the roughest critics of Trump. This meeting between Trump and Peña Nieto was held several months before he was elected. Trump tweeted on August 31st, 2016 after the meeting: 'Mexico will pay for the wall - 100%'.⁵⁹ Peña Nieto reacted to this tweet on his account: 'I repeat what I told him personally, Mr. Trump: Mexico will never pay for a wall'.⁶⁰ The following month in his address at the United Nations Summit, Peña Nieto said on the subject of Trump's efforts to deport immigrants, which are primarily Mexican: 'We Mexicans firmly believe that this mestizo fusion is the future and destiny of humankind'.⁶¹ The tense relations continued after Trump was elected and became the US President.

Later, after his election, the White House announced Trump wanted to collect a 35 percent border tax from Mexican companies. This would hurt the Mexican economy because Mexico exports over 70 percent of its products to the United States.⁶² These very statements had an impact on the Mexican economy and were one of the reasons that the Mexican peso was at near an all-time low when Trump became president.⁶³

Trump issued Executive Order 13767 that mandated construction of the wall after he became president on January 25th, 2017.⁶⁴ This action

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led to hostility between him and Peña Nieto before a scheduled visit that was supposed to happen a few days later. Peña repeatedly rejected Trump's proposal about the wall before the election. On January 26th, 2017, Peña Nieto said in his video address to the nation via Twitter: 'I regret and condemn the United States' decision to continue with the construction of a wall that, for years now, far from uniting us, divides us'. Trump tweeted on the same day: 'If Mexico is unwilling to pay for the badly needed wall, then it would be better to cancel the upcoming meeting'.⁶⁵ Peña Nieto also stated on Twitter: 'Mexico doesn't believe in walls. Our country believes in bridges'.⁶⁶

There were hostilities between them before Trump assumed office. However, in his very first week in office, US-Mexican relations changed course. Undoubtedly, these Twitter and other public exchanges between the two presidents were noticed by citizens, and Trump's foreign policy towards Mexico had an impact on the low confidence in him amongst the Mexicans. Now, we recall reactions of other Latin American presidents towards Trump's policies.

Brazilian President Michel Temer said that Trump's victory 'doesn't change the relationship between the two countries in any way'.⁶⁷ However, the image of the United States amongst Brazilians worsened by 5 percent. Trump's slogans 'buy American, hire American' had less impact in Brazil than in Mexico possibly because Brazil does not have the same extensive trade agreement with the United States as Mexico does.⁶⁸

After Trump's election, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos was full of optimism, and he said: 'We celebrate the United States' democratic spirit on Election Night. We'll continue to deepen the bilateral relation with Donald Trump'.⁶⁹ Unlike the majority of countries in Latin America, the image of the United States amongst Columbians did not worsen. It is worth remembering that Colombia has long been the largest recipient of US financial aid in the Western Hemisphere, whether in the fight against drugs and drug cartels or in the reconstruction of the country related to fighting guerrilla movements.

Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski also congratulated Trump on his election. However, he commented on Trump's actions after a few months as follows: 'We are going to grab a saw and cut ... He wants to put up a wall between the United States and Latin America and make the Mexicans pay for it. Isn't that too much?'.⁷⁰ Despite these statements, the Peruvian opinion of the United States did not worsen to the same degree as Mexico's.

Chilean President Michele Bachelet supported Hillary Clinton and addressed Trump before the election: 'I would want that the president of the US would be someone who is friendly and would respect countries and civilities'.⁷¹ However, the well-known Bachelet's opposition to Donald Trump was not reflected in Chilean opinion. Chilean opinion of the United States remained similar to that under Barack Obama.

Even though Argentinian President Mauricio Macri and his administration sympathised with Clinton, he congratulated Trump after the election. Before the election, he could not imagine him as a president when he stated the following: 'I believe in relationships, in networks — we are, in fact, speaking with the world through a network — not in building walls' and that it 'would be hard to work with someone who would want to build walls'.⁷² Similarly, the citizens of Argentina looked at Trump's election negatively, and bad opinion of the United States increased by 11 percent. Bolivian President Evo Morales congratulated Trump with some irony in his statement: 'We hope to work against racism, machismo, and anti-immigration for the sovereignty of our people'.⁷³ Similarly, the bad image of the United States among Bolivians increased by 15 percent as some probably felt the same way as Morales.

Trump's deportation plans do not concern only Mexico, but also other Central American countries. Currently, there are more than three million immigrants in the United States, mostly from El Salvador, Guatemala but also from Costa Rica. Their deportation could destabilise the already bad security situation in Central America^{74,75}. Even though a number of Central American countries worsened their opinion of the United States, this is not as significant a change as in Mexico. Nevertheless, Trump's negative discourse on immigrants was addressed to them as well. Latin Americans regularly migrate to the United States for better living conditions or to seek protection from criminal gangs and armed groups operating in their countries. However, countries such as Guatemala and El Salvador are not explicitly mentioned in his speeches, unlike Mexico, which may only be the reason for a slight worsening in the opinion of the respondents. Although many Latin American officials spoke out against Trump or in support of Mexico it did not have a significant effect on the respondents. Concerns about the realisation of Trump's plans were reflected in the Latin American and Caribbean leaders' summit that was hosted by the Dominican Republic just a few days after Trump's election. In his opening speech, President of the Dominican Republic Danilo Medina said 'We

are worried by the growing discourse of protectionism and the closing of borders that is not limited to the economic sphere but which could also seriously affect our migrant populations' in response to Trump's slogan America First, which can be described as a hard-line approach of governing that represents a review of the trade pacts, deporting migrants and building the wall. Moreover, Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa added: 'We have to protect ourselves from other things: the persecution of migrants'.⁷⁶ However, it must be mentioned that Trump migrant separation policy and Central American migrant caravans of 2018 are not reflected in 2017 *Latinobarómetro*. Therefore, it is possible that the opinion worsened more amongst Central American countries.

Trump has criticised two more important Latin American countries. The first was Venezuela, which is an important trading partner because of oil. Trump condemned authoritarian President Nicolas Maduro during the campaign⁷⁷. However, Venezuelan's opinion of the United States only marginally worsened maybe due to the fact that Maduro's opponents welcomed such criticism. The second country that was very frequent in Trump's discourse was Cuba. Unfortunately, this country is not included in this paper due to the absence of data. *Latinobarómetro* did not conduct a public opinion poll in that country. However, given its relevance, we mention Trump's discourse. First, he criticised Obama's administration. He argued that while he agreed to warm relations with Cuba, he would negotiate a much better deal. Subsequently, he suggested condemning this détente with Havana altogether if Cuban officials would not allow much deeper political and religious freedom in the country. Fidel Castro's death also confirmed the US hard line towards Cuba: 'Fidel Castro's legacy is one of the firing squads, theft, unimaginable suffering, poverty and the denial of fundamental human rights', and 'but all of the concessions that Barack Obama has granted the Castro regime were done with executive order, which means the next president can reverse them. And that is what I will do unless the Castro regime meets our demands'.⁷⁸

Although individual country data are not available about Cuba, deterioration of relations was evident within the administration from the Cuban counteraction. Exactly the day after Trump's election, Cuba responded demonstratively and announced a five-day military exercise to face 'a range of actions by the enemy'⁷⁹. His predecessor, Barack Obama, who achieved the Cuban détente, tried to minimise the dam-

age after Trump's election within his trip in Latin America. He stated: 'My main message to you ... is don't just assume the worst', during his question-and-answer session in Peru. He also said: 'With respect to Latin America, I don't anticipate major changes in policy from the new administration.'⁸⁰

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In general, the people of Latin America evaluate Donald Trump pretty negatively in all countries. The respondents could evaluate Trump on the scale from 0 to 10. He is worst evaluated by Mexicans, which could explain the worsened opinion of the United States as a whole country. The Mexican mean is only 1.61. Trump is best rated by respondents in Paraguay. However, the mean of this country is also only 4.08.

Methodology

Data

We used data from Latinobarómetro that regularly conducts polls in Latin American countries (usually once a year). As part of our research, we used data from 2016 and 2017 that, as we explain in the following section, include key variables that are part of the models.

Dependent variable

The dependent variable is the public opinion⁸¹ amongst Latin American citizens as regards US foreign policy. The variable itself has four values. The respondent could reply that he had a very positive, positive, negative or very negative opinion of the United States. We decided to dichotomise this variable, and we divided it into a positive and negative opinion. Although dichotomisation is often considered by many to be problematic, criticism is particularly concerned when dichotomising continuous variables^{82,83,84,85,86}. This is not the case with this research. Moreover, Latinobarómetro proceeds in its final reports in the same way, and it adds up positive and negative opinions together^{87,88}. Quiroga⁸⁹ also, in a similar way based on Latinobarómetro data, dichotomises his dependent variable. At the same time, the positive and negative opinions prevailed⁹⁰ over very positive and negative opinions, and for this reason it made sense to merge the variable into two categories. Such a dichotomised variable also had a sufficiently high correlation⁹¹, demonstrating that this process did not result in a significant loss of information. The pros, especially in the form of a model that will enable logistic regression and simpler interpretation, therefore clearly outweighed the cons.

Independent variables

The first independent variable is the year in which a public opinion poll was conducted. We coded 2017 as 1 and 2016 as 0. Barrack Obama's term came to a close in 2016, while 2017 is Donald Trump's first year in office. In 2017, the survey took place between June and August across Latin America⁹². Latin Americans did not only respond to the election result that certainly had some impact, but they judged at least half a year of Donald Trump's presidency. In 2016, surveys were conducted before Trump's victory between May and June⁹³.

The other two independent variables are based on the theory of trust. The first concerns interpersonal trust in fellow citizens and has only two values. We coded the attitude⁹⁴ that one can trust most people as 1, while if the respondent said caution is required, we coded it as 0. The second variable examines the political trust in the national institutions. There was a total of three questions, classic Likert items, about parliament, national government and political parties. Some researchers criticise the use of individual Likert items^{95;96}; some see it as nonproblematic⁹⁷, and those in the middle say that once we got the Likert scale, it is no longer problematic⁹⁸. Similarly, we added up⁹⁹ these three Likert items and got a scale from 3 to 12 that we considered being the ideal expression of political trust in the national institutions (government, parliament and political parties) arising from Latinobarómetro data.

The other three variables relate to ideology and beliefs. Latinobarómetro includes a question on the political spectrum. The respondents assigned themselves on a scale from 0 (the most left-wing) to 10 (the most right-wing), and we included this variable in this format. We dichotomised the other two variables. The first of them is whether democracy¹⁰⁰ is the best system of government and the second question¹⁰¹ is about the market economy. Respondents had the opportunity to answer questions strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The reasons for the dichotomisation process are the same¹⁰² as for the dependent variable. Therefore, we coded a positive relationship to democracy as 1 and a positive relationship to a market economy as 1; we coded negative relationships as 0.

Control variables

We also used five control variables. These variables are based on literature and are a regular part of political science research with opinion polls^{103,104,105,106,107,108,109,110,111}.

For a gender variable, we coded women as 1. We did not modify the variable age in any way. Also, we did not modify the education variable that was based on the interviewers' coding. They assigned the respondent's level of education to the 1-7 scale where 1 meant the respondent is illiterate and 7 meant that a respondent completed higher education¹¹². The other two control variables relate to the respondent's standard of living. The first is the evaluation of the interviewer who evaluated the socio-economic level of the respondent according to the type of housing, equipment and other factors. The scale was 1 for very good, and 5 was very poor. Researchers use similar scales in research with opinion poll data, either LAPOP or Latinobarómetro, and also use regression models^{113,114,115,116,117}. Similar scales can be used in regression models (Norman, 2010). The respondents answered the second question¹¹⁸, and it concerned finance. Here again, we dichotomised the variable. We merged answers: 'we have enough resources, and we can save' with 'we have enough, we have no problems', which we encode as 1. We merged answers: 'we do not have enough resources, and we have problems' with 'we have not enough resources and we have big problems' that we coded as 0. The arguments for this process are the same¹¹⁹ as in previous cases. We considered these two variables ideal for inclusion in research for comparative value across Latin America. These variables are important to include because of the advanced level of globalisation and a high level of poverty in a number of Latin American countries. The wealthy population through openness and cooperation with such a large trading partner as the United States have the opportunity to profit. The poorer population have much less adaptability and are more vulnerable to economic changes such as recession or stagnation. On the contrary, the rich are more resilient^{120,121}. We included also age. Scepticism grows with increasing age through experience¹²². The presence of the United States was counterproductive in many cases and countries of left-wing leaders, support for right-wing undemocratic regimes (Brazilian junta, the Somoza family in Nicaragua, etc.), promoting neoliberal reforms that have impacted on the low-income population.

Model

The dependent variable is dichotomous. Therefore, we used logistic regression, especially in terms of assignation to the political spectrum, relation to democracy and the market economy, we could assume cor-

relations. Therefore, we proceeded with caution about multicollinearity in modelling. We calculated the variance inflation factor (VIF), and it did not exceed 1.16¹²³ in any independent or control variable in Model 1, and no significant multicollinearity was found to prevent interpretation of the results. In Model 1, which includes all Latin-American countries of Latinobarómetro from 2016 and 2017, we controlled the impact of individual countries by including dummy variables, and we used a fixed effects model. We did not use the hierarchical (multi-level) model because we investigated data at the individual level in our research. Moreover, hierarchical models are in some cases methodologically problematic, and some recommend using fixed effect models instead¹²⁴. This is particularly the case when there are not enough cases for effective analysis at a higher level. For example, Kreft¹²⁵, Hox¹²⁶ or Snijders and Bosker¹²⁷ suggest the 30/30 rule of thumb, that there are at least 30 cases per each level. Our research included 18 countries. Therefore, it would not meet these oft-cited conditions. To capture the different situation across Latin America, logistic regression was applied to each country separately, and the values themselves are not presented to save space¹²⁸, but the statistical significance of each variable in Table 3 is presented. Unfortunately, 35.2 percent of cases could not be included in the analysis because they were missing from the data set. In these cases, the respondent refused to answer or did not have an opinion about the asked question.

Table 2 shows the results of logistic regression with all countries included. One of the independent variables is the year 2017 when Trump became president. A respondent from 2016 is 43 percent more likely to have a positive opinion of the United States than a respondent from 2017, and this variable is statistically significant. Therefore, we support the first hypothesis. Other hypotheses are not linked to the impact of the change of presidents. They are focused on general factors that may have an impact on public opinion of the United States in Latin America. The first of them, the second hypothesis, consists of three sub-hypotheses. These include political ideology and opinions about the free market and democracy. All these variables are statistically significant and in the expected direction. Therefore, all these sub-hypotheses are supported. A respondent is 10 percent more likely to have a positive opinion of the United States for each one point to the right on the left-right political spectrum. The scale is between 0 and 10 points. The United States has long supported right-wing governments

Table 2: Logistic regression – Opinion of the United States

Independent Variable	Model 1	
Dependent variable: Opinion of the United States		
	B	Exp(B)
Trump – 2017	-0.566*** (0.033)	0.568
Trust in people	-0.032 (0.044)	0.968
Political trust	-0.020* (0.008)	0.980
Left – right	0.097*** (0.005)	1.102
Democracy	0.268*** (0.038)	1.308
Free market	0.304*** (0.036)	1.356
Socio-economic level	0.051* (0.021)	1.052
Financial satisfaction	0.099** (0.034)	1.104
Gender	-0.014 (0.032)	0.986
Age	-0.008*** (0.001)	0.992
Education	0.026* (0.011)	1.026
Constant	1.755*** (0.181)	5.781
N	26171	
Nagelkerke R2	0.139	

Note: Standard errors in parentheses, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; dataset is weighted by WT provided by Latinobarómetro; country-dummies not reported, but included in the fixed-effects model

Source: Authors' calculations

in Latin America. Therefore, it is no surprise that left-leaning citizens have a worse opinion of the United States. A respondent that always considers democracy as a correct form of the government is 30 percent more likely to hold a positive opinion of the United States than a citizen with the opposite view. The United States has presented itself as

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a leading country of the free world and long-time supporter of democracy. Moreover, a respondent that considers a free market as the only way forward for developing countries is 35 percent more likely to hold a positive opinion of the United States than a citizen with the opposite opinion. The United States is known as a strongly capitalist country, and it has pushed neoliberal right-wing reforms in Latin America.

The third hypothesis examines interpersonal trust. This variable is not statistically significant, and we reject this hypothesis. It seems that low interpersonal trust does not help us to explain the opinion of the United States. However, the fourth hypothesis includes political trust, and this variable is statistically significant and in the expected direction. Therefore, we accept this hypothesis. A respondent is 2 percent more likely to have a positive opinion of the United States for each one-point political trust on the scale of is between 3 and 12 points. It seems that trust in national political institutions (in this case the national government, parliament and parties) can predict the respondent's opinion of the United States.

Table 2 also shows that all control variables except gender are statistically significant. The better off people are, they more likely they are to have a better opinion of the United States. It is probably because they consider themselves as 'winners' in the current system. They possibly welcome globalisation or the influence of the United States in their national economy because it allows them to have a good living standard. Therefore, they are in contrast to 'losers' that live in bad economic conditions and have major financial problems. They can partially blame the United States and its influence for their misfortune. Similarly, more educated respondents are more likely to have a better opinion of the United States. Educated people are generally more knowledgeable and have greater access to information, and they can compare living conditions in the United States to their own country. They are more likely to speak the English language and, therefore, experience greater cultural influence and are more likely to start their careers in the United States.

Table 3 shows logistic regression for each country separately. It is possible to see a pattern. The most variables are in the same direction across Latin America when they reach statistical significance. We can see a few interesting exceptions. First, gender is only significant in Colombia. The men are 33 percent more likely to have a positive opinion of the United States than women. In particular, thanks to US finan-

Table 3: Logistic regression - Country-by-country regression results

Dependent variable: The opinion of the United States

IV

Trump - 2017																						
Trust in people									■													
Political trust	■	■		■							■		■		■		■		■		■	
Left - right	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■					■		■		■	■	■	■	
Democracy						■				■	■	■	■	■							■	
Free market	■	■		■	■	■			■				■								■	■
Soc.-econ. level														■				■			■	
Fin. satisfaction	■	■		■							■		■		■						■	■
Gender						■																
Age			■	■				■				■								■	■	■
Education	■	■		■	■									■						■	■	■
Countries:	ARG	BOL	BRA	CHI	COL	CRI	DOM	ECU	ELS	GUA	HON	MEX	NIC	PAN	PAR	PER	URU	VEN				
ARG - Argentina, BOL - Bolivia, BRA - Brazil, CHI - Chile, COL - Colombia, CRI - Costa Rica, DOM - Dominican Republic, ECU - Ecuador, ELS - El Salvador, GUA - Guatemala, HON - Honduras, MEX - México, NIC - Nicaragua, PAN - Panamá, PAR - Paraguay, PER - Perú, URU - Uruguay, VEN - Venezuela																						
Coefficients $p < 0.05$ Positive, significant Negative, significant																						

Image of the United States in Latin America

Source: Authors' calculations

cial and military assistance, Colombia succeeded in weakening the largest drug cartels in the 1990s and the largest Colombian guerrilla movements FARC and ELN. Therefore, the United States may appear to be a great help for Colombian men, because arguably a lot of innocent lives, especially Colombian soldiers and police officers, have been saved. Colombian women, however, do not seem to get help from the United States in the same way.

Political trust is a positively significant variable only in Bolivia and Venezuela. This variable in other countries is in the opposite direction or is not significant. This is probably because in these countries left-wing politics dominates the scene, and that has invigorated the rhetoric of anti-Americanism. Obviously, in this case, the respondent with low trust in national political institutions would favour the United States to their government, parliament and political parties.

Again, Venezuela is the only country where financial satisfaction is a negatively statistically significant variable. It is possible that people who do not have an income to cover their basic needs speak positively of the United States because they blame their socialist government for the economic failures. The left-wing government has used anti-American rhetoric. Therefore, they positively perceive the United States as a country that defies Maduro's regime and urges it to provide the basic needs of the Venezuelan people.

Conclusion

During President Trump's first year in office, the people of Latin America had a worse opinion of the United States than during Obama's term. However, this unfavourable image is not the same in all countries. Unsurprisingly, Mexico was a country where public opinion of the US was the worst in Latin America. However, some countries did not experience a significant drop in the opinion of the United States. This was the case of Central American countries as well as Colombia, which has been long a recipient of significant aid from the United States. However, Latin American people evaluate Donald Trump negatively, irrespective of their national countries. He was best rated on the scale from 0 to 10 in Paraguay with the mean of 4.08, which is quite low.

Having included 18 Latin American countries in our fixed-effects model we found that respondents with a positive view about democracy and the free market hold a more likely positive opinion of the United States. Moreover, the more right-wing the person, the more likely the positive opinion of the United States. Another independent variable, political trust in national political institutions, is significant in a prediction about an opinion of the United States. The less trust a Latin American citizen has in national political institutions, the worse the opinion they have of the United States. However, this is not the case for Venezuela and Bolivia. Interpersonal trust is not statistically significant in our model as much as our control variables. The financially satisfied citizens have a better opinion of the United States than citizens that are not happy with their income. Also, more educated people have a better opinion of the United States. The gender is not a statistically significant variable except in the case of Colombia.



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- 100 The exact question is as follows: Democracy may have problems, but it is the best system of government
- 101 The exact question is as follows: Market economy is the only system with which the country can become a developed country
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FOERSTER, Schuyler. NATO's Return: Implications for Extended Deterrence. In R. R. MOORE & D. COLETTA. *NATO's Return to Europe: Engaging Ukraine, Russia and Beyond*. Georgetown University Press, 2017. ISBN 9781626164888.

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NATO's Return to Europe

Engaging Ukraine, Russia and Beyond

Reviewed by Ana Maria Albulescu

The Ukraine crisis constituted both a watershed moment for European security and a moment of reflection for the Alliance's identity and its broader global ambitions, thus prompting various debates related to the role of NATO both within Europe and beyond. These debates inform the contributions to the volume *NATO's return to Europe: Engaging Ukraine, Russia and Beyond*. This book brings together a series of different perspectives that touch upon the role of the Ukraine crisis in the context of NATO's regional and global missions. The volume provides a valuable contribution in that several cross-cutting issues are highlighted to understand the consequences of this historical event for the evolution of NATO's policies in Europe and beyond in terms of three key aspects: the challenges faced by the organisation as a result of this crisis, the responses that it generated for its member states and the wider implications for NATO's identity.

In Chapter One John Deni provides an overview of the Alliance's evolution in the aftermath of Soviet demise and discusses the various trends in NATO's member states defence spending as well as the dif-

ferent forces that make up its structure. Deni highlights the enduring inadequacy of NATO's force posture, given important strategic policy differences that have pushed the Eastern members of the Alliance to seek bilateral security solutions outside of NATO when faced with ongoing commitments to NATO's Founding Act to avoid permanent deployment in the East following the Ukraine crisis.

This particular focus on NATO's role - not just as a military alliance but also a political one - is re-iterated in Chapter Two, where Schuyler Foerster provides a complementary understanding of the evolution of NATO's commitments to nuclear deterrence since the Cold War. Here, the political dimension of the Alliance is again mentioned as a reason for the limitations faced by the organisation when dealing with Russian aggression in Ukraine, with the author observing that 'one of the consequences of this crisis is to highlight the limits of NATO's own extended deterrent guarantee, especially as it applies to an enlarged NATO membership'.¹

Evaluating NATO's enlargement policy in Chapter Three, Andrew Wolff's emphasis is on the way the annexation of Crimea has not only weakened Ukraine's chances of becoming a member of the Alliance by provoking a territorial dispute that contravenes NATO's position on enlargement, but also provided an opportunity to rethink NATO's ideologically driven liberal-order building project in this country.

The extent to which NATO has addressed its changing missions is made clear by the book's emphasis of how the organisation has repeatedly sought to rethink its global and regional roles and provide adaptive responses to emerging threats. In Chapter Four Magnus Peterson stresses the challenges to adapt these missions in the context of various emerging threats ranging from Islamic terrorism to a resurgent Russia, while Chapter Five illustrates NATO's drive to learn and adapt its mission in the context of the Ukraine crisis based on the 'lessons learned' throughout its campaign in Afghanistan.

What distinguishes this book is its approach to analysing the Ukraine crisis as a test-case in the Alliance's history by stressing that alongside these outwards challenges the Ukraine crisis also brought with it a serious 'identity crisis' for NATO. In the wake of this, the Alliance was forced into re-thinking a series of aspects of its work, ranging from its enlargement commitments to its institutional and military capabilities, as well as its broader goals in sustaining the liberal security

1 Cited in (Foerster, 2017), p. 59.

order that has been alluded to. Thus, whilst NATO has seen various models of institutional partnerships in the aftermath of the Cold War, the Ukraine crisis has raised questions with regards to its commitment to develop these partnerships with the aim of consolidating the liberal European Security order. In Chapter Six Ivan Ivanov stresses that the enlargement policy that served to expand these partnerships has only served to provoke Russia and weaken the existing NATO-Russia partnership, prompting NATO to question enlargement into Russia's sphere of influence. Despite this tendency, in Chapter Seven, Rebecca Moore highlights the need to re-enforce NATO's commitment to use these partnerships not only as crisis management tool but rather as a means to strengthen the liberal democratic values guiding the Alliance's actions abroad and thus respond to Russia's challenges against this vision.

The final two chapters serve as a warning about the global implications of the Ukraine crisis, which has not only weakened NATO's relationship with Russia - an aspect addressed in Chapter Eight - but also stresses the uncertainties governing the Russia-China strategic partnership, analysed by Huiyun Feng throughout Chapter Nine. It is thus an understanding of this evolving strategic environment described towards the end of the book that provides a compelling description of the global context in which NATO's return to Europe is taking place.

RENZ, Bettina. *Russia's Military Revival*. Polity Press, 2018. ISBN 978-1-5095-1618-6.

Russia's Military Revival

Reviewed by Ilya Levine

In 2012, US President Barack Obama and his supporters mocked Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney for describing Russia as America's 'number one geopolitical foe'. In 2017, Obama's Vice President Joe Biden characterised Russia as the biggest threat to the international liberal order. While this dramatic reversal was partly a result of the 2016 presidential election, it is also directly connected to Russia's military interventions in Ukraine and Syria. This showed a revamped Russian military as well as a willingness to use this military in ways not seen since the end of the Cold War. On the other hand, some commentators like the University of Chicago's John Mearsheimer argue that Russia's behaviour is still essentially defensive. *Russia's Military Revival* by Bettina Renz, a Russia specialist at the University of Nottingham, makes important contributions to the debate about the threats posed by Russia's partially modernised military.

Taking care to avoid justifying Russia's policies or completely dismissing the concerns of its neighbours, Renz positions herself between Mearsheimer's apologia and those who regard Russia as an existential threat. She challenges three influential arguments: 'first, the view that the desire for a powerful military and its use signals a "paradigm shift" in the Kremlin's outlook; second, the idea that the reason the military revival is pursued necessarily is to enable an expansionist and aggres-

sive foreign policy; and third, the notion that Russian military capabilities now rival those of the West' (p.11).

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In Chapter 1: Russian foreign policy and military power, Renz argues that Moscow sees military power as much more than just a tool of conquest. A powerful military is meant to help Russia to regain its status as a great power, protect its sovereignty, assert its influence over the post-Soviet sphere, and even facilitate multilateral cooperation with other great powers. Chapter 2: Reforming the military describes the decline of the Russian military during the 1990s. While discussions of military modernization began as early as 1992, political and financial factors prevented these from coming to fruition until 2008. Although Vladimir Putin's ambitious modernization program achieved a great deal, Renz argues that Russia's military power is still far behind that of the West because of its heavy reliance on conscripts, manpower problems, technological backwardness, and financial constraints.

While Russia's military strength is far from comparable with the collective forces of the NATO allies, Renz may still have overstated her point. For example, she notes that 'Russia's military expenditure of just over US\$90 billion in 2015 was less than a sixth of US spending, which amounted to over US\$595 billion' (p.72). However, Kennan Institute fellow Michael Kofman and the University of Birmingham's Richard Connolly point out that Russia's military budget may actually be closer to one fourth of that of the US if it is measured in purchasing power parity terms. Analysts have also warned that Russia's investments in missiles, radars, and electronic warfare systems could pose a substantial challenge to US forces.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the country's sizable paramilitary forces. This chapter emphasises the domestic role of the Russian armed forces, particularly in maintaining order and regime security. In Chapter 4: Russian uses of military power since 1991, Renz observes that, while recent years have seen Russia become more assertive, its willingness to deploy its forces beyond its borders can be traced as far back as its interventions in Moldova, Georgia, and Tajikistan in the early 1990s. She argues that the Russian Federation's uses of military power both during and after the 1990s were motivated by a complex combination of status concerns, strategic and material interests, and insecurity. Chapter 5 discusses developments in Russian military thinking and doctrine. Renz challenges some of the popular rhetoric around Russia's use of 'hybrid warfare'. She points out that this ap-

proach is not a Russian invention, fails to adequately describe much of what Russia has done, and has only proven effective under very particular circumstances.

Overall, I would recommend Russia's Military Revival to graduate students, academics, analysts, and policymakers as a nuanced and well-researched introduction to this important topic.

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