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# Bahrain's al Khalifa Dilemma

*Mitchell Belfer*

With the wider Middle East in a seemingly intractable crisis spiral, it is easy to lose track of specific national and historical contexts. Bahrain's chapter in the now defunct Arab Spring has generally, but erroneously, been treated as a case of a pacifist opposition, composed of members of the Shia sect (majority) and a repressive Sunni government (minority). Not only does such loose demographic bookkeeping and simplistic categorisations intellectually detract from truly understanding the internal dynamics of the country, it also eclipses the manner in which Bahrain's government and civil society have adjusted themselves to the unfolding crisis and blinds observers to the roles played by exogenous agitators, particularly post-revolutionary Iran.

The 1979 revolution in Iran continues to profoundly impact Bahrain. From the attempted coup d'état by the Iranian proxy, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) in 1981, to the more recent usage of Hezbollah and its local allies, the Youth of 14 February (re: the Youth) and Sacred Defence Bahrain (SDB), it is clear that Iranian interests in Bahrain are persistent. And the actions of such terrorist groups is telling; demonstrations-cum-riots, car bombings, lynching and arson occur with frightening frequency and results. Against this backdrop, a political opposition group – the al Wafaq bloc – emerged to ostensibly represent the interests of Bahrain's Shia community. There is growing concern, and evidence, that links the al Wafaq bloc to Iran and Iran to the violent groups operating in Bahrain.

Al Wafaq's spiritual leader, Issa Qassim, was a member of the inner circle of Ayatollah Khomeini's Qom clique, and has retained his contacts throughout Khamenei's reign. In fact, Iran's Ayatollah has even bestowed the political-religious title 'Ayatollah' on Qassim since, according to Iran's parliamentary declaration that Issa Qassim is to become the

Ayatollah of Bahrain on the construction of an Islamic Republic there. And there is a symbiotic relationship between Iranian and Bahraini terrorist groups. The IFLB absorbed the al Haq movement, which was connected to al Sistani, who was instrumental in Hezbollah's defeat of Amal in Lebanon, which deployed to Bahrain. After a decade – from 1999 until 2009 – of Hezbollah having its numbers diminished due to successful counterterrorism efforts and a general national consensus that rejected political violence, the Youth of 14 February bear responsibility for the 2011 demonstrations turning violent. Since then, Hezbollah has increased its presence in Bahrain, prompting the government – and later the GCC – to ban both the political and military wings of the organisation. The Youth are a key linkage between al Wefaq, Hezbollah and Iran. To compliment Issa Qassim's relationship to the Ayatollah in Iran, al Wefaq chief, Ali Salman, is in frequent communication with Hezbollah's commander Sayyad Hassan Nasrallah and are said to be directly coordinating their activities. It is important to note here that Hezbollah is not an autonomous organisation, its true leader is Ayatollah Khamenei. Finally, the goals of Iran's and Bahrain's radicalised groups are the same; forced regime change and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Bahrain under direction of Tehran and its two local agents, Ali Salman and Issa Qassim. It is no coincidence that powerful figures in Iran's religious and political establishment have resurrected the claim that Bahrain is the 14th province of the former Persian Empire and should thus be returned to Iran.

*Editor's  
Analysis*

### The al Khalifa Dilemma

Such heightened pressures have resulted in the unfolding of an al Khalifa Dilemma where Bahrain's political leadership attempts to counter the Iranian-al Wefaq nexus through reforms to the Kingdom. In their embryotic form, such reforms are meant to better reflect the legitimate demands of the Shia, Sunni, Christian, Jewish and expat communities but ends up focusing only on a singular energised, organised and vocal segment of society, fractions of fractions of the Shia community, since members of such fractions are comfortable deploying violence and Bahrain's government is responsible for retaining order. In taking a wide reform programme and centring it on small fractions within one sect, Bahrain's government may inadvertently be contributing to the further destabilising the country. Reform in this case may, in fact, be dangerous.

Consider the following logic. Firstly, internally – from within al Khalifas’ leadership circles – national identity (re: as Bahraini) is considerably more important than a sectarian identity (re: Sunni). As a result, the al Khalifas (rightly) view themselves as representative of the entire spectrum of Bahraini society. This view is shared among the majority of Bahrainis and sectarianism continues to be the hobby of a few, more fringe-located, groups and does not form majority opinion.

However (secondly) externally – those located outside of political structures – some groups identify the al Khalifas through sectarian lenses. This is not due to the actions (or inactions) of the al Khalifas, but rather because such external groups’ ideology forces them not to consider the al Khalifas as legitimate leaders of Bahrain and categorise al Khalifa leadership as Sunni rather than Bahraini. It should be remembered that this form of sectarianism is not only to be found among smaller, spoiler groups within Bahrain; it tends to – more frequently – be held by external actors, particularly Iran, which has its own agenda and deploys sectarianism for achieving its more ambitious objectives. This opinion is also, strangely, reiterated in most international media outlets and so assists in mobilising portions of the international community behind the (false) notion that the al Khalifas are Sunni first and Bahraini second. It is likely that the over-mediatisation of Bahraini sectarianism is not a deliberate ploy to undermine the legitimacy of al Khalifa leadership in the country – it is probably due to lethargy or austerity – however such media images do reinforce a sectarian interpretation of Bahrain for those very groups which already believe that Bahrain is a sectarian society. So, while the media does not produce sectarianism in Bahrain it does reinforce it and such reinforcement makes effective reform in the Kingdom more difficult.

Given that such information is widely known within Bahraini political structures, the al Khalifas have responded by expending tremendous energies on national projects ranging from the development of public works (re: parks, museums, archaeological sites), the proliferation of public activities and events (re: annual air-show, F1 race), economic projects (re: automobile parts factory), increasing housing and food subsidies to engaging in political reform in a bid to allay sectarianism among a small, but still important, faction of Bahraini society.

Yet, despite the national benefits derived from a wide assortment of socio-economic overtures, such engagements have not been adequate in ending the sectarianisation of Bahrain; a puzzling outcome of such an enormous political and economic investment in transforming the entire

essence of the Kingdom. The reason why al Khalifa engagements have not worked in reducing sectarian identities among the aforementioned groups – and in some ways even encouraging greater membership in such groups, across Shia and Sunni communities – is the essence of the al Khalifa Dilemma.

*Editor's  
Analysis*

### **Consider the Following Chain of Events:**

Firstly – on recognising certain legitimate demands for political and economic reforms the al Khalifa leadership – as Bahraini nationalists – must also recognise the people who make such demands since Bahrain's leadership is based on providing avenues of national dialogue.

Secondly – on seeing the leaderships' desire to respond to public demands, smaller splinter groups (re: with a sectarian agenda), adopt the language of reform (because they know it works) though seek to fundamentally change the nature of the Kingdom for ideological reasons connected to external (f)actors.

Thirdly – such groups enter the mainstream of political discourse though refuse to compromise on even basic issues. This is because such groups are not actually seeking the fulfilling of the demands they incorporate into their public debates.

However (fourthly) – Bahraini leaders (as nationalists) seek to assuage tensions by working to reform the Kingdom, despite the fact that the reforms will never be enough to satisfy the fringe-cum-mainstream groups which are disinterested in reform and prefer revolution.

Yet (fifthly) – the fruitless engagement of the al Khalifas with such fringe groups undermines the former's relationship to other segments of Bahraini society which may not be as vocal as the aforementioned but do have legitimate grievances of their own. This problem is further exacerbated by the level of Sunni alienation to the al Khalifas likely to result from their perception of caving in to unreasonable demands on the national level and threats and intimidation on the international level.

Sixthly – two fronts of opposition will emerge against Bahrain's al Khalifa leadership; one rooted on the original hijacking and manipulation of legitimate demands for reform and the second rooted on the manner in which Bahrain's leaders sought to compromise with those that, themselves, will not compromise.

Seventh – the very sectarianism which the al Khalifas sought to diminish with their initial overtures will actually be more acute, wide-spread and difficult to resolve.

Finally – this will further encourage external involvement (re: from Iran) to fan the flames of sectarianism, allow violence and counter-violence to occur more frequently as a pretext for more direct intervention.

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## Conclusion

This is the dilemma – on the domestic-to-regional level – presently unfolding in Bahrain and although some of the tactics, counter-tactics and repercussions are similar as in other part of the Middle East they are felt much more acutely, and the consequences of them will be much greater because the size of the national territory and the political communities it houses. Every action, reaction, external threat and political statement reverberates throughout the Kingdom with greater speed and consequence than other, larger, national entities. Additionally, the relatively small size of Bahrain has meant that issues of nation, state and identity affect each citizen and resident directly. In Bahrain, as a small state, political life is not an abstraction, it is a reality. Local stability is equivalent to national stability and breaking out of the ascribed dilemma is of utmost importance for the al Khalifas and each member of Bahrain's civil society. The strife that is being encouraged by a few, over-zealous groups for the benefit of those beyond Bahrain's frontiers must be stemmed before real sectarianism rips the Kingdom to pieces, shatters more than two and a half centuries of nation and state building under the guidance of the al Khalifas and plunges the country into a form of chaos which will act as an invitation for the region's (and world's) more aspiring states to attempt to capture the geopolitical prize that is Bahrain. Reforming the Kingdom is certainly an appropriate way to encourage greater national cohesion and the development of a stake-holder's society. However, the reforms capable of achieving such lofty goals must not be imposed externally or adopted under the threat of terrorism. The al Khalifa Dilemma is genuine; time is running out to solve it.



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# Deterring Russia by US Followership?

## Decomposing The Czech Participation in Afghanistan

*Nik Hynek*

Deconstructing and explaining the Czech involvement in Afghanistan's post-war reconstruction are the key roles of this study. The notion of strategic narrative has recently been gaining popularity with security analysts. This work considers the applicability of this concept and its links to the genuine motives for the Czech presence in the ISAF mission. State-building efforts in Afghanistan have come increasingly to reflect a war of attrition and the political need to justify these unpopular activities has grown. This analysis of the Czech engagement in Afghanistan is the first of its kind: it draws systematically on primary data – particularly opinion polls - to link domestic political and public preferences to the country's participation in the ISAF mission and NATO more generally. The analysis takes in Czech activities in Afghanistan, public opinion and the contestation of the country's involvement by its political elite. It shows that there is a disconnection between official decision-making processes and popular beliefs as well as between the government and the political opposition.

*Keywords: ISAF, NATO, security, Afghanistan, the Czech Republic, post-war reconstruction, US, Russia*



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### Introduction

This work explains the Czech involvement in Afghanistan's post-war reconstruction. Its main consideration is the applicability of the notion of strategic narrative and its links to the actual reasons for the Czech

presence in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission. In recent times, the concept of strategic narrative has been applied increasingly in security analyses. As allied state-building efforts in Afghanistan have come more and more to resemble a war of attrition, the political need to justify these unpopular activities has risen. Weary publics have been targeted by more or less sophisticated narratives explaining why their government has participated in something so distant and even nebulous. Many commentators have openly talked about information warfare in this context. The hazy line between what NATO has called 'strategic communication' and propaganda has become ever fuzzier according to one top NATO official.<sup>1</sup> Political interpretations of supposedly impartial security reports have also varied greatly depending on both the time and place. Strategic narratives have once again assumed the central position. Nor has the Ivory Tower lagged far behind. While some academic analyses have focused on identifying these narratives and attempting to discern patterns in how they function, others have sometimes made normative cases for their construction. This study falls in the first category.

Analyses of strategic narratives suffer from an obvious limitation when it comes to explaining the possible political/security motives for coalition burden-sharing. This analysis of the Czech engagement in Afghanistan is, however, the first investigation of its kind: it draws systematically on primary data, especially opinion polls, to connect Czech political and societal attitudes with the country's presence in the ISAF mission and NATO more generally. As it turns out, these actual attitudes point to strong links between a perceived Russian threat, Czech NATO membership and participation in the ISAF mission and the potential provision of US security guarantees.

This work approaches its subject matter as follows: first, the conceptual and empirical specificities of the Czech case are outlined and their implications discussed. This includes addressing the leader-follower relationship that exists between the Czech Republic and the United States. This normative bond has served as the referential framework against which the Czech governmental elite makes security policy decisions, including those pursuing Afghanistan's reconstruction. A brief overview of Czech activities in Afghanistan is also given. Second, I describe the features of the Czech strategic narrative and compare them with the expectations in the general literature. This is a vital inductive step that is essential for establishing the positive heuristics of the concept.

Finally, the potential limits of strategic narratives are demonstrated in the Czech case. This is achieved in two moves: I present an analysis of public opinion and then discuss the elite political contestation of the country's involvement in Afghanistan. This reveals the gaps between official decision-making processes and popular beliefs as well as between the government and its political opposition. It also refutes the popular belief that the only reason why allied states continued their support for an utterly unpopular mission was the presence of a domestic political consensus.<sup>2</sup>

### Contextual Considerations

An adequate understanding of the Czech strategic narrative requires an outline of existing dependencies between the Czech Republic and the United States, often mediated through NATO. This is what the relationship between a leader and a follower encapsulates. Since the end of the Cold War, the Czech Republic's position vis-à-vis the United States has been that of a normatively-oriented follower. This strategic reorientation from the Soviet Union to the United States was seen as natural after the Velvet Revolution in 1989. Key political discussions in the country reflected this, and the issue was not whether to support the US but rather in what form and to what degree. The course was set by Czechoslovak participation in the First Gulf War (1990-1991). The event became a symbolic milestone in the Czechoslovak reintegration into the West. The early – some would say the only – success of the New World Order led to greatly enhanced cooperation between the Czech Republic and NATO. In terms of institutionalisation, the Partnership for Peace programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council paved the way for the country's accession to NATO in 1999.

Using the First Gulf War specifically as empirical background, Cooper, Higgot and Nossal have analysed the leader-follower nexus.<sup>3</sup> They argue that the desire to follow is crucial. In their words:

[W]hat appears to be the critical element [of followership is] ... the degree to which the follower regards the leader and the leader's "vision" (the goal that the leader seeks for the collective or the group) as worthy of active and concrete support; and [this follows] from the degree to which the follower willingly

trust[s] the leader - in other words, accords the leader the right to make decisions on behalf of the group to achieve those goals ... Followers need to be convinced that ... the goals being embraced by the leader embody some notion of a “greater good,” rather than just happening to be in the obvious parochial interests of the leader.<sup>4</sup>

*Nik Hynek*

Reasons for accepting the role of follower vary. Ikenberry and Kupchan distinguish between pragmatic and normative acceptance of followership.<sup>5</sup> Followership can also be considered a form of political clientelism.<sup>6</sup> Specifically, the follower’s clientelism is perceived by either side as beneficial so far as its own political interests are concerned: support from client states helps the leader avoid the risk of abandonment at peak moments in unilateral foreign and security policy<sup>7</sup> while also providing access to forward-deployed military bases; the clients, in turn, hope their support of the leader will give deeper sense to their political actions and elicit further security guarantees from the leader. The guarantees often comprise a combination of symbolic gestures, strategic references to the transatlantic family of states and practical steps, which may relate to the provision of training, material goods and/or physical protection of the followers’ territories.<sup>8</sup>

For the Czech political elite, the primary reason for followership has been normative or ideologically-based, albeit with pragmatic elements. Such pragmatism has had a lot to do with a widely perceived Russian threat. The best hopes were said to lie to the country’s participation in the transatlantic security architecture. It is important to keep in mind that within the realm of foreign and security policy, a broad Atlantist orientation represents - above all - a set of shared beliefs condensed into a fairly coherent and persuasive political world view. In the existing literature, the Atlantism of Central European (CE) countries has been linked to US neo-conservatism. This has served as an example and inspiration. Specifically, it has connected with the CE states’ sizable policy-making community made up of former dissidents ‘whose political leanings are in part informed by the American anti-communist, [and] pro-democracy policies of the 1970s and 1980s.’<sup>9</sup> This is so despite the fact that US neo-conservatism was originally framed in exclusivist terms, with Europe being singled out as an ‘inhospitable environment.’<sup>10</sup> Atlantism can, thus, be assumed to represent a form of political hegemony. Culturally and

ideologically, it binds together countries that are otherwise disparate geographically and economically as well as in terms of their size, political power and place in international perceptions.<sup>11</sup>

Czech political discussions about the country's entry into NATO juxtaposed normative and strategic considerations. The historical telos was taken for granted. Cooperation with the US was said to be vital so the historical lessons of 1938, 1948, and 1968 did not repeat themselves. References to the continuity between the unfinished project of the first democratic Czechoslovak Republic (1918-1938), post-Cold War Czechoslovakia - and from 1993, the Czech Republic - were widespread. When it came to forms of partnership, the Czech political elite always preferred broader transatlantic security cooperation. This meant strong support for security multilateralism as practised in NATO. While many post-communist countries embraced transatlantic security cooperation and fashioned an Atlantist world view around this, notable differences remained among these states. The implications for Czech participation in Afghanistan's post-war reconstruction are palpable and will be returned to later in this study.

The Czech preference for multilateral Atlantism stemmed from several factors. One of them was certainly the country's perception of its own limited size politically. Security bandwagoning and alliance burden-sharing were deemed important. So were normative factors - namely normative beliefs in Atlantist ideology and the liberal internationalism of the 1990s - very much in line with the depiction by Cooper, Higgot and Nossal. In addition, respect for multilateral cooperation with the US through NATO was seen as the politically safer option. This marked a notable difference when compared to Poland. The latter championed a far more direct and special relationship with the United States, often bypassing NATO. The reason for the more circumspect Czech approach to US support lay in the far greater polarisation of attitudes in Czech society. This was linked too to the limited popular support for the Czechoslovak dissident movement during the 1980s. The attitudes of Polish citizens were more accommodating to the US than those of their Czech counterparts. Poland's US-oriented pre-1989 domestic dissent had been a mass concern through the Solidarity movement. It had the active support of ordinary citizens. In contrast, pre-1989 Czechoslovak society remained quite distant from the United States and was largely oblivious to the domestic activities of several dozen elite dissidents.<sup>12</sup>

Czech Atlantism, thus, emerged as an elitist world view and was repeatedly contested at the societal level.

The main purveyors of strong Atlantist convictions – and simultaneous Euro-scepticism – were the Civic Democrats (ODS), a neo-conservative party that was politically dominant (it would lose this status in the 2013 general elections). It governed the country for most of the 1990s and held power again between 2006 and 2013: first, in a monochrome ODS minority government (2006-2007); then in a centre-right cabinet in coalition with the Green Party and the Christian and Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party (2007-2009); then in an indirect way by backing up the supposedly apolitical (and in fact centre-right) caretaker government of PM Jan Fischer; and most recently, as the strongest political party in a governmental coalition formed with TOP 09 (itself created by renegades of the Christian and Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party and early sympathisers/members of the Green Party and Civic Democrats) and the right-wing and populist party-cum-cartel Public Affairs.

*Deterring  
Russia*

The Czech government's fastening to the United States, which was ideological in nature, resulted in something which the academic literature identifies as a *reactive state*. The phrase was coined in the late 1980s by Kent Calder, who used it to explain both the discursive and the practical dependence of the Japanese decision-making process on the United States. Calder's depiction was of a state which formulates policies and launches initiatives in response to external developments and pressures.<sup>13</sup> In particular, this was a state that 'responds to outside pressures for change, albeit erratically, unsystematically, and often incompletely.'<sup>14</sup> While the structural positions of Japan and the Czech Republic in their responses to US policy preferences are not directly comparable – Japan, after all, enjoys greater resources and potential scope for independent foreign policy action – Yasutomo discusses key facets of the Japanese context<sup>15</sup> that can clearly be recognised in the case of the Czech Republic. These are (i) the external origin of the reactivity; (ii) the fact that the United States is the source of this reactivity (linked to the leader-follower relationship); (iii) an at least partially paralysed and/or dysfunctional policy-making process; and (iv) the significant scope of the reactivity, which engulfs foreign, security and economic policy as well as the broader strategic and diplomatic orientation of the country. According to Blaker, such behaviour is based on the essential strategy of "coping" (with events and demands from the leader country,

here the United States) and may be characterised by minimal policy innovation, passive diplomacy and risk aversion in decision-making.<sup>16</sup> These structural characteristics provide the essential context for the strategic narrative which the Czech Republic has used to legitimise its presence in Afghanistan.

In the politico-economic literature, the notion of a reactive state has often been linked to processes in the late development and consolidation of political authority. Traditionally this has meant the economic development and modernisation efforts in the 19th century, with countries such as Italy, Germany and Japan serving as examples. Arguably, the concept of late development can be extended to describe the period following the political hiatus caused by the descent of the Iron Curtain and the ensuing reality of forty years of Communist rule in the former Czechoslovakia. Indeed, the end of this era brought about a major recalibration of the country's politico-strategic orientation, a process in which the United States historically replaced the former Soviet Union in the position of intellectual - or to be more precise, ideological - leader. This process was completed in 1999 with the Czech Republic's entry into NATO despite the fact that the early post-Cold War positions of the Czechoslovak and subsequently Czech political elite had been provisional neutrality and support for NATO's dissolution.<sup>17</sup> Earlier Czech internationalist commitments based on a deeply institutionalised multilateralism in the United Nations were replaced by attitudes originating in the United States, thus paving the way for Czech reactivity. After the country joined NATO in 1999 and the EU in 2004, the intellectual hollowness of the Czech governmental elite was clearly exposed. The means became the end goal: just being inside the club sufficed. Czech interests in the NATO policy cycle came to be seen as redundant when the country could simply react.

The political entrenchment of the Atlantist world view was aided by the nature of Czech bureaucracy. Contrary to the classical Weberian assumption which sees the political and bureaucratic spheres as separated and driven by different logics of action, many post-communist countries - including the Czech Republic - proved that the separation of these spheres was rather incomplete. The view that top political incumbents change according to the electoral cycle and popular preferences while a politically neutral bureaucracy ensures continuity, technocratic skills and institutional memory, was shown to be problematic at best. This was mainly due to the intensive politicisation of the bureaucratic

layer of the country's ministries (for our purposes, chiefly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence). The politically-motivated parachuting of politicians into the ranks of career diplomatic corps became the norm. A neo-conservative world view penetrated all diplomatic and bureaucratic levels. Its targets ranged from ambassadors to the very junior staff who had just completed their formal training at the Czech Diplomatic Academy. These individuals were frequently employed within those ministries as "regular" (if senior) clerks. The outcome was clear: bureaucratic coalitions in the Czech Republic held explicit ideological beliefs and biases, thereby creating a fecund substrate for the politico-bureaucratic use of strategic narratives.

*Nik Hynek*

### Afghanistan and the "Czech" Strategic Narrative

The Czech Republic has generally been known as a country which promotes human rights, international peace and democratisation while supporting related UN activities. The unflinching Czech support for peace operations with a UN mandate can be seen in government documents and speeches. 'The Concept of Czech Foreign Policy,' approved by the government in 2011, put it, 'the Czech Republic considers the UN the backbone of international relations and international law ... [the country] will actively contribute to UN peace operations ... support democracy promotion and human rights, mainly within the UN Commission on Human Rights, ... and continue to support the effectiveness of the system of international law, including the system of international crime and justice.'<sup>18</sup>As far as the general official discourse was concerned, the Czech Republic could be understood as a country committed to defending the work of the UN, international law and its legitimacy and universal norms. Practically speaking, however, the Czech Atlantist world view was what mattered when it came to Afghanistan. This view was mainly cultivated through NATO's out-of-area operations. The difference between general internationalist narratives and ideologically driven political action can be observed in the selectiveness of the Czech out-of-area involvement. While the Czech engagement in UN-led missions consisted of a meagre nine personnel,<sup>19</sup> Czech right-wing governments were eager to burnish their Atlantist credentials. Although they also occasionally supported controversial ad-hoc security projects such as the Third Pillar of us Ballistic Missile Defense, the crux of their activities took place through

NATO. The most important of these engagements to date has been the Czech participation in Afghanistan's reconstruction. At its peak, the ISAF mission included 626 contributing troops from the Czech Republic.<sup>20</sup>

Turning to the form of engagement, Czech armed forces have taken part in multinational operations in Afghanistan since April 2002. Back then, the Czech involvement consisted of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> field hospitals and the provision of bomb disposal experts and other military specialists. Furthermore, from September 2004 until March 2007, a contingent of the Czech meteorological service operated at Kabul International Airport, and from 2007 until the first half of 2009, a special unit of the Czech military police was active in the southern part of Afghanistan. Between 2011 and 2013, Czech military police trained Afghani policemen and "meta-trained" Afghani police instructors in the police academy with a view to building up the Afghan national police force in Wardak province. The Czech army also operated a mentoring and liaison team at the Carville base in the southern part of Wardak province where it trained, mentored and assisted a battalion-sized Afghan rifle unit. Some Czech armed forces were involved in combat operations. Between 2004 and 2006, a Czech Special Forces team of 120 was deployed in the framework of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF): the unit participated in military operations targeting al-Qaida and the Taliban leadership though it took rather auxiliary roles.

The first entirely Czech provincial reconstruction team (PRT) was sent to Afghanistan in March 2008. Located in Logar province near Kabul, it operated from the US Shank base until July 2013. This team put greater emphasis on peace-building than on military stabilisation. Its derivative form was especially clear from its division into military and civilian parts, the nature of the cooperation between the two (CIMIC) and their overall organisation and location. The military component greatly outnumbered the civilian part for reasons of security and protection. Three types of reconstruction projects were set as priorities for the Czech PRT mission: it was active in the reform of the security sector (mostly by training the Afghan national army and the Afghan national police); it worked on economic and social development (mainly through social and technical projects focused on education, infrastructure and agriculture projects and the development of radio broadcasting); and it strived to contribute to governance, the rule of law and human rights reforms. Special attention was paid to the promotion of gender equality.

These orientating values were seen as the continuation of Vaclav Havel's liberal internationalist ethos in foreign and security policy.

NATO's dynamics confirm that shared perceptions of threats – and the shared political construction of these threats – are important phenomena for strategic narratives. Though subsequent developments suggested a growing rift between the United States and Western Europe in this regard, a strong ideological convergence prevailed between CE countries and the United States. Within this ideological core of the North Atlantic security community,<sup>21</sup> an intensive and sustained argumentative practice developed. Its main aim was to convince the target audience – decision makers, key thinkers, opinion makers and the general public in the new CE member countries – to accept and share the political and security threats defined by the United States.

These social constructions of security threats – and especially of Us vs. Them categories – can be seen as the extension of a long tradition of us danger production.<sup>22</sup> To paraphrase the founding father of modern us geo-strategy, George Kennan, if no danger exists, one must be created.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Johnson underlines that in the us security tradition, the world is full of enemies and evil, resulting in the conviction that the United States needs to remain vigilant.<sup>24</sup> If the idea that we are living in a dangerous world is constantly repeated, this leads over time to a genuine belief that the surrounding environment is indeed dangerous and is therefore a key challenge to the vital interests of the United States and its allies. This has been particularly true for ideological follower states such as the Czech Republic. If a threat is portrayed as imminent, then the political response may be a military campaign whose aim is to overthrow a dangerous regime and replace it with a more benign and cooperative one.<sup>25</sup>

The main development in the post-9/11 strategic narrative consisted of the us concluding that a specific terrorist organisation (al-Qaida) and Afghanistan under Taliban rule represented the gravest threats to international peace and stability and that it was necessary to act against them. Leader-follower relationships are reinforced through a discursive mechanism which Thierry Balzacq calls 'cascade argumentation,' meaning that 'persuasive arguments operate in cascade (e.g. people are convinced because friends of a friend are convinced, etc.).'<sup>26</sup> This is the key socio-political mechanism of a successful strategic narrative since it concerns its salience, transposition and reception. While the leader

makes the arguments, the followers serve as the principal target audience. The tighter the ideological bond between the leader and the follower, the more automated and uncritical the follower's acceptance of the leader's convictions and perceptions will be. The process of "mental preparing" the Czech target audience for the regime change in Afghanistan was based on claims of the danger of the Islamic world and the use of heuristic artefacts. This narrative was rich in its imaginings as Rumsfeldian metaphors about Islamo-fascism, Blair's references to Saddam's ability to attack any place in Europe with WMD within 45 minutes and Bush's Manichean waging of a global war against Islamic terror showed.<sup>27</sup>

The use of cascade argumentation was also evident in the justifications for both the OEF and ISAF missions in Afghanistan. For the Bush and Obama administrations, interventions were said to be necessary to prevent terrorists from coming to New York, Paris, Brussels, Prague, Warsaw and other places. US opinion makers such as Ronald Asmus – who had been instrumental in the earlier NATO enlargement process in his then position of US deputy secretary of state for European affairs – played a crucial role in this discursive process.<sup>28</sup> Certainly, NATO's decision to create the ISAF mission in Afghanistan arose from such a perceived threat (and related US diplomatic pressure). The former NATO secretary-general Jaap de Hoop Scheffer invoked this narrative in his speeches after 2004 with the ostensible aim of increasing the allied presence in Afghanistan in light of the relocation of most US forces to Iraq. Consequently, he helped to increase the Czech Republic's engagement in Afghanistan. Such cascade argumentation had an important aim: to persuade the target audience in the Czech Republic to see the Islamic world in an alarmist way, having reasoned there was no solution other than military overthrow of the anti-US regime in Afghanistan and subsequent stabilisation of the country.

The Czech government's own motivation for going into Afghanistan highlights the importance of cascade argumentation for strategic narratives. The government successfully internalised first the US and then the NATO strategic narratives about the need for an allied reconstruction of Afghanistan. This can be seen in a statement made by Karel Schwarzenberg, the then Czech minister of foreign affairs before the parliamentary vote on extending the mandate for the Czech PRT in Logar: 'the seriousness of the Czech Republic in the world, its allied commitments, and the safety of both the Czech Republic and our allies should be matters that are neither subject to arguments between

opposition and government parties nor partially subject to intraparty skirmishes.<sup>29</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, such reasoning is an example of *post-decisional politics* in which the national parliament is relegated to the role of an automatic rubber stamp in the name of a “more important” transnational ideological solidarity – here the solidarity between the United States-as-a-leader and the Czech Republic-as-a-follower.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, that solidarity is contingent on the existence of an internalised strategic narrative.

Over time, the US and NATO narratives were accepted by consecutive Czech governments and then passed off discursively as those governments’ own motivations. The Czech narrative contained strong elements of the US vision of what the Czechs should do in Afghanistan, but without any critical reflection on why the US-as-a-leader insisted on its presence. The mechanically transferred discourse on the need to go to Afghanistan therefore did not contain an explanation of the changing reasons for being there. Originally, this mission had been a result of the US’s effort to free its hands in order to deal with Iraq. Later, under the Obama administration, it became part of the US strategy to increase the number of soldiers and civilians in Afghanistan with the US serving as a supposed role model in the “surge” strategy officially unveiled in March 2009.

After US President Obama started to speak about the “Afghanisation” of Afghanistan, i.e. the gradual process of transferring responsibility to Afghan political and security bodies, and about negotiating with the Taliban, the Czech political elite once again passively reproduced this narrative without any innovation. Bizarrely, when the then Czech PM Petr Nečas and his minister of defence Alexander Vondra (ODS) were asked to explain why the Czechs were involved in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and should remain there, they both pointed out that this was obvious since the Czechs had been there for some time working alongside allies, most importantly the United States.<sup>31</sup> The latest manifestation of Czech governmental passivity and subsequent reactivity to US recalibration can be seen in the period since NATO’s 2012 Chicago Summit. As soon as the US announced its exit plan, Czech government officials began to use exactly those terms.<sup>32</sup> The Czech intention was, thus, to create an image of itself as a responsible – albeit reactive – NATO member state whose newly gained maturity was demonstrated in its acceptance of the role of follower, or in the frequently used phrase, ‘net security provider.’<sup>33</sup>

## Limits of Narratives: Public Opinion and Elite Contestation

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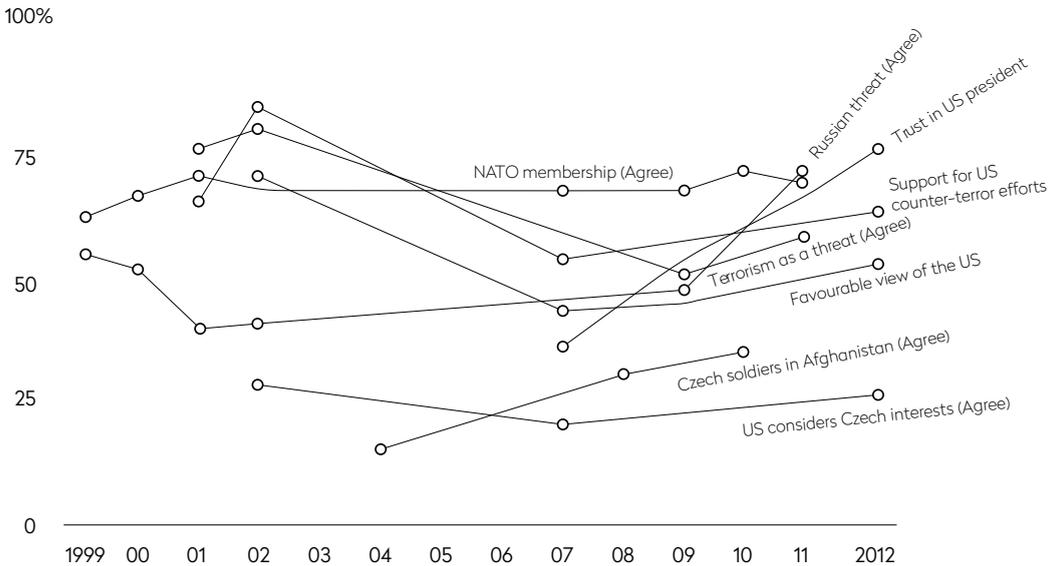
This section demonstrates the limits of strategic narratives. Specifically, it shows how a narrative successfully internalised by a government can be contested at political and societal levels. Arguably, this is what happened with the Czech strategic narrative on Afghanistan. The primary focus here is on several opinion polls with additional glimpses into the parliamentary debate. In this way, the discussion challenges a popular belief about why it has been possible for allied countries to maintain external – yet deeply unpopular – security engagements. The most convincing explanation that specifically deals with Afghanistan’s reconstruction can be found in the scholarship of Sarah Kreps.<sup>34</sup> Taking Kreps as a foil is also seen as a productive move since her comparative analysis features the Czech Republic. She offers the following account in a bid to understand a seeming paradox:

Theoretical expectations about international cooperation and evidence from case studies point to elite consensus as the reason why leaders are not running for the exits in Afghanistan when their publics would prefer that they do .... [O]perating through a formal institution such as NATO creates systemic incentives for sustained international cooperation. The result is that elite consensus inoculates leaders from electoral punishment and gives states’ commitments to Afghanistan a “stickiness” that defies negative public opinion.<sup>35</sup>

However, when the existing data are analysed, a different picture emerges: there has neither been an elite political consensus nor any widespread societal acceptance concerning the government’s strategic narrative. So while Kreps is right to point out that the Czech government ignored public opinion concerning the country’s reconstruction of Afghanistan, this was not at all because the political elite – i.e. the government and its political opponents– forged any consensus on this matter. What I offer as an alternative explanation is that in trying to overcome opposition from the Social Democrats, which escalated in a series of direct political assaults on the ISAF mission, the Czech government used the mechanism identified earlier as post-decisional politics. This – in the context of the Czech public being oblivious to the issue and actually knowing very little about the Czech engagement in Afghanistan – allowed the government to set the course on Afghanistan quite autonomously. The government’s use of a strategic narrative on

Afghanistan had greater resonance externally since it was part of the Czech contribution to forming a transnational elite consensus within NATO. Put otherwise, once the US strategic narrative had cascaded into the Czech Republic through NATO, it was internalised by the Czech government then rejected by its political opponents and most of the public, only to bounce back to NATO and prove that the Czech Republic was a valid member of the Western security universe.

*Deterring Russia*



The above graph combines data about attitudes in Czech society concerning aspects of the country’s engagement in Afghanistan. Generally speaking, the majority of the Czech population consistently approved of the country’s membership of NATO.<sup>36</sup> A crucial reason for this – if not the primary one – was the provision of security guarantees vis-à-vis Russia. The data available show a rough correspondence between views on Czech NATO membership and the perceived Russian threat. This is most visible before 2011 and over the last few years (especially since 2008 and chiefly due to Russia’s military blitzkrieg in South Ossetia, its naval

military exercises and bellicose rhetoric). The events of 9/11 skewed this link. A poll taken in November 2001 showed that concern about the Russian threat went down very briefly from 40% to 18%, only to return to its original height and rise even further.<sup>37</sup> Czech respondents feared the possible consequences of the terrorist attack. The emergence of an imminent threat of terrorism and Islamo-fascism replaced the Russian situation as the gravest perceived danger to the country.<sup>38</sup> What is more, this link between NATO membership and the Russian threat is reinforced by the available pre-1999 data which are not included in the graph for practical reasons.<sup>39</sup>

A cluster of corresponding polls directly touch on the central issue of Czech public support for the country's involvement in Afghanistan's reconstruction. The data available from the period between 2004 and 2010 indicate a rise in the popularity of that engagement, albeit from the very low figure of 14%.<sup>40</sup> The peak was recorded in 2010 when 35% of respondents – still a considerable minority – supported an increase in the number of Czech soldiers sent to Afghanistan as part of President Obama's surge strategy.<sup>41</sup> I learned, however, from many interviews with Czech government officials that this was mainly due to the strategic focus of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence on presenting the contribution as an infrastructure enhancement in Afghanistan. One member of the Czech PRT in Afghanistan was a media expert who took care of the government's website on the Czech engagement in Afghanistan. This online image of the Czech contribution did not, however, represent the true extent of Czech activities in the country.

Overall, the military and reconstruction engagement in Afghanistan was never popular among Czechs. Rather, it was approval – or the lack thereof – of the US president's personality that almost matched positions on the Czech security engagement. Also at work were the dynamics around how favourably the US was seen as a country and Czech public perceptions of how much the US cared about Czech interests (a very low figure across the board).<sup>42</sup> While the latter views aligned significantly, trust in the US president reflected a different dynamic, especially since Obama was far more popular – and Bush Jr. far less popular – among Czech citizens than the United States as a country at those given times. The rise in general support for US counter-terrorism efforts among Czech respondents mirrored public perceptions of terrorism as a threat.<sup>43</sup> As such, the US practices around this issue were widely considered legitimate.

The overall dynamics of Czech public support for us counter-terrorism activities hinged on how favourably the United States was seen as a country at any time. This development was completely disconnected from how the Czechs viewed Afghanistan as a country. A poll for 2012 showed that Afghanistan finished with only 7% approval, putting it at the very bottom of all states in terms of popularity among Czechs.<sup>44</sup> In addition, when asked about their support for economic and security investments in Afghanistan, 66% of respondents disagreed with these measures.<sup>45</sup> This hints that the Czech Republic's great alliance dependence and its notable followership of the US were the important factors in the government's decision to participate in Afghanistan's reconstruction. And that decision was made autonomously, irrespective of the attitudes of the Czech public.

Furthermore, the government's decision to engage continuously in Afghanistan took place despite the disagreement of the country's main opposition party, the Social Democrats. Therefore Kreps's argument about the forming of a national consensus is flawed. Though originally constructive, the opposition's frustration with Czech participation in the ISAF mission - which included the Logar PRT - veered at the end of 2008 into a counterproductive political conflict. The debate on the government's proposal to commit Czech armed forces and resources to foreign operations, was the event during which relations between the government and the opposition grew terse and the threats from the opposition intensified. The tension rose in December 2008 when the government asked Czech parliament to agree to increase the number of military personnel in the Czech Logar PRT by 120 soldiers.<sup>46</sup> The former chair of the Social Democrat Party Jiří Paroubek, along with its then vice-chair Lubomír Zaorálek and the then deputy and chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies Jan Hamáček took the government to task for not explaining the sense and purpose of the mission, refusing to discuss any peaceful, non-military solution to the Afghan conflict and over-emphasising the military component of the mission at the expense of the civilian component.<sup>47</sup>

The peak of the struggle between the government and the left-wing opposition came when the Social Democrats, whose votes the government needed to push through the proposal, announced that they would only vote to extend the commitment to Afghanistan if the government cancelled mandatory fees for healthcare facility visits in the Czech Re-

public. As the government refused to scrap these fees, the proposal to involve Czech armed forces and resources in 2009 foreign operations was voted down by the Social Democrats and the Communist Party on 19 December 2008; it had received only 99 votes in the Chamber of Deputies instead of the necessary minimum of 101. What followed was mutual blaming of the highest order. The then interior minister Ivan Langer went so far as to say that ‘if anything happens to our troops in Afghanistan now, then Jiří Paroubek is a base murderer. Their blood will stick to his hands, for the troops are now left without a mandate.’<sup>48</sup> Paroubek replied that former PM Topolánek was a base cynic.<sup>49</sup> After some difficulties, the government’s bill finally passed on 04 February 2009 in a vote of 105% based on the support of four Social Democrat MPs and seven independent MPs.<sup>50</sup>

This clash subsequently came under criticism from General Jiří Halaška, who was responsible for the ISAF mission. He emphasised the related dangers, noting specifically that the Czech army faced two key time limits that could not be shortened when readying a contingent for the ISAF mission. The first meant that a year was needed to plan all the activities connected with the contingent’s preparation and dispatch; the second required six months for the general and all-round preparation of the contingent before its dispatch. ‘Connecting our participation in approved missions with questions of politics and thus holding our participation hostage to feuds between different sides of parliament is a huge mistake,’ he stated.<sup>51</sup> I have highlighted the conflict above as the most acute illustration of the extent of political polarisation over the Czech contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. There were, however, several other instances.

Despite the polarisation of the public and the political opposition’s disagreement, the Czech government created its “own” motives on the US/NATO structure of expectations. The key political motive for the government’s involvement in the post-war reconstruction of Afghanistan was not related to Afghanistan as such, but rather to the nature of the Czech ideological followership of the United States. What remains is to show how the government attempted to reduce the domestic political paralysis over the ISAF mission. As I have suggested, this can be explained through the notion of post-decisional politics. On precisely these grounds, the Czech government, represented by the then minister of defence Vlasta Parkanová, opted for the following justification when the set-up of the Czech PRT in Logar was proposed:

This material fully reflects the political-military ambitions of the Czech Republic and is an expression of the shared responsibility of the Czech Republic for the safety of both itself and its allies and also for the defence of our shared values and interests... I consider it necessary to remind you here that in October of this year [2007], the members of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly... at their plenary session in Reykjavik in October accepted two resolutions in which they emphasised the strong resolve of the North Atlantic Alliance in relation to solving the situation in... Afghanistan and exhorted the NATO states to become more involved. It is completely certain that some colleagues, who are present here today in this hall, contributed to the acceptance of these resolutions, and I want to single out this moment as a moment that is, in my opinion, utterly crucial for future political decisions.<sup>52</sup>

Quoting the full length of this government justification is important in order to understand the complex conflict between the Czech government and the opposition over the question of Czech PRT and ISAF engagement in general. The reasons why the opposing parties (and especially the Social Democrats, who had otherwise supported foreign missions) had a problem with the PRT Logar were not so much related to its *content* as to the related *procedure*. This meant especially the lack of political debate and the failure to invite the Social Democrats to help in creating the government's proposal.<sup>53</sup> Thus, on one side stood the Czech government which considered the passing of its proposal in the Chamber of Deputies to be an automatic matter given that not only NATO framework executives, but also representatives of various national parliaments - including members of the Czech opposition - had accepted the allied commitments through the NATO parliamentary assembly.<sup>54</sup> On the other side was the Czech parliamentary opposition which was waiting for an invitation to join a real discussion of the proposal and saw Czech parliament as the key forum for confirming its political influence.

Such situations are well-known in political theory as instances of post-decisional politics. As we have seen, the principle of post-decisional politics holds that political decisions are accepted at the level of international communities and institutions while traditional domestic politics are reduced to an automatic seal of approval.<sup>55</sup> From the analysis presented here, it is clear that there could not have been a great difference of opinion on post-decisional politics and parliament's role in relation

to the Czech engagement in Afghanistan than the one between the right-wing governmental coalition and the opposition.

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## Conclusion

This study has attempted to discuss the Czech government's motivation for engaging in Afghanistan's reconstruction. It has highlighted the government's successful internalisation of the US and NATO strategic narratives on the need for the allies to rebuild Afghanistan. Over time, consecutive right-wing Czech governments accepted these narratives at a political level and then passed them off discursively as their own motivations. This work has also maintained that the main reason for these developments lay in the Czech Republic's ideological followership of the United States. This was characterised by its reactive behaviour as a docile ally. While the contours of the Czech strategic narrative produced for domestic public consumption emphasised the immediate terrorist threat and solidarity with a poor country/Afghan society, the real reason for the country's involvement in the ISAF mission was its alliances and US dependency. This point was made clear during parliamentary debates: the burden-sharing commitment was placed high within the NATO context and also seen as a prerequisite for the provision of US security guarantees against a Russian threat. This research has demonstrated that while the "Czech" strategic narrative – essentially a relayed US narrative – contributed to the formation of transnational consensus within NATO, it was never accepted domestically. Opinion polls indicated public division on the issue. Probing the parliamentary debate points to an on-going political split between the government and opposition. As a result, no national consensus was formed over Afghanistan, and we need to correct Kreps's claim that the presence of a domestic political consensus is the main reason for the endurance of unpopular missions.

Given that these findings refute Kreps's argument, a key question lingers: If the consensus of domestic elites does not explain the Czech commitment to the ISAF mission, then what does? As the empirical analysis has shown, a combination of factors allowed the government to continue with a deeply unpopular mission: first, as opinion polls indicated, the ISAF mission was a marginal issue for the domestic political audience. The relative lack of casualties meant that people did not pay heed to the country's presence in Afghanistan. Simultaneously, while the

mission itself was unpopular and somewhat ignored, public support for Czech NATO membership remained strong. This generally corresponded with the understanding that Russia was a national security threat. An additional factor was the lack of security guarantees on a public level. While the political opposition, especially the Social Democrats, used the high-risk strategy of linking parliamentary support for the mission to a domestic issue, this was the only venue where the issue was contested. The main reason why the Social Democrats avoided the larger security questions was that they themselves lacked a credible alternative policy. As such, they did not use this topic to inflame broader media and public attacks on the coalition government. The difference between the parliamentary attacks and the wider societal attacks can also be understood in terms of post-decisional politics. The theoretical point which this study has made is that the opposition expressed procedurally-based frustration at not being politically consulted rather than formulating a substantive alternative plan. No doubt, its risky parliamentary strategy of linking disparate agendas was also made possible by the fact it had been out of power for many years, and there was no immediate need to take command.

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*Nik Hynek*

# Rethinking US Policy Towards Iran's Nuclear Programme

*Surulola James Eke*

Western support for Iran's nuclear programme gave way to opposition when it was realised that alongside non-military use, the Islamic Republic was pursuing a nuclear weapons programme. Driven by Tehran's policy of aggression in the Middle East and elsewhere, Western states under US coordination intensified the pressure on Iran to abandon its alleged nuclear weapons programme. Rather than halting uranium enrichment in Iran, however, years of stifling economic, scientific and military sanctions have only caused the country to take a more clandestine approach. Though US-led restrictions have slowed down the pace of Iranian nuclear development, they have been unable to make Tehran come clean about its plans. While maintaining the correctness of the US position on Iran's nuclear ambitions, this work argues that the policy of restrictions must be reshaped in order to limit its effect on ordinary Iranians. These citizens are identified as potential drivers of change. Seeking their support is crucial for the success of global efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons – hence, the need to restructure restrictions.

*Keywords: Iran, nuclear weapons, United States, policy, sanctions, restrictions*



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## Introduction

The nature of nuclear activities in Iran suggests that the country is on a path to nuclear weapons production. In heading there, it has taken two routes: highly enriched uranium (HEU) and plutonium production. Despite the denials of Iranian government officials, components of the

state's programme and the secrecy of its nuclear dealings bolster the claims of world powers that there is a military dimension to the Islamic Republic's uranium enrichment plans. For decades now, the United States – with the support of the United Nations Security Council (of which it is part) as well as the European Union and other countries such as Australia, Canada, South Korea, India and China – has been pressuring Tehran to relinquish its nuclear weapons ambitions. Nevertheless, the country continues to insist that its uranium enrichment is for peaceful purposes only.

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The pressure mounted on the Islamic Republic of Iran has to date been monumental. Worst hit by the us-led restrictions is the economy. The resulting sky-high prices of goods and services have more impact on ordinary Iranians than on the policy makers who are their real targets. Overall, the consequences in the country have been colossal, and the controversial nuclear programme has also suffered under the weight of us-imposed and -influenced blockades. Despite these visible effects, however, restrictive policies have been ineffective in compelling Iran to jettison its plans to develop nuclear bombs. Thus, although sanctions have succeeded in slowing down Iran's nuclear development, I argue that they should now be reshaped in order to insulate ordinary Iranians from their effects.

This study proceeds by shedding light on Iran's nuclear history, which it traces through to the current state of nuclear developments and their military indicators. It next outlines the sanctions imposed on the country in order to force the redirection of policy; the analysis goes further to provide justification for the Western opposition to Iran based on the latter's aggressive conduct in the Middle East and elsewhere. Finally, this work concludes that current sanctions should be restructured in a way that makes them acceptable to ordinary Iranians. This will create cracks from inside the Islamic Republic.

## **Historical Overview of Iran's Nuclear Programme**

The current tension around Iran's plans to go nuclear – that is, to weaponise its nuclear capability – cannot and should not be divorced from the complicated history of the country's nuclear ambitions. In fact, the intensity of the controversy surrounding Iran's nuclear weapons drive

can be seen as a product of that complex history. Understanding that history, thus, provides a much needed context for the Western disapproval of Iran's desire to weaponise its nuclear power.

To be sure, relations between Iran and the West have not always been conflict-ridden. Britain, for instance, is known to have enjoyed excellent relation with Tehran when economics permitted and the public held that Tehran's dealings with London were not hostile to British interests. The demise of the Anglophone influence created leeway for Washington, which supported Iran's development of nuclear power in the mid-20th century. Iran's nuclear history can therefore be divided into three phases: Western support for Iran's uranium enrichment; Western suspicion of an atomic Iran; and the development of the country's nukes with non-Western input (a stage of conflict).

Interestingly, more than four decades of bumpy us-Iranian relations can be traced to the very nuclear programme which the us helped create and which is now at the heart of global controversy. Iran's efforts to develop nuclear energy date back to 1957; they were linked to a push from the Eisenhower administration which ultimately resulted in the establishment of military-cum-economic ties.<sup>1</sup> The apparent honeymoon between Tehran and Washington spanned decades and ostensibly hinged on Iran's lack of interest in attaining the same status as its us partner when it came to nuclear capability. For its part, Iran was keen to maintain this mutually beneficial situation. Hence, it signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty on 01 July 1968, the day the treaty opened for signatures. Six years later, the state also concluded a safeguard agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).<sup>2</sup> This points to an attitude of compliance rather than dissent and suggests that at the time Tehran was pursuing a peaceful nuclear programme. This compliance contrasts sharply with the defiant behaviour that has characterised Iran's relations with the West for much of the last four decades. It also calls into question the country's nuclear objectives – an issue analysed in-depth further on in this study.

Notably, Tehran's nuclear dealings were not restricted to the us and it also obtained assistance from other Western powers. In the mid-1970s, for instance, Iran signed contracts with Western firms including France's Framatome and Germany's Kraftwerk Union on the construction of nuclear plants and the supply of nuclear fuel. Still, the support from

the us remained substantial: under the 1957 Agreement for Cooperation in Research in the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, the United States provided nuclear technology, supported Iran's scientists and sold the country nuclear reactor fuel. Furthermore, Iran's first nuclear station in Bushehr was built under us supervision.

*Iran's  
Nuclear  
Programme*

To be clear, this was never a one-sided expression of goodwill. In other words, rather than being parasitic, relations were largely symbiotic. The us also stood to benefit from maintaining such close and friendly ties with Iran. In return for its goodwill, the us enjoyed the purchase of Iranian oil at favourably low prices. What factors, then, lay behind the shift from Western support for Iran's nuclear programme to the opposition of Tehran's nuclear ambitions? To sketch an answer, we need to return to the lead-up to the Islamic Revolution of 1979: Western support for Iran's nuclear drive began to erode after us special intelligence forces suggested in 1974 that the Shah's ambitions could lead Iran to pursue nuclear weapons. This concern prompted the withdrawal of Western support for Iran's nuclear programme. But it was the seizing of us hostages and breaking off of diplomatic relations after the 1979 revolution that strained us-Iran relations to the degree assumed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It is widely known that the us is at the forefront of the Western opposition to Iran's nuclear programme. Washington has used sanctions to try to compel the Iranian government to fulfil its nuclear non-proliferation commitments under international law. Over the years, the case against Iran has been strengthened by the clandestine nature of its nuclear activities. (In contrast, Zarif argues that it was efforts 'to avoid the us-led restrictions that led Iran to refrain from disclosing the details of its programme.')

Such us disapproval of Iran's nuclear ambitions has significantly slowed their achievement, but it has failed to bring them to a halt; this is in spite of all recent talks. Though Washington has stepped in on several occasions to block nuclear deals between Iran and each of Argentina, China and Russia, these efforts have on the whole achieved minimal results.

While Washington's attempts to frustrate Tehran into holding dialogue have, for the most part, been unsuccessful – even as us-initiated sanctions undermine Iran's economy – these moves have developed local capacities with some foreign non-Western assistance. Iran may still be a long while away from producing nuclear bombs, but the state

has undoubtedly managed to assemble at least the essential ingredients for nuclear weapons capability. In 2003, *Iran Watch* reported that the world had

realised that Iran had built or was building everything needed to produce enriched uranium, which could fuel nuclear weapons as well as nuclear reactors...the sites included a uranium mine at Saghand, a yellowcake production plant near Ardekan, a pilot uranium enrichment plant at Natanz, and a commercial-scale enrichment facility on the same site. In addition, Iran was continuing work on a 1,000 megawatt nuclear reactor at Bushehr and was building a heavy water production plant at Arak, next to which Iran planned to build a 40 megawatt heavy water reactor.<sup>4</sup>

From very modest beginnings, Iran has managed to set up a torrent of nuclear installations. A partial list of their names underlines this success: Bonab Research Centre, Chalus Nuclear Facility, Darkhovin Nuclear Power Plant, Fordow Uranium Enrichment Facility and Isfahan Nuclear Technology Centre, Lashkar Abad Plant, Karaj Research Centre, Lavizan-Shian Technical Research Centre, Parachin Military Complex, Tehran Nuclear Research Centre, Yazd Radiation Processing Centre and Qom Uranium Enrichment Plant.<sup>5</sup>

### The Possible Military Dimensions of Iran's Nuclear Development

In line with its safeguards agreement, Iran has informed the IAEA about sixteen of its nuclear facilities as well as nine location outside facilities (LOFS) where material is regularly used. In 2010, Tehran also announced the construction of ten new enrichment facilities.<sup>6</sup> It has yet, however, to provide the IAEA with any details of these plans. The current Iranian nuclear infrastructure is extensive. It includes three known uranium enrichment plants: the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant (PFEP), the Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) and the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP).<sup>7</sup> The first two are located in Natanz while the FFEP is in Fordow near the city of Qom. In addition, Iran has at least one known enrichment research and development facility. This is Kalaye Electric in Tehran.

The FEP is the main enrichment facility which uses an IR-1 centrifuge.<sup>8</sup> It is a centrifugal enrichment plant brought into operation in 2007 for the production of low enriched uranium (LEU), enriched up to 5% U-235. The

PFEP is a pilot facility which has mainly been used to test centrifuges of various types (1R-1, 1R-2, 1R-2M, 1R-3 and 1R-4). It is also a LEU production plant and commenced operation in October 2003.<sup>9</sup> Like the FEP, the FFEP is an underground facility; the existence of both plants was revealed by the US in September 2009. Since that disclosure, the FFEP's purpose has been modified several times; it now appears to be dedicated to producing 20%-enriched UF<sub>6</sub>. Additionally it is used to generate UF<sub>6</sub> enriched up to 5% U-235.<sup>10</sup> Iran is constructing a uranium mine in Saghand and has a milling facility at Ardakan and a small (20-tonne per year) uranium mining/milling installation in operation at Gcchine. It is also continuing to build its heavy-water-moderated reactor at Arak though it has yet to disclose the amount of heavy water to be produced.<sup>11</sup> It is estimated that once in operation, Iran's 40MWth reactor at Arak will be able to produce plutonium for one nuclear weapon a year.

Since the initial August 2002 announcement of the construction of the heavy-water production plant at Arak, there has been little doubt in the minds of many people that in parallel with its uranium enrichment programme, Iran is now pursuing a plutonium route to the production of fissile materials for military use. Note that plutonium-239 is the preferred component for nuclear weapons production. This is significant given that most states which have launched a military nuclear weapons programme did so at first via one method – either HEU or plutonium production – and only later achieved military nuclear capacity through both routes. This was the case for the five nuclear weapon-owning states as well as for India, Pakistan, Iraq and North Korea. Though far more difficult to produce, plutonium has certain advantages, particularly since a smaller quantity of it is needed to create the same nuclear explosion yield and warheads are consequently smaller. This is immediately reflected in the size of, for example, the missile payload and the distance it can reach with a plutonium warhead when compared with an HEU warhead.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, many analysts have raised serious questions about the nature of Iran's nuclear research, development and production facilities. Cordesman, for instance, notes that the country has large and well-distributed state industries and military facilities that it can use to hide its activities or to shelter and disperse them.<sup>13</sup> These factors – together with Iran's reduced cooperation with the IAEA, non-implementation of the Additional Protocol, failure to answer longstanding questions about the programme's alleged military dimension and its hide-and-seek games in

negotiations on its nuclear activities – increase the opacity of this nuclear dossier and further justify intensified pressure on the Islamic Republic.

The view that Iran is secretly creating or else intends to develop nuclear weapons is also supported by military, political and technical indicators. Effectively assessing the country's nuclear path therefore requires consideration of all these dimensions; the permutations become complex as various elements enter the mix. Nevertheless, an effort can be made to show that from both technical and political standpoints, Iran has hinted to the world about its desire for nuclear weapons. Iran has enormous reserves of oil and gas deposits which are more than sufficient to generate electrical power, and so nuclear energy should not ordinarily be needed to power the Islamic Republic. The government insists, however, that its final goal is the export of nuclear technology. When we consider that Iran has fairly modest uranium deposits and it relies largely on imports for the major components of its nuclear programme, the country's nuclear plans become quite glaring. This is all the more true since these nuclear investments – often made in secret and dominated by black market purchases – do not appear to be consistent with a strictly peaceful nuclear programme. A.Q. Khan's covert network of business associates in Europe, Asia and Africa is one of the most important suppliers of the essential components of Iran's nuclear reactors.<sup>14</sup>

The heavy-water production plant near the town of Arak about 250 kilometres from Tehran and two gas centrifuge plants under construction at Natanz, forty kilometres from Kashan, are suspected to be part of Iran's nuclear weapons programme. With a capacity of eight kilograms of plutonium a year, the Arak plant is capable of producing two nuclear weapons per annum.<sup>15</sup> Contrary to the relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions – 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008) and 1929 (2010) – Iran has not suspended its enrichment-related activity at these controversial sites. Tehran is also yet to permit the IAEA to take samples from the heavy water stored at its uranium conversion facility.<sup>16</sup> This attitude gives credence to the suggestions of many analysts that Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of nuclear weapons. It is also worth emphasising that the UNSC resolutions which require all uranium enrichment activities to be halted at heavy-water reactors, reflect the efficiency of these plants at producing plutonium for nuclear weapons.

Politically, Iran's gestures both belie the country's outward claims and reveal its desire for nuclear weapons. This desire dates back to the Shah's regime and was identified in a 1975 memorandum from Henry Kissinger to the then US secretary of defence in which the former proposed constructing a multinational reprocessing facility in Iran as a fall back to his first choice, Iran's participation as an investor in an enrichment plant in the US.<sup>17</sup> Why, however, does Iran feel the need to possess nuclear weapons? A clue can be found in a 2003 *Le Figaro* interview which Akbar Etemad, the founder and first president of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI). In this interview, Etemad noted that he had asked the Shah in the mid-1970s if he wanted to build a bomb. The Shah, he said, responded that it would be premature to build a bomb as this would isolate Iran and prevent transfers of nuclear technology, but if in ten to twenty years, Iran's security situation had changed or other states had begun to acquire bombs, the nuclear military option would become at priority.<sup>18</sup> This gives weight to Kemp's view that the Shah's nuclear programme was partly motivated by nuclear threats from Israel, Iraq, Pakistan, India and the Soviet Union.<sup>19</sup>

According to Perry, the Iran-Iraq War taught Iran a valuable lesson about the importance of having a credible deterrent force of its own; the Iranians had possessed none and been left extremely vulnerable.<sup>20</sup> Top Iranian government officials at the time, thus, reiterated the desire for weapons of mass destruction. For instance, in an October 1988 address to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the then speaker of Iran's parliament, Hashemi Rafsanjani called for the development of nuclear and other unconventional weapons based on the country's wartime experience. Rafsanjani told the gathering: 'We should fully equip ourselves both in the offensive and defensive use of chemical, bacteriological and radiological weapons.'<sup>21</sup> Militarily, Iran's conduct in the Middle East – specifically in Lebanon and Syria – suggests the use to which the country would put nuclear weapons should it be allowed to acquire any.

Notwithstanding Iran's reporting obligations under its safeguarding undertakings, IAEA Board of Governors' resolutions and numerous UNSC resolutions, or the attempts made by the P5+1 to seek a political solution and concurrent rounds of sanctions (as discussed below), the country remains adamant as it proceeds with uranium enrichment. As a result, I surmise that though rigorous safeguards and accompanying restrictions

are key to addressing the Iranian nuclear question, repackaging sanctions is equally crucial if any significant headway is to be achieved. Further analysis of this standpoint is contained in the last sections of this study.

Granted that Iran desires nuclear weapons, does it possess the wherewithal to produce them? The answer is affirmative though the country will first have to augment its enrichment capacity to the point that it can make sufficient weapon-grade uranium quickly and secretly. This course of action also seems viable given Iran's extensive nuclear physics and engineering experience and the fact it has been operating nuclear research reactors for decades: the country has a cadre of trained personnel who could be switched to a nuclear weapon programme. As Barnaby has noted, 'if [Iran] produces the fissile material – highly-enriched uranium or plutonium or both – needed for nuclear weapons, such weapons could be built in a relatively short time of months rather than years.'<sup>22</sup> Contrary to the claims of President Hassan Rouhani and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif that Iran is not interested in acquiring nuclear bombs, the evidence available suggests that it is actively heading down this path.

The direct costs of Iran's nuclear pursuits are enormous, and keeping the nuclear weapons option open has staggering indirect costs for the nation in terms of both political and scientific isolation and economic sanctions.<sup>23</sup> However, Iran is maintaining this course. This indicates the need for changes to the strategies being used to force a redirection of national policy. The consequence of failing to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons will be dire: instability in the region will be worsened by the resulting race for nuclear weapons. Iran's history, detailed further below, also suggests how Tehran would behave if it possessed nukes. In contrast, a successful nuclear deal – if brokered by the us – could provide an enormous boost for beleaguered global non-proliferation efforts. This could also lead to a productive American-Iranian relationship which might tackle the many complex security problems impeding stability in the Middle East.

## The US Engagement with Iran

In dealing with the Iranian question, the us has adopted a dual approach: imposing restrictions on the Islamic Republic while seeking avenues for political engagement. What this means is that while the us appears to be

vehemently committed to the sanctions against Iran, it has also preserved the possibility of reaching a compromise through negotiations. In other words, sanctions are imposed while avenues for dialogue are left open. Given, however, that sanctions remain the principal tool relied on in the effort to compel Iran to stay committed to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its safeguards agreement, the discussion below charts the various economic, scientific and military restrictions which have been imposed on Iran by the US, the international community at the behest of the US or by way of the UN Security Council.

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In November 1979, Iranian government assets, including bank deposits, gold and other properties, worth \$12 billion (USD) were frozen. This was followed by a ban on weapon sales to the Iran Republican Guard Corps (Qods Force) (IRGC) in 1984. Then, in October 1987 came a prohibition on the export and import of any goods or services from Iran; it was reinforced in April 2012 by specific restrictions on the supply of technology which had been used to track down dissidents, who were later abused, tortured or killed. In March 2005, the US prohibited trade with Iran's oil industry. This strengthened a ban on US trading with Iran's financial, military, manufacturing and oil sectors in place since May 1995. In June 2005, the assets of individuals connected with Iran's nuclear programme were frozen. In September 2006, the US government prohibited dealings between US financial institutions and Bank Saderat Iran. The year 2008 saw the freezing of over \$2 billion (USD) held for Iran in Citigroup accounts. Finally, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act (CISADA) was adopted in June 2010. This law enhanced restrictions on Iran, including by rescinding authorisations for Iranian-origin imports such as rugs, pistachio nuts and caviar.<sup>24</sup>

Either on their own initiative or under US pressure, several other nations and multinational bodies have imposed sanctions which prohibit nuclear, missile-related and other military exports to Iran as well as investments in the Iranian oil, gas and petrochemical industries. They have also banned refined petroleum and medical product exports along with business dealings with the IRGC and banking and insurance transactions and shipping. For instance, on 23 December 2006, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution which prohibited the supply of nuclear-related materials and technology to Iran and also froze the assets of individuals connected with Iran's nuclear programme. This was followed by the imposing of a UNSC arms embargo on the IRGC on 24

March 2007. On 03 March 2008, the freezing of assets was extended to top Iranian officials connected to the country's nuclear programme. On 09 June 2010, the UNSC tightened the arms embargo, expanded travel bans to cover more individuals involved with Iran's nuclear programme and froze the funds and assets of the IRGC and the Islamic Republic of Iran shipping lines. The Australian government has also placed financial restrictions and travel bans on individuals connected with Iran's nuclear programme. Canada has banned dealings in the property of Iranian nationals and imposed a complete arms embargo along with restrictions on the sale of oil-refining equipment and items that could contribute to Iran's nuclear programme. On 17 March 2012, the European Union initiated the disconnection of twenty-five blacklisted Iranian banks from the SWIFT financial messaging network.

In additional international measures, the Indian government has banned the export of all items, materials, equipment, goods and technology that could contribute to Iran's nuclear programme. Meanwhile, Tehran's sworn enemy, Israel has prohibited business dealings with Iran and unauthorised travel to the country. South Korea has blacklisted 126 Iranian individuals and companies involved in the country's nuclear programme. In July 2012, the European Union placed an oil embargo on Iran and froze the assets of Iran's Central Bank. This was accompanied by a Swiss ban on the sale of arms and dual-use items to Iran. Switzerland has also excluded the sale of products that could be used in the Iranian oil and gas sector along with financing to this sector and put a restriction on financial services.

It is noteworthy that though the sanctions imposed on Iran have had crippling effect on its economy and other sectors – including the nuclear programme which is the source of the crisis – they have largely been ineffective in changing the course of Iran's nuclear drive. In fact, Iranian leaders have hinted at plans to develop an “economy of resistance” that would allow the country to neutralise sanctions and even put it in a position to impose boycotts on hostile states.

## Grounds for the Western Opposition to Iran's Nuclear Programme

Western hostility to Iran's uranium enrichment stems largely from the United States' designation of the Islamic Republic as a rogue state. This

perception of Iran hinges on the country's notorious role as a sponsor of terror – a status which it attained after the October 1983 bombing of US marine barracks in Lebanon. Iran is constantly being accused of aiding terrorism in the Middle East and other parts of the world. Byman notes that 'Iran has backed not only groups in its Persian Gulf neighbourhood, but also terrorists and radicals in Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, Bosnia, the Philippines, and elsewhere.'<sup>25</sup> Iran's propensity for acts of terror is closely associated with the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Iranian leaders believed that aggressively promoting the revolution was a sure way to ensure its success.<sup>26</sup> But, if over the years Iran has demonstrated a proclivity for terrorism, how exactly has this manifested itself? Has Iran's involvement in terrorism been covert, taking the form of support for terrorists, or has it been overt and entailed the actual, direct and undisguised planning and execution of terrorist acts? These questions are addressed below.

Immediately after the revolution, Tehran began to work especially actively with Shi'a Muslim movements around the world. In many countries in the Muslim world, the Shi'a faced oppression and discrimination, and the revolution inspired them to both take action and look to Tehran for support. Iran backed Shi'a groups in Iraq, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Kuwait and elsewhere.<sup>27</sup> The ideological support which Tehran still provides to Shi'a movements has sparked hostility towards Iran from both outside and within the region. In response, terrorism and subversion have been the major weapons in Iran's toolbox. Iran's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism is boosted by Tehran's close connections with the Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.<sup>28</sup> Tehran is seen here as relying on terrorism to further Iranian foreign policy interests.

Today Iran feels itself to be under growing pressure from the international community through both diplomatic and economic sanctions. From the stuxnet virus to the assassination of Iranian scientists and the defection of Iranian agents, the state sees itself as increasingly the target of Western intelligence services in general and Israel and the United States in particular.<sup>29</sup> But have these forces hindered Iran's nuclear programme? The answer, as we have seen, is not clear. In fact, the desire to avenge attacks on Tehran's scientists along with the sanctions targeting its nuclear programme has only fuelled Iran's aggressive tendencies. Is this then a question of failing tactics or one of an insatiable quest to

spread terror? A mixture of both is likely. Iran's role in a spate of terrorist attacks targeting us (and its allies') interests, including bombings in India and Georgia, shows its readiness to promote terror to further its foreign policy objectives. Failing to stop Iran's acquisition of nuclear missiles will, thus, only succeed in strengthening the state's use of terror as a foreign policy tool.

Iranian leaders have often endorsed the spread of terror as a plausible form of engagement. According to the CIA, while Iran's support for terrorism is meant to promote its national interests, this policy also stems from the clerical regime's view 'that it has a religious duty to export its Islamic revolution and to wage, by whatever means, a constant struggle against the perceived oppressor states.'<sup>30</sup> In 2011, Muhammed Hejazi, the deputy head of Iran's armed forces was quoted as saying that Tehran was in a position to order proxy militant groups in Gaza and Lebanon to fire rockets into Israel. He commented, 'Our strategy now is that we will make use of all means to protect our national interests.'<sup>31</sup>

Iran is known to support a number of militant groups active in the Middle East and elsewhere which have been designated as terrorist associations. Among the many groups that Tehran sponsors are the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Hamas and Iraqi Shia militias.<sup>32</sup> In addition, some Iranian state bodies have also been accused of staging terror attacks. They include the IRGC (identified by the US State Department as a terrorist group), the Ministry of Intelligence and Security and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Other non-Iranian terrorist proxies include the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain/Abu Dhabi/Qatar, Hizballah Hijaz and Turkish Hezbollah, Tehreek-Jafria Pakistan and Suni organisations such as Al-Qaeda and the Egyptian Al-Gamiah Islamiyya, which may be outwardly anti-Shiite but maintain covert relations with Iran.<sup>33</sup>

Israel has been one of the major targets for Iran-sponsored terrorism. Since the country has long been one of Iran's foremost enemies, Tehran is willing to spare no resource to secure its annihilation. Iran views the state as not simply an enemy regime, but an *enemy entity*; as such, Israeli civilians are also seen as legitimate objects for attacks by the Islamic Republic. These attacks are further evidence that terrorism has become so entrenched in the Iranian state that it has the status of a foreign policy option. Byman notes that 'in addition to giving Iran a way to weaken its neighbours, terrorism [has] allowed Iran to influence

events well beyond its borders... Iran has used terrorism to project power, particularly in the Arab Israeli arena but also against Iraqi targets and in Europe.<sup>34</sup> These assaults have mostly targeted Israel, the us and other regimes in the Middle East and elsewhere which are sympathetic to both countries. Iran has either been directly involved in their planning and execution or active through proxies such as Hezbollah and Hamas. Jaber reports, for instance, that 'with Iranian guidance, the Lebanese Hezbollah dramatically captured America's attention with devastating suicide attacks on the us embassy in Beirut in April 1983, where 63 people died, including 17 Americans, and on the US Marine Barracks in October, 1983, where 241 US Marines were killed.'<sup>34</sup>

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Iran has also been held accountable for the June 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers housing complex, which was home to American, Saudi, French and British service members in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province. Earlier, in 1983, Iran was accused of bombing the us marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon. It has since masterminded numerous other attacks: the kidnapping and execution of American hostages in Lebanon; the hijacking of us planes; multiple suicide bombings targeting Israeli civilians; and the assassination of scores of Iranian dissidents in the Middle East and Europe. Tehran was also allegedly involved in the fatal bombing of other American facilities in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and 1996. It supervised the 1992 bombing of Israel's embassy in Buenos Aires and has been implicated in the 1994 bombing of the city's Jewish cultural centre.<sup>35</sup> Iran has, thus, been able to compensate for its comparative lack of military power by relying on terrorism.

As can be gleaned from the above, there is overwhelming evidence to substantiate the claims of Western powers about the true aims of the nuclear programme being pursued by Tehran; this evidence also justifies the us location of Iran within the "axis of evil." Further, it points to the potential use to which nuclear weapons will be put if Tehran is allowed to develop them. In other words, this discussion makes clear that by failing to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, the world will create a ready source of atomic bombs for terrorist organisations.

## **Reshaping Restrictions**

One major factor that accounts for Washington's inability to force a review of Tehran's nuclear programme is the fact that the us cannot gain the approval of ordinary Iranians. This is itself a function of

doubts about the real motives for the US opposition to Iran's nuclear programme. Though the dominant view abroad is that Iran intends to enrich uranium beyond 20% (the maximum needed for non-military purposes), the impression at home is that Iran, being a sovereign state, has simply reserved the right to pursue a nuclear programme if it so desires. In fact, Iranians have come to see the US as the aggressor. This is partly the result of government propaganda but mostly because of the hardship which US restrictions impose on them.

On the whole, the US argument against Iran's nuclear programme is germane, but Washington has chosen an inappropriate strategy in its effort to ensure Tehran's retreat from plans to weaponise its uranium enrichment. The success of any new approach will be limited by the distrust that Iranians feel towards the US. This is largely a product of the 1953 coup which ousted Prime Minister Mossadeq and was orchestrated by the US. Such operations were not restricted to Iran, and the US has been accused of organising similar coups in Guatemala and Chile. In these cases, as in Iran, the US is seen as having applied indirect force in pursuit of its foreign policy interests. Building trust among ordinary Iranians is thus crucial if the US wants to see a comprehensive resolution of the Iranian question.

While there has been talk of possible military action by the Israeli and US governments against Iran's nuclear installations, this path should not be taken unless all other avenues have been exhausted. Military action – if it is at all considered – should be the last resort.

Ultimately, the only strategy that appears workable when it comes to halting Iran's nuclear weaponisation agenda is to create cracks from within the Islamic Republic itself. But how can this be achieved? The existing regime of crippling economic sanctions has certainly weakened the Iranian economy and so constrained the Tehran regime. The depleted economy has resulted in sky-high inflation that is still sapping the purchasing power of Iranians. The objective here was always to attack the economy and so compel Tehran to join the negotiating table. |However, these efforts have had an additional, albeit unintended outcome. Where sanctions were meant to create dissent within Iran and so force the government to change its path, they have instead become veritable tools of state propaganda against the West. In fact, the US strategy could only ever have been effective in a truly democratic setting where public opinion was respected and able to force a change in government policy.

## Conclusion

To be sure, the majority of Iranians object to the weaponisation of their country's nuclear programme. However, while they are discontent with their government, they appear unwilling to accept a tactic which does most harm to the ordinary man on the street. The current regime of sanctions mostly affects Iran's middle classes, who are in fact the agents of change in the Islamic Republic. Thus, rather than an over-emphasis on sanctions, what is needed is a shift towards intensified peaceful diplomacy. While the government in Tehran may appear less than disposed to talks about its nuclear ambitions, it remains equally true that the only plan that can gain the backing of ordinary Iranians, and thus, create fractures from within, is one which those citizens are not made to pay for. Moreover, since sanctions have proven ineffective, there should be an increased stress on dialogue. If Iranians no longer feel that they are being beaten into submission from outside, it is very likely that their disapproval of the potential military dimension of nuclear development will grow bolder and create dissent from within the population. Recent experiences in the Middle East reflect the strength of people power. I would suggest therefore that this option be explored.

*Iran's  
Nuclear  
Programme*



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# Looking for Insurgency in Cyberspace

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This study explores the rapidly developing area of conflicts in cyberspace. Its main objective is to outline the concept of cyber-insurgency, which has so far been missing from academic investigations. In addition, this work examines other types of conflicts present in cyberspace, including cyber-warfare, hacktivism and cyber-terrorism. Drawing key distinctions between these conflicts and cyber-insurgency enables us to formulate cyber-insurgency as a stand-alone concept. To this end, I base crucial features of insurgency on the work of David Galula. Applying this standard and traditional approach to the realm of cyberspace raises specific issues about violence and – more importantly – space itself. Finally, this study proposes reasons for the absence of cyber-insurgency from the current political scene and points to conditions for its future emergence.

*Keywords: cyberspace, insurgency, hacktivism, cyber-insurgency, cyber-warfare, cyber-terrorism*

## Introduction

The early decades of the 21st century have seen a remarkable upsurge in the use of cyberspace during conflicts. While fast-spreading malware and financial cybercrime were common even towards the end of the previous century, recent years have witnessed the first coordinated and substantial cyber-attacks during an inter-state war, the first ever use of malware to remotely sabotage mechanical industrial equipment, the sudden rise of hacking by non-state actors for political ends and an equally sudden spate of revelations about the extent of cyber-espionage conducted by national agencies. This would suggest that the era when force is used in cyberspace has finally dawned.

At the same time, some phenomena such as cyber-terrorism are nowhere to be seen despite having been predicted long ago. Physically



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destructive cyber-attacks remain extremely rare, and losses are usually either financial or to the victim's reputation. Although some truly novel forms of cyber-attacks have occurred and new political uses of cyberspace have taken shape, they have often lacked any successors. If this is the dawn, then it seems that only the very first light is visible.

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Against the backdrop of cyberspace's growing prominence in matters besides commerce and entertainment, this study attempts to explore one kind of conflict which often evades attention: cyber-insurgency. Insurgencies are a very common type of discord and one prevalent across the Asian and African continents. Their potential transformation through the influence of cyberspace, thus, deserves some thought.

The first section of this work discusses various forms of political conflict and sources of threats that have been enhanced or transformed by cyberspace's emergence. An attempt is then made to place the concept of cyber-insurgency among these concepts by looking for both common and distinctive traits. These reflections are mostly based on Galula's writings on insurgency.<sup>1</sup> After laying out the basic parameters of cyber-insurgency, I seek to explain its absence from the current scene and look at the conditions which would allow it take root. Finally, I add some observations about the form that cyber-insurgency is likely to take.

## Conflicts in Cyberspace

It is not yet entirely clear how cyberspace actually affects human activities such as war, politics and crime. And it is even less obvious how they will be transformed in the future. Some phenomena – cybercrime, for instance – seem to involve a simple expansion into this new territory. Their actors, whether individuals or organised criminal groups, have added new tools and new methods to their existing repertoire to accomplish exactly the same goals that they were striving to achieve before. In other words, the crime has been “enhanced” by the addition of cyberspace and not replaced by a new and different phenomenon. This is a change in scope and breadth and not in substance.<sup>2</sup>

So-called hacktivism (included here despite its lack of the popular “cyber” tag) seems to be a similar case of the fairly straightforward expansion of traditional politics into cyberspace - an adaption for the Internet age. Once again, new methods have been adopted and new tools are being used to achieve pretty much the same goals. The already apparent similarities between politically motivated Distributed Denial of Service

attacks (DDoS) and regular street protests are made even starker by their often concurrent execution by disgruntled groups. Defacements of websites and vandalism of physical billboards also bear close resemblance to one another, and both actions aim to show disagreement or promote a different political message. Protests against the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA),<sup>3</sup> against the Church of Scientology,<sup>4</sup> as part of the Occupy Movement<sup>5</sup> or even within the Arab Spring<sup>6</sup> are the most visible examples of this trend of political actors coming together in time but not in space. Old and new protest methods differ simply in that the first occupies physical space (streets, squares, buildings) while the second happens in cyberspace (via servers, data links, information systems). But this is only a difference in means and not in purpose.

One of the most discussed forms of human conflict which could potentially be transformed by cyberspace's involvement is, of course, war. Cyberspace is sometimes deemed the "fifth domain," meaning the fifth type of space where military operations could be conducted.<sup>7</sup> Military operations in cyberspace are, thus, called cyber-warfare. Unfortunately for scholars (and fortunately for almost everyone else), there have been very few opportunities to study this kind of warfare. The primary reason is that even before cyberspace had become a potential venue for inter-state warfare, fully modernised states had all but ceased to wage war against each other. Most wars so far have taken place among states for whom cyberspace does not offer many meaningful targets and whose capabilities in this respect are insufficiently developed.<sup>8</sup> The only notable exception is the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, and it has been thoroughly analysed and invoked as a harbinger of what is to come.<sup>9</sup>

The lesson so far seems to be that in an inter-state war, cyberspace would play more of an ancillary role akin to that of space-based systems.<sup>10</sup> This essentially means that it would support and enable the increased effectiveness of traditional forces by, among other things, disrupting enemy communications (both internal and external).<sup>11</sup> This concurrence of warfare across several domains is both similar to the hacktivism example and a critical part of the whole cyber-warfare concept.

The increasing proliferation of automated industrial systems and networked infrastructures (e.g. power grids, transport systems, financial institutions, etc.) coupled with growing awareness of their vulnerabilities raises the prospect of a cyber-attack that could break through the "kinetic barrier." Such an attack might, in theory at least, cause significant

physical damage and potentially the loss of life. Nevertheless, with the exception of Stuxnet,<sup>12</sup> no truly physically destructive cyber-attack has yet been positively documented.<sup>13</sup> Like the Georgian War of 2008, the Stuxnet attack of 2010 can perhaps, thus, be considered a sign of things to come. At the same time, while it demonstrated the scope for the physical destruction of industrial systems, Stuxnet was in some ways more divorced from the traditional concept of war than the Georgian example. There was no state of war between the countries involved; there were no concurrent physical engagements. This was a covert (i.e. hidden and deniable) effort to sabotage the Iranian nuclear enrichment program, an act perhaps more political in nature than military.

This kind of cyber-sabotage and cyber-espionage is quite possibly even more complicated than cyber-warfare, in part because it is currently happening and constantly evolving to respond to new threats and opportunities. Outside the high-profile Stuxnet case, information security corporations have discovered a whole slew of covert information-collecting malware (individual instances have names like Flame<sup>14</sup>, Duqu<sup>15</sup> and Red October<sup>16</sup>). On top of this, long-term efforts to exploit phishing or directly hack into and extract information from the systems of military industrial and technological companies have been observed and documented. They are usually subsumed under Advanced Persistent Threat (APT) phenomena. These covert attacks make good use of cyberspace's natural attributes – in particular, anonymity and global reach. But these same attributes also make any systematic research quite problematic: since these attacks often remain undiscovered for several years, they can hardly be ascribed to any specific actor, and their ultimate goal can be exceedingly difficult to infer from the available evidence.

It is worth noting that though we can observe a definite upswing in these types of operations, they are not an entirely new type of development. Intelligence services all over the world have been engaging in sabotage and espionage since long before the advent of the Internet and cyberspace. In other words, this is a new form of an already existing activity, rather than the manifestation of a new phenomenon.

Last but not least is the case of cyber-terrorism, which is also quite possibly the most controversial type of cyber-conflict. Consensus on what cyber-terrorism actually means is even harder to come by than is the case with any of the previously discussed phenomena. On a very basic level, we can discern two opposing interpretations of cyber-terrorism.

The first might be shorthand simply as “terrorists using the Internet.” This would include activities like using email to communicate, making websites to spread propaganda and share guidance and perhaps using social media to recruit new members and sympathisers.<sup>17</sup> The second view understands cyber-terrorism as acts of political violence that aim to spread fear and are accomplished – and not just facilitated – using cyberspace tools like computer networks and information systems.<sup>18</sup> These acts might, for example, include hacking into a dam’s control systems and flooding towns downstream while at the same time demanding territorial independence or other political concessions. Using conventional explosives to destroy the same dam and achieve the same political goal while tweeting about it would, thus, not be cyber-terrorism on this understanding.

The first approach and its variations have the disadvantage that they are extremely inclusive to the point of uselessness. So many activities can be covered by this definition of terrorism that the meaning of the term may be entirely diluted. The disadvantage of the second and narrower approach is that it does not currently capture a single real case of cyber-terrorism. To date, there has been no politically motivated cyber-attack so violent or damaging that it would really bear comparison to an act of physical terrorism – a suicide bombing, for instance – in terms of the fear instilled in its audience. Unlike cyber-warfare and cyber-sabotage, cyber-terrorism has not yet shown signs that it is looming.

The popular line, of course, is that “it is not matter of *if*, but *when* we experience the first true cyber-terrorist attack.” And this may very well be the case. After all, most other human activities and forms of conflict seem sooner or later to expand into cyberspace. If terrorism is simply a more violent and asymmetrical form of political conflict, then there is nothing to suggest that it would be fundamentally different to other acts and somehow incapable of taking advantage of this new environment. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that this expansion has not yet happened, at least if we adhere to the narrower definition of cyber-terrorism.

## The Absence of Cyber-insurgency

The incidence of these different types of cyberspace activities varies wildly. Some are exceedingly rare or virtually non-existent and discussed

mainly as possible future scenarios. This is the case for cyber-terrorism, cyber-sabotage and perhaps cyber-warfare. Others like cybercrime or cyber-espionage can be very common. Hacktivism, despite being a relatively recent addition to this “cyber-zoo,” has quickly become commonplace. The key difference between these activities lies not in the nature of the entity behind the action, but rather in the tools involved and the effects desired. The need to break through the kinetic barrier seems to be what is holding back the proliferation of some activities.<sup>19</sup> But while achieving physical results remains difficult, both state and non-state actors have become proficient at routinely disrupting communication channels and extracting and disseminating information. The absence of inter-state cyber-warfare also comes down to the lack of conducive wars, with peacetime espionage in cyberspace basically serving as a substitute.

So where does this leave cyber-insurgency? In these conditions, it has a similar profile to cyber-terrorism - particularly in the sense that it is not a phenomenon we now see occurring, but one we might expect to encounter in the future. This is based on the general observation that existing forms of conflict tend to take advantage of the opportunities that cyberspace offers. Insurgency certainly exists as a kind of conflict and so it follows that cyber-insurgency should hover somewhere on the horizon.

But while many pages of journals and other media have been devoted to cyber-warfare, hacktivism, covert actions and even cyber-terrorism, surprisingly little attention is being paid to the issue of insurgency in cyberspace. Even Dorothy Denning seems to skip insurgency in her axis of increasingly destructive political activities, jumping straight from hacktivism to cyber-terrorism.<sup>20</sup>

The little that can be found on this topic often describes how pre-existing insurgents might use and exploit the Internet to advance their goals, deploying websites or social media to communicate and mobilise.<sup>21</sup> This approach to cyber-insurgency basically mirrors the first approach to cyber-terrorism set out above and is probably too broad. Some commentaries are more specific and innovative but lean towards equating cyber-insurgency with another already existing concept such as hacktivism<sup>22</sup> or else analysing cyber-warfare through the prism of insurgency.<sup>23</sup> While such contributions can be very insightful, none of them really delves into cyber-insurgency as a concept or explains its absence from the current scene.

## Cyber-insurgency's Distinctive Features

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For those trying to deduce what insurgency in cyberspace might look like or why it seems to be absent, exploring related human behaviours which have been transformed or enhanced by the advent of cyberspace is only one part of the task. The second, and no less important, step is to look at insurgency itself and lay bare its core features and principles. This should enable us to infer how – and under what conditions – insurgency might be influenced by cyberspace.

Fortunately, the research on insurgency is well-established and replete with established works. For the purposes of this review, I focus on Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare* as the primary source of insights about insurgency. Galula's work deals with the conflict from both sides; it is pertinent and has stood the test of time. Despite being written in 1964 (which some might view as a shortcoming), it is still being referenced today by scholars and practitioners.<sup>24</sup> This also means that it is not overwhelmed by recent and very specific experiences from Afghanistan and Iraq, which tend to dominate current thinking on insurgency. Instead, it draws on a wider set of conflicts in various parts of the world. Naturally we need to allow for several historical shifts and technological advances which have occurred since Galula wrote this work, but its principal points and observations on the nature of insurgency remain valid.

Compared to war, insurgency differs in several key respects. For a start, it refers to an internal and highly asymmetrical conflict that challenges a current authority. And it is not only the asymmetry of the fighting forces which matters. Insurgents usually lack financial and industrial resources, control over media, transport, any executive or legislative power, diplomatic recognition and sometimes even international support. Cyber-insurgents can also be expected to occupy a much weaker economic and political position than their opponents. This difference in valuable assets is, however, perhaps slightly less pronounced in cyberspace due to its open nature and more easily obtainable and affordable tools. Insurgents are far closer to procuring state-of-the-art computer hardware and software than to operating their own aircraft carriers.

But the asymmetry cuts both ways. Insurgents are crucially free of the heavy burden to maintain order and a stable economy across a country. One of the pillars of their overall strategy is to make this burden even

heavier so that ideally the central authority will crumble under its load. Natural laws teach us that general disorder (also called entropy) is an organic state of affairs and tends to increase within a given system over time.<sup>25</sup> It is therefore always more demanding and expensive to counter this natural tendency by promoting order rather than it is to “go with the flow” and promote disorder. Undermining the government’s efforts to run the country by promoting chaos is, thus, a prominent feature of insurgency and a very efficient way to erode state power and authority. This feature can easily be translated into cyberspace. Services provided by state institutions and their infrastructure can, in principle, be targeted during a cyber-insurgency to gnaw away at the regime’s authority.

Additionally, insurgents may – and should – occupy the ideological high ground, invoking the abstract power of a political cause without being restrained by tangible obligations. They are also the only side which can initiate a conflict since there can be no counter-insurgency without the insurgency it is opposing. In a traditional inter-state war, the sides are more symmetrical – or at least comparable – in capabilities, resources, goals and responsibilities, and each of them can initiate the conflict.

Another key distinction from war is that insurgency is fought over control of the population. The aim of insurgents is to take control of the people and so secure victory in a protracted struggle. For any regime, the population is a source of both power and legitimacy, and its approval or at least passive submission is needed if that regime is to remain in control. Therefore, the goal of the insurgents’ cause is to pull the population away from the central authority without needing to directly overpower its entire military force. In contrast, in an inter-state war, the objective is usually to destroy the enemy’s military power and seize control of its territory in order to enforce one’s will.

This raises the intriguing issue of space itself.<sup>26</sup> Traditional physical wars between states are fought in all accessible domains because that is where their military assets are located and where they project their power. In some wars, national navies or air forces can exert crucial influence over the whole conflict by achieving decisive superiority in “their” domain. Such superiority can then be leveraged to critically disrupt the opponent’s operations in other domains (by means of long-range bombardment or direct combat support, for example). But virtually no fighting takes place in the air or at sea during insurgencies. These

domains may be used by counter-insurgent forces for logistical reasons or support, or insurgents may try to attack and disrupt them, but there is no symmetrical and systematic struggle over their control.

There is a key reason why these domains are not central: they are not where the population lies. There is no one living in the air, at sea or out in space over whom insurgents could fight. Insurgency can only exist where the people permanently live. Even if insurgents managed to take control of some section of airspace or sea (which is hardly achievable given the asymmetrical nature of the conflict and their inadequate resources), they would not benefit from this beyond being able to use the space to move troops and supplies. Insurgencies are primarily land-based conflicts because land is where the people are.

So, if it is the lack of a permanent population that currently prevents outbreaks of insurgencies in the air, at sea and in the orbit around the Earth,<sup>27</sup> where does this leave cyberspace? Can insurgencies occur there at least in theory? In other words, do people live in cyberspace such that insurgents might fight over them in the near future?

From a strictly physical point of view, the answer is obviously a resounding “no” – people do not live in cyberspace and so insurgencies cannot take place there. Cyberspace is basically notional and immaterial (despite being enabled by an infrastructure that is absolutely material); it is physically inaccessible to the solid body of a human being. As such, it is impossible to live in cyberspace in the same sense that one lives on land.

But it is an entirely different matter when one considers cyberspace in a more abstract context. People do spend large amounts of time “in” cyberspace. They work there; they seek entertainment there; they communicate; they even engage in politics and – crucially – they form communities across cyberspace which do not respect the physical boundaries or nationalities of their members. Therefore, there are, in some sense, politically active communities “living” in cyberspace that neither overlap nor are mutually exclusive to physical communities. They emerge more out of common interests and beliefs than shared ancestry or neighbourhoods. In some instances, this may even lead to physical relocations when members of communities originating in cyberspace converge in the same place, thus closing the gap between cyberspace and physical space even further.<sup>28</sup>

Under these conditions, cyberspace looks like a domain where it might be possible for insurgents to battle states and governments for

control over the segment of population that resides online. And this is basically what some hacktivists are already doing. Cyberspace has now spawned groups which use “local” tools to undermine existing central authorities and win the support of the people. Anonymous, an entity probably better described as a broad movement than an integrated group, may well be the best example of this development, but it is far from the only one. These groups execute cyber-attacks against governmental and other enemy assets in cyberspace; they use propaganda to spread their ideological cause among they people. And, as we have noted, they organise simultaneous political protests in the physical world.

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What, then, is the difference between hacktivism and cyber-insurgency? Traditionally, and as Galula also points out,<sup>29</sup> the line between political activism and insurgency has been very thin and vague. The shift from escalating activism to full-strength insurgency is usually gradual and hard to pin down. But the main difference relates to violence. Whereas activists and parties mostly hold rallies and protests and disseminate leaflets, insurgents instead focus on killing officials, ambushing armed forces and destroying infrastructure. To give some specific examples, the use and prevalence of violence are what distinguishes the Arab Spring in Tunisia from the Arab Spring in Libya. A second difference concerns insurgency’s conspiratorial nature, which is partly a consequence of the violence on both sides of the conflict. Holding an open political rally becomes problematic when explosions and small arms fire are the order of the day.

But the concept of violence is very hard to translate into cyberspace. Violence is generally defined as the use of physical force with the purpose of harming someone or damaging something.<sup>30</sup> Using physical force in cyberspace is not possible because the domain is immaterial. Calling malware or specific cyber-attacks violent also constitutes a considerable inflation of the term; it offers no clear distinctions and, thus, seems wholly unproductive. Key questions remain: Are DDoS flood attacks exercises of physical force intending to damage something? Was Stuxnet violent?

It makes far more sense to follow the distinction that Denning makes when discussing cyber-terrorism.<sup>31</sup> This distinction is not about violence but instead based upon disruption and destruction. Hacktivism is disruptive: it blocks communication, substitutes and misappropriates content and circulates disparaging information. It inconveniences or annoys its victims. But cyber-terrorism and cyber-insurgency are – or

rather they would be – destructive. Factories might be damaged, traffic or power might be perpetually disabled and, if technology so allows, people might be killed. Distinctions along these lines better capture the nature of cyberspace. As such, they are more useful when researching cyber-threats than trying to copy the concept of violence directly over from physical space.

Given their common destructive and political nature, it may be tempting to equate cyber-insurgency with cyber-terrorism. But, in cyberspace, as in physical space, the two activities can be distinguished. As is often the case, the line is just not clear-cut. In their simplest and purest form, insurgencies attempt to win over or take control of the people while attacking and weakening the central authority. In contrast, terrorism can be described as a strategy for extorting concessions from the government by attacking the people themselves. The relationships within these two forms of conflict are, thus, slightly different. Terrorist attacks are meant to be violent and destructive spectacles which put pressure on their audience. The direct victims of the attacks are not that audience; they are just a means to induce fear in the real audience consisting of the rest of the population and the government. During an insurgency, in contrast, it is the people who are being fought over. This is why insurgent attacks usually target the government, the army and other mainstays of the central authority.

As Galula notes, these two approaches are not entirely mutually exclusive.<sup>32</sup> Terrorism may be useful for its shock value and ability to destabilise the state, and both these effects may also help insurgents to achieve their goals. This is true especially when insurgent action starts out very weakly, lacking a strong political cause that would rally the population alongside, or when government counter-insurgency efforts are overly strong and effective. Terrorism can grab headlines, achieve desired publicity for a cause and raise the political awareness of the population. Later on during the conflict, it may be used to maintain control of the population by staging public executions of “traitors,” and thus, dividing the people from the government even further through fear. Still, for the most part, beyond its initial shock value, terrorism is detrimental to the insurgent cause. Protracted campaigns of fear alienate the population from a cause and can generate public support for counter-measures.

Applying these distinctions to cyberspace, we can expect cyber-terror attacks to be programmed for maximum shock value and fear with the intent of making central authorities yield to attackers’ demands. Soft,

civilian targets would be the easiest to attack as they would generate maximum publicity when destroyed or killed. On the other hand, cyber-insurgency would involve attacking government systems, trying to destroy military, police and other institutional assets and assassinating select officials who represent the enemy or its regime.

We can pause here to distinguish cybercrime, which unlike all of the types of conflict discussed above, lacks an inherently political essence. This is quite straightforwardly what sets it apart from cyber-insurgency. Crime is carried out for profit and not for political goals, while cyber-insurgency is thoroughly political. Nevertheless, since in practice, groups or individuals can pursue both aims (and even seek to control the population in order to achieve them), the distinction can become somewhat blurry. After all, cyber-insurgents need money to expand and remain active, and organised crime organisations are easier to build and maintain if they manage to gain political influence (through corruption or blackmail, for example). Ultimately, however, while some overlap or cooperation may occur, the difference in the motives of profit-seeking criminals and politically motivated insurgents offers the clearest and most practical distinction between the two activities.

The last of the cyberspace activities set out above, cyber-espionage and cyber-sabotage do not themselves really constitute separate types of conflict. Rather, they serve as more specific (yet still quite broad) means of cyber-attack, independent of the overall aims of the actors who deploy them. As such, both can be used to full effect during all the listed types of conflicts and also linked to varying long-term goals.

In recent years, such attacks, especially when targeting state assets and systems, have followed a pattern which is the modern cyberspace equivalent of the traditional covert contest between different intelligence agencies and their proxies.<sup>33</sup> It would be problematic to describe these attacks, which are generally non-destructive (with the clear exception of Stuxnet), as “cyberwars” in the absence of an actual state of war or any armed clashes between the actors. Alternative names like “cyber-cold wars” may be more accurate. At the same time, they do not seem to add much conceptual content beyond what “cyberspace intelligence operations” in general and “cyber-espionage/sabotage” specifically already capture.

## **Why is Cyber-Insurgency Nowhere to Be Seen?**

Having established the characteristics of cyber-insurgency and highlighted its distinguishing features, we have still to address the important

matter of its current absence. So, why is it that we do not see cyber-insurgency, as described above, on the world political scene?

The first reason why cyber-insurgency is missing comes almost directly from reflections on the similar case of cyber-terrorism, which is also notably absent. It stems from the necessarily destructive nature of both kinds of attacks. While cyber-terrorist attacks must cause harm in order to generate enough fear in their audience, cyber-insurgencies must be destructive to undermine state power, promote disorder, establish control over the people and thus exceed the merely disruptive nature of hacktivism. Currently, however, as we have seen, it remains relatively difficult to overcome the kinetic barrier and so achieve physically damaging outcomes through cyber-attacks.

This is especially true for non-state actors because they lack many of the resources along with the insider knowledge and dedication which allow some states and their agencies to push the boundaries of what can be achieved in this area. Insurgents are naturally non-state actors (unless they are being used as proxies and supported by another state). Therefore, it is not very likely that significant cyber-insurgency will take place before these kinds of attacks become more feasible. On the other hand, their feasibility might not be apparent until they actually start to happen.

The second reason for the absence of cyber-insurgency applies to cyber-warfare as well. As has been mentioned, in the absence of a modern inter-state war, there are few occasions when cyber-warfare may take place. Regions beset by conventional wars usually lack the infrastructure, appropriate targets and technical expertise needed to execute significant cyber-attacks that would support the on-going war in a noticeable way.

And similarly, while violent insurgencies have been occurring in those same regions, they are largely absent from the modern states dependent on the advanced and networked information systems which would provide fertile ground for cyber-attacks. Until states plagued by armed insurgencies are fully modernised, or those already modernised are embroiled in insurgent attacks, there will not be many opportunities for cyber-insurgency to take hold and develop. Assessing how probable these two scenarios are, or even which one of them is more likely, falls outside the scope of this study, however.

An alternative interpretation would call up the threat of “global cyber-insurgency.” Consistent with the lack of national borders and territoriality in cyberspace, this would manifest in attacks spanning the globe and disregarding spatial proximity and distance. This trend is

already visible in hacktivism, especially when Western hackers support political conflicts in African or Asian states.

Things get more complicated when destructive attacks are considered because, as noted above, these – in some cases conventional – insurgencies take place in states which often lack the favourable conditions needed for their execution. Harmful cyber-attacks meant to undermine the power of a specific regime must almost certainly physically manifest themselves in a territory which that regime controls. In other words, if a prospective cyber-insurgent living in Western Europe decides to help undermine a regime somewhere in Southwest Asia, then they must damage assets which are physically located in Asia, and not in Europe where the attacker lives. At least at present, this does not seem to be an easy task to accomplish.

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### *The Preconditions for Insurgency*

According to Galula, there are several prerequisites which must be met before insurgency can flourish.<sup>34</sup> The potential success or failure of an insurgency hinges largely on these preconditions. This should also hold true for cyber-insurgencies though, of course, with some modifications. Based on these prerequisites, we can also venture some observations about the likely nature of cyber-insurgency.

The first prerequisite relates to the cause behind the action. As has been noted, insurgents cannot succeed in gaining control of the population unless they represent and fight for a cause which both undermines the authority of the contested regime and attracts public support. A good cause is one whose validity the government cannot possibly accept, and which it cannot implement itself. Otherwise the insurgency will be drained of support before it even begins.

Any cause will invariably polarise the population and split it into three groups: those who support it; those who oppose it; and those who are passive or indifferent towards it. A protracted conflict will bring members of the last group to gradually align themselves with one of the extremes. Well-chosen causes attract the largest possible group of initial supporters, minimise opposition and lure those who have not yet had to decide. Later, the conflict will be intimately tied to the cause, rendering neutrality untenable.

Traditionally, insurgents picked their causes based on local politics and the local population. But, cyber-insurgency, as we have seen, opens up the conflict to a whole new set of actors who might decide to intervene

by making destructive attacks through cyberspace. Therefore, potential cyber-insurgents will need to consider how appealing their cause is to a wider audience. This was true to some degree even before the advent of cyberspace when volunteers would travel long distances to join the struggle they believed in. But in a cyber-insurgency, these volunteers do not even have to leave their homes and jobs. They can join in the fight while carrying on their regular lives, benefiting from the relative safety and anonymity that cyberspace provides.

This also means that the cause in question should call out especially to those who have the means to act upon it and can execute destructive cyber-attacks from outside. The highest concentration of such volunteers can probably be found in modern states characterised by the extensive use of information and communication technologies and corresponding education opportunities. The reason why the fight for freedom of information is such a popular cause among current hacktivists is that the people who are actually able to stage these attacks are the ones who find this cause personally appealing

The potential for external volunteers to have a significant impact on cyber-insurgencies is something that must be added to Galula's core conditions, particularly since he considers other states to be the only significant source of outside support. And there is another group of actors who might influence cyber-insurgencies: private companies. They carry out much of the technical development, run the infrastructure and also supply both hardware and software which are used to operate and even protect critical assets. Their attitude to the cause could prove decisive when insurgents seek to carry out destructive cyber-attacks and when counter-insurgent forces try to thwart their success. Obtaining their support and avoiding their opposition should therefore be goals which both sides consider pursuing in a cyber-insurgent conflict.

Geography also plays a crucial role here. Translating this into the cyber-insurgency context is problematic, however, because of the different nature of space itself in this domain. There is, of course, no physical geography to speak of in cyberspace; there are no mountain ranges or deserts. Some aspects of geography – climate, economic development levels, population density, for example – have no meaning in this realm. This is largely because much of cyberspace is uniformly accessible from anywhere and free of any limits. Frequently visited and economically thriving areas occupy the same space as abandoned and destitute ones.

Geography partitions the land and makes some areas more difficult to access than others in a conventional insurgency. But there are some comparatively inaccessible areas of cyberspace too. They are the equivalents of mountains and rivers, but are all man-made. A very prominent example is the national filtering done by governments in an attempt to prevent local populations from accessing “undesirable” content. Following a similar principle, but on a smaller scale, protected local area networks are supposed to prevent attackers and malware from coming in from the outside. Virtual private networks are another example of this “cyber-geography.” They enable a more secure exchange of information between endpoints, thus circumventing much filtering. These features can be considered the cyberspace equivalents of rivers and fords – or perhaps given their artificial nature, fortifications and tunnels may be a more appropriate analogy.<sup>35</sup>

Another major area of cyberspace with altered accessibility and visibility is the Deep Web, which is sometimes also called the Darknet. This is a network of hidden servers, anonymised services and encrypted information flows not reachable by regular means. This area is the cyberspace equivalent of mountain ranges and jungle, and it is next to impossible to observe what is happening inside it. It remains largely beyond the reach of regulation. Unsurprisingly, it is already providing a haven to both criminals and political dissidents.<sup>36</sup>

The most extreme form of geography in cyberspace is the complete physical separation of networks. Such a separation (also called an air-gap) theoretically prevents any malware or direct hacking attack from reaching its target over the Internet, and it is how the most sensitive systems are protected. Air-gaps open up a veritable ocean or chasm in cyberspace whose crossing requires entry into another domain. But whereas real oceans and chasms can be crossed by leaving land and travelling by air or sea, the cyberspace equivalent must be traversed through a physical domain. In practice, this elaborate analogy usually boils down to someone physically carrying malware over the gap via their USB flash drive or another portable data storage device.<sup>37</sup>

The last of Galula’s prerequisites for an insurgency is the weakness of the opponent. This weakness is closely connected to the political cause discussed earlier and mostly describes the regime’s inability to react efficiently to the threat posed by nascent insurgency. Issues like a weak political structure, internal fractures or incompetent security

forces make the job of insurgents easier. This applies to insurgencies conducted in physical space as well as those in cyberspace, and there is little conceptual difference between the two.

One of the informing ideas of the first part of this study was the mounting of simultaneous action in cyberspace and physical space. This tactic is especially important during cyber-warfare and hacktivism, but mostly absent from cybercrime and cyber-espionage. This is mainly because of the covert nature of the latter activities. The long-term success of both crime and espionage operations largely depends on their target not knowing it is under attack. It is significantly more difficult to fool a victim if it knows it is being deceived. Obscurity and a lack of physically apparent consequences are therefore critical to these attacks' successful continuation.

On the other hand, war and political activism are already apparent and visible to everyone. They can hardly be conducted without actions happening in the physical world such as leaders making demands, crowds gathering in the streets and military hardware moving around. Under these conditions, it would generally only be an advantage to take concurrent actions in cyberspace that boost offline efforts. These actions could include defacing news portals with one's own message, hacking into opponents' databases to look for information or even taking an enemy power grid offline.

In an active cyber-insurgency, attackers would also benefit from supporting their physical operations with same-time attacks in cyberspace. These strikes could delay the reactions of counter-insurgent forces, hinder their movements, weaken their response or stretch their resources by causing damage and deaths in multiple locations at the same time. In this respect, cyber-insurgency probably comes closer to cyber-warfare than to cyber-espionage.<sup>38</sup>

Clearly, different actors strive to conceal or publicise their attacks to different degrees. As we have seen, some strikes are supposed to remain concealed for as long as possible while others are meant to attract attention. Hacktivism especially seeks out attention and often goes so far as to publicly announce a target even before it is attacked.

More commonly, cyber-attacks are planned and executed in secret. But once an attack (or even a series of attacks) is complete, its results are widely publicised to achieve the maximum impact on the audience. The same pattern can be expected from cyber-insurgencies given their

focus on the population. But this is hardly surprising and quite analogous to how publicity is already handled during conventional insurgencies in physical space. This attention-seeking behaviour is definitely not exclusive to cyberspace; it is simply made easier there.<sup>39</sup>

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## Conclusion

Cyber-insurgency is still a hypothetical situation. Nevertheless, it is sufficiently distinctive from other forms of conflict to stand its own ground. Unlike cybercrime, its goals are political and not profit-oriented. Unlike cyber-warfare, it is highly asymmetrical and involves controlling the population. It follows the logic of hacktivism, but whereas hacktivism is essentially disruptive, cyber-insurgent attacks would be far more severe, destructive and lethal. It also differs from cyber-terrorism since it focuses on attacking and disrupting a regime rather than extorting and intimidating its people.

The absence of cyber-insurgency to date can mostly be ascribed to the lack of conducive political conflicts in states with sufficiently developed information infrastructure and integrated networked systems. Breaking through the kinetic barrier – that is, achieving significant physical destruction solely through a cyber-attack – also remains a major hurdle, especially for non-state actors. It remains to be seen where the first genuine cyber-insurgency will erupt and for what cause. Nor can we say when the first truly destructive and potentially even lethal political cyber-attack will strike. It could be months or decades away.

An additional benefit of studying cyber-insurgency's potential emergence is that it highlights interesting parallels between physical space and cyberspace along with their substantial differences. The transformation of society and civilisation which was triggered by the expansion of cyberspace is on-going and not yet fully understood. By looking forward and realistically anticipating the potential impact of cyberspace on our conflicts, we can avoid being caught unawares by sudden developments.



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## Notes

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7. The other four domains are (in chronological order of their becoming accessible) land, sea, air and outer space. Cyberspace is, thus, the most recent addition to the list. See William J. Lynn III (2010), 'Defending a New Domain,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 5, pp. 97-108.
8. For a list of wars in the period 1816 - 2007, see the Correlates of War (2010) data set: <[http://www.correlatesofwar.org/cow2%20Data/WarData\\_NEW/WarList\\_NEW.pdf](http://www.correlatesofwar.org/cow2%20Data/WarData_NEW/WarList_NEW.pdf)> (accessed 27 January 2014).
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10. Comparing their usefulness in military conflict suggests that the two domains (i.e. space and cyberspace) are both well-suited for collecting in-

formation on the enemy. However, while space-based systems can also efficiently distribute information to friendly forces and provide communication channels, current cyber-warfare tools are generally more geared to disrupting information flows within enemy systems and shutting down unwanted communication channels. The two domains are, in a sense, complementary.

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13. Stuxnet is not the only claimed case of a cyber-attack with physical consequences. Very widely mentioned is the case of the Siberian gas pipeline explosion caused by a "logic bomb" planted by the CIA during the Cold War. Unfortunately, every single allusion to this event can be traced back to a single original source (a memoir by Thomas C. Reed), which has never been supported by material evidence or independent confirmation. For a comparison, see Gus W. Weiss (2008), 'The Farewell Dossier,' *Studies in Intelligence*, available at: <<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/96unclass/farewell.htm>> (accessed 27 January 2014).

Less well-known is the alleged cyber-assassination of a hospitalised "mob boss" in Italy. This allegation also has only one source - this time a Nigerian newspaper report: see 'Cyber Terrorism Hits Nigeria,' (2010), *Daily Sun*, September 25, available at: <<http://newafricanpress.com/2010/09/25/cyber-terrorism-hits-nigeria/>> (accessed 27 January 2014). Much of the limited publicity that this story received arose from a post at DefenseTech.org which cited the original article as "evidence": Kevin Coleman (2010), 'A Cyber Assassination Confirmed?' *DefenseTech*, September 29, available at: <<http://defensetech.org/2010/09/29/a-cyber-assassination-confirmed/>> (accessed 27 January 2014).

A final example comes from the Polish town of Lodz where a schoolboy managed to assemble an infrared remote control for shifting tram tracks in 2008. This resulted in the derailment of a tram and several minor injuries: see Graeme Baker (2008), 'Schoolboy Hacks into City's Tram System,' *The Telegraph*, 11 January, available at: <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1575293/Schoolboy-hacks-into-citys-tram-system.html>> (accessed 27 January 2014). Though it exposed exploitable deficiencies in the public transportation system, this was basically a juvenile prank with very little political or military significance.

Ultimately, none of these events (whether real or fictitious) offers much insight into political conflicts in cyberspace.

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- blogid=208193522> (accessed 27 January 2014).
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  16. Kaspersky Labs' Global Research & Analysis Team (2013), "Red October" *Diplomatic Cyber Attacks Investigation*, available at: <[http://www.securelist.com/en/analysis/204792262/Red\\_October\\_Diplomatic\\_Cyber\\_Attacks\\_Investigation](http://www.securelist.com/en/analysis/204792262/Red_October_Diplomatic_Cyber_Attacks_Investigation)> (accessed 27 January 2014).
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  24. The current US Army counter-insurgency field manual cites Galula frequently; see 'Counterinsurgency,' FM 3-24, Headquarters, Department of the Army, available at: <<http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf>> (accessed 27 January 2014).
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# Latvia and Money Laundering

## An Examination of Regulatory and Institutional Effectiveness in Combating Money Laundering

*Andrew Bowen and Mark Galeotti*

In the wake of the Cyprus bailout, illicit financial flows and money laundering have shown their systemic threat to the stability of not only the Eurozone but the international financial system. Great attention is being paid to countries anti-money laundering efforts and on the stability of their banking sectors. This attention has increased with the entry of Latvia to the Eurozone as its banking sector is being used to launder illicit capital. Long a centre for capital from Eurasia, and the scene of multiple instances of financial malfeasance, great attention has been placed on its efforts to reform its regulatory and oversight capabilities. Despite the improvement, Latvia continues to experience large amounts of capital from Eurasia and is the continued scene of money laundering efforts. We examine the efforts of the regulatory institutions to combat money laundering and of the use of the banking sector for illicit purposes. We find that while there has been significant improvement in the regulatory capabilities of authorities, Latvia continues to be a locale for the laundering of capital from Eurasia and that without continued institutional improvement the situation is unlikely to change.



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*Keywords: Latvia, EU, Eurozone, Money Laundering, Tax Evasion, Financial Crime, Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia*

## Introduction

With Latvia's entry into the Eurozone as its 18<sup>th</sup> member in January 2014, the question of the country's will and capacity to regulate its own financial sector has raised considerable unease within the EU. It is generally acknowledged that the country has made efforts to reinforce its anti-money laundering (AML) and regulatory institutions.<sup>1</sup> In particular, Latvia has made a concerted effort to reform its economy to prevent another dramatic economic downturn of the kind that it experienced post-2008. However, the country remains a bridge between the economies of Russia and the other post-Soviet states and Europe and the world's financial systems. With that position has come a role as a key money laundering nexus, too, and one that potentially has both economic and political implications. The EU Commission noted that while Latvia was ready to join the Eurozone, 'Going forward, close monitoring of financial stability risks, readiness to adopt further regulatory measures if needed and determined implementation of anti-money laundering rules will remain key.'<sup>2</sup>

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There are certainly grounds to suspect that Latvia is still reluctant to openly commit itself to combating the abuse of its banks to move and launder criminal profits. For example, it has emerged that more than \$63 million (USD) passed through Latvian banks in connection with the massive fraud since known as the "Magnitsky Affair." However, the only action taken has been a fine of €140,000 euros (\$188,000) imposed by the Latvian Banking Regulator – Financial and Capital Markets Commission (FCMC) – against a bank that they have refused to publicly identify. Since then, Latvian financial institutions have been used to handle money for a range of controversial deals, ranging from weapon shipments to Syria<sup>3</sup> to facilitating the corrupt purchase of oil rigs by Ukraine for \$150 million more than they were worth.<sup>4</sup> The continued exploitation of the Latvian banking sector poses problems not only for the small country but also for the EU and the wider international community as well.

The Council of Europe's money laundering monitoring committee, MONEYVAL, in its last assessment noted Latvia's improved regulatory mechanisms

Since the 3<sup>rd</sup> round report Latvia has improved the supervisory regime, transposing into the new AML/CFT law both the pro-

visions of the third European Union (EU) AML/CFT Directive (2005/60/EC) and its Implementing Directive (2006/70/EC).<sup>5</sup>

The authorities have a financial intelligence unit to receive and analyse suspicious transactions, the Office for Prevention of Laundering of Proceeds derived from Criminal Activity under the Prosecutor's Office. Despite the presence of internationally acceptable standards of anti-money laundering institutions, though, Latvia continues to see significant instances of money laundering and the exploitation of its financial systems by illicit financial flows. This work examines the exploitation and use of the financial sector for illicit purposes and the effectiveness of the Latvian anti-money laundering efforts. The focus is not only to examine the nature of money laundering in Latvia but also to consider why it continues despite the implementation of internationally recognized mechanisms of anti-money laundering controls.

### Banking Sector Overview

There are several unique features of Latvia's economy and banking sector. The first is the structure of the banking sector itself. The largest banks in the country are Nordic owned banks such as Swedbank, SEB and Nordea, which together control 40% of the banking assets in the country.<sup>6</sup> These banks primarily serve the domestic market and are closely supported by their foreign parent institutions.<sup>7</sup> As such, many of the remaining banks serve as so-called "boutique" banks serving the large non-resident clientele.<sup>8</sup> But the designation boutique is a misnomer, especially when one considers that non-residents account for 49% of total deposits – roughly \$10 billion of the \$20 billion held in deposits.<sup>9</sup> By comparison, the non-resident rates in Switzerland and Cyprus are 43% and 37% respectively.<sup>10</sup> Since 2010, non-resident deposits have increased by 32% and Foreign Direct Investment from Russia has increased by 32.5%, from €268.6 million to €356 million euros over the same period.<sup>11</sup> The largest independently owned bank, ABLV, sees a large portion of its business in non-resident deposits and has been implicated in several money laundering scandals.<sup>12</sup> The example of ABLV demonstrates the demarcation between the Nordic held banks, serving the domestic market, and the "boutique" banks, serving primarily the non-resident market.

However, as a result of the mismatch between maturities and deposits that led to the near meltdown of the Latvian economy in 2008,

the Financial and Capital Markets Commission (FCMC) now requires banks serving high levels of non-resident deposits to maintain greater liquidity and capital adequacy ratios. This is to prevent the rush to withdraw deposits, its impact and to lessen the potential for any mismatch between liquidity and maturing securities (the minimum ratio is 8% but the average is 17.2% according to the FCMC).<sup>13</sup> In 2009 Latvia witnessed a credit crunch that amounted to 5% of GDP.<sup>14</sup> This led to the nationalisation in late 2008 of Latvia's largest domestically held bank Parex, which accounted for 14% of all banking assets.<sup>15</sup>

Latvia also has an attractive tax regime, providing significant incentives for the formation of corporations or holding companies within the country. Currently there is a 15% corporate tax rate, with the EU average standing at 23.5% and Cyprus's at 12.5%.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, there is no tax on foreign profits earned via dividends or stock sales and profits can be transferred tax free. From 2014, holding companies will also no longer have to pay taxes on interest or licensing fees that they pay to their parent companies, essentially allowing companies to divert all their profits to the holding companies which then repatriate almost all of the profits, tax free, back to their parent company in the form of licensing and patent fees. This enables shell companies and corporations to move their money easily throughout the world's financial system and to evade taxes. With its incorporation into the Eurozone, this ability will be compounded as Latvia is granted unlimited access to the rest of the zone's banking and financial sectors, with the additional benefit of insurance in the form of ECB guarantees.

The presence of large non-resident deposits is also facilitated by the geographic, ethnic and linguistic connections with Russia and the CIS. The Latvian state-owned air carrier, Air Baltic AS, operates daily direct flights to such places as Baku and Tashkent making Riga an easily accessible destination. Additionally, located next to Russia on the Baltic, Latvia enjoys close ethnic and linguistic ties with its larger neighbour. It has the largest Russian ethnic minority among the Baltic States, 25%, and 37% speak Russian as their first tongue.<sup>17</sup> Oligarchs such as Roman Abramovich and Mikhail Fridman, along with the likes of Vladimir Pronichev, the Deputy Director of the FSB, are known to visit the country; particularly the resort town of Jurmala that hosts a pop festival geared towards Russia's super rich.<sup>18</sup>

Other than the close connections to Russia and the CIS, Latvia also has a very attractive residency permit programme to attract investors.

Investors are able to gain five year residency permits based on the level of investment. Real estate investment requires a minimum 50,000 to 100,000 Lat (\$95,000-\$191,000) investment, depending on location. Those who buy Latvian equities are required a minimum 25,000 (\$48,000) Lat investment. Over 7,000 people have been granted such permits, 75% of whom are Russian.<sup>19</sup> The permit allows access to the Schengen area and requires that each holder spend only one day per year in Latvia to maintain the permit.<sup>20</sup> The programme was initiated in 2010 to attract capital back into the country, and since its inception has brought \$600 million into the country, with another \$2.3 billion projected to be brought into the country by 2015.<sup>21</sup> This has led to many rich and wealthy Russians buying property and vacationing in the country. Alleged crime figures<sup>22</sup> and former Bank of Moscow president Andrei Borodin,<sup>23</sup> who is wanted by Moscow in connection with a \$443 million money laundering scheme, are just some of the examples of the people who have had residency permits revoked by Latvian authorities.

With Latvia joining the Eurozone in 2014, there were worries that Latvia was similar to Cyprus and would expose the already troubled Eurozone to another potential destabilising bailout. While there are considerable similarities to Cyprus, Latvia maintains a relatively healthy balance sheet when compared to Cyprus and the rest of the Eurozone. Latvia's banking sector to GDP is a modest 133%, far lower than Cyprus pre-crash at 900% or even the Eurozone average of 357%. Additionally, the banking sector makes up a relatively small percentage of the overall economy, just 3% of GDP, contrasted with 9% for Cyprus.<sup>24</sup> Despite the healthier banking sheets, Latvia's experience in the wake of 2008 and the Parex nationalisation shows that it is not immune from the same kind of threats that destabilised countries with larger banking sectors.

### *Non-Resident Deposit Banking Institutions*

With the presence of large and well-funded Nordic banks dominating the retail and domestic lending sectors, domestic banks have turned to attracting non-resident deposits and business. Despite the higher capital ratios required for banks with large non-resident deposits, domestic banks such as Rietumu and ABLV seek non-resident business as their source of growth.

Due to the increased oversight and rules regarding capital ratios and liquidity, Latvia has become marketed as a stable and secure financial

location that allows for easy access to the rest of the EU. The mechanisms instituted after the financial crash of 2008 serve to assure investor's that Latvia will not experience another dramatic downturn nor turn into a Cyprus. This has enabled the domestically held banking sector to market their services to those in Russia and the former soviet sphere, which are looking for stable and legally protected banking services. Elites from Eurasia want to ensure that their holdings can be secure, and legally protected, away from the prying eyes of their home countries and rivals.

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With the acceptance of Latvia into the Eurozone, banking connections and transfers became much easier. Yet, despite this acceptance, domestic banks are not concentrating on opening subsidiaries or banking offices in Frankfurt or Paris. Instead, they are focusing on opening offices in Eurasia to court non-resident deposits. The three largest domestic banks, Rietumu, ABLV and Citadele, all rely heavily on non-resident deposits.<sup>25</sup> All three have numerous subsidiaries and offices in a variety of Eurasian countries: Rietumu has only one office in Paris, but eight in Russia, one in Belarus, two in Ukraine and one in Kazakhstan, Romania, Armenia and Azerbaijan; ABLV has four locations in Russia, two in Ukraine, and one office in each of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; Citadele has one location in each of Germany and Switzerland, but two in Russia, Ukraine and more in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Belarus. These banks also advertise their services for non-resident investors. On the front page of its website, Rietumu advertises its ability to help clients obtain a residency permit and that it, 'automatically guarantees free movement of persons within the Schengen area, currently consisting of 25 European countries.'<sup>26</sup> ABLV markets its ability to provide a customer with remote account management, 'We offer you a selection of effective tools to independently control and manage your capital, providing the opportunity for quick access to banking information anywhere, at any time.'<sup>27</sup> Exemplifying this pursuit of Eurasian business, ABLV and Rietumu Banks have attended several conferences in Odessa aimed at courting business with the Ukrainian and Russian shipping industries. These events were put on by individuals and firms that have been tied to arms smuggling with such names as "Maritime Days in Odessa" and "Practice of Maritime Business 2011."<sup>28</sup>

The importance of domestic institutions is because upon examination of documented instances of money laundering and/or illicit financial flows centred in Latvia, the banking institutions at the centre are almost always domestic banks with primarily non-resident deposits. Of the \$63

million relating to the Magnitsky fraud laundered through Latvian banks, all six banks were domestic institutions. The concentration of illicit activities among domestic banks leads to questions over whether those institutions are truly implementing stringent anti-money laundering (AML) regulations and over the authorities monitoring of those banks.

## EU Concerns and Latvian Governmental Responses

Money laundering is a global crime with implications that reverberate across the traditional conception of a nation-state's sovereign borders.<sup>29</sup> Despite the threat, many times tax havens or other financial locales find it difficult to equate the negative potential of money laundering with economic development and the influx of capital, licit or illicit.<sup>30</sup> Countries, especially developing or emerging nations, are fearful of instituting too stringent regulatory mechanisms that will limit the influx of capital and business, thus negatively impacting their growth and economic outlook. The rationale for limited monitoring and regulation is especially persuasive when the immediate effects of money laundering are hard to discern and often are not felt in the country the money transited. As such, the international AML regime has largely been imposed through coercion by the international community and developed nations.<sup>31</sup> The threat of reputational harm and isolation from the global financial network was the founding rationale behind the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)<sup>32</sup> NCCT (Non-Cooperating Countries and Territories) list that singled out countries which were failing to implement standard mechanisms to prevent money laundering. The same can be said of the insistence by the Eurozone that Latvia increase its institutional efforts to combat money laundering. Thus, Latvia has had to balance increasing its AML mechanism to satisfy Eurozone demands, while not negatively impacting banks relying on non-resident deposits. The pressure from supranational organizations and the desire to not be singled out as a risk-prone country was a significant motivating factor behind Latvia's recent efforts to improve its institutional mechanisms to combat money laundering.

As noted in the most recent MONEYVAL review, Latvia has improved its institutional and legal framework to combat money laundering. Latvia is in compliance with the EU's Third Anti-Money Laundering directive as well as with EU directives regarding AML efforts.<sup>33</sup> Despite the im-

provements though, Latvia has been either unwilling or unable in many instances to take action against revealed instances of money laundering and financial malfeasance. With the revelations that six Latvian banks laundered the proceeds from the \$230 million Magnitsky fraud, the FCMC fined only one bank the maximum fine of 100,000 Lats (\$192,244.84) and publicly refused to name it to, 'ensure financial stability.'<sup>34</sup>

In response to accusations that Latvia has weak financial and money laundering controls, and that its entry into the Eurozone will only increase the ease with which illicit Eurasian money can flow into Europe, many high ranking Latvian officials have vigorously defended its policies and efforts. Aivis Ronis, the former Latvian Foreign Minister and Ambassador to NATO and the US, recently voiced Latvia's position, stating:

We understand the higher standard applied to institutions in Russia's orbit. That's why our banks' anti-money-laundering standards are among the most rigorous, praised by everybody from the International Monetary Fund to the U.S. Treasury to Moneyval, the Council of Europe's anti-corruption unit. We welcome the bright light shined by the euro: It represents yet another chance to prove that Latvia, now the EU's fastest-growing economy, is a stable place for Western investment, and a nation that is proud to help build Europe's future.<sup>35</sup>

It is correct that Latvia has nominally increased the rules and regulations regarding property Due Diligence and Know Your Customer for banking institutions inside the country. Likewise, Latvia has certainly established the organisational infrastructure expected of a modern anti-money laundering regime. One of the basic components is a Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) tasked with analysing and monitoring suspicious transactions and activities, maintaining communication with law enforcement agencies and foreign counterparts and overseeing persons subject to AML regulations. Latvia created its FIU, Office for Prevention of Laundering of Proceeds derived from Criminal Activity, in 1998, reporting to the Prosecutor General. It is also monitored by an advisory board that helps to draw up recommendations, oversee methods and coordinate cooperation with those institutions subject to AML regulations. The Prosecutor General chairs the board and it consists of representatives from the FIU, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Bank of Latvia, FCMC, Association of Commercial Banks, Association of Insurers, Sworn Notaries Council, Sworn Auditors

Association, Council of Sworn Advocate, Supreme Court and the State Revenue Service.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, the implementation of private sector AML efforts is overseen by the Financial and Capital Markets Commission (FCMC), an autonomous agency. Its purview is the examination of institutions compliance and internal AML controls. The FCMC has the authority to fine banks for inadequate controls and does have the ability to revoke banking licenses.

However, the presence of regulations and structures alone is not enough to ensure the proper protection of the financial sector from exploitation. Commensurate with regulations is effective enforcement by authorities and the imposition of penalties should it be found that regulations are not being followed. Here Latvia's record is less impressive, as corruption and weak penalties combine to undermine the formal compliance regime. For example, when it comes to sanctioning banks, the inability of the FCMC to levy large fines compared to the vast amounts of capital transiting banks contributes to the limited utility of the threat of sanction.<sup>37</sup> Since 2006, the FCMC has imposed the maximum penalty six times, and each time has refused to name the bank in question.<sup>38</sup>

Furthermore, Latvia continues to experience significant corruption and a large "shadow economy," which the U.S. State Department estimates at 30%.<sup>39</sup> Powerful oligarchs continue to influence Latvian politics, and many politicians, including the mayor of Jurmala, have been convicted of corruption and bribery in recent years.<sup>40</sup>

Of considerable concern to the Eurozone has been the sale of residency permits to investors. While not unique to Latvia – Spain, Portugal, the UK, and France among other EU countries also have them – the influx of Russian and Eurasian investors have caused considerable concern, especially due to the fact that 98% of applicants are granted permits.<sup>41</sup> As described before, the residency permits have brought significant amounts of capital into the country. Despite the amount of money the programme creates, authorities have recently proposed limiting the number of visas granted to around 900 per year in response to accusations over the scheme's abuse. The wife of fugitive Kazakh banker Mukhtar Ablyazov, who is wanted in connection to a multi-billion dollar fraud in Kazakhstan, was found living in Rome on a Latvian residency permit, for example.<sup>42</sup>

The difficulty regarding assessing the effectiveness of the Latvian monitoring and regulatory regime is that there are no reliable statistics on the number of suspicious transaction reports that are passed by institutions to the FIU. Moneyval, in its latest report, stated,

The statistics kept by the Latvian authorities are not always comprehensive and do not contain all the necessary data for an accurate analysis of effectiveness. No reliable statistics are maintained with respect to the total number of STRs and UTRs received, as the authorities only track the total number of transactions and not the total number of reports. This makes it difficult to analyze the effectiveness of the reporting system and of the FIU's analytical work, especially with regard to disseminated cases to the LEAs [Law Enforcement Agencies].<sup>43</sup>

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The lack of reliable data further obfuscates Latvian enforcement efforts. A key aspect of the international money laundering standards is the reliance on private institutions to report any suspicious transactions to the country's FIU. The absence of reports makes a priori enforcement or intelligence gathering impossible and measures can only be taken if the crime becomes exposed.

## Incidents and Case Studies

There are a range of ways in which Latvia has developed a role within the shadow economics of the post-Soviet states. It has become a convenient locale for elites – eager to minimise their home states' control over their assets – can park or move funds away. Its banking system can be used for tax evasion. Latvia has also been used to launder criminal money and again transfer it to secure and discreet jurisdictions. After all, the search for stable banking is of importance to elites in post-soviet nations due to the capricious nature of many of the countries' legal systems and the states use of financial intelligence as a means of control by the political elites.<sup>44</sup> Due to the potential that the state will attempt to threaten their wealth to ensure their political support, or that a change in government could lead to their indictments, many in the former Soviet states desire to send their capital to more a stable, both politically and legally, locale.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, it is often hard to introduce their wealth into the global financial system due to the underdeveloped or insulated nature of many of the banking sectors in post-Soviet countries.<sup>46</sup> Due to Latvia's developed banking, political and legal structures, it remains an attractive locale that provides the necessary stability for the entry of post-Soviet states elite's capital into the wider financial system.

The threat of extortion or charges by members of the government and security services is of considerable concern to business and political elites.<sup>47</sup> The threat that *kompromat*, or compromising material used to

blackmail, could be used to create charges against these elites has contributed to the desire to move, at least some, of their holdings to more secure locales away from the oversight of politically motivated legal structures.<sup>48</sup> In August 2013, fugitive Kazakh banker Muhktar Ablyazov was arrested at his palatial villa in the south of France in connection with an Interpol arrest warrant.<sup>49</sup> Mr. Ablyazov stands accused of a \$6 billion fraud from Kazakhstan's BTA Bank. Claiming he was a victim of political persecution for challenging the rule of Nursultan Nazarbayev, he was charged by Kazakh prosecutors of an attempt at 'seizing power by inciting civil strife and hatred.'<sup>50</sup> He fled to London in 2009 and was granted political asylum in 2011. However, he was found in contempt of court by the High Court of England and Wales for failing to disclose the true value of his assets.<sup>51</sup> The court documents reveal that Ablyazov passed at least \$1 billion dollars through the Latvian bank Trasta Kommercbanka AS.<sup>52</sup>

Due to the corrupt nature of many of the states that makeup the post-Soviet sphere, the threat of rapid political and social change threaten the activities and holdings of the elite. Therefore, in order to secure their holdings, elites transfer their capital, through complex and interconnected legal structures, to various and stable banking locales. However, the direct transfer of their funds to locales in the west may bring increased scrutiny from large and effective financial regulatory services because of the high money laundering risk rating that countries in the CIS have. By first routing their capital through Latvia, with a lower risk rating and better reputation, elites can circumvent some of the increased scrutiny over their transactions. In 2010, the President of Kyrgyzstan, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, was overthrown in a revolution. Shortly after the revolution, the new authorities charged that the largest bank in the country, AsiaUniversalBank (AUB), was allegedly the scene of large scale corruption and money laundering. The management of the bank and other associates included the then President's son, Maxim Bakiyev, suggesting a close relationship between the bank and the country's political and economic elites.<sup>53</sup> Subsequent reports place Latvia and its banking institutions at the centre of a large transfer of capital out of the country just before the revolution. The anti-corruption NGO Global Witness discovered that AUB used shell companies to allegedly launder \$64 million of embezzled state funds, but also saw billions more pass through the bank to shell companies, many of which were publicly said to be dormant or never

filed account information before dissolving.<sup>54</sup> The report cites two shell companies, which were owned or registered out of the British Virgin Islands and Belize, used to transfer some \$31.7 million from accounts at AUB to other accounts in Latvia.<sup>55</sup> The transfers were always under \$1 million and were listed as payments for “cold-rolled hot dipped galvanised pre-painted metal products,” despite the fact that the companies had listed themselves as dormant – not conducting any business – and failed to report activity before dissolving.<sup>56</sup> The suspicious nature of the transfers leads to questions regarding the banks anti-money laundering practices, especially relating to due-diligence and know your customer principles, and of the oversight by regulators.

Latvia’s banking and regulatory regime is attractive for businesses in Eurasia thanks to its close location, friendly banking environment and low tax regime, which also provides valuable opportunities for tax evasion. By routing or integrating some of their business practices in Latvia, many businesses can significantly reduce their tax burdens, thus increasing their profits. In the recent court battle between Russian Oligarchs Boris Berezovsky and Roman Abramovich (Berezovsky had gone into exile after falling out with Putin and later committed suicide; Abramovich was Berezovsky’s former partner but remained close to Putin), the latter admitted that he and two of his subsidiary companies had used a Latvian bank – Latvian Bank of Trade – to allow Sibneft (one of the largest oil producers and refiners which was bought by the Russian state owned giant Gazprom in 2005, re-naming it Gazprom Neft) to evade taxes and gain \$300 million in profits in 2000 alone.<sup>57</sup> Subsidiaries were sending money out of Russia to an account held by a Panamanian company, Palmex S.A., for payments on the purchase of heavy equipment. These payments were subsequently cancelled and returned to Latvian Bank of Trade, effectively parking the profits outside the reach of Russian tax authorities.<sup>58</sup>

Indeed, Latvia has become so attractive to clients from the post-Soviet sphere that corporate service providers, businesses that specialise in setting up accounts and companies in different nations and jurisdictions, advertise the advantages of doing business in the country to them on their webpages.<sup>59</sup> Some state their mission as providing: ‘professional assistance for the incorporation and further maintenance of companies in tax-exempt jurisdictions as well as in other countries.’<sup>60</sup> Along with paying: ‘maximum attention to providing reliable and trustworthy

corporate services to entrepreneurs in CIS countries, and historically cooperates with professional services providers and other clients in these countries.<sup>61</sup> These companies provide numerous services and published a fee schedule on their websites, but one of their key services is the opening of banking accounts.<sup>62</sup> One corporate service provider notes that the final choice of country is up to the client, but states: ‘specialists can point to some factors of great importance to the entrepreneur that make the commercial banks in the Republic of Latvia especially attractive among the worldwide banking family.’<sup>63</sup> The provider then continues to then list numerous reasons why Latvia is the location of choice to open bank accounts: ‘Latvia is the financial centre of the Baltics;’ ‘Latvian banks have great experience and a high degree of specialism in services for clients from both Eastern and Western countries;’ ‘Latvian banks allow for the remote control of their accounts from anywhere in the world;’ ‘the use of multi-currency accounts, whereby customers can keep a great amount of different hard and soft currencies in the same account;’ ‘Latvian banking legislation makes no distinction between local and foreign companies—the procedure for opening an account at a Latvian bank is no more complicated for a foreign company than it is for a local one.’<sup>64</sup>

These advertisements illustrate the level to which the Latvian banking sector is viewed as a key locale for the creation of shell companies and accounts to transfer and hide capital. The various rationales and benefits to opening of accounts in Latvia demonstrate the level to which perceived launderers can utilise the sector for their various needs and situations. It is clear that despite the improvements made to Latvia’s institutional AML mechanisms, it is still regarded as one of the most attractive points for the transfer of wealth from post-soviet states into the wider global network.

Additionally, Latvia has gained a reputation as a locale that can be utilised to launder money. A released Wikileaks cable from the U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan stated: ‘Some also suspect that, despite the Baltic countries’ ascension to the EU, Baltic banks are not following anti-money laundering procedures, since many Turkmen citizens have Baltic bank accounts.’<sup>65</sup> The statement is integral to understanding the perceived, as opposed to actual, efforts of Latvian authorities to combat money laundering. While it is clear that the authorities have taken steps to combat the problem, perceptions lag behind realities, and Eurasian elites still see Latvia as a good place to launder capital.

Contributing to this perceived reputation as a laundering hub is the revelation that Iran had attempted to bypass sanctions through a Latvian bank despite no long standing or significant Iranian connections to Latvia.<sup>66</sup> A released State Department cable reveals that in 2010, a Treasury Delegation went to Latvia to consult the Latvian authorities over attempts by Iranian held interests to circumvent EU and U.S. sanctions in 2008.<sup>67</sup> The cable states that Latvian authorities pledged to investigate the incident and that during subsequent investigations two more attempts by Iran to manipulate the financial system were uncovered. However, while the Latvian authorities did examine and block the transactions cited by Treasury, along with two other transactions possibly connected to Iranian entities, beyond that no action was taken. It may well be that no laws had been broken, but the point is that even the Iranians saw Latvia as a place able to facilitate the movement of hidden or illicit capital. The cable went on to state, ‘However, despite the strong steps Latvia has taken to address money-laundering in the last few years it remains a problem in Latvia and various nefarious persons abuse its financial system.’<sup>68</sup>

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Beyond that, Latvian banks, primarily domestic banks serving the non-resident market, have been implicated as central figures in the activities of several criminal enterprises. In 2009, the US Securities and Exchange Commission filed a complaint against Rockford Funding Group LLC.<sup>69</sup> The SEC alleged that Rockford Group had misrepresented itself as ‘a leading private equity firm equipped with an \$800 million pipeline of investments’ but was in fact a Ponzi scheme<sup>70</sup> that bilked investors of \$11 million. The complaint alleges that Rockford Group transferred a total of \$3,244,743 from its accounts in the U.S. to subsidiary accounts at four separate banks in Latvia.<sup>71</sup> The listed reasons were to pay for “cooling systems,” “construction equipment,” and “electronic systems.” However, the complaint notes that these payments were for equipment ‘unrelated to Rockford Group’s claimed investment business.’<sup>72</sup> The fact that none of the banks discovered the unusual and unrelated nature of payments commensurate with Rockford Group’s supposed business dealings is evidence that even the basic Due Diligence and Know Your Customer AML assessments, which would have noticed that the payments were for goods unrelated to their business, were either not taken or simply ignored.

Latvia has also played an integral role in one of the most famous tax fraud cases, the Magnitsky Affair, in which \$230 million dollars was fraudulently stolen from the Russian treasury by using the stolen

identities of three companies owned by the investment firm Hermitage. These fraudulent companies applied for, and received, a total of \$230 million dollars in tax refunds from the government. This scheme involved high-level members of the Russian government and law enforcement. Of the \$230 million, a little over \$63 million is alleged to have passed through accounts at seven Latvian banks. Six Latvian banks<sup>73</sup> are documented as having received slightly more than \$19 million from two Moldovan firms.<sup>74</sup> The money transferred from the Moldovan companies was sent to accounts held by shell companies from Panama, New Zealand, Seychelles and the UK. Additionally, \$43 million were transferred from Russia to an account at another Latvian bank.<sup>75</sup> The funds were transferred to accounts held by companies owned or directed by Latvian citizens who have been linked to other companies involved in weapons trafficking, fraud and other crimes.<sup>76</sup> The law firm for Hermitage, in its complaint, detailed the transactions listed above and wrote to the Latvian authorities stating that

Indicators of laundering include the pattern of large transactions moving in and out of these accounts from companies established in jurisdictions that have minimal oversight of the companies that have no visible commercial activity, that involve high-risk jurisdictions, and that appear structured to evade oversight.<sup>77</sup>

Other than the single fine, no other regulatory action has been taken. This demonstrated how integral Latvia has or had become as an intermediary between Russia and the international financial network. By sending proceeds to accounts in and through Latvia, the perpetrators were able to reduce their chance of scrutiny and detection by both western financial institutions and regulators themselves.

Latvia has also been the scene of an alleged corruption scheme involving Ukraine's state owned oil and gas company, Naftogaz Ukrainy. In March 2011, Chornomornaftogaz, a subsidiary of Naftogaz Ukrainy, sought to buy offshore oil rigs, ostensibly aimed at increasing Ukraine's energy security and tapping into reserves in the Black Sea Shelf. Chornomornaftogaz purchased an oilrig from a UK shell company for \$400 million. However, that same rig was purchased from Norwegian drilling company, Seadrill, for only \$248.5 million.<sup>78</sup> The disparity in price between the sale from Norway to Ukraine has received immense scrutiny, especially because of a similar deal in October 2011 where Chornomornaftogaz stated that it had bought a similar oil rig for \$400 million and

involved the Riga Shipyards to make engineering modifications, except the Norwegian seller stated it had actually sold it for \$220 million. On the March 2011 deal, Chornomornaftogaz paid the \$400 million through an account at a domestic bank in Latvia.<sup>79</sup> Due to its opaque and questionable nature, Latvian authorities launched an investigation into the deal in May 2012, while freezing the accounts at the Latvian bank held by the UK shell company.<sup>80</sup>

*Latvia and  
Money  
Laundering*

## Summary

AS MONEYVAL, the EU and even the US have noted, Latvia has dramatically increased its oversight and regulatory capabilities, not only since its independence in 1991, but since the 2008 global financial crisis and as part of its recent efforts to join the Eurozone. The country has successfully transitioned from a centrally-planned Soviet republic into a stable, financial and banking centre that recently entered the Eurozone. Latvia has successfully met all the requirements for entry, and saw its acceptance as a chance not only to grow its economy but to increase its connections with the rest of Europe.

Despite the desire to integrate with the rest of Europe, though, it still remains a significant transit jurisdiction for Eurasian capital. Latvia has, and continues to provide the political and business elites of Eurasia the ability to disguise the true origin of their capital and to ease its entry into the wider global financial network. By acting as an intermediary, the country, so reliant on non-resident deposits, remains an integral node in the facilitation of capital from the unstable political and financial post-Soviet nations to more stable locales around the globe. Additionally, because of the welcoming nature of the non-resident banking sector, Latvia continues to play an integral role in various criminal schemes and activities which rely on the exploitation of its banking sector. The irony is that it is the very stability and protection afforded by Latvia's banking sector that is integral to the ability of criminals and corrupt politicians to conduct their various questionable activities.

Going forward, the issue is not whether Latvia has been used by foreign elites for tax avoidance, criminal activities or laundering, but rather, whether the authorities have the capabilities, support and incentive truly to tackle the flow of illicit capital through their financial system. Domestic banks serving the non-resident sector do not want to see their

business threatened, and any increased scrutiny could further impact their interests. So long as membership of the Eurozone was still under question, then this provided considerable incentive for over Latvia to increase its AML efforts. The fear must be that once this leverage is no longer being applied, the enforcement and regulatory improvements will start to atrophy. Whether the authorities are able to increase their enforcement or start to revert to lax oversight and enforcement will dictate their position among the nations of the Eurozone.



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# Saudi Arabia and the Arab Spring

## Reshaping Saudi Security Doctrine

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The Gulf regional strategic environment indicates that the balance of power is moving towards an inward concentration for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states while Iran attempts to fill the strategic vacuum created by the 2003 US invasion of Iraq. This work explores Saudi national security from different perspectives and addresses the impact of population growth, new media and societal harmony in relation to it. Challenges magnified by the so-called “Arab Spring” will also be discussed. Additionally, this work analyses a particular societal phenomena that could influence the strategic vacuum, which is caused by the absence of regulation in certain societal situations and, as the result of a gap, or emptiness, in public spaces. I argue that Saudi Arabia needs to develop a security doctrine combining both internal and external dimensions. This work does so by demonstrating that there are two “wheels:” 1. the wheel of change (i.e. demographical societal, regional with national impacts) and 2. the wheel of adaptation (i.e. the effort of the government). The wheel of change moves faster than the wheel of adaptation, illustrating the need to implement regulatory measures. Hence, internal and external “security circles” (national, regional and global) need to be synchronised into a single plan of action and security efforts will have to combine development both internally as well as externally. This work also studies a variety of Saudi government initiatives implemented to deal with the multi-dimensional changes noted above. Finally, this work asks whether it is possible to change the speed of interaction between the regional balance of power domestic socio-political realities in Saudi Arabia?



*Keywords: strategic vacuum, societal security, new media, population growth, demographics, national security, Saudi Arabia*

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## Introduction

While it is largely recognised that no state is fully immune to political instability, including revolutions, it is also understood that societies vary in the way they express reform aspirations; these are dependent on complex factors, and / or the transformation of governing political structures. In particular, monarchies throughout the Arab World have been characterised by their mainly “soft” approach vis-à-vis non-violent socio-political demands and movements. With many potentially destabilising political and socio-economic factors in Saudi Arabia, it is vital to ask how the Saudi government will preserve this “softer” approach, and whether the government will develop a comprehensive strategy to engage with increased societal demands and social movements. In a broader sense, this article contributes to the analysis of present and future Saudi state-society relations through a security nexus. The central aim of this work is to analyse Saudi regional and domestic strategic security environments and the impact of the Arab Spring on these. In this regard, it is possible to identify security challenges that may have transformed into threats, i.e. security challenges and normal tensions have become more obvious as a direct result of the uncertain regional situation.

This work is divided into two substantive sections: the first measures the impact of the Arab Spring on Saudi society and government. Some of the issues examined are: demographics,<sup>1</sup> socio-economic issues such as poverty and urbanisation, and new media usage in relation to Saudi society; for example, there are 5852520 Facebook users and 3.5 million Saudi Twitter users.<sup>2</sup> The second section evaluates the possibility of demographic issues, socio-economic issues and societal media factors being transformed into destabilising political trends. This section references and further develops concepts set out in Beshara’s work entitled: *On Revolution and the Revolutionary Potential*.<sup>3</sup> This section also examines the impact and possible consequences of recent Saudi socio-political developments such as the municipality elections and the appointment of women delegates to the *Majlis al-Shura*.

## The Pre-Arab Spring Security Environment

Before turning to the main point of this section, it is prudent to provide a brief overview on the concept of security and the various stratum it covers. For this work, national security is related to the development of international relations as well as definitions of the state and its strategic

interests. The concept of national security evolved in the US where the security of the state is not simply about the domestic level and / or issues of sovereignty but much more inclusive. Robert McNamara defined his vision of national security by focusing on three critical aspects: political development, economic development, and societal development.<sup>4</sup> National security can also be defined as a state of feeling secure, i.e. a state has freedom from danger; feelings of safety, and lack of fear and / or anxiety. Regarding a small state, its national security often perspective is often different as sovereignty issues are affected, in particular when these are based on state survival and the maintenance the small state's very existence.<sup>5</sup> In addition, a small state may have little trust in its neighbours, especially if a neighbouring state is arming itself for "defensive" purposes. Therefore, a small state may attempt to link its security with larger scale international security networks, i.e. internationalisation security for small states.

A 2013 article from Texas University addressed the US National Security Strategy by stating 'our nation is strongest when we adhere to the core values and interests of the citizenry'<sup>6</sup> illustrating a trans-vector characteristic. The concept of national security has many definitions whether applied to small states<sup>7</sup> or regional and / or international actors. Former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, highlighted the link between national and global security when he declared:

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we face a world of extraordinary challenges – and of extraordinary interconnectedness. We are all vulnerable to new security threats, and to old threats that are evolving in complex and unpredictable ways. Either we allow this array of threats, and our responses to them, to divide us, or we come together to take effective action to meet all of them on the basis of a shared commitment to collective security.

Within national security numerous elements refer to notions of state survival and the preservation of national integrity. These can be thus defined:

National security is a state or condition where our most cherished values and beliefs, our democratic way of life, our institutions of governance and our unity, welfare and well-being as a nation and people are permanently protected and continuously enhanced.<sup>8</sup>

Accordingly, there are two main divisions in within the definition of nation security. This is the national dimension that consists of the political, economic and societal aspects as well as the security aspect of these elements.

## *The Strategic Context of Saudi Arabia*

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Given the above, although the new US strategic vision vis-à-vis the Gulf region is a pivot away from the region – focusing instead on the Asia-Pacific and a “Strategic Rebalancing” (2012) – the core US security interests remain unchanged.<sup>9</sup> Thus, despite that this new US strategy has not marginalised US power in the region, it has encouraged secondary regional actors to expand their influence. In practical terms, currently Saudi Arabia is being challenged by both Iran and Turkey in the shadow of American redeployments.

And yet, Saudi Arabia remains a hinge of regional security. The Kingdom occupies 4/5<sup>th</sup> of the Arabian Peninsula with an area of more than 2250000 sq. kms, and has a population of some 27 million. Crucially, Saudi Arabia remains the global leader in oil production and has approximately 25% of all known oil reserves. It ranks fifth in terms of natural gas reserves and ninth in natural gas production. Additionally, the Kingdom hosts millions of pilgrims who perform Hajj and Umrah in Makkah and Madinah every year. The Saudi government provides accommodation, food and medical care in sufficient quantities to sustain this huge number during pilgrimage.

In terms of security objectives, it is important to turn to the Saudi Ministry of the Interior (MOI) which suggests that:

1. To achieve security and stability in all parts of the Kingdom, and to provide reassurance and security reasons for their children, and to fight against all forms of crime, immorality and corruption, in order to maintain the integrity of the Saudi society and ensure its progress;
2. Ensure the safety of pilgrims and protect them from risks, to enable them to perform rituals and worship freely and completely safe;
3. Achieving security cooperation and coordination with neighbouring Arab countries and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to protect internal and external security, and the fight against crime and drug smuggling, and the exchange of security information, organising rules and regulations relating to immigration, citizenship, and other fields;
4. To support and strengthen security cooperation and coordination with the Arab countries, in order to protect the gains and achievements of civilisation overall, consolidate internal and external

security in the face of challenges and different threats, and the fight against crime, terrorism and drugs, and the development of hardware Arab security and achieve progress and development.<sup>10</sup>

While the MOI is only one source of policy doctrine, it is key and the objectives set out by the Ministry are a reflection of the state as a whole. Yet, being able to define the national objectives of Saudi Arabia must be understood against the backdrop of the challenges faced by the state and its citizenship. These have certainly changed over the decades. This work very narrowly reviews the most recent spate of changes; those produced in the lead-up and aftermath of the Arab Spring events.

*Saudi Arabia  
and the  
Arab Spring*

## Wheels of Change and the Arab Spring

The Arab upheavals from 2011 intensified regional and domestic challenges by creating two phenomena: a regional power vacuum that could be filled by regional powers such as Iran and Turkey and increased national challenges that have created a comprehensive new 'security reality' approach.<sup>11</sup> This section evaluates these in a systematic manner.

Societal transformation indicators – Saudi Arabia has a population of between 27 and 29 million people and trends indicate an increase in the number of residents in the Kingdom to nearly 34 million people by 2030. This will have a profound impact on the Kingdom's security, and with it, the regions'. Indeed, Cordesman highlights the impact of the population on security by suggesting that:

The GCC should consider ways to improve security cooperation that address the causes of security issues as well as ways to deal with such threats. The last year has made it clear that the combination of high population growth, issues in educating and employing native youth, housing, infrastructure pressures, medical services, and other material issues play a critical role in the security of each GCC state.<sup>12</sup>

The demographic aspect presents both opportunities and risks that should be taken in to consideration by strategic planners when considering the importance of future events in terms of the prospective 'Black Swan.'<sup>13</sup> There is also a need to enhance the strengths of the different societal components in order to face these future risks. If there is one thing that is certain in the political life of states it is that demographics

is the lynchpin of stability; with the right formula of youth opportunities, employment, sustainability and the state will prosper. If policies are dysfunctional, animosities will be compounded and an expanded tension

Societal Security – Regarding the societal aspect, this work argues that two wheels are in operation. The first wheel represents fast-moving societal transformation influenced by new technology and media, social change and societal networks. In consequence, these are facilitating information sharing and helping to create a new public cyber-opinion. This in turn affects notions of national identity; notions that are being discussed within an ever expanding socio-political cyber space. However, the second wheel of adaptation appears to be slower in terms of interaction with fast-moving societal transformation as well as important youth issues and aspirations.

Societal security can be measured by the ability to satisfy the basic needs of citizens in order to achieve social justice and/or reduce social inequality. Societal security is based on upon a social contract:

An implicit agreement among the members of a society to cooperate for societal benefits, for example by sacrificing some individual freedom for state protection. Theories of a societal contract became popular in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries among theorists such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, as a means of explaining the origin of government and the obligations of subjects.<sup>14</sup>

Hence, this societal contract should preserve national identity along with all the existent components that play crucial roles in state- society relations. Indeed, a government needs to employ effective societal security in order to foster domestic security and also maintain its popularity. In addition, a government need to promote greater social interdependence as this alleviates societal dislocation and tensions, thereby encouraging creativity and innovation in all fields. This also assists societal solidarity and a degree of consistency and coherence between different sectors of social activity. Societal security involves state-society relations, in particular the rights of its members. It also involves the care of all segments of society, especially those in need such as women and children who do not have any source of income in addition to those members with special needs such as the elderly and disabled. Therefore, societal security is a community necessity that can facilitate not only societal

peace, but enduring social and state stability. However, the state must help its citizens in various aspects of their lives such as financial aid related to daily livelihood. For example, rent assistance or providing part-value of housing; finding channels that guarantee people a decent living from employment and / or financing study programmes; financial aid for craftsman or facilitating new projects.

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Ministry of Social Affairs—The Saudi Ministry of Social Affairs provides financial assistance, but this is often slow and inefficient. For example, a divorced woman receives only 800 riyals per month even though as Dr. Abdulaziz Al Dakhil has pointed out she needs a minimum of 5,000 riyals per month. This example illustrates the separation from reality when dealing with the ministry. Therefore, it is critical that the Ministry of Social Affairs starts to use subsidies as these are not merely financial assistance, but are in fact a right that the state must provide to its citizens, especially those who do not have access to a sufficient means. Indeed, this system is practiced in many countries under the pretext of societal security and provides an opportunity for everyone to live a decent life.

The Ministry of Social Affairs should also create more community centres within neighbourhoods that would incorporate volunteer work and community integration programmes for families through the activation of community participation in societal projects. In addition, the formation of social clubs could promote and enhance notions of national identity and culture, thereby helping to enrich community integration. This view is not utopian as these centres are necessary for effective neighbourhood integration, providing better community sports programmes and increased numbers of social clubs for training purpose that enhance creativity and excellence.

There is no doubt that in Saudi society, Islamic history and Islamic norms there are many such examples related to societal rights. The Saudi community has its own original Arabian features underpinned by Islamic principles. However, economic globalisation has impacted negatively on Saudi society; society has become overly materialistic and has forgotten traditions that encourage good deeds and Islamic behavior. Therefore, it is important to utilise traditional Saudi culture to enhance societal security related to Saudi Islamic and Arab civilizations; preserve Saudi traditions whilst simultaneously respect the principle of human rights and pluralism.

## New Media Impact and Societal Values

### *Where is the virtual world leading us?*

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Currently, the virtual and digital worlds cast greater shadows on the individual and society as well as in the world of business and even our family and government departments. Major Internet companies are in the process of greater integration so it is predicted that over the next 10-20 years a single set of Internet companies will control websites in each particular field including social media. Furthermore, increased availability of information in the virtual world is advancing globalisation which is affecting the formation of societal formats at both national and international levels. The role of the Internet represented by social media provided a clear picture of events in Arab countries during the Arab Spring. Social media played an important part in mobilising societal coordination as well as providing information that enable demonstrators to deal with emergency situations and assist in rapid decision-making. This enabled the protestors achieve what their stated goals and also transferred images of the demonstrations around the world through this virtual world. These political and / or economic events are characterised by a number of features including, for example, lack of predictability.

### *Lack of Predictability*

Taleb refers to this as “black swan” in his work on the repercussions of events that are unexpected and beyond familiar scope. Sims calls this a “revolt of information” and notes how the virtual world has contributed to the Arab Spring to ‘predict the future is becoming increasingly difficult when trends are a result of powerful forces and conflicts.’ Therefore, it is necessary to try and predict the event in particular if its impact is going to be overwhelming and influential although this can only be interpreted after the event. Of course, accurate prediction would make the event less controversial and random.

### *Cyber Threat or Opportunity?*

In recent years, there has been a boom in the amount and type of use of Internet services available from smart phones to social networking features that can be downloaded to any portable device. In addition,

the speed of information transmission has increased greatly and this is difficult to control. In fact, modern technology is said to have broken many vertical barriers and this has melted the separation between the leader and the subordinate and between the ordinary citizen and the state official. Ordinary citizens can now challenge the state official due to the dialogue occurring within social media networks as well as the breaking of traditional cultural taboos. There is little doubt that the Internet and the virtual world is an extension of our senses and our minds and that the development witnessed by this virtual world is produced by the evolution of human creativity. The future of online services is determined by millions of users through their choices and decisions, but we must not lose sight of the role of technology specialists, web developers and programmers. As the virtual world interferes more and more in our daily lives it also has an effect on overall human society including the Arab world.

### *Societal Values*

Mahdi Carpentry states that real values move the individual society forward and develop moral character and creativity. Renewal and innovation depend on scientific research, innovation and creation.<sup>15</sup> When discussing the foundations of citizenship, Wahba Zoheily (in 2006) stated that

This requires the availability of two grounds of citizenship, first: freedom, not tyranny of the ruling, and the second: the availability of equality between citizens in rights and duties regardless of religion, creed or custom. These are available only if there is a political system to serve democracy, which is the rule of the people and for the people, and the legal system that recognises the human rights of citizens and duties and a societal system based on patriotism.

Dr. Mohammed Ahmari maintains when discussing citizenship concepts it is important to remember that 'we use the word citizenship, we do not know its meaning.' In the case of the Arab community we do not have citizenship of any kind because citizenship means to participate in the responsibility of the homeland of its rights and duties. Arabs live in areas of authoritarianism, but citizenship means having rights and duties, i.e. participation in the decision-making process. However, this right is absent in the Arab community.

## Saudi Governmental Initiatives

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Depicting the challenges facing Saudi Arabia and the wider Gulf region paints only a partial picture however. It is equally important to identify some of the initiatives carried out by the Saudi government in order to stem the mounting pressure and construct a more stable domestic political scene. This brief section identifies some of the more visible ways that the Saudi government has reformed the Kingdom.

### *Food Security Initiative*

The late King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz initiated the Overseas Agricultural Investment in order to contribute to the achievement of national food security and at the global level build integrated partnerships with a number of countries around the world. In particular, with countries that have viable and high agricultural potential in the field of development and management of agricultural investments, for example in strategic crops, sustainable quantities and stable prices.

### *King Abdullah Scholarship Programme*

Education is a sign of the development of any nation. In Saudi Arabia this is exemplified by the King Abdullah Scholarship Programme related to the sustainable development of human resources in the Kingdom. The programme aims to be an important tributary to support not only Saudi universities, but also public and government and private sectors so as to develop the human resource capabilities in the Kingdom. The programme also aims to prepare individuals to work effectively in order to assist Saudi Arabia become a global competitor in the labor market as well as in the field of scientific research.<sup>16</sup>

### *Women's Development*

Saudi women can act as a positive factor for the reconstruction of Saudi society. King Abdullah said in interview with Barbara Walters 'I believe strongly in the rights of women. My mother is a woman. My sister is a woman. My daughter is a woman. My wife is a woman.'<sup>17</sup> This demonstrated the king's support female empowerment. In fact, women's empowerment and capacity building were highlighted as major goals

of the Eighth National Development Plan (2005-2009). Consequently, there was an increase in female employment from 5% in 1990 to 19% in 2010. Previously in 2004, Saudi women had effectively participated in the Third National Dialogue Forum which focused on women issues, rights, and responsibilities and yielded several related recommendations. The gradual progress of Saudi Arabian women is attributed to the general increase in female educational levels. The average rate of yearly growth for female enrollment in all education levels has reached 8% between years 1975 and 2002.<sup>18</sup>

In the last few years, women's empowerment has emerged as a priority issue and this has been illustrated by the emphasis in national policies and strategies on increasing women's participation and contribution in the socio-economic and socio-cultural processes in accordance with Islamic laws and Saudi cultural values.<sup>19</sup> It has also been illustrated by the socio-political participation of Saudi women in the *majlis al- shura*.<sup>20</sup>

### *Economic Reform*

King Abdullah has taken Saudi Arabia into the G20 (twenty-largest economic countries in the world) and the WTO (World Trade Organisation) in order for the Kingdom to be at the heart of global economic decision-making.<sup>21</sup> These new economic reforms represent an ambitious plan that includes the creation of giant economic cities such as the King Abdullah Economic City and the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST).

### **In Need of a New Strategic Vision Based on Regulation**

Two phenomena related to Saudi Arabia raise some questions regarding societal security levels. For example, what transpires when certain societal elements try to impose their interpretation of religion on others and yet at the same time the state supports and applies Sharia'a law; who is correct? A first phenomenon can be seen at the annual Riyadh International Book Fair. Individuals not connected to the official religious police have taken it upon themselves to enforce religious police rulings such as attempting to influence:

1. The type of books an individual should buy;
2. Enforcing gender segregation;

3. Prohibiting the teaching of so called 'liberal' Saudi or westernised ideas.

This has happened despite the fact that the Riyadh Book Fair is under the patronage, and organised, by the Ministry of Culture and Media. This illustrates a lack of effective communication between government officials and specific individuals from differing ideologies.

A second phenomenon happened at the annual Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG) organised Janadriyah cultural festival when an administrator, who looked like a member of the religious police, attempted to stop an Emirati female, a traditional entertainer, from singing as he considered this a breach of religious law. These incidents demonstrate a lack of regulation with regard to religious issues. Furthermore, there are regulations governing fundamental rights such as freedom to gather and cultural activism that are guaranteed by recognised human rights conventions.

### *National Challenges*

It is argued that the external regional situation surrounding Saudi Arabia has imposed more draconian internal security measures. However, in the foreseeable future it will be necessary for the Saudi government to integrate issues of internal security with overlapping external security issues. For example, responding to Iran's influence and in the Arabian Gulf, its presence in the Red Sea as well as its influence in Sudan, Ethiopia and Yemen, particularly with regard to the Houthis. Also the conflicts in Syria and Lebanon and Saudi attempts at rapprochement with Egypt, all have created types of external strategic security threats. At the internal level there are a number of security challenges, particularly with regard to Shiite communities in the Kingdom, as well as human rights organisations and related community issues. In addition, population growth and its impact on the national security system also poses an important socio-political and economic challenge.

Within these circles a problem occurs: the internal and external levels (or wheels) move at different paces. The first dimension focuses on change in population growth and economic change; the second one focuses on the adjustment that operates at a different pace and this creates a strategic gap regarding the comprehensive concept of security in the Kingdom.

## *Youth and Citizenship*

The attacks by conservative religious shaikhs on Twitter users in their Friday sermons demonstrate the separation between young people and policy-makers and between decision-makers and Saudi youth. However, societal security is affected by another level that is increased social knowledge and awareness through social media such as Facebook and Twitter. These play an increasing important role in influencing young Saudi perceptions. The issue is that the virtual world is very different from what Saudi youth observe in reality and this causes social confusion and indeed, conflict. Additionally, this could widen the gap between the different societal components especially those who have not officially considered the acceptance of pluralism as a basis to form critical questions concerning national identity, loyalty and citizenship principals. Therefore, there needs to be a better understanding in terms of intellectual and religious issues as related to Saudi youth so as to enhance values of citizenship and create a secure community; one that rejects extremist ideologies.

*Saudi Arabia  
and the  
Arab Spring*

## **Conclusion**

This work emphasised the link and interaction between multiple dimensions of security strategic concept. The paper showed that there is a new strategic reality pushed by the Arab Spring exemplified by the strategic vacuum on a regional level since the retreat of us power in the region. On a domestic level, there are various challenges that have been intensified by the Arab upheavals, including demographics, societal security and security exposure. Saudi Arabia has attempted to deal with these issues on numerous levels, yet the speed of these changes has made it difficult for the Saudi government to respond in kind. In particular, regarding implementing legal procedures that are able to create regulation that correlate with societal transformation and progress such as socio-economic rights.

The work illustrated that in the short-term Saudi Arabia has succeeded in confronting and dealing with issues raised by the Arab spring. However, in the long-term, other socio-political reforms should be taken into consideration such as continuing the experience of free and fair elections such the one that exists in the Saudi Sports Federation. The continuity of legal reforms will also deter national actors from claiming

societal issues related to security exposure in the name of the religion, or reform or “liberalism” in the Saudi sense. It is imperative to find common ground where national norms and values can exist; norms and values that respect multi-culturalism, pluralism and human rights within a legal framework that enhances the Saudi social contract. The Arab upheavals may create a great opportunity for Saudi national development; one that focuses on the comprehensive understanding of security and provides opportunities to all national actors to act collectively for the benefit of progress, stability and sustainable security in Saudi Arabia.



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## Notes

1. Approximately 70% of the total population of Saudi Arabia is under 30 year old.
2. See, for example: <<http://www.internetworldstats.com/middle.htm#sa>> (accessed 12 December 2014)
3. Azmi Beshara who is a former member of the Knesset is a Palestinian intellectual, academic and politician. He has written extensively on various topics and is currently is the General Director of the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies.
4. Robert McNamara (1968), *The Essence of Security: Reflections in Office*, New York, Harper & Row.
5. There is no clear-cut definition of a small state, but three of the elements of small state are: population, GDP and size; for example other than Saudi Arabia, the rest of GCC countries are small states. Saudi Arabia in comparison with Iran can be considered a small state if indicators such as population are taken into account.
6. See, for instance: <<http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/sites/default/files/file/news/National%20Security%20Strategy%202013%20%28Final%20Draft%29.pdf>> (accessed 01 December 2014).
7. Jonathan Alford (1984), 'Security Dilemmas of Small States: The World Today,' *The Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 40:8/9, pp. 363-369.
8. See: <<http://www.dlsu.edu.ph/offices/osa/rotc/pdf/ms1/threat-NatlSecurity.pdf>> (accessed 14 December 2014).
9. This work references the classical US three strategic pillars theory, i.e. as the US is prepared to act militarily if it is threatened with regard to US security, Israeli security, and access to Gulf oil supplies.
10. See: <<http://www.moi.gov.sa/wps/portal>> (accessed 14 December 2014).

11. Beshara identifies three conditions for revolt status: a) when it is impossible for the governing system to govern without change and there is a bridge between the ruling classes; b) increased suffering for the oppressed classes c) when there is increased political awareness amongst an oppressed class as a result of a crises. See: Azmi Beshara (2013), 'The Revolution and Revolutionary Potential,' *Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies*, Doha, pp. 62-63.
12. Anthony Cordesman (2013), 'Securing the Gulf: Key Threats and Options for Enhanced Cooperation,' *Center for Strategic and International Studies*.
13. Black Swan Theory, by Nassim Taleb, argues that: 'The disproportionate role of high-profile, hard-to-predict, and rare events that are beyond the realm of normal expectations in history, science, finance, and technology.' See: <<http://www.fooledbyrandomness.com/tenprinciples.pdf>> (accessed 12 December 2014).
14. See: <<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/social%2Bcontract>> (accessed 15 December 2014).
15. Mahdi Emandjra (2006), *Valeur des Valeurs*, Najah el Jadida Publishing.
16. See: <<http://www.mohe.gov.sa/ar/studyaboard/King-Abdulla-hstages/Pages/Introduction.aspx>> (accessed 12 December 2014)
17. King Abdullah in an interview with Barbara Walters on ABC, October 2005.
18. Ibid.
19. See:<[http://www.undp.org.sa/sa/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=262&Itemid=383](http://www.undp.org.sa/sa/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=262&Itemid=383)> (accessed 12 December 2014).
20. See: <<http://www.shura.gov.sa/magazine/majalah128/majbdf/t7kek.pdf>> (accessed 12 December 2014).
21. See: <<http://www.kingabdullahcity.com/>> (accessed 12 December 2014).

Yahya  
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# From the BSU to the BSEC

## Evaluating Interwar Geopolitical Fantasies

*Ostap Kushnir*

This study charts the political, cultural and economic foundations of two inter-governmental bodies intended to emerge in the Black Sea region: the first, the Black Sea Union (BSU) was an idea developed by Ukrainian geopolitical specialist Yuriy Lypa before World War II. The second is the current Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) launched in 1992. By comparing these bodies, this research pursues three key goals: first, it traces the succession of ideas between the eras of the BSU and the BSEC and shows the existence of a specifically interwar mode of geopolitical thinking. Second, it highlights and explains the differences between the BSU's geopolitical objectives and their actual implementation in the BSEC. Finally, this work assesses current Ukrainian policies and perspectives in the Black Sea region.

*Keywords: Yuriy Lypa, Black Sea Union, Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Eastern Europe, interwar geopolitics*

### Introduction

When considering Ukraine's membership of different international organisations, political scientists often underestimate the role of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). It is difficult to find mention of this organisation in the documents defining Ukraine's strategic objectives and the public speeches of state authorities. This may seem strange since Ukraine entered the BSEC in 1992, a year after gaining its independence, making the BSEC one of the first organisations to be joined by the new state. Moreover, Ukraine has since shown itself to be an important – if not the decisive – actor in the Black Sea region,



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and the BSEC could provide a means for the country to boost its political clout with the assistance of its allies.

The Black Sea region has been growing in significance since the end of the Cold War. This is primarily because the eastern borders of NATO and the EU have stretched along the Black Sea shores since Romania and Bulgaria entered NATO in 2004 and the EU in 2007; Turkey meanwhile had been a NATO member since 1952. The region's good governance, stability and prosperity are therefore of crucial interest to Western states. Secondly, many pipelines that transport oil and gas from the Caspian fields to Europe run through the Black Sea states. While some may claim that the EU's dependence on Caspian resources remains comparatively low, smooth-running oil and gas supplies have always been important to the economic sustainability of Western states.<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, the Black Sea region creates a buffer zone between prosperous European states and the unstable Middle East region. As such, it is a key player in the fight against terrorism, separatism, aggressive nationalism, drug and weapon smuggling, illegal migration and other security challenges. Finally, the majority of Black Sea countries are seen as developing states with huge market potential, growing consumption demands and a cheap labour force; all this makes them attractive for international business.

As of 2010, the BSEC had twelve member states. Their combined population was around 350 million people, with 190 million living in the immediate Black Sea region.<sup>2</sup> However, the core idea of the BSEC as an inter-governmental entity is not brand new. One political scientist who advocated for it obstinately in the second quarter of the 20th century was the Ukrainian geopolitician Yuriy Lypa (1900-1944). He outlined the idea clearly in his books *The Destination of Ukraine* (1938) and *The Black Sea Doctrine* (1942), claiming that all states in the Black Sea region should unite in the Black Sea Union (BSU). He also offered economic, political, military and cultural justifications to prove the viability of his concept.

Lypa had an impressive background and education. His father, Ivan Lypa served as the minister of religion and the minister of health in the 1917-1921 Ukrainian governments (Tsentralna Rada and Dyrektoria), and the young geopolitician therefore had the chance to connect with the brightest Ukrainian intellectuals of his time. Between 1918 and 1920, he also studied law at Kamieniec-Podolski University in Ukraine. In 1922, he moved to Poland and enrolled at Poznań Medical University from

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which he graduated in 1928.<sup>3</sup> Some sources suggest that around 1930, he was awarded a scholarship and spent several months studying in Great Britain.<sup>4</sup> All this makes Lypa's geopolitical views worth addressing in this research. This is especially true when we consider that the BSU he proposed shares many features with the current BSEC.

Put briefly, this study considers the prospects for inter-governmental organisations in the Black Sea region. To this end, it has three aims: 1) to describe and assess the BSEC's geopolitical position in the modern globalised world, 2) to trace the connection between the BSU and the BSEC by revealing and comparing key objectives common to these entities and 3) to evaluate the BSU concept critically from a historical standpoint. It is important to stress the difficulties inherent in comparing an existing inter-governmental body such as the BSEC with the BSU, which was halted as a half-finished idea between the wars. The grounds for the BSEC's existence and operations have been substantiated by many politicians and economists while the BSU concept was posited and cherished by just one man. The BSEC, being rooted in reality, has embraced the Black Sea region's diversity and contradictions while the BSU was tied to naive expectations and misguided simplifications. Finally, the BSU concept had numerous gaps and shortcomings, but the BSEC was built to be a coherent and functional entity.

### Distinguishing Features of the BSEC and the BSU

In 1990, (then) Turkish president Turgut Özal announced plans to create an inter-governmental entity in the Black Sea region. His preliminary name for this body was the Black Sea Area of Prosperity and Cooperation. It was supposed to embrace four states: the USSR, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. Two years later, on 25 June 1992, eleven countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine, the majority emerging after the USSR's dissolution) signed a declaration that launched official international cooperation in the Black Sea region. This declaration is better known today as the Bosphorus Statement. It contained several objectives, which were, however, formulated vaguely. In particular, the presidents of the member states agreed to:

1. strive for peace, stability and development in the region, realise concrete schemes of cooperative action, peacefully settle all dis-

putes according to the principles set out by the Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) (now the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)),

2. resist aggression, violence, terrorism and lawlessness so as to help establish and restore peace and justice,
3. transform the Black Sea into a region of peace, freedom, stability and prosperity and
4. facilitate the processes and structures of European integration.<sup>5</sup>

*From BSU  
to BSEC*

Before the Bosphorus Statement, other early drafts had maintained that the organisation should become a kind of customs union ensuring the free movement of goods, services and capital regardless of borders. To make this possible, the member states agreed to invest in improvements in transport, communication and security infrastructure in the region. These investments were to be managed by individual member states with no rigorous central coordination.<sup>6</sup>

With the adoption of the Yalta Charter on 05 June 1998, the group became a full-fledged regional economic entity and acquired its official name – the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

Since the start of the 21st century, BSEC member states have boasted significant economic growth which is among the most dynamic in the world. According to the data provided by Tarlopov, the total market capacity of the region was US\$1.6 trillion in 2009 with trade capacity of US\$300 billion.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, the region's financial potential has ultimately been less impressive from a global perspective: the above-mentioned US\$300 billion represented only 4.5% of the world's trade capacity.<sup>8</sup>

Along with the twelve member states (Serbia joined in April 2004), the BSEC now includes seventeen observers and seventeen sectoral dialogue partners. The member states differ in terms of their size, population, economic development, political systems and military power. These differences produce significant asymmetries. For instance, 83% of the BSEC's GDP is generated by three states – the Russian Federation, Turkey and Greece. In turn, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova are responsible for just 1% of the GDP in total. The asymmetries also contribute to the rivalry between the larger member states which are vying for BSEC leadership; Russia and Turkey are evidently keen to increase their power and gain political control over the other states.<sup>9</sup> The rivalry becomes even more challenging when we take into account that

several BSEC member states are also full members of other international organisations such as the EU, CIS, GUAM, CEFTA, OIC, ECO, D-8, G-20 and EEC.<sup>10</sup> In sum, asymmetries, diversity and conflicts of interests are what characterises the BSEC today; they are also clearly what hampers the relations among its member states.

On 26 June 2012, the BSEC set new priorities during its most recent summit in Istanbul. This time, the leaders of the member states undertook to:

1. contribute to enhancing peace, stability, security, dialogue and prosperity in the region,
2. substantially increase intra-BSEC trade and investments and further promote public-private partnerships,
3. incorporate environmental approaches into economic and social development programmes,
4. enhance coordination and interaction among BSEC-related bodies and affiliates,
5. increase gender equality and women's participation in economic and political processes,
6. deepen cooperation in the spheres of culture, tourism and youth policy and
7. establish a strategic relationship between the BSEC and the EU.<sup>11</sup>

If we compare the 2012 priorities with those adopted twenty years ago, we can find virtually no significant changes. To be sure, several new issues appeared on the 2012 list which had not been in focus in 1992. These were, in particular, gender, the environment, tourism, exchanges among youth, good governance and public-private partnerships. Nevertheless, the stress remained on improving the business climate and EU cooperation as the indisputable priorities. To achieve the 2012 priorities, a roadmap was sketched out. This was the 'The BSEC Economic Agenda – Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership.'

However, the parallels between the 1992 and 2012 agenda also prompted another more cynical conclusion: the declared ambitions of BSEC member states has always been high on rhetoric but low on achievement. Their joint efforts had borne little fruit in twenty years. At any rate, no customs union had been created, and there is little chance of one coming into being in the near future.

In contrast, the idea of the BSU originated with Lypa on the eve of WWII. At the time, his proposal seemed both defiant and opportunistic. There

existed no clear vision regarding the shape of the postwar world or the place the Eastern European states would have within it. Lypa, however, looked to the future enthusiastically; he wrote that the states located on the Black Sea shores should create a genuine union and so transform the sea into an internal lake.<sup>12</sup> Membership of that union was to be granted to Ukraine, Turkey, the Caucasus republics (Kuban, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan), Bulgaria and Romania. Lypa also strongly believed that the USSR (or “Russia,” as he continued to call it) was doomed to dissolve after the war and that this would bring independence to all of its Black Sea republics. After that dissolution, Russia would be expelled from the region and, most likely, erased from the world map.

To illustrate the uniqueness and self-sufficiency of the Black Sea region, Lypa used a fascinating analogy: this region was, he said, like a fortress. The Black Sea lay at the centre of the fortress. Its eastern walls were the Caucasian states stretching all the way to the Caspian Sea and Volga River. On the other side, its western walls ran along the Carpathian mountain range and the borders of the Balkan states. This fortress also had three gates: the Danube, the Caspian Sea and the Bosphorus. Turkey was said to be the fortress’s base while Ukraine was its vault.<sup>13</sup> The solidity of the fortress, according to Lypa’s calculations, was to be ensured through the mutually beneficial cooperation of Ukraine, Bulgaria and Turkey.

In his books, Lypa described the BSU as a political, cultural and economic union. The majority of ties with its eastern and western neighbours should be suspended, he argued; the only reasonable and profitable way for the BSU to develop was by promoting North-to-South cooperation. The economic system of the union would be closed and nationalistic. Lypa claimed that all strategic industries should be owned and supported by the region’s nation states with no foreign investment allowed (unless it came from other BSU members). He was also certain that the Black Sea region should be forged from within; any assistance from abroad or cooperation with third countries would be a security threat. To ensure that closed national economies were sufficient, Lypa advocated for the creation of a customs union: ‘A customs union of Black Sea states will firmly and durably unite several dozen Black Sea peoples into one national household. Now is the time for large national households.’<sup>14</sup>

Addressing the union’s political objectives, Lypa claimed that a strong BSU would ensure that its member states were protected from external threats. He pointed here especially to the pressures on the region from

Russia, Britain, France and Italy and their territorial claims. As may be recalled, Britain had deployed significant numbers of troops in the Cyprus-Haifa-Suez triangle during the interwar period; France had occupied Syria and much of the Middle East; Italy had built its strongest naval base on the Dodecanese islands near the Turkish mainland while Russia was aggressively re-routing the flow of people and goods from Ukraine to its land in the north-east. As well as protecting against these external threats, political unification would make it possible to solve the problem of internal instability. Since the early 20th century, tensions had regularly played out in the relations between the Bulgarians and the Turks, the Armenians and the Turks, the Bulgarians and the Romanians, the Georgians and the Kubanians, the Azeris and the Armenians, to name some of these conflicts. Common authority at inter-state level would contribute to greater peace in the region. Moreover, the political union of the Black Sea states would change the way that they were positioned in the world. According to Lypa, at the beginning of the 1940s, none of the Western or Eastern powers gave much credit to these states, which were seen traditionally as colonial annexes with no defined national objectives.<sup>15</sup> Creating the BSU could, thus, send a strong message to the international community about the maturity of the Black Sea region.

In sum, Lypa advocated for the following objectives for the BSU:

1. political and economic unification and the subsequent transformation of the Black Sea into an internal lake,
2. nationalisation of strategic industries and the adopting of economic nationalism by every state in the union,
3. organised resistance to pressures and territorial claims from third countries,
4. recovery from colonial dependencies and joint development of a regional economy,
5. creation of a customs union to ensure free trade within the BSU and
6. peaceful settlement of internal conflicts.

It may be observed that these objectives hardly fit with the interwar realities; in fact, they revealed Lypa's unrealistic expectations rather than reflecting the true balance of power in the 1940s. In drawing up his objectives, the geopolitician had a tendency to overestimate political, economic and social conditions in line with his own viewpoints and to underestimate or ignore anything contradictory. For instance, he accepted

the assumption that the USSR would lose its territorial integrity as an indisputable truth; he also never doubted that the newly formed post-Soviet states would forge a bloc notwithstanding any possible disagreements among them. In light of these and other ideas, we might conclude that Lypa was a pseudo-scientist generating theoretical abstractions. This might be true were it not for the fact that several of his findings appear pragmatic and rational; moreover, some even came into being as BSEC objectives at the beginning of 21st century. These and other observations mean that Lypa's idea warrants a more profound examination.

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## Comparing the Economic Objectives of the BSU and the BSEC

Looking closely at the 'BSEC Economic Agenda - Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership' roadmap, we find a genuine effort to set out guidelines for action along with objectives for strengthening the BSEC and strategic organisational goals. The latter – of which there are seventeen in total – are in line with the recent Istanbul Summit Declaration and reflect the current economic interests of Black Sea states. The following targets may be seen as most important:

1. intensified intra-regional trade and investments,
2. cooperation in customs and border-crossing administration,
3. creation of an efficient transport network,
4. development of sustainable energy and the Black Sea energy market,
5. environmental protection and conservation ,
6. food security and safety,
7. support for sustainable development of the SME sector,
8. tourism development and cultural heritage protection,
9. cooperation in banking and finance and
10. combating of organised crime, illicit trade in drugs and weapons, terrorism, corruption and money laundering.<sup>16</sup>

These goals also determine the steps that the BSEC should, and probably will, take for its further development. Comparing them to the BSU objectives can provide a sufficient assessment of the depth of Lypa's geopolitical thought. This approach, moreover, can highlight the sequence of key ideas.

In considering the economic self-sufficiency of the BSU, Lypa calculated that the union would be able to satisfy its own demand for raw materials

solely by drawing solely on the resources (mineral deposits, soil, rivers and populations) available in Black Sea states. In fact, the majority of his calculations hold true in the region today and can be used to illustrate why the BSEC's operation is reasonable. According to the Ukrainian geopolitician, hard coal could be extracted from the Donbass (1940s reserves were estimated at 5 billion tonnes), crude oil could be pumped from the valleys (reserves around this time were approx. 6,400 million tonnes) and manganese, copper and iron could be excavated in central Ukraine and southern Turkey. Rivers could also ensure hydroelectricity production; their potential was estimated at 8,760,000 hp. This would meet the union's energy demands. In turn, he noted that crops, fruit and vegetables could easily be cultivated in the black-coloured soil; the quantity of food produced would be enough to feed the whole population of the Black Sea region.<sup>17</sup>

Like today's BSEC members, Lypa also maintained the Black Sea region's capacity to support the rapid transport of goods, people and services between its member states. Lypa claimed that such transportation should occur mainly via Black Sea routes and river systems. In the 1940s, the region featured more than fifty river ports equipped to moor and handle large vessels – this was without even considering its sea ports.<sup>18</sup> Current BSEC leaders add that land routes have significant potential and should be used simultaneously with sea routes. Several provisions of the BSEC roadmap, thus, stress the need to complete the Black Sea Ring Highway.<sup>19</sup> The latter is set to be some 7250 kilometres long, extending to the Black Sea shores with numerous branches and running deep into the territories of the member states. At this juncture, however, only Turkey has managed to complete its part of the highway.

When it comes to the matters of reduced customs tariffs and open borders, BSEC leaders have always stressed the importance and administrative aspects of these goals. Lypa, on the other hand, paid them minimal attention. Understanding open borders as an obvious and immanent part of the BSU, he claimed that these borders would emerge automatically as the BSU came into being. As such, he did not focus much on the restrictions imposed by sovereignty or under international agreements with third countries. Indeed, such restrictions simply did not exist from his perspective.

Regarding cultural issues in the region, we may note the shared sensitivity but very different perceptions of Lypa and current BSEC members.

It is evident from the current BSEC roadmap that the organisation's goals in the cultural sphere are today very business-oriented. They include, for instance, promoting the Black Sea region as one of the world's leading tourist destinations, launching research on common heritage and preserving cultural diversity. No other cultural cooperation can be launched successfully within the BSEC due to the differences in religion, behaviour, traditions, history and geopolitical identifications among the member states; this is, at any rate, how the BSEC leaders see the situation. Lypa, in contrast, was never concerned with such differences, but instead advocated for cultural cohesion, aiming to encourage a deeper socialisation of those living in the region. Writing on cultural issues, he stressed the common maritime outlook, historic success of joint actions and the existing threats which undermined national identities. The people of the Black Sea area, he argued, were characterised by their blind love of adventure, endeavours and discoveries.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, he appealed broadly to the idea of cultural justice. Black Sea regional culture had been oppressed for a long time, he claimed. As such, after the BSU was created, nothing should stop it from dramatically expanding and gaining global influence.<sup>21</sup>

Turning to the issue of energy security, we can make out only minor similarities between the BSU and the BSEC. Again, this can be explained by Lypa's overestimation of the region's cohesion. In contrast, today's BSEC member states, especially those exporting oil and gas, perceive one another as rivals. This rivalry is intensified by irresolvable ethnic and political conflicts such as the ones over Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia. Russia remains the biggest and most influential player in the region, and smaller states like Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey and Romania struggle to achieve any profits from exports. This contributes to a hidden geopolitical war inside the BSEC with no possibilities for intervention by inter-governmental institutions to decrease tensions. Instead, smaller states are attempting to ensure their interests and self-sufficiency by constructing pipelines that bypass Russia. One such pipeline which already exists and transports Caspian gas to European markets, is the South Caucasus or Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum link. A second (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan) route transports crude oil from the Caspian to the Mediterranean seas, bypassing not only Russian, but also Armenian and Iranian territories.<sup>22</sup> A third line, the White Stream or Supsa-Constanța, which should run through Ukraine is in the process of construction.

The Kremlin has responded in turn with its own plans for the Blue Stream or Izobilnoye-Beregovaya-Durusu-Ankara pipeline and the South Stream, which will connect Anapa with Pleven through Varna; the latter pipeline is expected to be in use by 2015, a year before the White Stream is ready.<sup>23</sup> Looking at Lypa's interpretation of energy issues, what is most striking is his comparative optimism and ignorance of regional tensions. The Ukrainian analyst gladly noted the abundance of mineral deposits in the Caucasus, which was for him an additional argument for the economic self-sufficiency of the BSU. Oil deposits near Grozny and Baku, he estimated, were very substantial and he held them to be rich in octane. The only pre-war pipelines that he mentioned were Armavir-Rostov, Armavir-Tuapse, and Baku-Batumi running through Dagestan and Kuban.<sup>24</sup> No new pipeline routes were sketched out. Lypa also noted that the oil near Baku was a major reason for interventions by third countries in the internal policies of Azerbaijan.<sup>25</sup> Still, he said nothing precise about the mechanisms for exporting resources abroad – to Europe, for instance. In fact, Lypa's work simply did not focus on international trade.

Regarding the sustainable development of the SME sector, BSEC authorities today call for the promoting of favourable conditions for local businesses and foreign investment. They also propose facilitating networking and exchanges of experiences and know-how, organising training for young entrepreneurs and other relevant steps.<sup>26</sup> Lypa supported virtually the same goals with the notable exception of promoting foreign investment. Such investment, he argued, would not contribute to the development of national industry but only lead to the enrichment of investors and some local administrators; plus there was the growing security threat to consider. In his writing about the SME sector, the geopolitician also advocated for the revival of "natural" forms of Black Sea entrepreneurship. National and international policies on small and medium-sized companies, he argued, should support the emergence of *zadrugas* (family businesses), *artiles* (small businesses with a narrow niche that were usually composed of several *zadrugas*) and cooperatives (medium-sized companies consisting of several *artiles*).<sup>27</sup> As such, not only transparent business relations, but also interpersonal solidarity and family-type collectivism were of crucial importance to Lypa's SME sector models.

No clear environmental and gender issues are discussed in Lypa's works since these matters were not of significant concern in the 1940s. His only mention of women's social role related to the preservation and transfer of national traditions. Lypa argued that women might become good politicians, social activists or even soldiers, but they were not born to take on these roles. On the other hand, he noted that women and men usually enjoyed equal rights in societies in the Black Sea region and that particularly in Ukraine, these societies were historically matriarchal; women had a prominent social role because they kept their families strong.<sup>28</sup> Though some may claim today that such statements are sexist, they reflect gender equality as it was understood in the second quarter of the 20th century.

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Unlike current BSEC leaders, Lypa was not particularly interested in the issue of food security. He considered the Black Sea region to be sufficiently fertile to feed all its inhabitants; just the agricultural facilities in Ukraine, he claimed, were sufficient to satisfy internal demands for food.<sup>29</sup> To increase land fertility, the geopolitician advised launching policies to attract private industrial investors. This would not only lead to more efficient production, but also strengthen the economic reliability and military capacities of BSU member states.<sup>30</sup> He did not, however, describe any precise mechanisms to achieve these ends: it was not clear how to redirect private investment into agriculture or how to draw economic and military benefits from food overproduction.

Finally, Lypa was silent on the issues of banking cooperation and organised crime. On the first count, this was because the banking sector was exceedingly weak in the Black Sea region in the interwar period. On the second, organised crime was not perceived as a substantial threat.

All in all, Lypa did not provide any substantial economic calculations, programmes or roadmaps in his books; instead, he appealed to existing economic opportunities and the natural resources of the Black Sea region, holding that these might potentially bring the states located there a new global status. These opportunities remain valid even at the beginning of the 21st century. Abundant natural resources, fertile soil, the vast size of the population, convenient communication and transport systems and an entrepreneurial spirit – all these things may contribute significantly to living standards in BSEC member states. Nevertheless, Lypa argued that for economic opportunities to take flesh, political unification and

practical inter-governmental management were of absolute importance. This is something that BSEC leaders are still not fully inclined to accept; they are only prepared to consider select issues of a political nature at an inter-state level. As it turns out, some of these issues were also noted by Lypa as BSU objectives.

### Political Foundations of the BSU: Measuring Lypa's Romanticism

If we are to believe Lypa, Ukraine, Turkey and Bulgaria were all destined to create the political body of the BSU. The three states had experienced deep interconnection throughout history; they also shared the same outlook and treated one another with respect. The minor tensions which existed between them in the 1940s would be resolved promptly and peacefully in the name of future prosperity, he said. Turning to the political leader of the Ukraine-Turkey-Bulgaria triumvirate, Lypa claimed that only Ukraine could succeed with this responsibility. In his view, Ukrainians were less inclined to adopt arbitrary political decisions than Bulgarians and Turks; they favoured a rational approach to governance. As proof, Lypa pointed out that Ukrainian administrative geniuses and intellectuals enjoyed high regard among the rulers of neighbouring states. For example, he claimed that the descendants of the Rozumovskyi, Suvorov, Kochubei and Paskevych noble lines were known in medieval and modern Europe as the brightest administrators within the Russian states.<sup>31</sup>

On the roles of the BSU member states, Lypa argued that Turkey would become the Union's stronghold in the Middle East, Ukraine would emerge as a liberator of the Caucasus (leading to the unifying of fragmented republics) and Bulgaria would secure the Union's Balkan interests.<sup>32</sup> As a Christian state, Bulgaria would also assist Ukraine in counterbalancing any eventual political fluctuations in Turkey. Under a single leadership, the three states were meant to pacify the territories at the BSU's border with each of one taking care of its own neighbourhood. This would help the union to withstand external pressures from the Russian, British, French, German and Italian sides. The military units of Bulgaria and Turkey would be capable of achieving these objectives with some rearmament and training.<sup>33</sup>

Focusing particularly on Turkey and Ukraine – set to become two major powers of the union – Lypa noted that these states had support-

ed one another frequently and constructively throughout history. We may recall here the Turkish assistance to the Cossack Hetmans in their wars against the Poles and Muscovites; the Turkish support for the Cossacks after the destruction of Zaporozhian Sich in 1774; the Cossack participation in Ottoman military campaigns; Turkey's recognition of the Ukrainian People's Republic in 1919 (it was in fact the first state to recognise UPR); Turkish agreements with the Ukrainian Soviet Republic and other examples.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Lypa claimed that these two states were naturally predisposed to cooperate with one another: Turkey's biggest mineral resource deposits and most developed industrial districts were located in the north of the country while the Ukrainian equivalents were mainly in the south. The Black Sea was the only barrier between the Turkish and Ukrainian industrial areas.

Additionally, Turkey and Ukraine also shared ancient traditions of profitable sea trade. This reached its historical zenith in 1649 when a trade convention was signed between the Zaporozhian Cossacks and the Ottoman Empire granting Cossack vessels the right to free movement on the Black Sea. This document consisted of 13 articles and entitled the Cossacks to trade tax-free on Turkish territory for the next 100 years.<sup>35</sup> In fact, this was first customs union in the Black Sea region and its positive example, described by Lypa, can be seen as the blueprint for the BSU.

People living on the Anatolian peninsula had always needed access to northern markets and vice versa. This is clear from the very existence of a medieval trading route between the Varangians and the Greeks which connected the Baltic and Mediterranean seas. In Lypa's time, Turkey was interested in exporting wool and cattle to the north and importing Ukrainian cotton, steel and machinery.<sup>36</sup> The geopolitician advocated strongly for the preservation of the North-to-South connection in the Black Sea region over the course of history. He claimed that this would not only enrich all states situated there, but strengthen the role of the region at a global level.

Lypa also argued that Kyiv should become the capital of the BSU. There were several factors which predisposed the city to this role. First, Kyiv had a symbolic place in the Black Sea region, having accumulated cultural heritage and shaped political traditions for centuries. Secondly, it lay at the heart of the North-to-South trading routes. Thirdly, it was known as a centre of Christianity and was thus better placed to unite Christians living in the region than Istanbul, which had already become a pillar of the Muslim cultural world.<sup>37</sup>

If we compare Lypa's political visions with the current state of the Black Sea region, it is clear that the Ukrainian scholar was partly right. Demir notes that Ukrainian markets are currently filled with the products of Turkish light industries while Turkey remains one of the biggest importers of Ukrainian steel and scrap metals.<sup>38</sup> The same is true of inter-state investment: Turkish entrepreneurs are willing to develop Ukrainian industries, focusing especially coal extraction near the Black Sea shores; at the same time, Ukrainians are investing in Turkish recreational facilities. The quantity of Black Sea trade is also growing though it remains significantly imbalanced with a clear predominance of raw materials and products with little value added.<sup>39</sup> Finally, Ukraine can rely on Turkish support when it comes to the issues of oil and gas supplies. Turkey is interested in its northern neighbour as a reliable transit partner. and it is eager to develop joint energy projects.

Even so, there are a number of issues which do not correspond to the patterns forecast by Lypa . One is the fact that Turkey plays a more important role in the Black Sea region than Ukraine does, with the BSEC's "capital" being located in Istanbul, and not in Kyiv. Turkey is the initiator and coordinator of the Black Sea For programme, which addresses common security, rescue and search activities in the Black Sea and also trains the military to help civilian vessels in need. Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia and Georgia are all participating states. Black Sea Harmony is another Turkish initiative in which Russia and Ukraine have some involvement. The main programme objective is the interception of suspicious vessels to prevent terrorist activity at sea and secure the straits. Russia is a crucial partner here, making it a second active player in the region. In contrast, Ukraine can hardly be said to be interested in southward expansion. It possesses no clear strategy regarding Black Sea policies and is bandwagoning between powers in the East and the West, and not those in the North and the South where it claims to be neutral.<sup>40</sup>

Returning to the matter of the Russian (eventually Soviet) presence in the Black Sea region, Lypa maintained that this should be minimised or even terminated. In his view, Russia's interests and the arrogant ways that they were promoted undermined natural trading patterns in the region. The geopolitician wrote that Russia had never been comfortable on the Black Sea shores: its exports and trade there were very weak and risky due to its inability to control all the players there. In 1896, 92.5% of vessels moored in Russia's Black Sea ports belonged to foreign countries;

by 1911, the situation had improved slightly for Russia with foreign vessels constituting 86.1% of moored ships. Lypa attributed the imbalance to the Kremlin's disastrous policy on tariffs and trade; transporting goods from one Black Sea port to another was, he noted, as costly as sending them from the port to Great Britain. It was similarly more expensive to transport coal from the Donets Basin to the Black Sea ports than to send it to the Baltic ports ten times further away.<sup>41</sup>

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According to Lypa, Russia's aggressive behaviour towards the Caucasus contributed to the instability and insecurity in the region. The geopolitician wrote that such brazen attempts to conquer and administer the mountainous republics had undermined the ordinary lives of their native peoples and triggered significant turmoil. The same turmoil could be observed in the Ukrainian lands where public dissent had been brewing since 1918. Expelling Russia from the Black Sea region and restoring ancient lifestyles would significantly decrease tensions in the region. To achieve this goal, an independent Ukraine should gain control over all Soviet shores in the Black and Azov seas, Lypa argued.<sup>42</sup> This control over the seas would significantly jeopardise Russian positions on land. Nevertheless, it must be conceded that neither Ukraine nor any other state in the Black Sea region was in a position to achieve these objectives in 1940s, just as they do not they have much chance of accomplishing them today – if indeed they ever will.

Assessing Lypa's views on Russia means running into significant degrees of subjectivity and romanticism. The position of Russia, a 20th-century superpower could not be disregarded as easily as Lypa wished to do; its regional policies, which he labelled 'disastrous,' had after all managed to ensure the Kremlin's interests in these lands over centuries. Moreover, Lypa never wrote about positive aspects of Russian's presence on the Black Sea shores such as the region's dramatic industrialisation and the increase in living standards. As of today, Russia, like Turkey, remains a key player in the region. Nothing threatens its dominance; moreover, it has incentives to acquire even more power. Finally, if there emerges any threat which could weaken Russian presence in the region, this would undermine existing economic ties and the political status quo. The consequences could be devastating.

In describing the Black Sea region, Lypa constantly stressed its colonial status as perceived by the interwar superpowers. To fight off the colonialist assaults of third countries, he advocated for an end to

external dependencies along with the development of a closed economy. Cutting ties with the external world, however, had several significant drawbacks. These would become clear with time. Lypa did not take into consideration the shift that Western states had made from “hard” to “soft” power in their foreign policies, or the distinct pro-European orientation of several Black Sea states, especially Bulgaria, Turkey and Romania. The majority of the threats he saw as critical had ceased to exist after the Second World War and could be ruled out in later years. For instance, Turkey currently experiences no pressures from Britain, Italy and France at its borders; the Balkan and Central European states are no longer threatened by either the Russians or the Germans; a sovereign Ukraine also has means to oppose Russian influences. The truth is also that the Black Sea states are more willing to cooperate with “Western bullies” than they are willing to develop a self-sufficient inter-governmental body in the Black Sea region. Again taking Turkey as an example, the rates of its exports to Germany and imports from South Korea are several times higher than those for its trade with Ukraine, its neighbour on the natural North-to-South axis.<sup>43</sup> It is also worth highlighting that Turkey has already joined a customs union with the EU.

The Black Sea region is of strategic importance for a united Europe today. No longer perceived as a colonial space, this area of 190 million citizens is instead seen as a huge market for the sale of goods and provision of services. On this basis, the region appears to be a player in European and Asian trade relations. In addition, it is rich in mineral resources, which are vital for the sustainability of Western economies. All this results in significant European engagement in promoting the economic predictability of the region, decreasing financial risks, combating organised crime and terrorism, advancing good governance and developing oil and gas transport systems.<sup>44</sup> When Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU in 2007, Brussels officials gained a legitimate foothold for their representation in the region, allowing them to promote EU strategic interests more efficiently. To facilitate BSEC-EU cooperation, the special Black Sea Synergy programme was launched along with the European Neighbourhood Policy. These developments point to a significant deviation from Lypa’s theory: the BSEC does not function as an independent entity; instead it is used by its member states as a means to cooperate with the EU. BSEC membership may also serve to accelerate the EU accession tracks of Turkey, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine.<sup>45</sup>

Coming back to the cultivating of closed national economies, it can hardly be agreed that this is the best option for state development. Indeed,

it may even be considered a disastrous strategy from the point of view of the underdeveloped states of 1940s. The evidence can be found in the present-day Black Sea region: Moldova and Georgia are two states with comparatively closed economies. On the one hand, this served to soften the severe impact of the 2008 world crisis and to preserve the growth of their GDP uninterrupted. On the other hand, these states are some of the poorest in Europe with no significant economic growth beyond their cities.<sup>46</sup> This demonstrates that a closed economy never bears much fruit and would have been counterproductive to the BSU.

To summarise, several of Lypa's expectations made his political theorising unrealistic. For a start, he overestimated the solidarity of the nations located in the Black Sea region. Not all of them were willing to establish genuine relations with one another and, most likely, not all of them would recognise Ukraine as a political leader. Secondly, he did not properly consider the post-war changes in Europe or the shift within Western states to liberalism and "soft" power. Thirdly, he underestimated the positions and policies of Russia, which was firmly entrenched in the Black Sea region. As such, Lypa's idea of the BSU as a political union was not feasible. The current BSEC, with its poor functionality and narrow economic outlook, is the best proof of this claim.

## Conclusions

It may be observed that despite their numerous similarities on a conceptual level, the BSU and the BSEC in fact had different objectives. In describing the BSU, Lypa was sure that:

1. the Black Sea states had no option other than besides forming a political bloc to achieve prosperity,
2. that bloc would emerge notwithstanding any external oppression or internal disagreements,
3. it would become culturally and ideologically homogeneous and
4. it was the only way for the colonised Black Sea states to ensure their independence and strengthen global role.

As an existing body, the BSEC demonstrates that Lypa's aims were not entirely valid for the region. This can be deduced from the following:

1. Black Sea states pursue different interests and are not inclined to pool their sovereign powers,
2. these states clearly lack coherence and common understandings in their relations with one another,
3. their cooperation is largely limited to the economic sphere and

4. some Black Sea states put little stock in a strong BSEC and instead use it as a tool to pursue alternative goals (for instance, accelerating EU accession).

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The current balance of power in the region can also scarcely be defined as in line with Lypa's predictions. Ukraine, which he argued would become a political leader, remains too weak and indifferent to unify the Black Sea states. Turkey and Bulgaria, supposed to become the major powers in the region along with Ukraine, remain sceptical about the creation of a triumvirate; the North-to-South axis is dysfunctional. In contrast, Russia continues to actively promote its interests disregarding Lypa's claim that it should be ousted from the Black Sea shores. Finally, there has been no significant advance in the BSEC objectives since 1993: little changed between the time of the Bosphorus Statement and the latest Istanbul Summit Declaration. In other words, Lypa's ideas of political unification, deepening interdependence and the creation of a genuine bloc in the Black Sea region remain largely wishful thinking.

Ironically, it is the supposed Western bullies whom the geopolitician considered a critical threat which have started to set up the most constructive policies in the region. In this regard, we can point to the EU's Black Sea Synergy programme, which aims to stimulate economic reforms, facilitate trade and further democratisation. The majority of the BSEC states are currently far more interested in cooperating with the EU than among themselves. Moreover, Bulgaria and Romania have already joined the EU, thereby clearly demonstrating their strategic orientation; their activities within the BSEC are now restricted by the European *acquis communautaire*. Finally, Western states no longer perceive the Black Sea region as a colony. Instead, they regard it as a massive market for the sale of their goods and services.

The general romanticism in Lypa's geopolitical thinking has been eloquently summed up by Dnistrianskyi: 'In the context of his time ... he overestimated the value of anthropological factors in social and political processes [and he overstated] the uniqueness of Ukrainian cultural and historic traditions. His interpretation of ancient Ukrainian history is not purified through this mythologising.'<sup>47</sup> If, however, we indulge the evident miscalculations, then we will also note the strengths in Lypa's objectives. Updated and adjusted, these aims continue to be the impetus for the operation of the BSEC today:

1. the Black Sea states all agree to deepen intra-regional trade and investments,

2. they are working towards establishing a customs union and facilitating migration,
3. they plan to construct and maintain an efficient transport network including sea lanes and land routes,
4. they aim to increase food security and safety by developing the region's agricultural potential and
5. they agree to exchange and trade natural resources with one another, thereby satisfying regional demands for oil, gas and coal

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To conclude, despite the critical shortcomings in Lypa's political theory, it is of significant historic value and highly innovative. It might even be said that the geopolitician was one of the spiritual founding fathers of the BSEC. Entirely on his own, he worked out a sophisticated strategy for the dozens of Black Sea states on the eve of Second World War, and he published it under very harsh conditions. It is likely that strategy would have been significantly improved if Lypa had lived for a longer time and continued his work after the war. He was, however, murdered by the NKVD in 1944.<sup>48</sup>



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47. Myroslav Dnistrianskyi (2000), Pratsi S. Rudnytskogo I Yu. Lypy V Konteksti Yevropeyskoyi Polityko-Geografichnoyi Dumky ('The Works of S. Rudnytski and Yu. Lypa in the Context of European Political and Geopolitical Thought'), *History of Ukrainian Geography: The All Ukrainian Scientific and Theoretical Journal*, vol. 2, p, 77.
48. The Narodnyi komisariat vnutrishnikh sprav (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) was a law enforcement agency of the Soviet Union.

# Would External Intervention by Military Force to Protect Civilians in Syria be Legally Justified?

*Richard Lappin*

Anti-government protests erupted in Syria in March 2011, assuming a more formal nature following a violent government response that ultimately escalated into civil war. There is broad consensus that the Syrian regime has committed crimes against humanity against its own population over the past two years. It has been reported that more than 100,000 people have been killed, that 1.7 million people have been registered as refugees, and that chemical weapons were used in the Ghouta area of Damascus.<sup>1</sup> Yet widespread debate – in policy circles, academia, and the media – testifies to some confusion as to whether external intervention by military force to protect civilians in Syria would be legally justifiable. This article contends that such an intervention would lack legal justification in a positivist sense, that is to say according to treaties, custom, and general principles of law,<sup>2</sup> and the general principles of treaty interpretation as codified in the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

*Keywords: Syrian civil war, crimes against humanity, forced intervention, R2P movement, treaty interpretation, legal positivism*

## Part One: Treaty Interpretation

Treaty interpretation has always enjoyed a prominent place in international law, yet its role has been enhanced with the proliferation of international human rights treaties and the expansion of international judicial bodies. Part one of this article outlines the relevant principles of



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treaty interpretation as codified in the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCLT) and how these have been applied to human rights treaties. The section concludes by assessing the extent to which local contexts should be taken into account when interpreting human rights treaties, calling for an approach that remains faithful to the positivist foundations established in the VCLT as a means to reinforce the universalism of human rights and avoid their dilution.

### *Principles of Treaty Interpretation*

Section 3 of the 1969 VCLT codifies a robust and authoritative guide to interpreting international treaties, including human rights instruments.<sup>3</sup> Article 31(1) establishes that interpretation should be in 'good faith' in accordance with three core principles. First, in respect of the *text*, that is to say 'the ordinary meaning to be given to the terms to the treaty'. Second, in respect of the *context*, that is to say a word or phrase should not be read in isolation but 'in their context'. Third, in respect of the *objective*, that is to say 'in light of its object and purpose'.

These core principles are elaborated upon. Article 31(2) notes that *context* refers to the full text, including the preamble and annexes, as well as any other agreement or instrument established in connection to the treaty.<sup>4</sup> Article 31(3) provides that *objective* can be determined from the context, as well as subsequent agreements and practice in respect of its interpretation, in view of 'relevant rules of international law'.<sup>5</sup> While paragraphs 1-3 of Article 31 do not create an unequivocal hierarchical order of interpretation, they do generally 'embody a logical procession'.<sup>6</sup>

The notion of 'good faith' prevails throughout the process of interpretation, embodying the principle of *pacta sunt servanda* as contained in Article 26 of the VCLT. While it has been argued that 'good faith itself has no normative quality',<sup>7</sup> it has become, according to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), 'one of the basic principles governing the creation and performance of legal obligations'.<sup>8</sup> Good faith, essentially, requires parties to a treaty to act honestly, fairly, and reasonably, in accordance with the spirit of the law as well as the letter.<sup>9</sup>

In confirming the meaning resulting from the application of Article 31, and particularly if the 'meaning is ambiguous or obscure' or 'leads to a result which is manifestly absurd or unreasonable', Article 32 provides that recourse can also be made to supplementary materials, including the *travaux préparatoires* and the circumstances of its conclusion.

These principles of interpretation are fully consistent with Article 38 of the 1945 Statute of the ICJ, which establishes the parameters of international law.<sup>10</sup> At present, 113 states are party to the VCLT<sup>11</sup> and Section 3 has been widely accepted as part of international customary law.<sup>12</sup> As Orakhelashvili rightly observes, Section 3 of the VCLT ‘reinforces the consensual positivist foundation of the international legal system, which means that international rules are created through agreement between states, and interpretation methods help to ascertain the parameters of that agreement.’<sup>13</sup>

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This understanding has been expressly connected to human rights treaties, as reflected in the jurisprudence of UN human rights treaty bodies<sup>14</sup> and regional human rights tribunals.<sup>15</sup> While there are no specific provisions on interpretation in the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), the American Convention on Human Rights, or the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the subsequent reliance on the VCLT is reassuring in terms of promoting consistency in the interpretation of human rights law. Furthermore, as Sorensen writes, ‘a statement as to the validity or invalidity of a logical proposition cannot be applied to itself – a principle, which like all other principles of logic, must be observed in all legal interpretation.’<sup>16</sup>

### *Schools of Interpretation*

While the brief articles of the VCLT establish authoritative parameters for treaty interpretation, their application can be lengthy, requiring careful consideration when applied to a given context.<sup>17</sup> Sinclair notes that ‘there are few topics in international law which have given rise to such extensive doctrinal dispute as the topic of treaty interpretation.’<sup>18</sup> Indeed, notwithstanding the precision of the VCLT, it is widely held that three schools of interpretation have arisen.<sup>19</sup> First, the *textualist* school that focuses on the text and its ‘ordinary meaning’, where words and phrases are given their normal and unstrained meaning. Second, the *intentionalist* school that focuses on the intention of the drafters, often with an emphasis on the *travaux préparatoires*. Third, the *teleological* school that focuses on the ‘object and purpose’ of a treaty, in a way that gives scope to the fundamental problem it was supposed to address. Significantly, these schools are not mutually exclusive and may vary according to the case, thereby imbuing a flexibility that is necessary for effective interpretation and implementation of the law.

## *The Special Character of Human Rights Treaties*

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Consideration should be given to the special character of human rights treaties, which create obligations on states to protect individual rights rather than reciprocal responsibilities between parties.<sup>20</sup> As early as 1951, the ICJ opined that parties to the Genocide Convention ‘do not have any individual advantages or disadvantages nor interests of their own, but merely a common interest.’<sup>21</sup> This approach has been reaffirmed by regional tribunals and was concisely explained by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) in 1982:

Modern human rights treaties... are not multilateral treaties of the traditional type concluded to accomplish the reciprocal exchange of rights for the mutual benefit of the contracting States. Their object and purpose is the protection of the basic rights of individual human beings irrespective of their nationality, both against the State of their nationality and all other contracting states. In concluding these human rights treaties, the States can be deemed to submit themselves to a legal order within which they, for the common good, assume various obligations, not in relation to other states, but towards all individuals within their jurisdiction.<sup>22</sup>

This approach naturally lends itself to the teleological school of interpretation and its emphasis on *objective*, specifically the protection of the individual human person. As the European Court of Human Rights (ECTHR) has noted, it is ‘necessary to seek the interpretation that is most appropriate in order to realise the aim and achieve the object of the treaty.’<sup>23</sup> This has been further articulated in the principle of *pro homine* as promoted by the IACHR, whereby ‘*it is always necessary to choose the alternative that is most favourable to protection of the rights enshrined in said treaty, based on the principle of the rule most favourable to the human being.*’<sup>24</sup>

It follows that such interpretation should ensure that human rights protection is effective. The IACHR has spoken of ‘appropriate effects’, while the ECTHR has held that provisions should ‘be interpreted and applied so as to make its safeguards practical and effective.’<sup>25</sup> Jurisprudence further illustrates that this emphasis on ‘objective and purpose’ often requires an evolutive approach, reflecting a view that human rights are not static and should be interpreted in accordance with developments in law and society.<sup>26</sup> In this respect, the ECTHR has held that the ECHR is

a 'living instrument which must be interpreted in the light of present day conditions.'<sup>27</sup> The ICJ has also frequently ruled that treaties should be interpreted in accordance with the legal framework prevailing at the time of interpretation, rather than the one at the conclusion of the treaty.<sup>28</sup>

In some instances the evolutive principle has led to interpretations that have established rights not expressly defined in the original wording. For example, the ECtHR has established that the right of access to a court could be interpreted from Article 6 of the ECHR's guarantee of a fair trial.<sup>29</sup> This has led Fitzmaurice to label the evolutive approach as 'controversial' and one that does 'not always conform to the classical rules on interpretation.'<sup>30</sup> While the above example may be deemed reasonable and one interpreted in 'good faith', it is clear that there should be limits to this approach. Indeed, the ECtHR has acknowledged that although '*the Convention and its Protocols must be interpreted in the light of present-day conditions... the Court cannot, by means of an evolutive interpretation, derive from these instruments a right that was not included therein at the outset*'.<sup>31</sup>

### *Local Context and the Margin of Appreciation*

The VCLT does not mention whether local contexts should be taken into account during the process of treaty interpretation, yet the relevant articles are expressed at a level of generality that grants some discretion to local authorities and regional tribunals. On this basis, the ECtHR has made reference to regional consensus on particular issues, at times reflecting a national law standard that can act as the lowest common denominator. Similarly, UN human rights treaty bodies have been praised for their ability to reconcile tensions between diverse local practices and respect for universal human rights.<sup>32</sup>

Another possibility is the application of the principle of a 'margin of appreciation', whereby states are afforded a degree of discretion in applying local measures to international standards.<sup>33</sup> For example, the ECtHR recently ruled that while an indiscriminate ban on prisoner voting rights breached the ECHR, states do enjoy wide discretion in deciding which prisoners should be prohibited.<sup>34</sup> The principle of a margin of appreciation may vary depending on the issue. Moreover, where a right may justifiably be restricted, jurisprudence establishes that proportionality should be employed in order to establish 'a fair balance between the

demands of the general interest of the community and the requirements of the protection of the individual's fundamental rights'.<sup>35</sup>

Much of the debate on treaty interpretation at the local level has, however, focused on the need to interpret universal treaties according to local contexts. Campbell has opined that the 'positivization of human rights increases their utility but compromises their moral status' at the local level.<sup>36</sup> While Merry has asserted that 'in order for human rights ideas to be effective... they need to be translated into local terms and situated within local contexts of power and meaning. They need, in other words, to be remade in the vernacular'.<sup>37</sup>

Yet, while it is important to remain sensitive to local contexts, caution should be exercised. For instance, how is the local context defined? By geography only? And whose vernacular represents the local context?<sup>38</sup> In addition, a focus on the local context has the 'potential to detract from the universalist aspirations of the global system by posing different and indeed lower standards of protection',<sup>39</sup> while also providing convenient justifications for human rights violations.<sup>40</sup> It may also risk opening an unnecessary distinction between 'ordinary' and 'higher' rights, which may have an adverse effect on 'the credibility of human rights as a legal discipline'.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, it should be underlined that 'when a treaty is being interpreted, it has to be appreciated that the parties to it have already made their political choice which they then expressed through legal commitments; it is not for the interpreter to replace that choice by its own one'.<sup>42</sup>

This is not to diminish the importance of the local context, which is of high relevance in the drafting and ratification of treaties, as well as in efforts to inform citizens of their treaty rights in a given context and the reasoning of decisions. Indeed, such outreach programmes are imperative to bridging identified gaps between legal discourse and lived experiences.<sup>43</sup> However, while carefully drafted treaties provide a margin of appreciation for interpretation by local authorities, caution should be exercised to ensure that any interpretation based on local context does not dilute the universal standards that states have already agreed to through legal commitments.

## Part Two: External Intervention in Syria

Section 3 of the VCLT provides clear, positivist parameters for interpreting human rights treaties; an approach that should be applied when considering the legality of possible external intervention by military force

to protect civilians in Syria. Part two of this article analyses the basis of a possible intervention in Syria, affirming that such an action would lack legal justification in a positivist sense, that is to say according to treaties, custom, and general principles of law.<sup>44</sup> The section concludes by acknowledging competing political and moral justifications for intervention that, while compelling, do not necessarily reinforce the legal basis for external military action.

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### *Treaty Law*

One of the fundamental rules of international treaty law is the prohibition of the use of force between states.<sup>45</sup> While Articles 55 and 56 of the UN Charter oblige states to 'promote universal respect for human rights' and 'to take joint and separate action' to do so,<sup>46</sup> Article 2(4) clearly prohibits the use of force with the caveat of two exceptions: to restore or maintain collective security on the basis of UN Security Council (UNSC) authorization (Articles 39-42) or as self-defence in case of 'armed attack' (Article 51).<sup>47</sup> Both conditions are manifestly absent from the Syrian context.

First, there has been no UNSC authorization of force. Article 24 of the UN Charter delegates 'primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security' to the UNSC, requiring decisions be made by 9 of the 15 members with no veto from the 5 permanent members. Russia and China, as permanent members, have consistently opposed the use of force in Syria rendering any UNSC authorization unlikely in the foreseeable future.

Second, Syria has also not attacked another state, nor has it threatened to, thus removing the possibility of action based on self-defence. It has been posited that the opposition, the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, could request external intervention to assist them in collective self-defence against the "former Assad regime".<sup>48</sup> Although the likes of France and the UK have recognised the opposition as 'the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people', it is apparent that the opposition does not hold effective control across Syria, that the legitimacy of the opposition is contested at an international level, and that the Assad regime does in fact maintain the formal requirements to be recognised as the legal government.<sup>49</sup>

Additionally, while the US has linked the use of chemical weapons (in general) to core national interests, the extension of the argument to one of 'self-defence' is tenuous. Justifying intervention on the basis of

chemical weapon use in Syria as part of a broader strategy of self-defence strays into a pre-emptive discourse that is not provided in treaty law and certainly does not represent an imminent threat to US security.<sup>50</sup>

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Lastly, it should also be underscored that while the use of chemical weapons is a violation of international law it does not, on its own, constitute a legal basis for a military response to such violations.

### *Customary International Law*

From a customary international law (CIL) perspective, proponents of intervention argue that custom has developed since the UN Charter, providing a legal basis for military intervention ‘to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe or to stop widespread human rights abuse.’<sup>51</sup> In the case of Syria, it is argued that the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention and other custom<sup>52</sup> have established the prohibition of chemical warfare as a *jus cogens* norm that amounts to a crime against humanity, from which no state may derogate in its actions.<sup>53</sup> This was the position assumed by the UK government in respect of Syria, on the basis that ‘there is no practicable alternative to the use of force’ due to continued blocking of the UNSC and that ‘the proposed use of force... is the minimum necessary to achieve the end and for no other purpose.’<sup>54</sup> Advocates of this position also refer to precedents of military intervention on humanitarian grounds in the absence of UNSC approval, including the Belgian action in the Congo in 1960, Tanzania’s intervention in Uganda in 1978-79, the US action in Grenada in 1983, and the NATO operation in Serbia/Kosovo in 1999.<sup>55</sup>

However, it should be recalled that such a position has been rejected by the vast majority of states, including the some 130 members of the G77 at the 2000 Declaration of the South Summit, with paragraph 54 stating that ‘we reject the so-called “right” of humanitarian intervention which has no legal basis in the United Nations Charter or in the general principles of international law’. Additionally, when past “humanitarian” interventions have occurred, there are very few instances in which humanitarian grounds were explicitly cited.<sup>56</sup> For example, the oft-cited precedent of the 1999 Serbia/Kosovo intervention was formally based on the security interests of NATO members rather than on humanitarian grounds.<sup>57</sup> Joyner asserts that ‘it is important to understand that both elements (state practice and *opinio juris*) must be satisfied before a prin-

ciple may become a candidate for recognition as customary international law'.<sup>58</sup> The clear absence of state practice and *opinio juris*, thus, fails to provide a compelling legal case for intervention based in CIL.

Even if parallel contradictory CIL were to ultimately become established, it would likely not prevail over the UN Charter treaty-based obligations. While there is no *a priori* hierarchy between treaty and custom as sources of international law,<sup>59</sup> 'relevant norms deriving from a treaty prevail between the parties over norms deriving from customary law',<sup>60</sup> except in rare cases such as *desuetude* when a treaty loses its binding character, which the UN Charter has clearly not.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, Article 103 of the UN Charter states that obligations under the Charter prevail over obligations under any other international treaties, a provision that can, largely, be extended to custom. Additionally, the interpretive rule of *lex specialis derogate legi generalis* may be applied; prioritizing the specific rules of the UN Charter over the more general and ambiguous custom of humanitarian intervention.<sup>62</sup>

The recent 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P) movement, despite initial aspirations, does not alter the legal basis in a meaningful way. R2P emerged as a means to prevent mass atrocities such as the genocides in Rwanda and Srebrenica in the 1990s. Under R2P reasoning, the international community has a responsibility to protect a nation's citizens when its government has clearly forfeited that duty.<sup>63</sup> However, while the 2005 UN GA Resolution 60/1 recognised a *responsibility* to protect, it reaffirmed the need for collective action through the (legally authorized) UNSC.

### *Reforming International Law*

Ultimately, the strongest legal argument for military intervention against Syria on humanitarian grounds rests on the claim that the intervention itself will help crystallize a new customary norm of international law that does not yet exist.<sup>64</sup> Such claims of a legal basis for intervention are, paradoxically, fully consistent with the system of international law.<sup>65</sup> Under certain conditions a willingness to violate existing international law for the sake of reforming it is not only consistent with a commitment to the rule of law but may even be required by it.<sup>66</sup> To paraphrase Akande; the only way to change customary law it is to break (or reinterpret) it. One possible avenue of reinterpretation is that the prohibition of the use of force should *not* be seen in a limited way. Indeed, Article 2(4) of the

UN Charter prohibits force against ‘the territorial integrity or political independence of another State or in a manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN’, arguably allowing the permissible use of force to be extended to the protection of human rights.<sup>67</sup>

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Such an approach can be loosely grouped with the so-called ‘pragmatic’ approach, which ‘sees international law not as a formal enterprise unto itself, but instead as part of a system of general international order, where the law itself embraces the legality of enforcing a certain amount of rough order in the world.’<sup>68</sup> As Henkin asked in the aftermath of Kosovo: ‘Is it better to leave the law alone, while turning a blind eye (and a deaf ear) to violations that had compelling moral justification? Or should Kosovo [or Syria] move us to push the law along to bring it closer to what the law ought to be?’<sup>69</sup>

The ‘reform’ and ‘pragmatic’ schools offer insightful observations about the direction of international law, but ones that do not yet have an unequivocal basis in international law. They are also ones that require careful and inclusive consideration, preferably through treaty-based reform, because if international law is to be accepted as being so inherently malleable and easy to circumvent it risks becoming ‘not law but rather a mere collection of recommendations.’<sup>70</sup>

### *Legality vs. Legitimacy*

Although intervention would not be legally justifiable, it does not mean that it would not be morally or politically justifiable. In the words of Austin, ‘the existence of the law is one thing; its merit or demerit is another.’<sup>71</sup> Political and moral justifications are more qualitative, more subjective – but they can be more compelling and ultimately accepted, especially when cloaked in *CIL* language; as in the ‘illegal but legitimate’ tradition of the Serbia/Kosovo intervention.<sup>72</sup> The need to respond to the use of chemical weapons to uphold the international norm prohibiting their use and to deter future use has political credence.<sup>73</sup> These justifications, moreover, gain more normative weight in the absence of UNSC agreement to intervene to protect against gross human rights abuses.<sup>74</sup>

However, such developments bypass critical and rigorous checks and balances, legally enshrined in the UN Charter. The use of force, irrespective of the underlying intent, should be subject to collective authorization according to mutually agreed and objective standards: ‘what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.’<sup>75</sup> While this may – and has – led to the

unnecessary and preventable loss of life, it should be preserved, albeit potentially amended.<sup>76</sup> The alternative of looser, unilateral and competing claims of legality for intervention based on custom is inherently more subjective and not only risks undermining the international law system but also escalating larger threats to global peace by opening the possibility for powerful states to redefine the grounds for unrestrained force on nominal and self-proclaimed “humanitarian” grounds.<sup>77</sup>

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Additionally, the legality versus legitimacy paradigm is reductionist and risks obfuscating other key criteria. Intervention to protect human lives is almost always morally compelling but, irrespective of the legality of the use of force, it should be accompanied by considerations of the proportionality of force, potential to deter future violations (in Syria and elsewhere), timeframes, local reaction to external intervention, and the impact on the internal balance of power.<sup>78</sup>

Furthermore, it should be underlined that states may also utilise a range of legal non-military measures to protect civilians, including multilateral diplomacy, humanitarian aid, GA resolutions and special commissions, economic and political sanctions, weapons inspections, and criminal prosecutions. Indeed, the concept of R2P is explicit in calling for multiple non-military measures to be employed; ‘R2P cannot be relegated to code for armed intervention.’<sup>79</sup>

## Conclusions

International treaty law clearly prohibits the use of force between states with the exception of two caveats, UNSC authorization or as an act of self-defence, both of which are manifestly absent from the Syrian context. Additionally, external intervention by military force to protect civilians has not attained CIL status through state practice or *opinio juris* and, even if a CIL doctrine of humanitarian intervention were to be satisfied, it would not necessarily prevail over the UN Charter prohibition. Moreover, it is held that the use of force, irrespective of political or moral justifications, should be subject to collective authorization according to mutually agreed and objective standards. As such, external intervention by military force to protect civilians in Syria would not be legally justified.

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## Notes

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1. United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic; Hurd; Martin; British Broadcasting Company
2. See, Article 38 of the 1945 Statute of the International Court of Justice
3. Of note, the 1986 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties between States and International Organizations or between International Organizations, not yet in force, follows the same principles of interpretation as the 1969 VCLT. See also, Aust, pp.7-8; D'Amato, p.599, Fitzmaurice, Elias and Merkouris, p.153, Sinclair, p.153. For a counterview, see: McDougal, Lasswell and Miller. It should also be noted that the leading authorities on treaty interpretation often sat on the International Law Commission (ILC), the principal drafter of the VCLT.
4. In support of this principle, see: *Case of Golder v. The United Kingdom*, Judgement, 21 February 1975, ECtHR, paragraph 34; *Rights of Nationals of the United States of America in Morocco (France v. United States)*, Judgement, 27 August 1952, ICJ, p.196; *Resources Foundation v. Zambia*, Judgement, 7 May 2001, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), paragraph 70
5. Article 31(4) further provides that 'a special meaning shall be given to a term if it is established that the parties so intended'. For an insightful analysis on this specific provision, see: Icelandic Human Rights Centre
6. Fitzmaurice, Elias and Merkouris, p.157. See also, Aust, p.187, Gardiner, pp.37-38, Orakhelashvili, p.121, Sinclair, p.153. See also, *Case of Witold Litwa v. Poland*, Judgement, 4 April 2000, ECtHR, paragraphs 58-59, which states that interpretation 'places on the same footing the various elements enumerated in the four paragraphs of that Article... [yet] the sequence in which those elements are listed in Article 31 of the Vienna Convention regulates, however, the order which the process of interpretation of the treaty should follow'. Others, however, caution that the Articles should be read in a purely holistic manner, see, for example: *Abi-Saab*
7. Viliger, p.365
8. *Nuclear Tests Case (Australia v. France)*, Report, 20 December 1974, ICJ, p.268
9. See, Rosenne, p.35; D'Amato, p. 599
10. According to Article 38 of the 1945 Statute of the ICJ, international law comprises: 'a. international conventions, whether general or particular, establishing rules expressly recognized by the contesting states; b. international custom, as evidence of a general practice accepted as law; c. the general principles of law recognized by civilized nations; d. subject to the provisions of Article 59, judicial decisions and the teachings of the most highly qualified publicists of the various nations, as subsidiary means for the determination of rules of law'. See also, Sinclair, p.8, Gardiner, D'Amato
11. The VCLT entered into force on 27 January 1980.
12. See, *Case Concerning Kasikili/Sedudu Islands (Botswana v. Namibia)*, Judgement, 13 December 1999, ICJ, supra note 5 at paragraph 18, which states

- that Articles 31 and 32 of the vclt are ‘applicable inasmuch as it reflects customary international law.’ See also, *Case Concerning the Dispute Regarding Navigational and Related Rights (Costa Rica v. Nicaragua)*, Judgement, 13 July 2009, ICJ, paragraph 47; *us – Continued Existence and Application of Zeroing Methodology*, Report of the World Trade Organization Appellate Body, 4 February 4 2009, p.267. For a contrasting view, see, Klabbers, p.30: ‘no rule on interpretation could likely be of customary law nature; interpretation rules simply are of a different quality than ordinary norms of behaviour’.
13. Orakhelashvili, p.117
  14. Allain, p. 4, Addo, Icelandic Human Rights Centre
  15. Killander, p.145, Orakhelashvili, p.117. Killander notes that while the ECtHR has traditionally put more emphasis on regional consensus, the IACHR and African Commission have often looked outside of their continent to treaties and soft law of the UN as well as jurisprudence of other regional courts.
  16. Sorensen, p.153. Such a view was affirmed by a Greek representative in their comments on the vclt: ‘even if a treaty provided rules for the interpretation of clauses regarding interpretation, those provisions would require to be interpreted by means not contained in the treaty’, as quoted in Viliger, p. 14.
  17. Linderfaulk, Gardiner, Sinclair, p.119, Yasseen
  18. Sinclair, p.114. See, also: Ris, p.111, Fitzmaurice, Elias and Merkouris, p.157
  19. American Society of International Law and the International Judicial Academy, Brownlie, pp.604-7, Orakhelashvili, p.118, Sinclair, p.115. These schools may also be referred to as ‘objective’, ‘subjective’, and ‘purposive’.
  20. Harris, O’Boyle, Bates and Buckley, p.6
  21. *Reservations to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes of Genocide*, Advisory Opinion, 28 May 1951, ICJ
  22. *The Effect of Reservations on the Entry Into Force of the American Convention on Human Rights (Arts. 74 and 75)*, Second Advisory Opinion, 24 September 1982, Inter-American Court of Human Rights, paragraph 29. See also, *Austria v. Italy (Application No. 788/60)*, European Human Rights Commission, 1961.
  23. *Case of Wemhoff v. Germany*, Judgement, 27 June 1968, ECtHR, paragraph 8
  24. *Case of Mapiripán Massacre v. Colombia*, Judgement, 15 September 2005, IACHR, paragraph 106
  25. *Case of Paniagua Morales et al. v. Guatemala*, Preliminary Objections, 25 January 1998, IACHR, paragraph 40. *Case of Golder v. The United Kingdom*, Judgement, 21 February 1975, ECtHR, paragraph 34. See also, *Case of Soering v. The United Kingdom*, Judgement, 7 July 1989, ECtHR, paragraph 87; *Scanlen and Holderness v. Zimbabwe*, Judgement, 3 April 2009, ACHPR, paragraph 178
  26. See, Alvarez-Jimenez, Bernhardt, Borge, Letsas, Lixinski, McCaig, Simma and Kill, Tzevelekos, Van Damme
  27. *Case of Loizidou v. Turkey (Preliminary Objections)*, Judgement, 23 March 1995, ECtHR, paragraph 79. See also, *Interpretation of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man Within the Framework of Article 64 of*

- the American Convention on Human Rights*, Advisory Opinion, 14 July 1989, IACHR, paragraph 37; *Case of Tyrer v. the United Kingdom*, Judgement, 25 April 1978, ECtHR, paragraph 31.
28. See: *Case Concerning the Dispute Regarding Navigational and Related Rights (Costa Rica v. Nicaragua)*, Judgement, 13 July 2009, ICJ, paragraph 66; *Case Concerning Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Bosnia and Herzegovina v Serbia and Montenegro)*, Judgement, 26 February 2007, ICJ, paragraph 160
  29. *Case of Golder v. The United Kingdom*, Judgement, 21 February 1975, ECtHR
  30. Fitzmaurice, p.955. See also: Letsas, p.509, Mowbray
  31. *Case of Johnston and Others v. Ireland*, Judgement, 18 December 1986, ECtHR, paragraph 53. See, also: Harris, O'Boyle, Bates and Buckley, p.7
  32. Addo, p.615, Pasqualucci, p.39, Thornberry, p.245. It is of note that the importance of culture is referenced in most major human rights treaties. For example, Article 27 of the ICCPR provides that persons belonging to minorities 'shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture'.
  33. Stacy, pp.134-138. See also, Rellis, pp.511, 519: 'universal standards must be interpreted in diverse ways by different cultures'.
  34. *Case of Scoppola v. Italy (No.3)*, Judgement, 22 May 2012, ECtHR, paragraph 85.
  35. *Case of Soering v. The United Kingdom*, Judgement, 7 July 1989, ECtHR, paragraph 89. Article 8(2) of the ECHR.
  36. Campbell, p.6
  37. Merry, p.1. For an example in respect of gender-based violence, see Amirthalingam
  38. Chanock, pp.38-39: 'There is typically a wide gap between those who speak for cultures and those who live the culture spoken about. While cultures are complex and multi-vocal, in the representation of cultures the voices of the elites overwhelm others. Assertions about cultures tend to be totalizing and simplifying, privileging some voices and patterns of acts and ignoring and marginalizing others'.
  39. Heyns and Killander, p.43, Mechlem. For examples, full or partial, see: Ardeshiri, Banda, Leane
  40. Obokata and O'Connell, p.396
  41. Meron, p.21
  42. Orakhelashvili, p.118
  43. Twining, Killander
  44. See, Article 38 of the 1945 Statute of the International Court of Justice
  45. Dinstein, p.95; Green, p.215
  46. For some, these Articles alone give sufficient grounds for military intervention, see: Shapiro
  47. See also, 1970 UN General Assembly (GA) Resolution 2625, 'Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations': 'armed intervention... [is] in violation of international law.' For support of the authoritative status of the Declaration see Article 31(2) and

- (3) of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.
48. For an elaboration of this argument in a different context, see: Bannelier and Christakis, pp.861-864
  49. Anderson; Baruch and Weinstock, p.1; Rozenberg; For a statement of criteria of state legality, see: Merkel, pp.478-479, as well as Restatement (Third) of US Foreign Relations, Section 203.
  50. Anderson; Baruch and Weinstock, p.2
  51. Akande. See also: Brown, pp.1686-1687; Holzgrefe, p.18; Roberts, p. 5
  52. Syria formally acceded to Chemical Weapons Convention on 14 October 2013. See also, the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention as a generally accepted source of CIL, as well as state practice since 1945.
  53. Other examples of *jus cogens*, or peremptory, norms include prohibition of genocide, slavery, and torture.
  54. Prime Minister's Office (United Kingdom). Similar arguments were also presented in support of the Kosovo intervention, see: Roberts. And more generally by: Annan; International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
  55. Brown, pp.1703-1706; Greenwood, pp.163-171; Koh; Roberts, pp.22-25
  56. Joyner, p.602; Arend and Beck, p.110
  57. Roberts, Campos;
  58. Joyner, p.601
  59. Meron
  60. The Institute of International Law
  61. Akande; Joyner, pp.602-604
  62. Conde, p.150; Joyner, p.604; Perrazzelli and Vergano, p.747
  63. See, among others: Evans; Glanville; International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty; Massingham
  64. Campos; Hurd
  65. Akande
  66. Buchannan, pp.440-473; Kadish and Kadish
  67. See, for example: Macklem, p.389; Welsh, p.55
  68. Anderson; Koh
  69. Henkin, p.827
  70. Joyner, p.609
  71. John Austin, quoted in: Macklem, p.374
  72. Independent International Commission on Kosovo
  73. Hurd;Kerry; Koh
  74. Resiman, pp.861-862; Teson
  75. Dinstein, p.101
  76. See, for example: Joyner, pp.609-617
  77. Anderson; Joyner
  78. Akande; Massingham, pp.817-822; Moore, pp.1-3; Roberts; British Broadcasting Company
  79. See, for example: Moore, p.2

Richard  
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# The Poverty of Statistics

## Military Power and Strategic Balance

*Jan Ludvík*

Military expenditures and the number of service personnel are the two most common features used to compare national military power. However, to what extent they reflect the real world remains a question. This article aims to provide the answer by using data on the great power conflicts in the last 160 years. The Correlates of War data are utilized to highlight that the relation between pre-war military expenditures and the numerical strength of armies on one hand and the outcome of the war on the other is blurred to say the least. States with higher military expenditures prevailed only in six great power conflicts out of nine. Only four of them were won by the state with a numerically stronger peacetime army. The case of the Franco-Prussian war is then used to illustrate that not even superiority in both categories can safely prevent a crushing defeat, still less ensure victory. A nation's military power stems from its ability to adapt effectively to the realities of modern warfare. That is what neither the sheer number of soldiers, nor high military expenditures can guarantee.

*Keywords: strategic balance; military power; military expenditures; Franco-Prussian war.*



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### Introduction

The significance of studying shifts in the balance of military power hardly needs explaining.<sup>1</sup> The concept of balance lies at the very heart of the realist tradition of international relations theory and changes in the distribution of power are often seen as causes of systemic wars between great powers.<sup>2</sup> The balance of military power is one of the most

important components of the overall balance of power, if not *the* most important. Nonetheless, the critical issue how the balance should be estimated remains to be solved. When powers are at war the balance is visible on the battlefield. But peacetime estimates pose more challenging issue. Elaborated models can be produced, and are occasionally utilized by scholars and specialist.<sup>3</sup> But most practitioners use much easier estimates that are drawn from readily available data.

Arguably the most influential estimates are drawn from data on military expenditures and the numerical strengths of armed forces, often establishing guidelines for the policy. NATO's discourse that sets the defence expenditures at two percent of nation's GDP as the threshold of nation's responsible behaviour in the realm of defence and alliance commitments stands as a prime example. The question is to what extent we simplify reality by assuming (purely intuitively) that a state with a larger army and military budget must be stronger than another with a smaller military budget and a smaller army. The relation between strategic balance on one hand and military expenditure and troop numbers on the other remains largely operationally undefined. This text aims to fill this gap and offer a simple, rigorous operational definition of the relation between strategic balance and military power as measured by arms spending and number of military personnel.

The text proceeds as follows: the research strategy and data are first introduced. Thereafter follows the results, which show that the relation between military expenditures and number of military personnel on one side and the outcome of a war on the other is far less intuitive than it might seem. In its next section, the text therefore presents a brief case study of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871, whose analysis serves to illustrate the critical flaws of the reductionist comparisons of military balance.

## Method and data

War is a highly visible and unequivocal comparison of military strength, hard to contest. If we wish to stay within the Clausewitzian paradigm of war as a utilitarian act that serves to achieve a political goal, we can assume that the outcome of a war is the best dependent variable for testing the measures of military power in the real world. The state with

higher military expenditures and numerically preponderant army should overpower its opponent, thus it must prove capable of achieving their political aims also when it comes to a real war conflict.

The analysis presented here is based on the outcomes of great power conflicts since 1850. For each of these conflicts, the author examines the data on military expenditures and number of military personnel of the great powers involved. The data are taken from the *Correlates of War* database<sup>4</sup>. The choice of 1850 as the starting point in time is largely arbitrary. The general aim was to use data from as many conflicts as possible: however, the different nature of wars in the period before the industrial revolution and the rise of nationalism could have affected the validity of results. On the other hand, skewing the data set markedly toward the present would radically reduce the number of cases that could be studied and ultimately prevent the use of quantitative analysis to illustrate the relation between the variables.

The key criterion a conflict must satisfy to be included in this analysis concerns the parties involved: it must be a conflict between great powers. This criterion is based primarily on the concept of strategic balance, which is concerned with the strongest countries of the world. This is justifiable, since great powers have traditionally been the agents of international relations, while small states often end up as mere objects of these relations. In reality, small states often have negligible impact on strategic balance. The analysis therefore includes only those conflicts in which at least one contemporary great power was fighting on either side. Conversely, conflicts in which a great power was involved only on one side have been excluded, as these are often asymmetrical conflicts that follow a different logic than great power conflicts.<sup>5</sup> In line with the *Correlates of War* methodology, war is defined as a conflict with more than 1,000 battle-related deaths a year. The term “great power” is used to denote the following countries: Russia (including the Soviet Union), France and the United Kingdom for the entire period taken into account, Germany (and Prussia) until 1945, Austria until 1918, Italy from 1859 till 1945, Japan from 1900 till 1945, the United States since the turn of the century, the People’s Republic of China since 1949, India and Pakistan since 1998. Another condition for including a great power in the data set analysed is a significant participation of its forces in combat operations.

The period studied includes nine wars between great powers. The first of these is the Crimean War of 1856 between Russia on one side and a

coalition led by the United Kingdom and France on the other. Three years later, France and Austria clashed in northern Italy. The struggle for national unification of Germany and Italy produced two more conflicts: in 1866, Austria found itself at war with Prussia and Italy, and in 1870-1871 Prussia, aided by smaller German states, waged war against France. The twentieth century ushered in the first Asian great power and with it the Russo-Japanese War. This conflict is followed by the two systemic world wars. The analysis further includes the Korean War as a conflict between the US and the People's Republic of China. The last war between great powers as defined above is the 1999 conflict between India and Pakistan in the Kargil area.

For each of these conflicts, two indexes are provided, indicating the ratio of military expenditure of the victorious party to the expenditure of the defeated party and a corresponding ratio between numbers of military personnel on the two sides. The indexes are evaluated as follows: values between 0.9 and 1.1 are considered as parity; values between 1.1 and 1.5 are classified as moderate preponderance of the victorious party/coalition; the range between 1.5 and 2.0 denotes significant preponderance; a value exceeding 2.0 is considered an overwhelming preponderance. On the other hand, values between 0.75-0.9 denote moderate disadvantage; 0.5-0.75 significant disadvantage, and a value below 0.5 an overwhelming disadvantage. Assumption that the preponderant state should win the war is then tested against empirical reality and the correlation between this hypothesis and reality is examined to determine whether it is strong enough to indicate a causal relationship.

Two crucial steps that impact the selected data should be highlighted. Firstly, the indexes only represent the troop or expenditure ratios between the great powers involved. The role of small states is thus disregarded, although it is taken into account in the (qualitative) explanation of deviant cases. The second step was the decision to use data from the year immediately preceding the conflict. In this case, the aim was to establish to what extent the comparison of "peacetime data" is useful in determining the balance of power.

Alliance changes make it rather difficult to analyse either of the world wars. However, in both of them, the determining factor for assessing the role of a state was whether – and on which side – the forces of that state significantly participated in combat operations. For this reason, the First World War is regarded as a conflict between Germany and

Austria on one side and the United Kingdom, France, Russia, Italy and the us on the other. Though Italy supported the Central Powers before the war, it entered the war on the side of the Entente Powers. Russia quit the war in 1917, but until then had borne a significant part of the war fighting burden. Similarly, the us only entered the war in 1917, but its share was also significant. In contrast, Japan is not included in the aggregate data for the Entente, since its participation in the war effort was negligible after its early occupation of the German Pacific colonies. In the case of the Second World War, data for Germany, Italy and Japan on one side are compared with the United Kingdom, France, Russia and the us on the other. A late entry into war (Japan, the us, the Soviet Union, to some extent also Italy) or an early exit due to defeat (France, Italy) are neglected. It should be acknowledged that the choices made by the author in the case of both world wars can definitely be questioned. However, other imaginable choices should not alter the final outcomes very strongly, since the research does not only focus on the correlation between military expenditure/number of military personnel and the outcome of the war, but also seeks to determine whether the relationship is causal. This implies that even a single case that cannot be satisfactorily explained within the framework of the model may suffice to prove that the above-mentioned variables are not linked by a causal relationship.

## Results

A difference in pre-war military spending of the future warring states (Table 1) can explain the outcome of six of the nine great power conflicts in the last 160 years. In two cases (First World War and Kargil War) the victorious party/coalition had an overwhelming advantage in terms of pre-war military expenditure. A significant advantage in this field was converted into victory in three cases (Crimean War, Second Italian War of Independence, Austro-Prussian War). In one case (Russo-Japanese War), the victorious state had moderate advantage in military expenditure. On the other hand, in three cases the model fails to explain the outcome. The most marked counterexample demonstrating the inadequacy of an approach that identifies the ratio between military expenditures with the balance of military power is provided by the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 in which a Prussia-led coalition of German states defeated France. Prussia wins even though the model places it at an overwhelming disadvantage. The model also fails to explain the outcome of the Second

World War and the Korean War. In the first case, however, its failure may be due to the fact that the us enters the war later and the data reflecting its contribution to the coalition potential are not from the year before the war. As for the Korean War, which ends in a stalemate, the failure of the model can be attributed to the fact that the overwhelming superiority in military expenditure on one side is offset by significantly lower troop numbers.<sup>6</sup>

Table 1

| Conflict                           | Year(s)   | Victor (coalition) | Military expenditure | Defeated (coalition) | Military expenditure | Preponderance index |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Crimean War                        | 1853-1856 | France             | 17,257               | Russia               | 15,692               | 1.75                |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     | 10,132               |                      |                      |                     |
| Second Italian War of Independence | 1859-1860 | France             | 19,967               | Austria              | 12,835               | 1.56                |
| Austro-Prussian War                | 1866      | Prussia            | 5,950                | Austria              | 9,121                | 1.65                |
|                                    |           | Italy              | 9,102                |                      |                      |                     |
| Franco-Prussian War                | 1870-1871 | Prussia            | 10,196               | France               | 23,912               | 0.43                |
| Russo-Japanese War                 | 1905      | Japan              | 67,273               | Russia               | 50,305               | 1.34                |
| First World War                    | 1914-1918 | Russia             | 73,512               | Germany              | 63,926               | 3.34                |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     | 67,957               | Austria              | 27,376               |                     |
|                                    |           | USA                | 62,825               |                      |                      |                     |
|                                    |           | France             | 61,367               |                      |                      |                     |
|                                    |           | Italy              | 38,849               |                      |                      |                     |
| Second World War                   | 1939-1945 | Russia             | 5,429,984            | Germany              | 7,415,163            | 0.95                |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     | 1,863,997            | Japan                | 1,699,210            |                     |
|                                    |           | USA                | 1,131,499            | Italy                | 746,050              |                     |
|                                    |           | France             | 919,284              |                      |                      |                     |
| Korean War                         | 1950-1953 | USA                | 13503000             | China                | 2,030,000            | 6.65                |
| Kargil War                         | 1999      | India              | 13594000             | Pakistan             | 4,078,000            | 3.33                |

*Before 1913, the data are in thousands of GBP in the prices of the given year; since 1914 similarly in thousands of USD*

If comparing military expenditure produces at least a limited correlation between superiority in this area and the outcome of the war, the numerical strength of armies seems to lack explanatory potential almost entirely (see Table 2). This model can only explain four of the nine cases. An overwhelming numerical preponderance may have been the reason for the victories of Indian forces in the Kargil conflict and of the Entente Powers in the First World War. The victorious countries of the Second World War had a significant advantage in this respect. In one case (Austro-Prussian War), the victorious coalition of Prussia and Italy had a moderate numerical preponderance. In the Second Italian War of Independence, France defeats Austria in a situation of parity. What is far more significant, however, is the fact that in the Crimean, Franco-Prussian, Russo-Japanese and Korean wars, the numerically stronger army fails to win, thus indicating a failure of the statistical model. In the case of the Crimean war the failure can be partly explained by the involvement of Turkey, which, if taken into account, would bring the two sides to a parity of forces, although, for the purposes of the model, Turkey in 1856 is no longer a great power. A critical failure of the model can be demonstrated on the example of the Russo-Japanese War and the Franco-Prussian War.

To better explain the cases where one of the parties is preponderant in the number of personnel, while the other in military expenditure, I have compiled a composite index of preponderance (Table 3). This index should help explain such cases as the Korean War. The index is an average value, calculated from the victorious party's preponderance indexes in the two areas taken into account. Since preponderance in military expenditure need not be equally significant as preponderance in troop numbers, I have calculated three versions of the index. The first (v. 1) is the actual arithmetical mean of the preponderance indexes in the two areas. The second index (v. 2) assumes that preponderance in military expenditure is twice as significant as numerical advantage in military personnel. Conversely, the third index (v. 3) works with the assumption that a numerically preponderant army is twice as significant for the outcome as preponderance in military expenditure.

However, even after compiling the composite index of preponderance, based on both military expenditure and the numerical strength of armies, the predictive value of the model has not improved significantly.

| Conflict                           | Year(s)   | Victor (coalition) | Troop numbers | Defeated (coalition) | Troop numbers | Preponderance index |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Crimean War                        | 1853-1856 | France             | 397           | Russia               | 756           | 0.79                |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     | 201           |                      |               |                     |
| Second Italian War of Independence | 1859-1860 | France             | 427           | Austria              | 403           | 1.06                |
| Austro-Prussian War                | 1866      | Prussia            | 216           | Austria              | 292           | 1.46                |
|                                    |           | Italy              | 209           |                      |               |                     |
| Franco-Prussian War                | 1870-1871 | Prussia            | 318           | France               | 474           | 0.67                |
| Russo-Japanese War                 | 1905      | Japan              | 218           | Russia               | 1160          | 0.19                |
| First World War                    | 1914-1918 | Russia             | 1,434         | Germany              | 716           | 3.04                |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     | 523           | Austria              | 322           |                     |
|                                    |           | USA                | 155           |                      |               |                     |
|                                    |           | France             | 642           |                      |               |                     |
|                                    |           | Italy              | 398           |                      |               |                     |
| Second World War                   | 1939-1945 | Russia             | 1,566         | Germany              | 782           | 1.74                |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     | 376           | Japan                | 370           |                     |
|                                    |           | USA                | 330           | Italy                | 486           |                     |
|                                    |           | France             | 581           |                      |               |                     |
| Korean War                         | 1950-1953 | USA                | 1,615         | China                | 2,570         | 0.63                |
| Kargil War                         | 1999      | India              | 1,300         | Pakistan             | 590           | 2.20                |

*In thousands of soldiers*

*Table 2*

The version which represents the actual arithmetic mean of the two preponderance indexes can explain six of the nine cases. However, it once again fails in the case of the Franco-Prussian War, the Russo-Japanese War and the Korean War. The assumption that an advantage in troop numbers is less significant than higher military expenditure fares slightly better.

| Conflict                           | Year(s)   | Victor (coalition) | Defeated (coalition) | Composite index |      |      |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------|------|
|                                    |           |                    |                      | v. 1            | v. 2 | v. 3 |
| Crimean War                        | 1853-1856 | France             | Russia               | 1.27            | 1.43 | 0.95 |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     |                      |                 |      |      |
| Second Italian War of Independence | 1859-1860 | France             | Austria              | 1.31            | 1.39 | 1.23 |
| Austro-Prussian War                | 1866      | Prussia            | Austria              | 1.56            | 1.59 | 1.52 |
|                                    |           | Italy              |                      |                 |      |      |
| Franco-Prussian War                | 1870-1871 | Prussia            | France               | 0.55            | 0.51 | 0.59 |
| Russo-Japanese War                 | 1905      | Japan              | Russia               | 0.77            | 0.96 | 0.57 |
| First World War                    | 1914-1918 | Russia             | Germany              | 3.19            | 3.24 | 3.14 |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     | Austria              |                 |      |      |
|                                    |           | USA                |                      |                 |      |      |
|                                    |           | France             |                      |                 |      |      |
|                                    |           | Italy              |                      |                 |      |      |
| Second World War                   | 1939-1945 | Russia             | Germany              | 1.34            | 1.21 | 1.48 |
|                                    |           | United Kingdom     | Japan                |                 |      |      |
|                                    |           | USA                | Italy                |                 |      |      |
|                                    |           | France             |                      |                 |      |      |
| Korean War                         | 1950-1953 | USA                | China                | 3.65            | 4.64 | 2.64 |
| Kargil War                         | 1999      | India              | Pakistan             | 2.77            | 2.95 | 2.58 |

Table 3

With the calculation method thus altered, the Russo-Japanese War becomes a parity situation, which cannot be regarded as a complete failure of the model. On the other hand, attributing greater significance to troop numbers than to military expenditure would lead us back to firm expectations of Russian victory. The Crimean War would then seem a parity situation.

All the failures pointed out above demonstrate how problematic it is to assume a causal relationship between preponderance in both areas and the outcome of the war. At the same time, they confirm the limited predictive power of quantitative models. Without including a qualitative analysis, it is impossible to rule out the role of other factors that may have determined the outcome. Since a theory, under prede-

financed conditions, must hold true for all cases, the hypothesized causal relationship need only be disproved once. For this purpose, then, the text analyses the case of the Franco-Prussian War, which exemplifies the model's critical failure.

Jan Ludvík

### Explanation of the critical failure

In the summer of 1870, Prussia stunned Europe by its *Blitzkrieg* victory over France. Its army seemed to emerge almost out of nowhere. Since the defeat of Napoleon till the victory in the Battle of Königgrätz it had not fought a single major battle. In contrast, French armies had been victorious on the Crimean Peninsula and in Italy. French military professionals had also been hardened by the fierce fighting in Algeria and Mexico. The French government could (and should) have been warned by the outcome of the Austro-Prussian War four years earlier. However, most observers quickly attributed the Prussian victory simply to technological advantage represented by the breech-loading needle guns of the Prussian infantry. By that time, Europe had grown so used to Hapsburg defeats that it didn't pay much attention.

The case of the Franco-Prussian war is crucial for determining to what extent peacetime statistics are helpful for assessing strategic balance. In this war, Prussia defeats France despite the fact that, according to our model, the country is at an overwhelming disadvantage in military expenditure and also significantly outnumbered in military personnel. An adequate strategic balance model should be able to provide viable explanations (with the exception of the role of chance, which cannot be adequately evaluated in any model). An analysis of the conflict can uncover a number of aspects which assumption about the relation between strategic balance and military expenditure/number of military personnel simply does not take into account.

The two great powers clashed on a scale probably unsurpassed by any of the other conflicts under analysis, with the exception of the two world wars. The outcome cannot be explained by a merely partial deployment of forces by one of the great powers. Also, the French collapse can be satisfactorily explained neither by a difference in tactics between the opposing parties, nor by the involvement of Prussia's allies.

On Prussia's side we find three relatively important South German states: Bavaria, Baden and Württemberg. However, even after adding their forces and defence expenditure, France still significantly outspends

and moderately outnumbers the Prussian side.<sup>7</sup> The failure of the model thus cannot be ascribed to the fact that Prussia was aided by allies. Even after factoring in their contribution, the model still predicts French victory, the only anticipated difference being that the French would prevail less overwhelmingly.

On the level of tactics, difficult to capture in a strategic balance model, the French and the Germans are almost on a par. On the whole, Prussian commanders do not differ greatly in quality from their French counterparts, von Moltke being perhaps the only exception. On the contrary: as has been aptly noted by Conrad Prince, the commander of the First Prussian Army, General Karl von Steinmetz almost rivals his opponents in incompetence.<sup>8</sup> A combination of infantry, cavalry and artillery forms the core of the combat forces on both sides. Both armies are divided into corps, about 30,000 men strong, made up by two to four divisions. The importance of cavalry is slowly but steadily diminishing and, on an industrial-warfare battlefield, will not be crucial for either of the parties. Prussia has the advantage of superior artillery, equipped with Krupp's steel cannons. France, however, has learned one lesson from the Austrian defeat in 1866, introducing state-of-the-art *chassepot* infantry rifles; with an effective range double that of the Prussian firearms.

The main reason for Prussia's victory was the country's ability to adapt to the changing times. Nationalism, the industrial revolution and the new opportunities it brought had been changing the world's battlefields. The crushing defeat of France was caused by three key factors: a) the existence of a truly effective Prussian General Staff, b) a different organization of the army, c) Prussia's better management of logistics and mobilization at the beginning of the war.

The Prussian General Staff, headed by Helmuth von Moltke, was the key to the other two advantages mentioned. Von Moltke filled the General Staff with the *crème de la crème* of *Kriegsakademie* graduates, and supervised a further honing of their skills and capabilities. Many commanders of Prussian divisions and brigades had gone through this training and the commander of each Prussian corps could consult his Chief of Staff, well acquainted with von Moltke's intentions and his style of warfare. In peacetime, the General Staff prepared the Prussian army for war. In contrast, France had no real plan for the war with Prussia. Its system of command perpetuated the Napoleonic tradition. While Prussia established its General Staff as a substitute for "individual genius", the

French relied excessively on their supreme command. Unfortunately, Napoleon III with his marshals was far less capable than his uncle.

Of the two remaining causes, the different organization of the army in particular is crucial for demonstrating the deficiencies of the model. Prussia reformed its army in the 1860s under the leadership of the Minister of War, Albrecht von Roon. With the exception of commissioned and non-commissioned officers, its ranks were filled by universal conscription that almost no one could avoid. After three years of service, Prussian conscripts had to serve another four years in the army reserve and thereafter were transferred to *Landwehr*. In contrast, the French army was, in June 1870, composed of some 277,000 long-serving professionals and 173,000 poorly trained reserves.<sup>9</sup> The French system was based on a specific concept of the defence duty: a lottery was held to determine which of the men subject to military service would actually be drafted. However, the person selected merely had the obligation to provide the state with a soldier. Whoever was sufficiently rich could afford to send a substitute. The soldiers who had already completed their compulsory years of service were encouraged to stay on – and most of them did, for want of better prospects outside the army. While Paris did realize that the system needed reform, the reform itself was extremely unpopular and could hardly be carried out by the unstable regime. In 1868, Minister of War Adolphe Niel implemented a compromise. The lottery continued to select part of the men born in a given year for five-year service, after which they spent four years in the army reserve. The rest, including those who sent a substitute, were to go through five-month training, after which they would serve for five years in what was called *Garde Mobile*. The *Garde Mobile* would have a three-week intensive training every year. However, the parliament made alterations to Niel's original plan: not only was the annual training of the *Garde Mobile* shortened to two weeks, but the soldiers even returned home every night. In 1870, the French drafting system was thus in the middle of a half-hearted transformation attempt. The *Garde Mobile* was still largely untrained, unequipped and unorganized.<sup>10</sup>

In theory, France could have used the advantage it had in its longer-serving professional soldiers to launch a quick attack against the Prussian initial positions and thus disrupt the enemy's mobilization effort. Von Moltke was not only aware of this threat, but also took precautions, drawing on the experience of the last war. The Prussian General Staff drew up

plans of the mobilization, focusing, amongst other things, on the most effective use of railroads. In the course of just eighteen days, 1,183,000 soldiers passed through Germany's military barracks and 462,000 were sent to the French border. With a quick enough mobilization of forces, France had a good chance of victory. Realizing this, the French decided to send their troops directly to the front, without waiting for reserves and materiel, both of which were to be delivered directly to the Franco-German border. However, this led to enormous logistics problems on the railroads, which could perhaps have been solved if France's general staff had been as competent and efficient as the Prussian one and had dealt with the logistics in advance. Instead, French railroads plunged into chaos. The trains waited at the stations with no one to unload them, while the troops at the front lacked materiel, and the still unemptied wagons were already sorely needed elsewhere. Materiel was abundant, but the distribution system broke down completely.

In the 1860s, Prussia built an army that fully reflected the needs and conditions of the time – and the outcome of the war was a confirmation of this. On the surface, the French army looked no worse than the Prussian one. But Roon and Moltke managed to transform the Prussian army into an effective training institution, which made capable soldiers of most Prussian men. The chosen manner of organization was well suited to contemporary technology and tactics. The Prussian soldier was sufficiently trained for serving in the field. A large army made up of conscripts was at an advantage against a smaller, *de facto* professional force. Without taking into account the mobilization potential, logistics plans and the qualitative advantage represented by Prussia's General Staff, it would be impossible to comprehend how Prussia could defeat France so crushingly.

## Conclusion

Distribution of military power has a clear impact on the functioning of the international system. It is a fairly customary procedure to determine this distribution by comparing national military expenditures and the numerical strength of national military forces. However, war as a real-world confrontation of military power takes little heed of peacetime spending or personnel statistics and often grants victory to the party which, based on the statistician's records of pre-war expenditure and troop numbers, should be destined for defeat. This text convincingly

demonstrates that there is no causal relationship between peacetime preponderance in terms of expenditure and personnel numbers, and the outcome of a war. Although a certain level of positive correlation can be shown to exist, i.e., in very general terms, it is true that the state with higher defence expenditure and a larger army has a statistically greater chance of winning the war, these characteristics are nothing more than imprecise indicators. Out of the nine great power wars examined, no more than six have been won by the state with larger pre-war military spending. Only four of these wars have been won by the state which, in peacetime, kept a larger army. The example of the Franco-Prussian War shows that not even preponderance in both areas provides sufficient safeguard against crushing defeat, let alone guarantees victory. The military power of a state consists solely in its ability to adapt effectively to the demands of modern warfare. Neither a large army, nor high defence expenditures can in themselves guarantee that.

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## Notes

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- 2 Cf. e.g., Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth W. Thompson, *Politics among nations: the struggle for power and peace* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993); Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of international politics* (Boston, Mass.: McGraw-Hill, 1979); Kenneth N. Waltz, “Structural Realism after the Cold War,” *International Security* 26:1 (2001): 5-41; John J. Mearsheimer, *The tragedy of great power politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002).
- 3 Good overview of the literature is given by Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004):14-27.
- 4 The databases of the Correlates of War project are available at [www.correlatesofwar.org](http://www.correlatesofwar.org). Authors working with databases of interstate wars can

- consult Meredith Reid Sarkees and Frank Whelon Wayman, *Resort to war: a data guide to inter-state, extra-state, intra-state, and non-state wars, 1816-2007* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2010). When working with a database of national material capabilities it is possible to consult J. David Singer, Stuart Bremer and John Stuckey, "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965", in *Peace, war, and numbers*, ed. Bruce M. Russett (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1972): 19-48; J. David Singer, "Reconstructing the Correlates of War dataset on material capabilities of states, 1816-1985," *International Interactions* 14:2 (1988): 115-132.
- 5 Cf. Ivan Arreguín-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Security* 26:1 (2001): 93-128.
  - 6 For the sake of simplicity, the us features in the table as the victorious party. This, however, is not an attempt to evaluate the outcome of the war, but simply the wish to maintain a unified approach to the calculation of the index. The designation of the us as the victorious party does not affect the validity of the conclusions.
  - 7 Bavaria contributes a 50,000-strong army and GBP 1,363,000 in defence spending to the coalition. The two less important states, Baden and Württemberg, have, in the year before the war, 15,000 and 14,000 men in arms respectively and the defence expenditure of each slightly exceeds GBP 400,000 in contemporary prices. If taken into account, their contributions would raise the preponderance index of the victorious side to 0.52 in military spending and 0.84 in the number of military personnel.
  - 8 Conrad Prince, "Metz 1870 - Marshal Francois Achille Bazaine: A Classic Example of an Over-promoted Man," *Defence Studies* 5:1 (2005): 101.
  - 9 John G. Lorimer, "Why Would Modern Military Commanders Study the Franco-Prussian War?," *Defence Studies* 5:1 (2005): 111.
  - 10 Michael Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War: the German invasion of France, 1870-1871* (New York: Routledge, 2001): 22-31.



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# Vindicating Neoclassical Geopolitics, Challenging Postmodernism

A New Look at an Old Problem

*Nuno Morgado*

The objective of this work is to exhort the Academia towards a Neoclassical Geopolitics, both in terms of theory and methodology. The relevance of the problem – the validity of Neoclassical Geopolitics – is based on the hypothesis that geography influences the foreign policies of States. Such an assumption is then tested empirically. In terms of methodology, a “theory testing” approach is selected, through the hypothetico-deductive model from Popper, using essentially qualitative approach. As for the structure, the study starts with a philosophical worldview that provides a basic set of ideas for a solid theoretical framework, in which the analysis shall be accomplished. Then sequential steps from the method succeed: delimitation of the subject, systematisation of relations among concepts, description and analysis of ideas from German School of Geopolitics, formulation of hypothesis, deduction and empirical tests.

*Keywords: Geopolitics, German School of Geopolitics, Neoclassical Geopolitics, Critical Geopolitics Hypothetico-deductive method*



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## Introduction

The objective of this paper is quite clear – to exhort the Academia towards a *Neoclassical Geopolitics*, both in terms of theory and methodology. In order to achieve that goal, several steps will be formulated and achieved: how could geopolitical subject be delimited? What are the

relations among concepts of Strategy, Geostrategy, and Geopolitics? What is the significance of Classical Geopolitics, especially ideas from German School of Geopolitics, after *postmodernist Critical* Geopolitics? Did it remain any valid concept, any valid method, and any valid theory? What kind of basis *Critical* Geopolitics presented?

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Therefore, the approach from this paper connects the relevance of the problem – the validity of *Neoclassical* Geopolitics as Mamadouh stressed – to the empirical fact of influence of geography on politics, particularly foreign policy. As it will be defended, in this core assumption, one can find the essence of Geopolitics. So, this will be the framework, in which the hypothesis will be formulated to then be tested against the empirical reality.

As for the structure, the paper will start with philosophical worldview that will provide the elementary set of ideas for a solid theoretical and methodological context, in which the analysis shall be consummated. Specifically in terms of methodology, ‘theory testing’ approach will be elected, through the hypothetico-deductive model from Popper, essentially using qualitative methods.

Both the definition of Geopolitics and the definition of concepts in its domain; the enumeration of several ethical rules within geopolitical methodology; the description of main ideas from German School of Geopolitics, recapturing some concepts, and a particular attention paid to Spanish geopolitician Vicens Vives – all these stages will be followed under the supreme objective to create a framework for usage of *Neoclassical* Geopolitics as a science (object, methodology and finality). Thus, one may find innovative aspects in this study.

As a matter of fact, whereas *Critical* Geopolitics seems to flourish, *Neoclassical* Geopolitics has been, somehow, neglected. This paper tries to bring some balance to that reality.

## Methodological Considerations

### *Weltanschauung*

Honesty shall be above all.

The philosophical worldview – or in some sense the *Weltanschauung* in German language – could be initially docketed with the concept of

*doxa* [δόξα], mentioned in the teachings of Plato. That *doxa* would, in this particular case, correspond simply to the answers from Philosophy, specifically Gnoseology, to questions such as: *what is knowledge? where does knowledge come from? what are the limits of knowledge?* – legitimate questions, but questions that cannot be tested through scientific methods.

Thus, choices have to be made, and in the name of Truth those choices have to be expressively declared.

The existence of the external and ordered reality outside the human mind (ontological argument) and, and although some limitations, the possibility of a trustworthy apprehension from that reality by that human mind (epistemological conclusion) are assumptions accepted by this paper.

Furthermore, the scientific method, which structures the reality into a framework of theories, constitutes a privileged domain on that task of a 'trustworthy apprehension of the reality'. Yet, it is believed that it is not the only one.

Therefore, under the scientific angle that matters for now, it is also relevant to let clear that, on the contrary of 19<sup>th</sup> century *Positivism*, the reality is not acknowledged as a machine, full of quantifiable and mechanic laws towards a mathematical and infallible prediction, but instead, it is believed that Science provides methods which allow reliable knowledge.

Hence, it is already evident that this paper is located at the antipodes of two specific *Weltanschauungen*: the [structuralist] Frankfurt School (*Critical Theory*), which aims to analyze the marxist concept of '*superstructure*' with the deconstruction of Western Civilization as a normative goal; but also the *postmodernist* [and *poststructuralist*] approach, which pursues the same normative goal, yet through other means. As a matter of fact, in terms of methodology, Foucault – whose ideas are based in Marx too – suggested '*genealogy*' as '*anti-science*', thereby a method that shall fight – in Foucault's worldview – against the '*power*'. Consequently: the rejection of rationalism as tool, the rejection of the existence of objective reality outside Man, the rejection of the possibility to reach the reality through scientific method will be disregarded in this paper.

So, the dedication to Truth and to Rigor, from an approach focused on the scientific method, shall not be born from 'passion' and 'fanaticism' as Foucault accused, but from the sincere commitment with Reason and with Truth.

It will be then rejected the pretension of absolute truth instead, searching for equilibrium between what 'exists' and 'what is possible to be known', or according to the explanation of Pope Benedict xvi:

'...the positivist view of the World in general, is a most important dimension of human knowledge and capacity that we may in no way dispense with. But [...] it is not a sufficient culture. ...'

that is the same to support that *positivism* is needed to understand reality, although *positivism* – by itself only – is not sufficient to understand *all* the reality.

*Vindicating  
Neoclassical  
Geopolitics*

### *Methodology*

The angle of 'theory testing' is elected by this paper as approach. In this way, the objective is to provide a solid methodological and theoretical framework, recapturing assumptions from classical geopolitics, and then testing theoretical suppositions against empirical facts.

In reality, one of the weaknesses of *postmodernism* is to *circulate* widely, indeed, in the *royaume* of theories, but what concerns to the test of the ideas against the material reality, the task remains undone. It might be precisely this problem that Glassner refers to.

Thus, the paper will be structured in the two levels: conceptual-theoretical (logical validity), aiming to delimitate the geopolitical object, to describe classical geopolitics, to formulate hypothesis; and observational-empirical (empirical verification) in order to provide empirical verification.

Strictly concerning to the method, the hypothetico-deductive method shall be elected in order to test hypothesis.

In this way, following stages should be accomplished:

1. to observe and to define the problem [*what?*];
2. state-of-the-art about German School of Geopolitics;
3. to generate hypothesis as potential explanation;
4. to deduce predictions from the hypothesis;
5. and then to perform the empirical test, i.e. search for facts from reality related with predictions.

In case that such test would not be possible, hypothesis should be abandoned, since it is not scientific – the criterion of demarcation from Popper. Concerning procedures of inquiry [*how?*], methods of the research

will be essentially qualitative – direct observation, and content analysis from publicly available sources: academic papers, dissertations and books, internet websites, newsletters from research centers, companies and think tanks; Web-based communities (YouTube, Blogs); Google Earth; notes from lectures, conferences, seminars.

On the other hand, with the finality of assuring the validity of the information, sources shall be previously evaluated and the data itself compared with data from other source – with this procedure, exact and feasible objectivity will be assured.

Hence, it is held that Episteme [ἐπιστήμη] – understood as approximation to Truth – is possible. The scientific method as tool, as instrument, should then be guided by Ethics, which shall not allow abusive ideas, based on intentional misinterpretations of the reality. Honesty and accuracy will guide the procedures of intuition, introspection, and judgment of the researcher and that will be reached in practice through laws of objectivity, intelligibility and rationality. Traditionalist methodology will also help in that, avoiding generalizations and allowing a deep study of the problem, relying on knowledge of History, Politics, Foreign Affairs, Law, etc.

Moreover, every conclusion will be, at the end, submitted to verification – that fact should seal the methodological circle.

University is, *par excellence*, a truth-seeking institution. As a matter of fact, that is the reason why those who submit themselves to the slavery of ideology, are condemned to fail in such purpose. In this way, in terms of justification of methodological choices, ‘deconstruction’ or ‘genealogy’ are rejected methods, in detriment of the stages from the scientific method previously described.

## Geopolitics As Science

### *Delimitation of Geopolitical subject*

In previous works, the definition of Geopolitics of Glassner and Fahrer has been used: “the study of States in the context of global spatial phenomena, in an attempt to understand both the bases of State power and the nature of States’ interaction with one another”.

Although this definition could be largely accepted, there is some haziness that it might be proper to go through. Ignoring the fact that

'global' could be too much inaccurate term for a field that one is trying to delimitate, the part of the definition concerning to '... understand [...] the bases of State power. . .' builds up a bridge to strategic studies, which goes beyond the strict relevance of geographical features on politics. Nevertheless, geopolitical studies' instruments are not detached whatsoever from this kind of approach.

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As a matter of fact, Strategic Potential Analysis would be shared both by Geopolitics and (*Grand*) Strategy, taking into account that Strategic Potential Analysis is located, in general terms, on the field of Geostrategy. However, Strategy is submitted to Geopolitics, in the sense that Strategy cannot ignore Geopolitics to formulate itself. In this way, Geostrategy would integrate Geopolitics as a narrower dimension, in which the geopolitical interests are pursued within an 'environment of hostility' – a fundamental element of Strategy. Thus, 'environment of hostility' would definitely represent the characteristic that turns possible the distinction, for academic purposes, between the domains.

In this way, and because Geopolitics includes another sphere, in which under strict conditions (e.g. joint economic benefits) cooperation among States can be achieved, Geopolitics may truly be considered wider than Strategy (Fig.1).

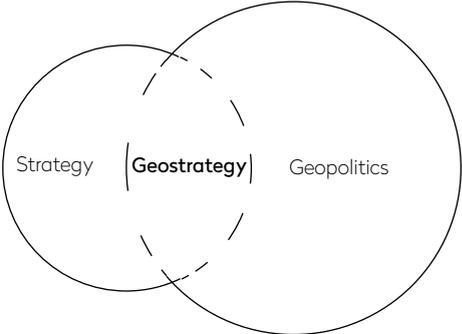


Figure 1

Subsequently, the arguments of a *manichaeist* distinction between an 'Organic State Theory' and 'Geostrategy' inside the label of Classical Geopolitics<sup>1</sup>, or the argument of a 'pacific' Geostrategy against an 'expansionist' Geopolitics<sup>2</sup> could then be refuted. In concrete terms, also Karl Haushofer could fit in the Geostrategic domain, since in his thought he clearly identified the rival of Germany: the British Empire<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore, what is Geopolitics *precisely* about? A minimalist definition: 'the study of relations between political activity and space'<sup>4</sup> could provide two main cores of the concept: *politics* (*power*, by extension) and *space*<sup>5 6</sup>.

However, such definition disregards a vital aspect – geopolitical studies take place on the field of ‘International Relations’<sup>7</sup>. In reality, from this point of view, a conclusion can be deducted – the study of *internal* aspects of influence of geography on power (e.g. electoral geography, intra-state regionalism) concerns another discipline – and that is Political Geography.

In this way, Political Geography comprises Geopolitics, and Geopolitics *autonomously* studies a specific *subject*, within the sphere (but not exclusively) of Political Geography, projected to International Relations<sup>8</sup>.

Consequently, Geopolitics analyzes the interactions among *certain* international actors based on their geography. At the end, Geopolitics tries to answer questions such as: ‘how do geographical features influence *politics* [in the international environment]?’ ‘How do the political élites use space?’<sup>9</sup>

“Geopolitics allows us to place an event or action within a larger framework so that we can determine its potential significance, as well as identify connections among seemingly disparate trends” STRATFOR<sup>10</sup> affirms. Furthermore, the corporation defends that even [geopolitical] prediction is possible, under such framework. One tends to agree, namely because Geopolitics includes a ‘diachronic’ dimension, in the sense that Geopolitics benefits from certain continuity in the line of time.

Chauprade<sup>11 12</sup> also sustains this perspective, favoring the ‘continuity of geopolitics’, consequently, a continuity on foreign policy too. Nevertheless, he defined Geopolitics as: “the study of political relations among States, and also in infra-State and trans-State levels from the geographical criteria” including, moreover, issues such as: people’s identity and resources<sup>13 14</sup>. Such definition could be useful too, since the external role of the International Actor derives also from its *internal* potential<sup>15</sup>. However, the distinction between Geopolitics and Political Geography should be kept in mind.

As for the unit of analysis of geopolitical studies, it seems that *State* still stands as an essential instrument. So Geopolitics remains, at some extent, a *Science of the State*. Result of the combination of ‘population’, ‘territory’ and ‘system of sovereign power’<sup>16</sup>, State still lasts the most important actor in International Relations – yet, facing challenges to its supremacy, namely from supranational entities. Therefore, the State by itself geographically materialized assures the importance of space. Nevertheless, ahead on the paper, Vives’ approach gave a relevant contribution to this matter.

Space, by its side, constitutes an *objective reality*, and an *objective reality* from which Man cannot release himself<sup>17</sup> so far.

Geography, understood as basic pillar of State's power<sup>18 19</sup>, studies geographical aspects, and Geopolitics proceeds to the relations and its possible impact of those studies on *power* in IR level. In fact, although i) geographical characteristics can change<sup>20</sup> – and a practical example of this idea is the current melting of ice on the Arctic Ocean<sup>21</sup> that completely undermines one of the cores of Mackinder's *Heartland* theory – and although ii) *geopolitical* events can change even more drastically (e.g. re-location of Poland, disintegration of Portugal as pluricontinental state, re-unification of Germany) – the reality is that Geography consists in fact into one of the most stable elements of State's potential<sup>22</sup>.

Besides like Geography<sup>23</sup>, also Geopolitics is a 'holistic science'<sup>24</sup>. Geopolitics, a *dynamic* science, deals with the past, the present and the future<sup>25</sup> – confirming what was stated regarding its 'diachronic' dimension – being speculative<sup>26</sup> too. And as it is well known speculation<sup>27</sup> is an essential component for the progress of Knowledge.

But Geopolitics cannot be confused with broad International Relations that include actors (e.g. International Organizations), realities (e.g. International Law), and other scopes, which have weak relations with Geopolitics. In this way, Geopolitics fits in International Relations, but it is not synonymous with International Relations.

In their 'first form', Flint and Taylor<sup>28</sup> attach Geopolitics with the description of 'global rivalries in world politics', but that would be again excessively too vague. Geopolitics cannot be only a word to apply to rivalries among States in International Relations' context. Hence the mistake famously stressed by Robert E. Harkavy that geopolitics is almost everything, consequently almost nothing.

On the other hand, because Geopolitics should not be separated from practical politics – as Haushofer<sup>29</sup> assumed too – that does not imply that Geopolitics is simply an 'imperialistic stream', or to use words from Critical Geopolitics, 'obeying' to the structures of power<sup>30</sup>.

Geopolitics is constituted by theory and by praxis, is subject of Academia and is subject of Foreign-Policy makers. Nevertheless that, Geopolitics as a science cultivated at the University has to obey to several rules, thus Geopolitics has to submit itself to the scientific method, in way to guarantee feasible objectivity. In fact Geopolitics is, as multidisciplinary science indeed<sup>31 32</sup>, before anything a social science, and like any other social science is permeated by the historic-political context.

Regarding used methods in geopolitical studies, some of them derive straight from Geography: analytical observation, gather information on fieldwork, description of geographical reality, analysis of maps/globe, use of statistics, but also handling with new technologies (e.g. satellites, Google Earth).

Geopolitics encompasses an acute description, interconnected with explanatory analysis – within broad environment of clash of interests – sometimes even towards prescription, or pointing out a way to action<sup>33</sup>; because of the relevance of this activity, it is extremely important to keep full attention to the methodology.

As a matter of fact, in the past, Geopolitics – and German School of Geopolitics is a good example of that mistake – was not careful with methodology whatsoever, adapting methods from other fields, with no major consideration. Currently, the lesson should be learned, so strict ethical rules to guarantee objectivity of geopolitical studies should be applied. Chauprade<sup>34</sup> mentions several of them: to refuse to establish one single cause to explain the problems (that means that is required to have more than one variable); to refuse to promote an ideology, but instead to include ideology as subject to be itself analyzed (that means that there is no space to: e.g. nationalism, expansionism, irredentism); and to be transparent regarding received influences (namely in the bibliography).

Such kind of guidelines, under the supreme idea of the final verification of results, and falsification of the hypothesis as criterion of demarcation already stated above, will destroy the doubts about total subjectivity that could have remained. Particularly the hypothetico-deductive method used in this paper, applying deductive logic, will grant step by step the process towards the formulation of the hypothesis and then its test against the facts.

As science – and *not* a pseudoscience<sup>35</sup> – Geopolitics cannot admit any ideological submission. On the other hand, *political* field itself (consequently, foreign policy too) may become ideological in such measure that could turn, at some moment, completely blind to geopolitics<sup>36,37</sup>. To acknowledge this fact shall not undermine the hypothesis, but shall contribute to its falsification instead. In fact, the stated hypothesis will be validated as *general* rule, and not as *compulsory* rule for foreign policies of all international actors. Again determinism is rejected in all manners. Therefore, in spite of the fact that Geopolitics is theory and practice, University and Politics are not the same, on the contrary, there is a great distance among them.

Geopolitics as science demands a skeptical attitude, a *critical* perspective. It requires looking for geographical patterns within political history, something that results into a powerful analytical framework<sup>38</sup>. Below, this idea shall be empirically tested against some historical examples.

At last, the idea of possibility of objectivity could match with words of Karl Haushofer<sup>39</sup>: “no matter the conditions, a real and scientific geopolitical knowledge should remain isolated from any influences from the political parties, and it should then remain true in the same way to both far left and far right. . .” At the end, to study the positive reality (how it is), rejecting an idyllic reality (how it should be)<sup>40</sup>.

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### *Historical contributions from Classical Geopolitics: German School of Geopolitics*

Taking into account that the amount of intellectual production aiming the description and analysis of German School of Geopolitics is relatively large (as the list of references expresses) one more intensive analysis of that same object might be considered useless. Nevertheless, since it was assumed the objective to pay particular attention to German School of Geopolitics – and further to use some concepts/theories from that School – it would be a mistake to avoid a previous formulation about the subject<sup>41</sup>, including a description of its roots, historical context, main assumptions and finalities. And, of course, mentioning perspectives concerning the relations between German School of Geopolitics and Nazi regime.

As it was declared, Glassner and Fahrer<sup>42</sup> included German School of Geopolitics under the label of ‘Organic State Theory’, which would be opposed to ‘Geostrategy’. Such position was already criticized above, taking into account that it is believed that ‘Classical Geopolitics’ would be enough to classify those approaches with no distinction, since all of them aimed the supremacy in a region, or in the World as a whole.

One of the strongest roots of German School of Geopolitics may be identified in Friedrich Ratzel<sup>43</sup>. Ratzel, a political geographer originally and lightly considered as a *determinist*<sup>44</sup>, was in fact a ‘careful scientist’<sup>45</sup>. Genuinely influenced by Darwin, namely in the notion of perpetual competition among States, especially for territory [*Kampf um Raum*], Ratzel affirmed also the existence of mystical impulses for growth<sup>46</sup> <sup>47</sup> and in that milieu, Ratzel also defended that a stronger culture defeats a weaker culture.

Certainly his methodology deeply predisposed to use instruments from natural sciences (pharmacy, zoology) should be analyzed cautiously. But the fact is that Ratzel clearly expressed<sup>48</sup> that the analogy of 'State as organism' was precisely that: an analogy, consequently, needless to underline, not a literal notion. Moreover, Ratzel putted expressively the tonic on the spiritual bounds between people [*Volk*] and soil [*Boden*]<sup>49</sup> <sup>50</sup> and recognized the limits of this metaphor.

Also linked with this *careful* explanation of the evolutionist and biological conception of the State, Ratzel formulated the elastic conception of borders<sup>51</sup> that shall be retaken below.

Furthermore, among other significant ratzelian concepts one can mention: *Großlebensformen*<sup>52</sup> in which Ratzel clarified that cultural affinities are basis for Great Empires; *Raum* (e.g. extension, climate, land relief, hydrography); *Lage* (position: North or South Hemisphere? access to sea? island?);<sup>53</sup> *Raumsinn* 'the meaning of space' – an attribute of large spaces only<sup>54</sup>, associated with the capacity of how Man can organize and take advantages from geographical features<sup>55</sup>.

The most known concept of Ratzel is surely *Lebensraum* – and well-known for the worst reasons connected with Nazism. However, the idea of *Lebensraum* means strictly 'living space', the space needed for State's independence and prosperity<sup>56</sup>. Yet, Ratzel wrote originally about *Lebensraum* bearing in mind great spaces, so then he came up with axiom 'space is power'<sup>57</sup> <sup>58</sup>.

Nevertheless, substantially, there is no possible relation of causality between Ratzel and Nazism. Besides, Ratzel was not a racist<sup>59</sup> <sup>60</sup> (such as Arthur de Gobineau or Stewart Chamberlain) – and it is evident that racism was the basis of Nazi ideology. In addition, at his time, Ratzel gave no policy recommendations to the *Reichskanzler* Bismarck, that means that if Hitler took the ratzelian formula 'space is power' – a hypothesis verified by History in many circumstances – as excuse to invade Europe enslaving and exterminating peoples, that would be certainly neither Ratzel's nor Haushofer's responsibility, because both of them were completely outsiders from any ideological project of racial colonization.

With Rudolf Kjellén the considerations and impact are different. The Swedish professor who created the neologism *Geopolitik* – and who defined the new field as the study of State understood as a 'geographical organism or a phenomenon in space'<sup>61</sup> – *transformed* the State into an organism *de facto*: literally a being that was born, lives and can die.

Although Kjellén distinguished the State's geographical essence from the Nation's ethnic essence<sup>62</sup>, the issue is that Kjellén underlined the 'quality of the population' with racial concerns<sup>63</sup> of superiority. So, there could be found an unfortunate common line between Kjellén and the Nazi regime. Furthermore, Kjellén also believed that powerful states would absorb weaker states, thus the World should 'end up' with a few number of states, those simultaneously Great Powers. And this procedure should have occurred under the idea that 'as long as the state-organism expands, it will be healthy'<sup>64</sup>.

Nevertheless these problematic notions, Kjellén emphasized the concept of 'will', i.e. *willpower* a psychological and dynamic concept (that Haushofer would recapture too) and that nowadays is essential in the task of strategic potential analysis.

General Karl Haushofer is consensually taken as the key name of German School of Geopolitics. Producing his *Geopolitik* in a very traumatic historic and political context Haushofer, influenced by German geographers, historians and philosophers<sup>65</sup> tried to accomplish something that Mahan<sup>66</sup> and Mackinder<sup>67</sup> had previously done in the U.S.A. and in the United Kingdom<sup>68</sup>.

Therefore, mirroring the political context after the Treaty of Versailles – or the *Diktat* of Versailles<sup>69</sup> – Haushofer established as his main target to set Germany free from its 'defeat' in World War I<sup>70</sup>. In fact, based in the concept of *Deutschtum*, Haushofer endeavored 'to create a space where they [German and Germanized peoples] could explore freely their potentialities (*Lebensraum*)<sup>71</sup>. Although the methodology used by Haushofer was extremely fragile; starting from a situation such as the devastated Germany of post-1<sup>st</sup> World War<sup>72</sup>, it does not seem to be so scandalous that Haushofer was, as a patriot, trying to help his country to rise against *Versailles'* order.

In spite of that fact, German School of Geopolitics should not be confounded with Nazism. It is true that Haushofer, as a patriot and a conservative, was until 1938-9 empathic towards Nazism, because Germany was respected and powerful once again, Germans were proud and being united to a single State, the enemies were under direct threat, and most important the *Diktat* of Versailles was being smashed.

Nevertheless, the majority of the literature<sup>73</sup> states that there are no solid explanations able to justify influence of Haushofer's geopolitics – including the idea of 'living space' and 'elastic conception of frontiers'

– on Nazi policies<sup>74 75 76 77 78 79</sup>. Furthermore, it could be affirmed that the ‘geopolitical’<sup>80</sup> content of *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler<sup>81 82 83</sup> is totally opposed to the main cores of German School of Geopolitics, namely: the alliance with USSR, the effort to fight primarily against the power of Great Britain<sup>84 85</sup> and not against France<sup>86</sup>, the focus on territory and not on race<sup>87 88</sup>. Forsooth, the fact that German School of Geopolitics was able to manage, until the last moment possible, to remain truthful to its roots – once again defending soil and not race as key-element, consequently not applauding racial supremacy or impact of race on its work<sup>89</sup> – should not be slighted, taking into account that the task was achieved in the *Nazi Germany* itself, a country with no freedom of thought whatsoever. Besides, a coherent and scientific approach on geopolitics, materialized on a *thing* such as a ‘Nazi science’ is not even possible, since Nazism is a fanatic ideology in which Truth does not matter, but the goals established by the Party under the supreme authority of the *Führer* [*Führerprinzip*], are the only admissible targets<sup>90</sup>.

This said, from Haushofer’s ideas the concept of ‘living space’ still has relevance. Obviously, the concept has to be understood free from any sort of deterministic and mystical approach, but attached to the *realist* idea of ‘state’s struggle for survival’<sup>91 92</sup>. Additionally, it should be stressed that the idea of ‘state’s struggle for survival’<sup>93</sup> may include the notion of struggle for ‘living space’ [*Lebensraum*]<sup>94</sup>, but cannot be confused with it.

On the other hand, the ‘elastic conception of border’, which originally explains that the border depends on the power of the State, is also a theory with particular relevance<sup>95</sup>. This conception of borders admits that the act of drawing the border should be conducted by a multidisciplinary analysis<sup>96</sup> taking into account, among others issues, the cultural penetration that a State is able to do inside other States<sup>97</sup>.

Furthermore, Pan-regions’ doctrine<sup>98</sup> still remain worthy to be re-analyzed too.

At the end, the aim of *Geopolitik*, in accordance with Haushofer’s own words, was to assure stability in World Order and to prevent greater ‘disorders in the future’, based on ‘mutual understanding of peoples and their potentialities’<sup>99</sup> within the notion of ‘living space’. These words state, beyond any doubt, a diametrically opposed thought, while compared to the objectives of Hitler’s ideological movement.

Within the sphere of Classical Geopolitics, one may bring Jaume Vicens Vives<sup>100</sup> to the discussion, although Vives was a Spanish historian and geopolitician, thus not a member of German School of Geopolitics.

Vives, not so well-known in the literature of the 'anglosphere', constitutes absolutely elementary reference in the effort to create a *Neoclassical* Geopolitics, since Vives provided an accurate analysis of German *Geopolitik*.

First of all, Vives re-considered the concept of 'living space' [*Lebensraum*] without the existence of any determinism, neither geographical nor racial<sup>101</sup>.

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Therefore Vives defended a solid *possibilism*, based on the existence of 'average adversity', idea previously formulated in the *Law of Gold* by Arnold Toynbee<sup>102</sup>. In fact, the concept of *possibilism* that came later on from the ideas of Paul Vidal de la Blache<sup>103</sup> and especially Lucien Febvre<sup>104</sup> stresses that geography offers opportunities that can either be taken or not, in accordance with 'principles of civilization'<sup>105</sup>. In this way, the concept of 'willpower', from Kjellén and Haushofer, could be wisely applied – that means totally undressed from the deterministic cloak.

Moreover, Vives defined Geopolitics as 'the doctrine of «living space» [*Lebensraum*], which assumes the results from historical geography and political geography, in order to explain political and diplomatic successes of the present'<sup>106</sup>. In other words, Vives concludes that geographical features have influence, but there is no *deterministic* relation between geography and politics<sup>107</sup>. That should be the perspective of *Neoclassical* Geopolitics too.

The defense of *cultural society*<sup>108 109</sup> as the protagonist of History – likewise the relations between Man and geographical factors<sup>110</sup> – is other new aspect introduced by Vives. In fact, in terms of geopolitics, the protagonist role to State was attributed by German School of Geopolitics in particular, and by Classical Geopolitics in general.

Beyond that, Vives rejected the conception of State as organism<sup>111</sup> too. For him, the relations between Man and Earth should not be considered from a mystical point of view, but should be analyzed instead as empirical experience, in which both blood and soil have influence<sup>112</sup>. As a matter of fact, *capacities* of *cultural society* are the key-concept in the geopolitical analysis – capacities understood in the sense of taking advantage from a 'group of stimuli'<sup>113 114</sup>. In fact, Ratzel<sup>115</sup> himself recognized that society may influence the environment in which is living in even with the capacity to change it profoundly. In this way, Haushofer and German School of Geopolitics were responsible for armful creation of deterministic-biogeographic approach on the relations between Man and Soil. Currently, that could be pointed out as a serious error.

## *The effort towards a Neoclassical Geopolitics*

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The main problems from classical geopolitics – which Mamadouh<sup>116</sup> resumed as: ‘state is conceived as living organism, therefore borders are conceived flexible the evolution of the political organism is determined by its environment’ in other words: methodological weaknesses, determinism, mysticism; are at this point criticized.

Curiously, it is really interesting to remark that if *determinism* and the *single cause* are reasons that sustain the perspective of German School of Geopolitics as a non-scientific approach, then also Marxism – both as ‘science’ and as ideology – should be labeled as historical pseudo-scientific effort, as German School of Geopolitics was labeled. Same measure to deal with the same problem. In fact, because it was also born at the 19<sup>th</sup> century’s positivist context – in the sense of ‘scientification’ of every aspect of reality – every *form* of Marxism may be disqualified<sup>117</sup> as such, taking into account that, even if the strict positivism (and/or determinism) was/were already abandoned<sup>118 119</sup>, the fact is that *class struggle* still constitutes the *single cause* that puts the *mechanism* of History working on.

Regarding *Neoclassical Geopolitics*, as it was mentioned in methodological rules, an analysis based in a *single cause* cannot be taken too seriously.

Hence, released from the mysticism from German School of Geopolitics, a new effort to turn Geopolitics into ‘exact science’<sup>120</sup> can have place. Subsequently, a systematic alternative has to be arranged. In this way, which framework should be designed in terms of relevance of the problem: ‘towards *Neoclassical Geopolitics*’?

First of all, the delimitation of the subject was required – and that assignment was accomplished above. At second place, one may point out methodological concerns and at a third place the finality<sup>121 122</sup>.

Although largely focused above, several methodological remarks could be mentioned or reminded. So, because it is believed that Truth does exist, consequently it would be admitted possibility to search for that Truth too. In this line of thought, reality – as rational and ordered *creation* – may be approached by scientific knowledge, which should be rigorous, verifiable through observation, analysis of documents, and other regular named methods, i.e. empirically experimented too. This approach would be considered universally valid, thus objective. Naturally is also temporary, since it can be expanded and modified, namely by total rejection of hypothesis that in the past was taken by granted, and suddenly was destroyed by a new discovery, for example.

Description and explanation should be submitted to the logic established by facts that means objective and rational analysis of empirical facts. In this line, predictions are considered as a possibility, yet far from any sort of determinism in general, or mechanism in particular. G. Friedman and R. Kaplan<sup>123</sup> from STRATFOR Corporation had a stimulating discussion about the possibility of *forecast*. To sustain the argument Friedman noticed that, although the President of the United States Barack Obama promised a foreign policy *completely new*, the fact is that a continuity of foreign policy between G. Bush and B. Obama on *power politics* may be verified. Below, further empirical tests will recover this idea of continuity in foreign policy.

On the other hand, because *Realpolitik* describes International Relations anarchical, does therefore such *Realpolitik* description have the power to transform reality into anarchy<sup>124</sup>? One does not adhere to such perspective. On the contrary, reality is how 'it is' *a priori* and empirically verified *a posteriori*. This is what is proposed as valid position from *Neoclassical Geopolitics'* approach to International Relations.

As for the finality, Geopolitical studies as Science have to establish, first than anything, that research should be committed to the general and original principle of University: *searching for Truth*. And this is not a minor question, since the reliability of the results of a research has to be supported by principles of objectivity, intelligibility and rationality<sup>125</sup>.

After all these procedures are accepted and respected, it is believed that it would be no scandal if the conclusions of a geopolitical study could be used within a context of decision-making, namely used by foreign policy makers, in order to apply what was analyzed by the Academia. Naturally, there should be no *idealism* whatsoever, namely aspirations for the creation of a 'paradise on Earth', but with the clear goal to generate equilibrium of forces with the supreme goal to avoid disorders, explicitly, for instance, from the so-called *New Threats*.

At this level, all elements from the hypothesis have already been mentioned, so one may proceed to its clear formulation.

*Hypothesis:* Neoclassical Geopolitics claims that geographical features do have influence on States' politics, particularly on foreign policy. In this way, geopolitical prediction is possible, but only at some extent – taking into account that the capacities of how Man interacts with geography leave a free-space in the process for ascertain that same prediction.

Therefore, the problem should not be framed anymore in the terms such as: 'politics. . .driven by inexorable geographical laws'<sup>126</sup>, i.e. deterministic mechanisms ordering the *geopolitical World* – even less towards a teleological goal – but considering seriously the relevance of geographical features in the conduction of foreign policy – vital component of International Relations. So, for those who reject geography as essential<sup>127</sup>, at least they should seriously consider it – after all, the majority of features of power are somehow geographically located. As a matter of fact, Geography is treated as the most stable factor upon which the power of a State depends on<sup>128</sup>. In truth, the studies by Kaplan sustain these notions<sup>129 130</sup> too. For all these reasons, plus the fact that such ideas are being defended *after* contributes by *Critical Geopolitics*, then the hypothesis remains pertinent to the debate.

Insisting in this point, geopolitical studies may be fruitfully applied indeed in the conduction of foreign policy. To nothing less dedicated Mahan himself, recommending to the U.S.A. to occupy Hawaiian Islands, to take control of Caribbean and to build a canal linking Atlantic to Pacific Oceans<sup>131 132 133</sup>. And Ratzel, although not giving any policy recommendations, concluded that tellurocratic powers should also become thalassocratic forces<sup>134</sup>.

On the other hand, it was also underlined enough times so far, that Geopolitics cannot be contaminated by ideological influences. Thereby, although Geopolitics is always affected by current historical and political context, Geopolitics should remain completely untouched by any ideological commandment. As History already revealed – and the allusion applies to German History from 30's directly – ideological fanaticism above geopolitical guidelines could have extremely high costs.

This stated the paper should proceed to the effort of providing solid arguments, in order to support the hypothesis as logical supposition, deducing consequences from it. Theoretically based on *possibilism*, i.e. presuming that geography may have impact on foreign policy, refusing *determinism*<sup>135 136</sup>, one could recapture several concepts from German School of Geopolitics, in order to use them to formulate posteriorly and briefly a basis to sustain the doctrine of *Neoclassical Geopolitics*.

Naturally, the ratzelian concepts of *Raum* [space] and *Lage* [position] – parts of Strategic Potential Analysis<sup>137</sup> – are perceptibly the first to be mentioned. Concerning particularly *Lage*, a State in the position of, for example, 'island' plus its *circumstances* (which include, for instance:

‘principles of civilization’, ‘willpower’, and ‘constraints in the relation between people and soil’) could opt either for a status of thalassocratic force, or to isolate itself. This sort of option would correspond precisely to the concept of *Raumsinn*. Furthermore, this *Neoclassical* approach is another example that destroys a deterministic method on geopolitics.

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In fact, the concept of *Raumsinn* [‘meaning of space’] would be another essential geopolitical concept<sup>138</sup>, since even identity is spatially located – that means that when *identity* changes its location, so do *expressions* from that same *identity* change too<sup>139</sup>. Concrete examples of that argument are, in accordance with Ratzel<sup>140</sup>, that ‘urban industrial life’ could be seen within a sphere of ‘spiritual crisis’, taking into account that Man loses their interactions with the soil; or, on the other hand, the concept of *Raumsinn* could also be used specifically to overcome the typical opposition from classical geopolitics ‘Sea Power/Land Power’ in the name of certain complementary alliance between tellurocratic and thalassocratic states<sup>141 142</sup>.

Under the realist paradigm of International Relations, one may apprehend the notion of ‘struggle of State for survival’ (namely for state’s *independence*). This perspective could lead to validation of a new standpoint about the concept of *Lebensraum* [“living space”] – released from any sort of stimulus for expansionism – since a State needs a minimum of territory to assure its existence – even if it is only 2 sq km like Monaco. The fact seems to be self-sustainable, without need of further explanation, taking into account that there are no States without territory.

However, on the contrary of what German School of Geopolitics sustained, the State should not be compared with a living organism.

If may be accepted, on one hand that the State should not be understood merely as a legal-abstract creation or construction, i.e. if from its own definition the State relies on the Nation, thus the premise that State depends on the Nation to survive should be stated directly as consequence. That means that if the Nation – in its geographical-cultural definition – devitalizes or disappears, the State shall not survive beyond that event, i.e. after the de-vitalization or disappearance of a Nation, the structures from a State that could have survived to that experience will definitely turn into something that it is not anymore the State that used to be. So if that is true, on the other hand, it should also be accepted that there is no mystical link between State and Nation, but only empirical experience – in the line of explanation by Vives.

Consequently, and contradicting ideas by Kjellén<sup>143</sup>, the State does not have to grow continuously to avoid its extinction – for that, it would be enough to eradicate any signs of decadency (e.g. political decline, economic troubles, social instability). As a matter of fact, historical evidences sustain that State/*cultural-society* periods of long-term decadency (e.g. Western Roman Empire, Ottoman Empire) or even short-term decadency (e.g. USSR) led sooner or later to the disappearance of those States or ‘*cultures*’ themselves.

But because the State is not analogous with a living organism, one may not deduce that elastic conception of border loses its validity, because they are expressively two independent hypotheses.

Nevertheless, border would not *derive* from any ‘impulse’, but accurately from the *material* – in the sense that is observable – influence (or power) of the State/*cultural society*. Vives sustained the argument with the ‘vitality of the *geohistorical nucleus*’<sup>144</sup> and, in the same perspective, Ancel stated that borders are flexible, reflecting the balance of powers<sup>145</sup>. Accordingly, there would not exist such thing as borders settled by ‘natural barriers’, since borders are artificially draw<sup>146</sup>, but borders would be a direct result from State’s/*cultural society*’s power. Therefore, as Haushofer wisely observed<sup>147</sup> a border that “. . . would satisfy everybody [...] is practically impossible. . .” In this way it is reaffirmed the importance of geography, however pushed away from any sort of determinism.

In fact, *Neoclassical* Geopolitics would reject what Mearsheimer affirmed<sup>148</sup> concerning ‘stopping power of water’<sup>149</sup>. If that conception would be accepted, how could have the Ocean (in the sense of sea lanes) represented the *link* on which Portuguese thalassocratic empire from the 15<sup>th</sup> century was based? Furthermore, the might of a powerful navy should not be neglected in favor of preference for land power forces, since the control of choke points still have relevance in the domain of World supremacy – or even regional supremacy<sup>150</sup>.

Bringing to the analysis the argument about ‘civilizations’<sup>151</sup> by Huntington<sup>152</sup>, the concept of Pan-regions could be recovered too, perceptibly and necessarily not with the same geographical contour.

In this way, Pan-Regions’ doctrine could eventually include the ratzelian concept of *Großraumformen* that means something that could overcome the present-day formula of *nation-states*<sup>153</sup>. At the end, it would be Haushofer’s old idea of: ‘large spaces should be united under a common principle’<sup>154</sup>, applied currently in the Era of Globalization. A

particular idea that such 'large spaces' could possibly and mutually liked to would be the idea of 'multipolarity'<sup>155</sup>. Certainly, under the idea of hierarchy of powers from the realist paradigm, each one of those large areas would have to be led by a *Director-State* or *supranational entity*, in the case of nation-state would be already overpassed.

Therefore, central ideas from Classical Geopolitics still continue to have influence over current geopolitical studies<sup>156 157</sup>. And not only ideas from German School of Geopolitics – the main focus of this paper – but also ideas, for example, of Admiral Mahan. As a matter of fact, in terms of Geopolitics of the Sea, once again, the control over choke points still has impact in terms of World/regional dominance. Moreover, Mahan remains pertinent in the sense of analysis of the possibility of a great conflict in the medium-term future taking place *on* and *because* of the World's Ocean issues<sup>158 159</sup>.

At this point, after strict and precise use of recaptured concepts from Classical Geopolitics and deduction of consequences from the hypothesis, one should proceed to several empirical tests. In truth, a descriptive-analytical text in Geopolitics – describing and explaining how Foreign Policy may be influenced by geography – cannot be isolated from the empirical facts.

Concerning prediction particularly – as formulated in the hypothesis – the analysis should ensue cautiously, considering several variables, '...concentrat[ing] on the constraints of geography and other factors place on those decisions [from political élites]<sup>160</sup>.

Several geographical areas of the World could be taken as example to test such ideas.

The cyclic wars and attacks from Russia (Kievan Rus', Grand Principality of Moscow, Russian Empire) to Constantinople, currently named Istanbul, in order to control Bosphorus strait granting access to Mediterranean Sea, could certainly serve as one of those examples. As a matter of fact, *Slavophiles* even praised for the conquest of that city and its conversion into *Tsargrad*<sup>161</sup>. Later on, at the beginning of the Cold War, the support from the USA. in order to Turkey join NATO – blocking once again the access of USSR to Bosphorus – was geopolitically more than justified.

In a previous work<sup>162</sup> the hypothesis of a current process of hegemony of Germany was already tested, a project traditionally extended from the mouth of Rheine to the mouth of Danube. In that monograph, repetitive 'cycles of hegemony' through the *Geohistory* of the region were identified,

described and analyzed. Thus, one of the most clear empirical facts of that study was the effort of former German Minister of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier so that excellent relations between Germany and Russia were coined – as Haushofer abundantly recommended.

Another illustration about how geography may influence foreign policy can be found in Serbia. Until the appearance of Kingdom of *Yugoslavia* – or, at the end, a Greater Serbia<sup>163</sup>, when Serbia finally received a large coastline on the Adriatic Sea – in the course of History until that event, Serbia intermittently tried to obtain access to seas: either to Adriatic Sea at the West, or to Aegean Sea at the South. And the multiple values (martial, political, economic) of the access to sea were tested before too<sup>164</sup>.

In the same line – on the periods that appeared on the map of Europe – Polish state has been struggling for access to the sea at the North. After centuries of conflict with the powerful State of Prussia, and by the end of World War I, the Danzig corridor was granted to Poland. Predictably, a geopolitical situation that would have given to Hitler an excuse to ‘unify’ the territory of the two separated ‘Prussias’ was created. After World War II – thus after the destruction of the Prussian State – Poland received finally an entire coastline on the Baltic Sea.

At another level, also Romania and its ‘fight’ to keep the mouth of Danube<sup>165</sup> ‘opened to Europe’<sup>166</sup> could have place in this kind of approach.

Finally, the conflicts between Uzbekistan in one side, and Kirgizstan and Tajikistan in the other side, materialize another situation that clearly sustains the argument of influence of geography on foreign policies. As a matter of fact, the problem of management of bodies of fresh water – particularly rivers, in Ferghana Valley case – reveal how a geographical feature may convert itself into an instrument of power politics<sup>167</sup>.

If geographical features, and if geopolitical doctrines, have no influence at all on politics, so it cannot be traced any parallel between Mackinder’s ‘Midland Ocean’<sup>168</sup> doctrine and the establishment of NATO, aiming a break of Pivot Area’s power. In this case, the political *praxis* – understood in the settlement of NATO – visibly shows the relevance of Geopolitics – although that event also ruined an original pillar of Mackinder’s own doctrine: the classical opposition Sea Power/Land Power. However, as this paper already tried to let clear, thalassocratic and tellurocratic states/*cultural societies* may really joined forces<sup>169</sup> – and, again, that was what happened with the appearance of NATO.

If politics and foreign policies are commanded by ideology only, what would be the explanation for the alliance between the U.S., British and

French democracies with the autocracies of Russian Empire/USSR during World War I and World War II?

Furthermore, from the ideological point of view, Portugal from the 40's would have had more in common with the regime of Italy, rather than with the USA or Great Britain. Nevertheless duly to patent geopolitical reasons, Portugal – in the person of 'Prime-Minister' Salazar – chose to become closer to the Allies during World War II. The preservation of the Portuguese territorial integrity in Europe, Africa and Asia required that decision, required an alliance with those who were ruling the Atlantic Ocean. And later, in the same logic, Portugal was a founder member of NATO.

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Therefore, in the domain of effects of *Realpolitik* in foreign policy, what does ideology have to deal with an ingenious *Grand Strategy*?

### *The limited progress from Critical Geopolitics*

Eventually, '*Postmodern Age*' could have started with World War I as Arnold Toynbee stated. However, the effects of Postmodernism came to the University definitely later – and to Geopolitics especially later. But it came anyway.

The streams of *Critical Geopolitics* are daughters of Foucault's and Derrida's ideas indeed<sup>170 171</sup>. Whereas in the broad field of International Relations Postmodernism could be seen more oriented to political objectives, rather than to academic purposes<sup>172</sup>, particularly in Geopolitics Postmodernism came with the accusation of a focus on 'writing' (*geopolitical representations*) instead of 'description'<sup>173</sup>.

As a matter of fact, one of the biggest goals of *Critical Geopolitics* is 'to denounce' – by itself a verb that calls on Marxist methods<sup>174</sup> – the 'obedience' to 'structures of power'<sup>175</sup>. In this way,

‘. . .critical geopolitics connected political geography to the developments of human geography that, under the broad influence of postmodernism, had taken a “cultural turn” in which landscapes, media and everyday behavior were deconstructed and read to uncover power relations<sup>176</sup>.

*Critical Geopolitics* of Ó Tuathail, particularly, is synonymous of exaggeration of chaos, being somehow chaotic itself, taking into account so many contradictions<sup>177 178</sup> within it. In fact, Ó Tuathail<sup>179</sup> aims to unmask Geopolitics as an instrument under the service of 'oppressive power', that means that obviously no place is left to considerer Geopolitics as

science, since Science itself is not even understood under a *positivist* angle as such. In this way, it is really easy to escape from Academia and cross the path to other fields. In truth, Glassner and Fahrer<sup>180</sup>, refering to *Critical Geopolitics*, pointed out: 'difficulty in building a theoretical base' and 'approaches [which] tend to ignore reality'.

Previously, this paper managed ontological and epistemological tasks stating that 'reality exists' and 'it is possible its apprehension by the human mind'. *Post-positivism* does not accept such assumptions at all. Somehow, this *post-positivist* worldview could be putted on parallel with a situation as such: in a crime scene, in which a murdered man is lying on the floor, the policeman, instead of investigating the evidences to lead to the identification and imprisonment of the murder, would start a procedure of self-reflection about the eventual possibilities *a priori* of the assassination. That would certainly represent a weird circumstance, which would reveal a useless preoccupation with conditional situations 'what if?' and simultaneously futile activity, because at that moment there would be nothing that could be done to invert the *status quo*. Changing the analysis to the level of International Relations, that is something that Morgenthau described, indeed, as the need to accept realities that cannot be changed<sup>181</sup>.

The scope and the example given above, not the content by any mean, might sound ridiculous. However, it is believed that the level of grotesque from the analogies of Ó Tuathail applying sexual descriptions to Geopolitics<sup>182</sup> can hardly be beaten. But that would not be enough, since Ó Tuathail linked the 'defeat' of Germany after World War I – something imprecise in the sense that there was no proper military defeat<sup>183</sup> – with a '... masculinity crisis'<sup>184</sup>.

So far, the analysis about *Critical Geopolitics* has been focusing mainly on issues from philosophical domain, in which nobody is able to claim scientifically to be *absolutely* right yet. Nevertheless, theoretical and methodological difficulties in *Critical Geopolitics* are much more serious problem.

In this way, the difficulty is not so much about the fairness of the denunciation of the alleged relations between Geopolitics and the interests of Power from *Critical Geopolitics'* perspective, but the problem relies on upstream questions regarding scientific issues themselves.

Whereas broad *post-positivism* accuses *positivism* to hide dishonest relations with the 'institutionalized' and 'oppressive' power, genea-

logical-archeological methodology was constructed on the basis of an incredibly partial interpretation of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche ignoring the complexity of his mind, namely in what concerns to its deep political intolerance<sup>185</sup>. In truth, Foucault admitted proudly his purposes on: cognitive relativism, lack of objectivity and total disrespect for the *whole*<sup>186</sup>. It is in this context that *post-structuralism* would be taken as ‘. . . silly but noncatastrophic phenomenon’<sup>187</sup>.

Although all these problems, difficulties, intellectual dishonesty at some extent, the framework of denunciation, destruction and deconstruction; there are several useful ideas that arose from *Critical Geopolitics*.

Ó Tuathail tried, for instance, to demonstrate the influence of information’s technologies and Globalization<sup>188</sup>, plus ‘de-territorialized dangers’<sup>189</sup> on *Geopolitics*. Thus he promoted an ‘expansion of horizons’, through holistic perspectives<sup>190</sup>. On the other hand, that kind of improvement was not exclusive result from *Critical Geopolitics*, since a central name of *Neoclassical Geopolitics* – Everett Dolman – exposed that ‘. . . roles of transportation, communication and technology. . .’<sup>191</sup> should not be ignored by *Geopolitics* too<sup>192</sup>.

Furthermore, following carefully criticism from Ó Tuathail<sup>193</sup>, scholars may apprehend a methodological rule – to avoid the creation of a ‘homogenous order of the spatial’.

Nevertheless, Geography is not only an ‘argument’<sup>194</sup>. Geography is, as this paper explained and justified, one of the most stable elements of power. Consequently, and contradicting expressively *Critical Geopolitics*<sup>195</sup> territory does still count. In fact, as Kazanecki<sup>196</sup> pointed out: plains, spaceships, internet came up – however space still matters.

## Conclusions

The main result of this paper is to endeavor to create a basis, both theoretical and methodological, to accomplish thoughtful geopolitical analysis. As a matter of fact, the paper is transversally crossed by methodological concerns from the beginning to the end, in order to overcome difficulties from *Classical Geopolitics* and, simultaneously, to contribute to the systematization of assumptions for the innovative *Neoclassical Geopolitics*.

*Geopolitics* and its main core – the influence of geographical features on the foreign policy – thus, a field deeply committed with the study of

*Power (lato sensu)* and *State (stricto sensu)*, could then be considered under the label of *Neoclassical Geopolitics* and be treated through academic and systematic manner. The hypothesis is indeed confirmed by the study.

In this way, the exercise of recapturing – and in some cases reinterpreting – theories and concepts from German School of Geopolitics was not a-critical, but pointed out many mistakes from it. Only after analysis and criticism of methodological weaknesses, determinism, mysticism from German School of Geopolitics, the empirical tests of hypothesis may have occurred.

In order to be solid, all mentioned ideas from Classical Geopolitics quoted the literature, and in many cases with double or triple references, that means strong scientific provision of this study. As a small note, my personal research trip to Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, in München – with the objective to investigate documentation from General Haushofer – certainly gave me motivation extra to write this article.

The last part concerning *Critical Geopolitics* should be understood as a clear trace for the location of this paper in the antipodes of that point of view, taking into account that *destruction* or *denunciation* without offering an alternative – and the refuge in madness *à la* Nietzsche – was not the path of these lines. Thus, it was not an objective to establish a direct refutation to principles and ideas of *Critical Geopolitics*, but simply to allege that nonexistence of alternatives does not contribute to the advance of knowledge.

As stated by Fernandes<sup>197</sup>, Geopolitics has never been ‘dead’, but the term was not used after World War II and before 70’s and also during that period a lack on such kind of approach may be identified. Currently, an effort towards *Neoclassical Geopolitics* is taking shape. And if the conclusions from this paper would be considered wrong, then very well – after all, the *error*, at least, is a factor for the progress of Science.



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## Notes

- 1 Martin Glassner, and Chuck Fahrer, *Political Geography* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004), 270.

- 2 Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, *Traité de Stratégie* (Paris: Economica, 2008), 765.
- 3 Mario Losano, "I «Grandi Spazi» in un Inedito Progetto di Trattato del 1943 fra gli Stati dell'Asse", *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, Nuova Serie, vol. LXXVIII (2007): 284.
- 4 Carlos Mendes Dias, *Geopolítica: Teorização Clássica e Ensinamentos* (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2005), 21.
- 5 Leonhardt van Efferink, "The definition of Geopolitics – Classical, French and Critical traditions", *Exploring Geopolitics: introducing the many faces of Geopolitics*, (Accessed June 19, 2013). Available at: [http://www.exploringgeopolitics.org/Publication\\_Efferink\\_van\\_Leonhardt\\_The\\_Definition\\_of\\_Geopolitics\\_Classical\\_French\\_Critical.html](http://www.exploringgeopolitics.org/Publication_Efferink_van_Leonhardt_The_Definition_of_Geopolitics_Classical_French_Critical.html)
- 6 Mamadouh, Virgine, "Geopolitics in nineties: one flag, many meanings", *Geojournal*, no. 46 (1998): 246.
- 7 Mackubin Thomas Owens, "In Defense of Classical Geopolitics" (Accessed November 13, 2013). Available at: <http://www.badgleyb.net/geopolitics/docs/theory/defenseofclassicalgeop.htm>
- 8 Although Haushofer affirmed '«*Geopolitik ist viel mehr als politische Geographie*»' – Karl Haushofer, *Abschrift. N<sup>o</sup> 367*, [manuscript] Dr. Karl Haushofer, OC-IX-94/UAM, OC-VII-137. München: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 1939 – so, to Haushofer Political Geography studies the distribution of State's power on the continents and the geographical conditions, in which those processes occur, whereas the subject of Geopolitics is the political activity on the 'natural space' (Michel Korinman, *Quand l'Allemagne pensait le Monde – grandeur et décadence d'une Géopolitique* (Saint-Armand-Montrond: Fayard, 1990), 155), one maintains the perspective that Political Geography comprises Geopolitics, consequently Geopolitics focuses a particular subject, already delimited, within (but not exclusively) the field of Political Geography.
- 9 Philippe Moreau Defarges, *Introdução à Geopolítica* (Lisboa: Gradiva, 2003), 13.
- 10 STRATFOR. "Methodology" (Accessed June 20, 2013). Available at: <http://www.stratfor.com/about/methodology>
- 11 Aymeric Chauprade, *Introduction à l'analyse géopolitique* (Paris: Ellipses, 1999).
- 12 Aymeric Chauprade, *Géopolitique: constantes et changements dans l'histoire* (Paris: Ellipses, 2001).
- 13 Aymeric Chauprade, "Che cos'è la geopolitica?" *Geopolitica*, Vol. 1, no.3 (Autumn 2012). (Accessed June 30, 2013). Available at: <http://www.geopolitica-rivista.org/19542/che-cose-la-geopolitica/>
- 14 Karl Haushofer, *An English Translation and Analysis of Major General Karl Ernst Haushofer's – Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean: Studies on the Relationship between Geography and History* (Lewistor: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 55-63.
- 15 Nuno Morgado, *Da Avaliação do Potencial Estratégico da Alemanha* (Lisboa: Bubok, 2011).
- 16 António José Fernandes, *Introdução à Ciência Política. Teorias, Métodos e Temáticas* (Lisboa: Porto Editora, 1995), 81.

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- 17 Philippe Moreau Defarges, *Introdução à Geopolítica* (Lisboa: Gradiva, 2003), 16.
- 18 Políbio Valente De Almeida, *Do poder do pequeno Estado* (Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, 1990), 80,88.
- 19 Abel Cabral Couto, *Elementos de Estratégia*. Vol I. (Lisboa: Instituto Altos Estudos Militares, 1988), 257-259.
- 20 Colin Flint, and Peter Taylor. *Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation-State and Locality* (Essex: Pearson Education, 2007), 44.
- 21 E.g. Caitlyn Antrim, “The Next Geographical Pivot: The Russian Arctic in the Twenty-first Century”, *Naval War College Review*, No. 63 (3) (2010).
- 22 Nicholas Spykman, *The Geography of Peace* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1944), 41.
- 23 Martin Glassner, and Chuck Fahrer, *Political Geography* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004), 9.
- 24 António Marques Bessa, and Carlos Mendes Dias, *O Salto do Tigre - Geopolítica aplicada* (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2007), 60.
- 25 Karl Haushofer, “Why Geopolitik?” in *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 41.
- 26 António Marques Bessa, and Carlos Mendes Dias, *O Salto do Tigre - Geopolítica aplicada* (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2007), 27.
- 27 Speculation is not isolated from the historic and political context indeed, i.e., it might be in this domain that its influence is received.
- 28 Colin Flint, and Peter Taylor. *Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation-State and Locality* (Essex: Pearson Education, 2007).
- 29 Geróid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics* (Minneapolis: Borderlines, 1996), 46.
- 30 Geróid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics* (Minneapolis: Borderlines, 1996).
- 31 Carlos Mendes Dias, *Geopolítica: Teorização Clássica e Ensinos* (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2005), 62.
- 32 Karl Haushofer, *An English Translation and Analysis of Major General Karl Ernst Haushofer's - Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean: Studies on the Relationship between Geography and History* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), xxiii.
- 33 António Marques Bessa, and Carlos Mendes Dias, *O Salto do Tigre - Geopolítica aplicada* (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2007), 24.
- 34 Aymeric Chauprade, *Géopolitique: constantes et changements dans l'histoire* (Paris: Ellipses, 2001).
- 35 Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978).
- 36 This fact is logically compatible with the geopolitical notion of *possibilism*, in which *Neoclassical* Geopolitics should be based on.
- 37 Since 1974 Portugal seems to be an *excellent* example of those circumstances.
- 38 Colin S. Gray, and Geoffrey Sloan, *Geopolitics, Geography, and Strategy* (London: Frank Cass, 1999), 1-2.
- 39 Philippe Moreau Defarges, *Introdução à Geopolítica* (Lisboa: Gradiva, 2003), 29.
- 40 Karl Haushofer, “Why Geopolitik?” in *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó

- Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 41.
- 41 Therefore it is not an intensive description. To know basic information about the influences received by German School of Geopolitics, its concepts, theories and impact, *vide*, for example:  
 Sandra Da Fonseca, “Uma introdução à geopolítica clássica: de Ratzel a Haushofer”, *Instituto de Geografia UFU*, (Accessed June 19, 2013). Available at: <http://www.ig.ufu.br/2srg/4/4-81.pdf>  
 Philippe Moreau Defarges, *Introdução à Geopolítica* (Lisboa: Gradiva, 2003).  
 Carlos Mendes Dias, *Geopolítica: Teorização Clássica e Ensinamentos* (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2005).  
 Martin Glassner, and Chuck Fahrner, *Political Geography* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004).  
 Karl-Heinz Harbeck, *Die “Zeitschrift für Geopolitik” 1924-1944*. Ph.D. (Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, 1963).  
 Henning Heske, “Political geographers of the past III German geographical research in the Nazi period: a content analysis of the major geography journals, 1925–1945”, *Political Geography Quarterly*, Vol. 5, n.3, (July 1986).  
 Henning Heske, “Karl Haushofer: his role in German geopolitics and Nazi politics”. *Political Geography Quarterly*, Vol. 6, n.2 (April 1987).  
 Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, *Karl Haushofer. Leben und Werk Vol. 1 und Vol.2*. Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt, 1987.  
 Michel Korinman, *Quand l’Allemagne pensait le Monde – grandeur et décadence d’une Géopolitique* (Saint-Armand-Montrond: Fayard, 1990).  
 Nuno Morgado, *Império Germânico: designio anulado ou a renascer? Uma perspectiva geopolítica*. M.A. (Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, 2011).
- 42 Martin Glassner, and Chuck Fahrner, *Political Geography* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004), 270-271.
- 43 More than a “root”, Haushofer considered Ratzel as “one of the founders of Geopolitics”. Karl Haushofer, *An English Translation and Analysis of Major General Karl Ernst Haushofer’s – Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean: Studies on the Relationship between Geography and History* (Lewistor: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 3.
- 44 In fact, it should be kept in mind that some of Ratzel’s students, like Otto Maull – Otto Maull, *Politische Geographie*, (Berlin: Borntraeger, 1925) – might have distorted Ratzel’s thought beyond the reasonable, in the way of pure *determinism*.
- 45 Martin Glassner, and Chuck Fahrner, *Political Geography* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004), 271.
- 46 Friedrich Ratzel, *Géographie Politique* (Genève: Editions Regionales Europeennes S.A., 1988).
- 47 Philippe Moreau Defarges, *Introdução à Geopolítica* (Lisboa: Gradiva, 2003), 74.
- 48 Friedrich Ratzel, *Géographie Politique* (Genève: Editions Regionales Europeennes S.A., 1988), 19-20.
- 49 Bassin *apud* Mark Blacksell, *Political Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 142.

- 50 Daniel Castagnin, ed., *Poder global y Geopolítica* (Buenos Aires: Pleamar, 1984), 161.
- 51 Friedrich Ratzel, *Géographie Politique* (Genève: Editions Regionales Europeennes S.A., 1988), 335.
- 52 Mario Losano, “Karl Haushofer (1869-1946): o Pai da Geopolítica das Ditaduras Europeias”, *Verba Juris*, N° 7 (2008), 452.
- 53 Daniel Castagnin, ed., *Poder global y Geopolítica* (Buenos Aires: Pleamar, 1984), 161.
- 54 Daniel Castagnin, ed., *Poder global y Geopolítica* (Buenos Aires: Pleamar, 1984), 162.
- 55 Políbio Valente De Almeida, *Do poder do pequeno Estado* (Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, 1990), 105.
- 56 Philippe Moreau Defarges, *Introdução à Geopolítica* (Lisboa: Gradiva, 2003), 75.
- 57 Friedrich Ratzel, *Géographie Politique* (Genève: Editions Regionales Europeennes S.A., 1988).
- 58 Everett Dolman, *Astropolitic: Classical Geopolitics in the Space Age* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002), 51.
- 59 José Pedro Teixeira Fernandes, “Da Geopolítica clássica à Geopolítica pós-moderna: entre a ruptura e a continuidade”, *Política Internacional*, 26, (Autumn 2002), 3. (Accessed June 16, 2013). Available at : [http://www.jptfernanandes.com/resources/GeopoliticaClassicaPos\\_Moderna.pdf](http://www.jptfernanandes.com/resources/GeopoliticaClassicaPos_Moderna.pdf)
- 60 John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell and Geróid Ó Tuathail, eds, *A Companion to Political Geography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 195.
- 61 Sven Holdar, “The ideal state and the power of geography the life-work of Rudolf Kjellén”, *Political Geography*, Vol. 11, no. 3, (May 1992): 312.
- 62 Políbio Valente De Almeida, *Do poder do pequeno Estado* (Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, 1990), 115.
- 63 John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell and Geróid Ó Tuathail, eds, *A Companion to Political Geography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 194.
- 64 Everett Dolman, *Astropolitic: Classical Geopolitics in the Space Age* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002), 52-53.
- 65 Nuno Morgado, *Império Germânico: designio anulado ou a renascer? Uma perspectiva geopolítica*. M.A. (Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, 2011), 28-29.
- 66 Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The influence of sea power upon History 1660-1783* (Accessed June 17, 2013). Available at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13529/13529-h/13529-h.htm>
- 67 Halford Mackinder, “The Geographical Pivot of History”, *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 4, (1904): 421-437. (Accessed February 23, 2013). Available at: <http://intersci.ss.uci.edu/wiki/eBooks/Articles/1904%20HEARTLAND%20THEORY%20HALFORD%20MACKINDER.pdf>
- 68 In Mahan’s epoch, the U.S.A. were trying to overcome the European imperialism; whereas Mackinder was concerned about how to prolong the supremacy of the British Empire facing a tellurocratic threat that he identified himself. Later, de Seversky would write about how to geopolitically proceed against the air power of USSR. Currently, Dolman elaborated a ge-

- opolitical doctrine on *Astropolitics*, in order to propose prescriptions about how to achieve control over the Outer Space.
- 69 Karl Haushofer, "Defense of German Geopolitics" in: *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 53. Or: Karl Haushofer, "Apologie de la géopolitique allemande" in: *De la Géopolitique*, Karl Haushofer (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 155-164.
  - 70 Aymeric Chauprade and François Thuail, *Dictionnaire de géopolitique: états, concepts, auteurs* (Paris: Ellipses, 1998), 587.
  - 71 Sandra Da Fonseca, "Uma introdução à geopolítica clássica: de Ratzel a Haushofer", *Instituto de Geografia UFU*: 13 (Accessed June 19, 2013). Available at: <http://www.ig.ufu.br/2srg/4/4-81.pdf>
  - 72 "... the mutilated Germany of today..."; "Germany, thrown back to the minimal measure of existence... cut off from the open sea and deprived...of free traffic on our own rivers..." Karl Haushofer, *An English Translation and Analysis of Major General Karl Ernst Haushofer's - Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean: Studies on the Relationship between Geography and History* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), xxvi, III.
  - 73 For a different perspective from the majority of the literature: Holger Herwig, "Geopolitik: Haushofer, Hitler and Lebensraum", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol 22, no2-3 (1999): 218-241.
  - 74 Hans Weigert, *Generals and Geographers: The Twilight of Geopolitics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942), 151.
  - 75 Joe Painter and Alex Jeffrey, *Political Geography* (London: SAGE, 2009), 203.
  - 76 Geróid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics* (Minneapolis: Borderlines, 1996), 48.
  - 77 Jaume Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 50.
  - 78 Paul Claval, *Géopolitique et géostratégie: la pensée politique, l'espace et le territoire au xxème siècle* (Paris: Nathan-Université, 1996), 27-28.
  - 79 John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell and Geróid Ó Tuathail, eds, *A Companion to Political Geography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 190.
  - 80 Haushofer himself meaningfully affirmed that *Mein Kampf* ". . .had nothing to deal with geopolitics" – Karl Haushofer, "Defense of German Geopolitics" in: *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 55.
  - 81 Geróid Ó Tuathail, "Eastern Orientation or Eastern Policy?" in: *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 43-46.
  - 82 Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, (Lisboa: Hugin, 1998).
  - 83 Adolf Hitler, *A Maior Luta da História. Como um discurso que reclama a paz, faz a guerra e envolve o povo alemão na maior acção solidária até 1940* (Lisboa: Padrões Culturais, 2008).
  - 84 Sandra Da Fonseca, "Uma introdução à geopolítica clássica: de Ratzel a Haushofer", *Instituto de Geografia UFU*: 11 (Accessed June 19, 2013). Available at: <http://www.ig.ufu.br/2srg/4/4-81.pdf>
  - 85 Geróid Ó Tuathail, "Introduction to Part One" in: *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 26.
  - 86 Karl Haushofer, *De la Géopolitique* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 34.
  - 87 David Thomas Murphy, *The Heroic Earth, geopolitical thought in Weimar*

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- Germany 1918-1933 (Ohio: The Kent University Press, 1997), 247.
- 88 Mark Bassin, "Race contra space: the conflict between German "Geopolitik" and National Socialism", *Political Geography Quarterly*, Vol. 6, no.2 (April 1987): 115-134.
- 89 Mario Losano, "Karl Haushofer (1869-1946): o Pai da Geopolítica das Ditaduras Europeias", *Verba Juris*, N° 7 (2008): 469.
- 90 As last note, it should be reminded that after the capitulation of the III Reich, General Haushofer was investigated by the Allies concerning his role in the Nazi regime and the authorities released him of any indictments.
- 91 ". . .die für den Lebenskampf des Großdeutschen Reiches ums Dasein mindestens ebenso notwendig ist" – Karl Haushofer, *Abschrift – Dekan der Naturwissenschaftlichen Fakultät*. [manuscript] Dr. Karl Haushofer, OC-IX-94/UAM, OC-VII-137. München: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 1940.
- 92 Geróid Ó Tuathail, "Introduction to Part One" in: *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 24.
- 93 Karl Haushofer, *An English Translation and Analysis of Major General Karl Ernst Haushofer's – Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean: Studies on the Relationship between Geography and History* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), xxiii.
- 94 As a matter of fact, it is absolutely fundamental to distinguish between the realist idea 'struggle for survival', and ratzelian dimension of 'Kampf um Raum'.
- 95 Karl Haushofer, *De la Geopolitique* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), 156.
- 96 José Pedro Teixeira Fernandes, "A Geopolítica clássica revisitada", *Nação e Defesa*, 105, (Summer 2003): 230 (Accessed 13 June 13, 2013). Available at: <http://www.jptfernandes.com/resources/GeopoliticaClassica.pdf>
- 97 Karl Haushofer, *Grenzen in ihrer Geographischen und Politischen Bedeutung* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vowinckel Verlag, 1939).
- 98 Karl Haushofer, *Geopolitik der Pan-Ideen* (Berlin: Zentral Verlag, 1931).
- 99 Karl Haushofer, "Defense of German Geopolitics" in: *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 55.
- 100 Jaime Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961).
- 101 Jaime Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 69-75.
- 102 Jaime Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 75.
- 103 E.g. Paul Vidal de la Blache, *Tableau de la Géographie de la France* (Paris: Tallandier, 1979).
- 104 E.g. Lucien Febvre, *La terre et l'évolution humaine - Introduction géographique à l'histoire* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1949).
- 105 Carlos Mendes Dias, *Geopolítica: Teorização Clássica e Ensinaamentos* (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2005), 87-88.
- 106 Jaime Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 77.
- 107 Jaime Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 89.

- 108 Jaume Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 76.
- 109 Arlene Maykot Prates, “Geohistória na concepção de Vicens Vives” *Geosul*, no. 2 (1986): 95 (Accessed June 15, 2013). Available at: <http://www.periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/geosul/article/download/12553/11861>
- 110 Nuno Morgado, “Maritime Spatial Planning as element of Geopolitics of the Sea”, *Maria Scientia Scientific e-Journal*, no. 4 (Autumn 2012): 50.
- 111 Jaume Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 72.
- 112 Jaume Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el proceso histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 75.
- 113 Carlos Mendes Dias, *Geopolítica: Teorização Clássica e Ensinamentos* (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2005), 91-92.
- 114 Arlene Maykot Prates, “Geohistória na concepção de Vicens Vives” *Geosul*, no. 2 (1986): 95 (Accessed June 15, 2013). Available at: <http://www.periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/geosul/article/download/12553/11861>
- 115 Friedrich Ratzel, *Géographie Politique* (Genève: Editions Regionales Européennes S.A., 1988).
- 116 Mamadouh, Virgine, “Geopolitics in nineties: one flag, many meanings”, *Geojournal*, no. 46 (1998): 238.
- 117 Evidently, this paper solemnly shields the *Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism* - (Accessed November 10, 2013). Available at: <http://www.webcitation.org/64otCtAyz> – signed by Václav Havel, among others, which called for education and serious academic research in order (among other issues): to cease the promotion of communist ideology, and to underline that class struggle theory has been at the origin of terrible crimes. Moreover, the declaration reminded that crimes of communism were never assessed as crimes against humanity, as Nazi crimes were assessed by the Nuremberg trial. Thus, totalitarianism: never again.
- 118 Another example is, generally, the Critical Theory by Frankfurt School.
- 119 Benno, Teschke, *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics and the Making of Modern International Relations* (London: Verso, 2003).
- 120 Karl Haushofer, “Why Geopolitik?” in *The Geopolitics Reader*, ed. Geróid Ó Tuathail (London: Routledge, 2006), 41.
- 121 José Pedro Teixeira Fernandes, *Teorias das Relações Internacionais. Da abordagem clássica ao debate pós-positivista* (Lisboa: Almedina, 2009), 31-42, 129.
- 122 Nuno Morgado, “Traditionalist methodology: preference for “interpretation” besides “description”” (CEEISA 9<sup>th</sup> Convention: *Boundaries in/of International Relations*, Krakow, Poland, 20-22 September 2012).
- 123 STRATFORvideo. “George Friedman and Robert D. Kaplan on Geopolitical Forecasting (Agenda)”. (Accessed July 1, 2013). Available at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZ9Bt\\_j2N1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZ9Bt_j2N1)
- 124 Aleksandr Dugin, *Teoria do Mundo Multipolar* (E.U.: Instituto de Altos Estudos em Geopolítica & Ciências Auxiliares, 2012), 53.
- 125 António José Fernandes, *Introdução à Ciência Política. Teorias, Métodos e Temáticas* (Lisboa: Porto Editora, 1995), 57.
- 126 Mark Blacksell, *Political Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 7.

- 127 Michael Heffernan, *The Meaning of Europe: Geography and Geopolitics* (London: Arnold, 1998).
- 128 Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 117.
- 129 Robert D. Kaplan, *The revenge of geography: what the map tells us about coming conflicts and the battle against fate* (New York: Random House, 2012).
- 130 Nick Megoran, "Guest Editorial", *Political Geography*, no 29 (2010).
- 131 Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The influence of sea power upon History 1660-1783* (Accessed June 17, 2013). Available at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13529/13529-h/13529-h.htm>
- 132 Martin Glassner, *Political Geography* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996).
- 133 Karl Haushofer, *An English Translation and Analysis of Major General Karl Ernst Haushofer's - Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean: Studies on the Relationship between Geography and History* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 96.
- 134 Daniel Castagnin, ed., *Poder global y Geopolítica* (Buenos Aires: Pleamar, 1984), 162.
- 135 'Questo o è un addebito da parte di chi non ha capito o non vuol capire, o una distorsione, un abuso di chi crede d'aver individuato un nuovo "determinismo"' - Enrico Galoppini, "La Geopolitica è "immorale"? Note su alcune obiezioni all'approccio geopolitico", *Eurasia*, (Accessed June 13, 2013) Available at: <http://www.eurasia-rivista.org/la-geopolitica-e-immorale-note-su-alcune-obiezioni-allapproccio-geopolitico/15327/>
- 136 Determinism is also easily understandable, for instance, from the adage by Bonapart '*La politique d'un état est dans sa géographie*', and it is believed that such approach should be rejected since geography may be ignored by politics (*Vide* endnote f)
- 137 Nuno Morgado, *Da Avaliação do Potencial Estratégico da Alemanha* (Lisboa: Bubok, 2011).
- 138 Karl Haushofer, Bayerisches Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität zu München. *Probe-Vorlesung des Dr.Phil. Karl Haushofer*. [manuscript] Dr. Karl Haushofer, OC-VII-137. München: Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 1919.
- 139 Aymeric Chauprade, "Che cos'è la geopolitica?" *Geopolitica*, Vol. I, no.3 (Autumn 2012). (Accessed June 30, 2013). Available at: <http://www.geopolitica-rivista.org/19542/che-cose-la-geopolitica/>
- 140 Klaus Dodds and David Atkinson, eds. *Geopolitical Traditions. A century of geopolitical thought* (London: Routledge, 2000), 46.
- 141 Nuno Morgado, "Portugal, Russia and a conceivable Lusophone block - a geopolitical opportunity", *Maria Scientia Scientific e-Journal*, no. 6 (Summer 2013).
- 142 Nuno Morgado, "Japan and Russia: alternative geopolitics within a multipolar international context", *Geopolitica*. Vol. 2, no. 2 (Autumn 2013): (forthcoming).
- 143 Everett Dolman, *Astropolitic: Classical Geopolitics in the Space Age* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002), 52-53.
- 144 Jaime Vicens Vives, *Tratado general de Geopolítica. El factor geográfico y el*

- processo histórico* (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1961), 172.
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# Differentiating Arctic Provinces

## A Cluster Analysis of Geographic and Geopolitical Indicators

*Irina Valko*

Based on a geographical-administrative definition of the region, theoretical assumptions of contemporary structuralist geopolitics, cross-sectional data for 2000, 2005 and 2010 from the Arctic Regional Attributes Dataset, and the technical capabilities of cluster analysis, this article aims to produce a 3-stage geopolitical differentiation of 27 Arctic provinces according to 16 indicators reflecting their performance in the physical, economic, demographic, military and institutional areas over the first decade of the new millennia. First, geographic attributes of the Arctic provinces are clustered (area, average temperature in January and July, exclusive economic zone, sector area). Second, a set of geopolitical attributes is added into the analysis (total and indigenous population, gross regional product and its agriculture-industry-services segregation, advancement in economic and military regionalism, military bases and expenditures, and possession of nuclear weapons) to detect the consequent responses in the model. Finally, geopolitical variables are clustered separately in order to reveal the cause of unstable membership. Two geographic clusters, three geopolitical clusters, and four outlier cases are identified.

*Keywords: systemic, differentiation, geopolitics, Arctic, conflict, regionalism, cluster analysis*

### Introduction

A stable characteristic of the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the unprecedented, increasing rate at which Arctic ice has been melting. By August 2012, the Arctic ice shelf had shrunk to the smallest size ever



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observed. Today it covers just half of the area it covered in the 1980s, when measurements began, and it is estimated that the first iceless summer will occur over the next few years, instead of the 30-40 year period previously predicted. Such dramatic geophysical transformations have enormous human-related consequences. Scientists, politicians, lawyers, senior multinationals managers, army generals, and even media stars and athletes steadily reintroduce the problematic of polar ice melting into academic space and mass media discourse. Indeed, the positions are manifold. While some scholars point to the irreversibility of ice melting and call the Arctic the next geopolitical hot spot others question whether it is appropriate to treat it as a distinct region at all, as the idea is little more than 'an artificial construct that requires serious manipulation of the facts to seem credible' and attempt to falsify the economic rationale behind the majority of profit-related projects in the region. Before allying with any position, it is necessary to understand the basic configuration of the Arctic geopolitical space.

Apart from a series of issue-specific institutional reports, most scientific works operating on the systemic, regional level of approximation either highlight the diversity of polar geography – re: Dowdeswell and Hambrey 2002, Woodford 2003, Stein 2008 – or evaluate the evolution of Arctic regional cooperation – re: Chaturvedi 1996, Koivurova 2009, Exner-Pirot 2012, Hough 2013 – or summarise the expected geopolitical effects from the changing environment – re: Anderson 2009, Chapman 2011, Ostreng (et al) 2013. With the exception of a comprehensive empirical introduction to the functioning of the Arctic geopolitical system by Knell (2008), a rigorous attempt to combine these issues is lacking – as quantitative interdisciplinary geopolitical classification of Arctic provinces according to their geographic, economic and political attributes is still missing in literature.

Based on the geographical-administrative definition of the region, theoretical assumptions of contemporary structuralist geopolitics, empirical data from national and international statistical databases, and the technical capabilities of cluster analysis, this article aims to produce a 3-stage geopolitical differentiation of 27 Arctic provinces according to 16 indicators reflecting their performance in the physical, economic, demographic, military and institutional areas over the first decade of the new millennium. First, this work clusters a set of geo-

graphic attributes of the Arctic provinces (area, average temperature in January and July, exclusive economic zone, sector area). Second, a set of geopolitical attributes is added to the analysis (total and indigenous population, gross regional product and its agriculture–industry–services segregation, advancement in economic and military regionalism, military bases and expenditures, and possession of nuclear weapons) to detect the consequent responses in the model. Finally, the clustering of Arctic provinces is done according to a set of geopolitical attributes (omitting the geographic ones). The aim is to study the intersection of the geographic and geopolitical vectors of Arctic development. The significant divergence of these vectors might be interpreted as a potential source of conflict between the Arctic states. In order to discover the most probable areas of potential interstate conflict, this research verifies the significance of vector coincidence and evaluates the potential implications of the presence of two geographic factors leading to interstate conflict, proximity and temperature change, on the Arctic geopolitical system.

The null hypothesis is that: *Clusters are dynamic, i.e. they are not stable in time.*

The following questions are answered in this work:

1. How are Arctic provinces grouped according to their geographical attributes?
2. Is the geographical grouping stable in time?
3. How do geopolitical attributes adjust geographical grouping?
4. *Is the adjusted grouping stable in time?*

Answering these questions allows the discovery of geographic forces of clustering, detecting and evaluating geopolitically-driven deviation from geographical clustering, and assessing the emerging sources of conflict between geography and politics in the region. Fulfilling these goals provides a neutral, comparative and compact analytical addition to regression-based research on Arctic geopolitics and creating an objective ground for forecasting.

The analysis is described in five additional sections. First, the 27 Arctic provinces are defined. Next, discussion focuses on how Arctic regional attributes are related to each other. This part presents the methodological configuration of the time-series model. Third, a summary of the mechanics of the cluster analysis and a presentation of the data and measurements is done. The fourth section offers the results while the final part of the article summarises the findings, discusses the role of

cluster stability within the relationship between geography and interstate conflict, and provides directions for further research.

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## **27 Arctic Provinces: Similar but Diverse**

The Arctic region includes the vast, northernmost coastal parts of North America, Europe and Asia; a series of archipelagos between them; and the relatively enclosed waters of the world's smallest ocean. While the region's northern extremity is the North Pole, the delimitation of its southern border is not obvious, as geographical, ecological and historical borders do not coincide. Since delineating the Arctic is not the primary goal of the analysis, and because maintaining consistency in the aggregation of empirical data is of primary importance in any quantitative research design, two restrictions apply: (a) sub-national administrative units with at least one per cent of territory within the Arctic Circle (66°33'44") and/or 10° July Isotherm and/or tree line are considered to be a part of the Arctic region; (b) the administrative division of 2010 applies throughout the period under consideration – see Figure 1.

This work considers 27 sub-national administrative units or “Arctic provinces:” Newfoundland and Labrador, The Northwest Territories, Quebec, Nunavut, The Yukon (Canada); The Faroe Islands, Greenland (Denmark); Kainuu, Lapland, North Ostrobothnia (Finland); Iceland; Finnmark, Nordland, Svalbard and Jan Mayen, Tromsø (Norway); Arkhangelsk and Nenets, Chukchi, Karelia, Khanty-Mansii, Komi, Krasnoyarsk, Murmansk, Sakha/Yakutia, Yamal-Nenets (Russia); Norrbotten, Västerbotten (Sweden); and Alaska (US). Apart from imposing administrative borders on land, these provinces also generate delimitation of the Arctic according to the real and potential (imaginary) borders of, respectively, the Arctic states' exclusive economic zones and national sectors

The Arctic provinces are both similar and heterogeneous. On one hand, they all experience the lowest atmospheric temperatures and longest winters on Earth, ‘polar days’ and ‘polar nights,’ and have glaciers instead of trees, as well as certain visual and sound effects found only north of the Arctic Circle. The current Arctic states take these conditions into account when organising their military, economic, and demographic spaces.



Pacific Ocean

Japan

China

United States

Canada

Arctic Ocean

Russia

Norway

Greenland

Iceland

Finland

Kazakhstan

Sweden

Faeroe Is.

Norway

Latvia

Lithuania

Belarus

United Kingdom

Poland

Ukraine

Georgia

Atlantic Ocean

Turkey

Jordan

0 350 700 Km

The provinces also share the historical position within the structure of the nation state: 'unlike more familiar regions, such as Southeast Asia, the Middle East, or South America, the Arctic consists largely of segments of nation states whose political centres of gravity lie, for the most part, far to the south.'

On the other hand, the Arctic provinces are heterogeneous in relief, climate, and distribution of natural resources, as well as in population and industrial composition, military configuration, and level of institutional integration and technological advancement. Despite the potential change in climate, it is highly unlikely that these characteristics will disappear in the near future.

### Geopolitical Analysis: Theoretical and Methodological Configuration

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, geography still matters 'because humans are physical beings who occupy space and have physical needs geography cannot be dethroned from its central position in the international sphere.' At the same time, the new thinking in geopolitics refers to geographical possibilism rather than determinism. Geography is now assumed to be one of many possible *conditional* factors in national and global politics, with a facilitating rather than a pure effect as O'Loughlin and Anselin argued (1993). It is, however, unclear whether this condition holds in the Arctic.

This work belongs to the domain of systemic (structural) geopolitics. It implies that 'the study of the structural processes and tendencies that condition how all states practice [domestic and] foreign policy.' Systemic analysis is a powerful methodological tool for contrasting Arctic provinces as, firstly, many scholars believe that it is relatively "neutral" and, secondly, it is probably the best approach ever imagined when comparing heterogeneous political systems such as those of the eight Arctic states, according to Berg-Schlusser and Stammen (2000). Methodologically, a systemic approach allows the analytical process to be perceived through the prism of allocating the complex social reality (the whole) as a system of interconnected elements and then integrating these elements back into the whole. In diagram form, this version of elementary modeling might be presented as:

*Whole* → *System of elements* → *Whole*

Among the rare analytical attempts to operationalise systemic geopolitical analysis four works deserve special attention since their theoretical and methodological elements form the basis of the current analysis. The first is Dussouy's 'Global Interpretation Method of the World' (2010). The idea is that

no two-dimensional map can capture the multi-scalar intersection of physical, demographic, strategic, socio-economic, and cultural-ideological forces at work in the geopolitical arena; instead, we need to think in terms of the interaction of all these things in different places and under varying circumstances.

Accordingly, a strictly axiomatic approach is not adoptable as 'it is impossible, in all social sciences, to practice any sort of a priori verification.' The global system is partitioned into five distinct geopolitical action spaces: physical, natural space; demo-political space; diplomatic-military space; socio-economic space dealing with globalisation; and symbolic, idealistic and cultural space representing the system's subjective attributes. Each space should then be subjected to a spatial analysis to uncover the internal structural logic and the obstacles it has to face. Dussouy offers a methodology for gathering data that can serve as the basis for an empiric-inductive theory. While displaying clear signs of systemic geopolitics, Dussouy's analysis leaves the question of model operationalisation and, specifically, the determination of concrete indicators of performance within individual action spaces, open.

Second, in 'Constant and Variable Factors of Geopolitical Analysis' (2009), Csurgai proposes that the geopolitical system consists of both objective and subjective components. The objective components are elements of physical geography, availability of natural resources, boundary specifics, ethnic composition and demography, socio-economic factors, and strategies of actors. The subjective components reflect the specifics of the question of identity, shape of geopolitical representations ("mental maps"), and historical heritage. The goal is to identify the individual attributes, and interaction, of these factors. In doing so, 'geopolitical analysis can respond to the need of using a multidimensional method to interpret the complexity of contemporary international relations.' However, no definite specification of individual indicators is offered.

The third work offers a solid empirical configuration of Arctic geopolitics. In 'Reemergence of the Arctic as a Strategic Location' (2008),

Knell highlights the multi-dimensional character of modern geopolitics in the Arctic and proposes a multi-vector analytical response to it. He analyses the northernmost region as a system of its political, military, economic, social, infrastructural, and information sub-systems, as 'any purely linear approach to the Arctic would be doomed, because it would not recognise the complexity of any one action.'

Knell suggests to start with analysing the developments within each sub-system and then focusing on the system's dynamic interaction of parts. However, the intra-regional geopolitical differentiation of Arctic provinces is absent, as the study remains on a national, rather than sub-national, level.

A final, indirect, contribution to the operationalisation of systemic geopolitical analysis belongs to Wolfson, Madjd-Sadjadi and James (2004). Advocating the appropriateness of cluster analysis in understanding the full range of interactions among political, economic, and conflict-related variables, the authors suggest that 'it is appropriate to begin without imposing too many restrictions on the analysis.' The variables are assumed to form part of a yet-to-be-understood, non-linear, time-dependent interactive system. Again, the analysis operates on the national level.

Integrating the interdisciplinary logic of the four above-mentioned approaches and focusing on the sub-national level of regional analysis, this study assumes the geopolitical performance of each Arctic province to be defined as a complex process of simultaneous interaction between geographic, economic, demographic, military and institutional factors. If the Arctic civilizational evolution is divided into 'pre-Cold war,' 'Cold war' and 'post-Cold war' periods, the 'Cold war' period might be represented as the region's traditional geopolitical configuration. Because there are two primary conditions for a state's sovereignty – territory and population – the importance of geographic and demographic factors is traditionally significant. Assessment of military presence in the region is another traditional factor to be considered while studying Arctic geopolitics. Becoming much stronger in the post-Cold war period, economic and institutional factors are relevant because recent geopolitical analysis indicates the tendency of socio-economic factors to get ahead of the traditional military-oriented vision of the region as noted by Sale and Potapov (2010), Zellen (2009), Keskitalo (2004) and Knell (2008). As 'the lines between

international economics and regional economics are becoming blurred,' it also seems appropriate to position the Arctic provinces within an international context, showing the extent of their participation in intra- and inter-regional institutional integration. The reason is obvious – cooperation, rather than conflict, is in everyone's interest.

*Irina Valko*

These factors are operationalised through the following geographical and geopolitical indicators: total land area (sq. km); temperature in January and July (average, oC); exclusive economic zone (thou. sq. km); national sector area (thou. sq. km); total and indigenous population (thou. persons); gross regional product (million USD) and its division into agriculture (million USD), industry (million USD), and services (million USD); active links of economic and military regionalism (number); military bases (number), annual national military expenditure (million 2011 USD), and possession of nuclear weapons (binary).

The analysis is strictly objective: with no attempt to repudiate the presence of certain factors of subjective geopolitics in the Arctic, this work omits them due to the unbearably low availability of empirical data and problematic operationalisation. The only (partial) exception to this strategy is the decision to differentiate between the provinces based on their share of the national sector area. Indeed, the latter is a semi-subjective indicator. Even though the sector doctrine by itself does not constitute a valid basis for claims of title to territory, and is generally rejected by Denmark, Norway and the us, 'it appears that, since there are no outstanding disputes over land and island territories in the Arctic, the substance of the sectors claims there has been recognised either by treaty or simply by acquiescence.' The sector approach, if contrasted to EEZ, says much more about the role of provinces in the Arctic states' symbolic treatment of the Arctic Ocean (on geopolitical representations/'mental maps'). A mapping of modern territorial claims in the Arctic confirms that the sector approach is not completely out-dated.

The classification of Arctic provinces according to both geographic and geopolitical attributes allows (a) the identification of attributes that generate group membership instability and (b) reveal which specific areas in the region are more prone to potential interstate conflict in the region. The latter is defined as a disagreement of at least two Arctic states over some type of contentious issue(s). A substantial amount of empirical evidence exists on the causal relationship between geography and interstate conflict.

Two geographic facilitating conditions for causing of interstate conflict are relevant to the Arctic case: the threat of proximity and temperature change.

According to Bremer (1992), Huth (1992) and Hensel (2000), the majority of interstate conflicts occur between neighbouring states because 'contiguity produces the strongest effect, increasing the probability of war by over 35 times – more than such common explanations as alliances, major power status, and relative capabilities.' It is appropriate to demonstrate the ways in which the resulting geopolitical grouping of Arctic provinces contributes to the strength of this factor.

The proximity argument then implies the need to identify areas where groups border each other, as these are assumed to be the most probable candidates for potential conflict within the Arctic geopolitical system. At the same time, studying 10-year variation in Arctic temperatures allows the verification of the significance of temperature change in the region as, according to Hsiang, Burke and Miguel

when climate variations occur, they can have substantial effects on the incidence of conflict across a variety of contexts. The median effect of a 1°C change in climate variables generates a 14% change in the risk of intergroup conflict...If future populations respond similarly to past populations, then anthropogenic climate change has the potential to substantially increase conflict around the world, relative to a world without climate change.

### Research Mechanics: Cluster Analysis, Data, Measurement

A general question raised by researchers across many disciplines, including political geography and geopolitics, is how to organise the observable phenomena in vivid structures, i.e. to draw taxonomy. Cluster analysis (the term first used by Tryon 1939) is not one specific algorithm but a task encompassing a series of descriptive, multivariate and exploratory statistical procedures to classify entities into groups according to (a) how close the attributes are to one another and (b) how far they are from others. Despite the existence of intrinsic paradoxes, the method is both useful and meaningful and therefore popular in contemporary science. Besides, in contrast to factor analysis, clustering works well even with

a limited number of cases and attributes – a situation that is currently observable in the Arctic region.

Because the ‘selection of variables dictates the scope and validity of research, preliminary knowledge about theoretical linkages between variables procures the factual analysis. Searching for coherent groups of Arctic provinces, this clustering of geographical, economic, military, demographic and institutional variables emphasises the interdisciplinary nature of modern geopolitics. The analysis is run in the Statistica 10 package using menus.

Three basic decisions need to be made when performing cluster analysis. The first decision is what type of clustering method to deploy since Statistica offers a range of approaches. Without presupposing a particular number of groups to be found and without expecting the clustering of both cases and variables to yield useful results (when k-means clustering and two-way joining are, respectively, the most appropriate methods), this work applies the joining (tree) clustering method on cases resulting in a series of vertical dendrograms. Because, in this case, ‘similarities are a set of rules that serve as criteria for grouping or separating items,’ the choice of distance measurement is the second compulsory decision. Euclidean distance is the basic, and most frequently used, geometric distance in the multidimensional space. Its squared version allows greater weight to be placed on objects that are further apart. Both techniques are preferable when the data is raw. City-block (Manhattan) distance operates on the logic of the average difference across dimensions, but has the danger of a dampened effect on single large differences (outliers) as the latter are not squared. Chebychev distance is appropriate if two objects are defined as “different” if their difference occurs on any one of the dimensions. Power distance measurement allows assigning (and manipulating) the weight on dimensions on which the respective objects are very different. Finally, per cent disagreement measurement is preferable for analysing data whose parts are categorical in nature.

The last decision is on the choice of linkage rule (amalgamation). Single linkage determines the distance between two clusters based on the distance of the two closest objects in the different clusters (nearest neighbour). Complete linkage determines the distance between two clusters based on the greatest distance between any two objects in the different clusters (furthest neighbour). Pair-group average calculates the distance between clusters as the average distance between all pairs

of objects in the two different clusters, and its weighted version uses the size of the respective clusters as weight. Pair-group centroid determines the target distance as the difference between centroids; the average points in the multidimensional space defined by the dimensions. Its weighted version allows weights to be assigned in case there is an expected variation (considerable) in cluster size. Finally, based on a sum-of-squares technique, Ward's method uses variance approach to calculate the distance between clusters. It is closer to regression analysis than the other methods.

The Arctic Regional Attributes Dataset (ARA Dataset) is presented in Appendix A in Excel 2010 format. It is a cross-national dataset of 27 cases (provinces) covering 16 variables (geographical and geopolitical indicators). Balancing between the inevitable costs of data compilation and the need to provide credible results, the dataset does not strive to include all data for a 10-year period but instead takes information from databases once every five years, starting in 2000 and ending in 2010. Two indicators (Econ\_Reg and Mil\_Reg) are the analytical invention of the author, and the rest has been culled from the eight Arctic states' national statistical databases, circumpolar statistical database ArcticStat, Encyclopedia Britannica, CIA – World Factbook, Weatherspark: Weather Dashboard, Sea Around Us Project, DaftLogic: Advanced Google Maps Distance Calculator, OANDA Historical Exchange Rates Database, Барциц (2000) and the SIPRI Military Expenditure Dataset. Some variables have been standardised in order to eliminate nation-specific scaling differences.

Appendix B provides detailed description of data aggregation in Word 2010 format. What follows is a brief description of the configuration of variables. In most cases, the variables are defined according to their specification in the codebooks for the related datasets. Those interested in the exact configuration of all variables should therefore refer to the original documentation found in aforementioned public datasets. Each Arctic province is characterised by the following mix of variables:

*Area (thou. sq. km)* – sum of all land area (including inland water and glaciers) delimited by provincial boundaries and/or coastlines, as defined in the respective sub-national administrative division of the Arctic states. The variable is configured at constant 2010 values throughout the entire period under consideration.

*EEZ and Nat\_Sector (thou. sq. km)* – two variables reflecting the existing and potential (imaginary) maritime delimitation of the region; recal-

culated for each Arctic province according to the length of its coastline facing the northernmost ocean.

*EEZ* denotes existing borders. It reflects the area under the jurisdiction of the Arctic state generated by the coastline of each province facing the Arctic Ocean. The variable is configured at constant values throughout the entire period under consideration. Three provinces are landlocked (Kainuu, Khanty-Mansii and Komi) and are therefore assigned a zero value. Data for Alaska (Arctic sea basin-only) and the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Svalbard and Jan Mayen are imported without modification from the *Sea around Us Project*. In all other cases, *EEZ* per province is unknown. This work transforms the available data using basic arithmetic algorithms; for each Arctic state, the length of the coastline (km) and *EEZ* (sq. km). Next, to overcome the coastline paradox, this work reconstructs the same length of coastline for each Arctic state in *DaftLogic: Advanced Google Maps Distance Calculator*.

Using the same maps and markers, the calculated percentile share of each province's coastline in relation to the country's total coastline is undertaken. Finally, this work recalculates the country's total *EEZ* according to the provincial coastline's percentile value.

*Nat\_Sector* denotes the potential (imaginary) partition of the Arctic Ocean. It demonstrates each province's area of national sector generated by its own coastline. This variable has two functions: to differentiate the eight Arctic states according to their relative location vis-à-vis the ocean (littoral – non-littoral) and according to their sovereign ambitions regarding waters beyond their *EEZ* (extended continental shelf claims – no extended continental shelf claims). Finland and Sweden are non-littoral states – their coastlines do not directly face the Arctic Ocean. At the same time, Iceland does not seek to extend its jurisdiction over the High North, even though part of its *EEZ* is located north of the Arctic Circle. Zero values are assigned in all three cases. For other Arctic provinces, the share of national sector – generated by their own coastline – is recalculated according to the percentile share of its coastline within the country's total coastline.

*t\_Jan.* and *t\_Jul.* (average, °C) – two variables reflecting the average temperature registered at thirty-seven weather stations located within the borders of Arctic provinces. The simple average is calculated if data at several stations in the Arctic province is available.

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*Population and Indig\_pop (thou. persons)* – two demographic variables denoting the total number of residents (both citizens and non-citizens), and total number of indigenous residents, of Arctic provinces as of January 1 of the respective year. All data are standardised. With the exception of Greenland, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Alaska, no raw data are available on the ethnic composition of Arctic provinces. This work imports data on the percentile share of the indigenous population within the total population in the Arctic states' northernmost territories. Percentile values remain constant throughout period under consideration. The value for the indigenous population is calculated by augmenting the total population of the Arctic province with its percentile value for indigenous population. Data for Sweden, Norway, Finland, Canada and Russia are averaged.

*GRP (mln. USD)* – Gross Regional Product, by province, by year, in current prices. Data has been standardised. National currencies have been converted into current USD using OANDA yearly-average historical currency exchange rates. There is a lack of year-specific data on the following provinces: Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec (2000, 2010); Finnmark, Nordland, Tromsø, Norrbotten, Vasterbotten (2010). These values are not real but predicted. First an evaluation, via scatterplot in Statistica 10, was undertaken to see whether the available time range data form a trend. They do and thus this work uses multiple regression analysis to predict the missing value. Results are significant with 95% probability (significance level = 0.05; p-value < 0.05).

*Agriculture (mln. USD)* – the share of agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting within the Gross Regional Product, by province, by year, recalculated according to percentile value for every respective year. To reconstruct missing data on Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon in 2010 an evaluation, via scatterplot in Statistica 10, is conducted to see whether the available time range data form a trend. They do and a multiple regression analysis is used to predict the missing value. Results are significant with 95% probability (significance level = 0.05; p-value < 0.05).

*Industry (mln. USD)* – the share of mining, manufacturing (metal products, electronics, machinery and scientific instruments, shipbuilding, pulp and paper, foodstuffs, chemicals, textiles, and clothing) and energy and water supplies, within the Gross Regional Product, by province, by year, recalculated according to percentile value for every respective year. To reconstruct the missing data for Nunavut, the Northwest Territories

and the Yukon in 2010 an evaluation, via scatterplot in Statistica 10, is conducted to see whether the available time range data form a trend. They do. A multiple regression analysis is deployed to predict the missing value. The results are significant with 95% probability (significance level = 0.05; p-value < 0.05).

*Services (mln. USD)* – the share of construction, wholesale and retail trade, transportation, information, finance, real estate, tourism, education, healthcare and social services within the Gross Regional Product, by province, by year, recalculated according to the percentile value for every respective year. To reconstruct the missing data for Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon in 2010 an evaluation, via scatterplot in Statistica 10, to see whether the available time range data form a trend. They do and a multiple regression analysis is used to predict missing value. Results are significant with 95% probability (significance level = 0.05; p-value < 0.05).

*Econ\_Reg and Mil\_Reg (number of active links)* – two variables of international institutional regionalism denote the number of active membership in any of the following economic and military integration frameworks: World Trade Organisation, European Free Trade Association, North American Free Trade Agreement, Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, European Union – Common Market (economic regionalism) as well as North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, Memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Denmark, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Finland, the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Norway, and the government of the Kingdom of Sweden concerning Nordic coordinated arrangement for military peace support and the North American Aerospace Defence Command (military regionalism). The codification of provincial advancement in institutionalised integration is conducted according to the following scale: 0 = no active link, 1 = one active link, 2 = two active links; with no intention of reflecting the intensity ('depth') of integration. Each province is assumed to be 100% open towards the respective nation state. In terms of intra-state regionalism, the Arctic provinces are assumed to share all national-level opportunities and responsibilities granted by given integration frameworks.

*Mil\_Bases (number)* – active permanent military installations (land bases including training centers, maintenance sites, surveillance bases, air bases and heliports, naval bases, Coast and Home Guard and sledge

patrol bases) located within the borders of the Arctic provinces. A land base is defined for this work as being a military installation with a personnel of at least 18 persons, a naval base as a military installation with at least one armed vessel, and an air base as a military installation with a runway of at least 1600 m (45 x 40 m in case of heliport). Appendix B contains a full list of military bases. Data on the Khanty-Mansii and Yamal-Nenets provinces is not available.

*Nat\_Mil\_Exp (mln. 2011 USD)* – consistent provincial data on military expenditures is unavailable, thus national data is incorporated. The latter is taken from the SIPRI Military Expenditure Dataset. The military expenditure of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden, and the US in 2000, 2005 and 2010, is considered in million constant 2011 USD.

*Nucl\_W (binary: 1=Y/0=N)* – this variable differentiates between nuclear and non-nuclear Arctic states. This differentiation is based on the premises of Non-Proliferation Treaty (in force since 1970). According to the Treaty, the US and Russia are nuclear states and Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden are non-nuclear states.

### Cluster Analysis Using the ARA Dataset: Results

Because 'it is up to the researcher to select the right method for his/her specific application,' this work tried all methods of visual representation of clusters in Statistica 10 on the 2000 data. Since this work aims to contrast two perspectives of Arctic regional development in time, geographic and geopolitical, the method of amalgamation and distance metrics must be the same in both cases throughout the entire period under consideration. Only Ward's method and percentage disagreement offered apparent groups with relatively large membership within each group. The issue of membership is important because cluster analysis loses meaningfulness if there are many small and low-membership groups. Other methods did not offer plausible results; while single and complete linkage, pair-group average and centroid techniques produced too many groups with low membership (maximum three participants); Euclidean, City-block (Manhattan), Chebychev, Pearson and power distances did not allow clear distinguishability of groups (clusters themselves, and lines of association, were not discernible from zero). These techniques were therefore abandoned, and Ward's method combined with per cent disagreement was applied also to the 2005 and 2010 data.

Figures 2-7 demonstrate the clustering of Arctic provinces for 2000, 2005 and 2010. Even though the grouping method is the same in all cases, the reference values might be different for geographical and geopolitical clustering. In contrast to other research techniques, cluster analysis not presupposes any standard rules of cluster occurrence determination (e.g. 95% significance test in regression analysis). Clusters are found by drawing a reference line across the tree diagram and identifying groups below that line. The position of the reference line is arbitrary in nature and hence this work provides both the data (in both Excel 2010 and Statistica 10) and the clustering procedures in order to encourage other researchers to review the validity of the current results. Based on the author's preliminary knowledge of Arctic geopolitical affairs, the reference line is set up at the 1,35 value for geographic and geopolitical clustering. Such a configuration results in two geographical and three geopolitical clusters. Apart from several abnormalities, all clusters are stable in time, meaning that the null hypothesis is disproved. Abnormalities signal that 16 variables are enough to discover patterns in the data but are still not sufficient to produce mutually exclusive categories, as 'cluster analysis is diagnostic rather than definitive in nature.'

Geographically, the Arctic provinces are divided into two groups, the former being more internally homogeneous than the latter (see figures 2, 4, and 6). The first group might be called the 'Inner Ring' and it includes 15 provinces (16 in 2005). Members of this cluster share greater locational proximity to the North Pole (demonstrated through the existence of area of National sector generated by the province's coastline) and lowest January and July temperatures. Sample members are Nordland, Yukon and Krasnoyarsk. The second group might be called the 'Outer Ring,' it includes 12 provinces (11 in 2005). Members of this cluster are located further from the North Pole and/or have no direct access to the basin of the Arctic Ocean. They also experience moderate January and July temperatures, compared to provinces belonging to the first group. Sample members are Khanty-Mansii, Faroe Islands and Kainuu.

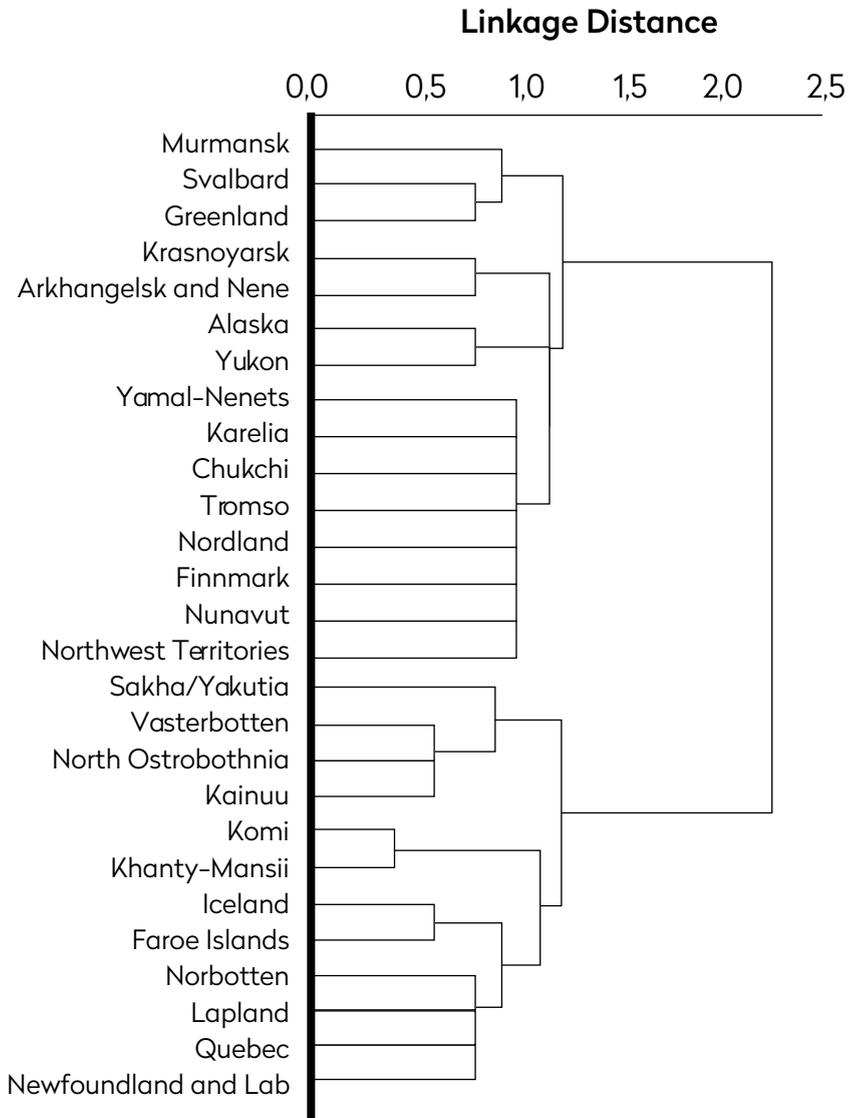
Geopolitically, the Arctic provinces are grouped into three internally homogeneous clusters (see figures 3, 5, and 7). The first cluster is termed 'Russia,' as it includes all Arctic provinces of the Russian Federation. Members of this group share a unique combination of geographical, economic, military, demographic and institutional integration attributes not found elsewhere in the region. And, these provinces account for almost

half the region's territory, population, and military installations, share nuclear state status, and generate approximately one fourth of gross regional product. They are also the least regionally integrated provinces, in both economic and military terms. This cluster therefore confirms the 'isolated' status of Russia mentioned by a number of analysts such as Arkhangelsk and Nenets, Murmansk and Chukchi.

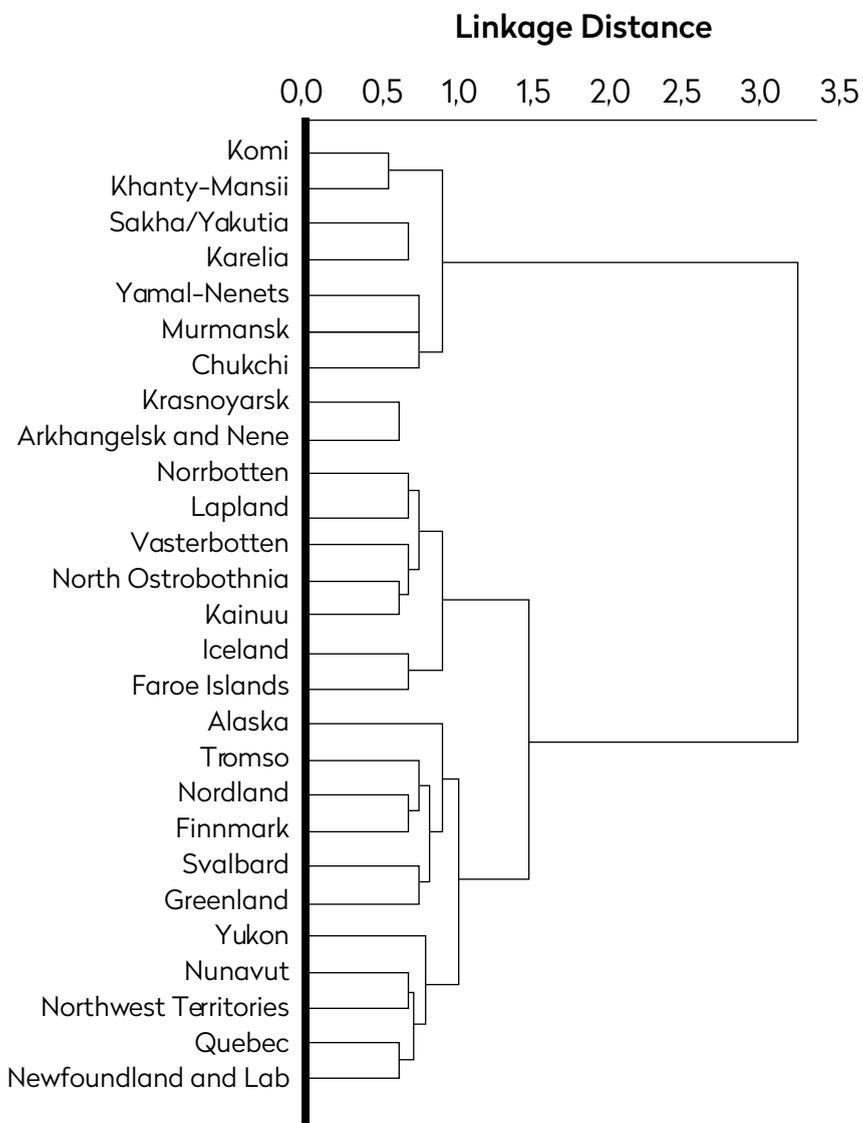
The second group might be labelled 'Northern Europe' as it includes 5 provinces (7 in 2000 and 6 in 2005) of Finland, Sweden, and, until 2005, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. It is important to note that two Danish territories appeared in different clusters in 2000, indicating their heterogeneity. This heterogeneity, however, did not last long: by 2010, Iceland and the Faroe Islands have moved into the third cluster. Apart from common geographical attributes, members of this cluster also have the highest share of services in their gross regional product and a moderate level of regional economic and military integration. Sample members are North Ostrobothnia and Vasterbotten.

The third cluster is 'North America to Norway' since it includes 13 provinces (11 in 2000 and 12 in 2005) of Canada, the US, Greenland and Norway. In our analysis, contrary to the wide-spread conception of Scandinavian uniqueness, Norway is more similar to Canada and the US than to other Northern European countries. The same is true for Greenland; despite its political ties to the European sub-continent, it is part of the third cluster. Accounting for the greatest share of the region's indigenous population and generating more than half of gross agricultural and industrial product, these provinces are the most advanced in regional economic and military integration. Alaska, Nunavut and Svalbard are sample members.

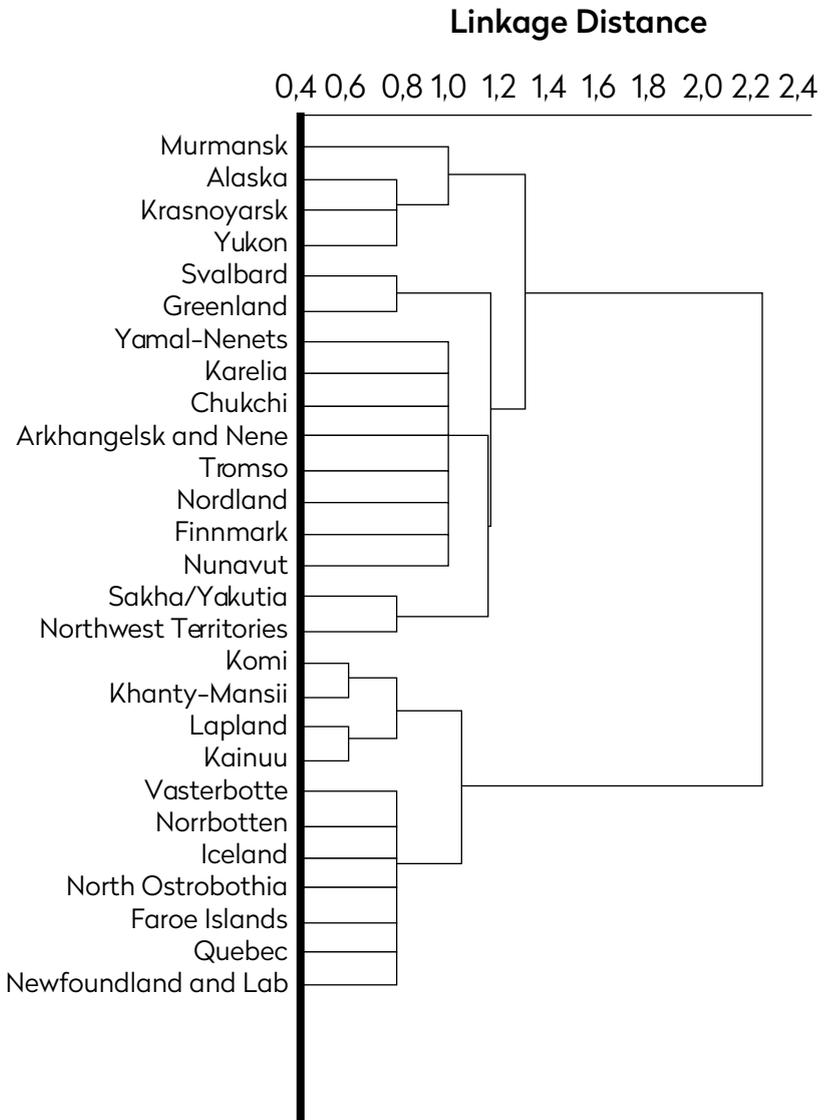
The clustering of geopolitical variables, without geographic variables, is also done in order to determine the cause of unstable group membership of four Arctic provinces: Yamal-Nenets, Sakha/Yakutia, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. All geopolitical groups were found to be totally stable throughout the period studied.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the preliminary impulse of instability arises from the geographic vector of regional development. Because three of five geographic variables in the dataset are fixed at constant values (total area, area of EEZ, area of National sector) the remaining two variables, average temperature in January and in July; appear to be the sole cause of unstable membership.



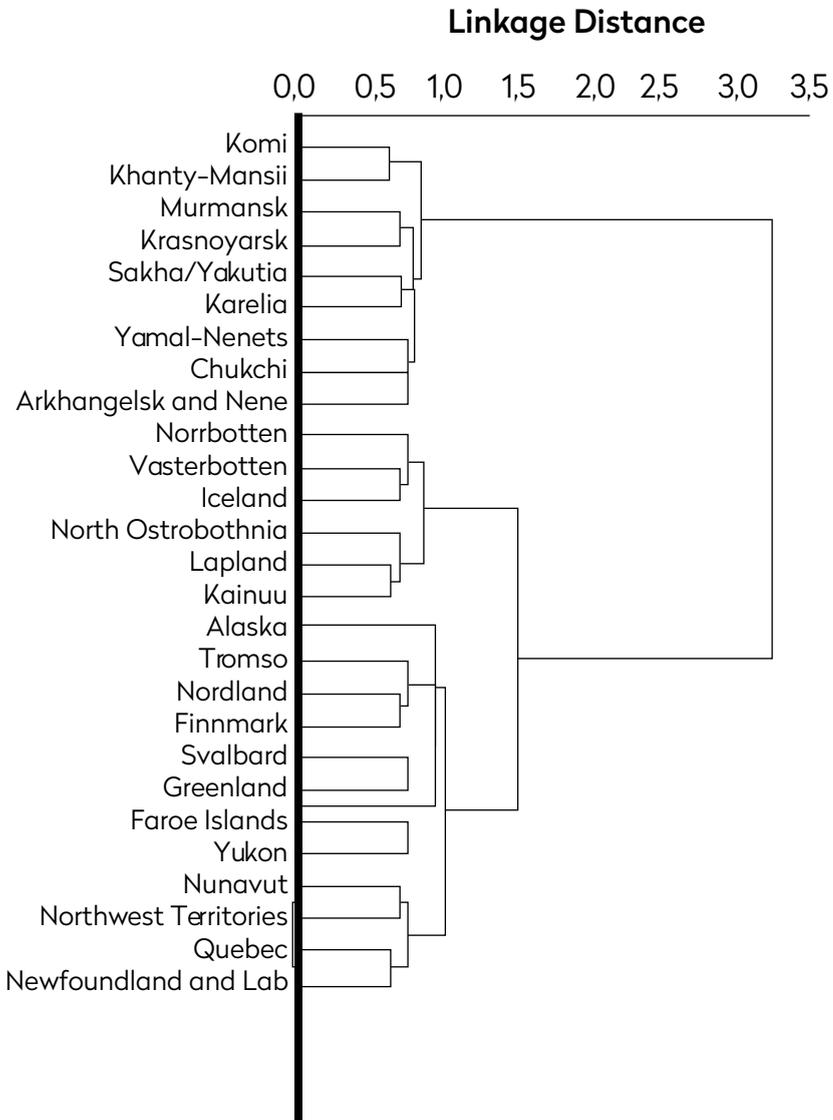
*Figure 2: 2000 Tree Diagram for 27 Cases, Ward's Method, Percent Disagreement (Geographic Variables)*



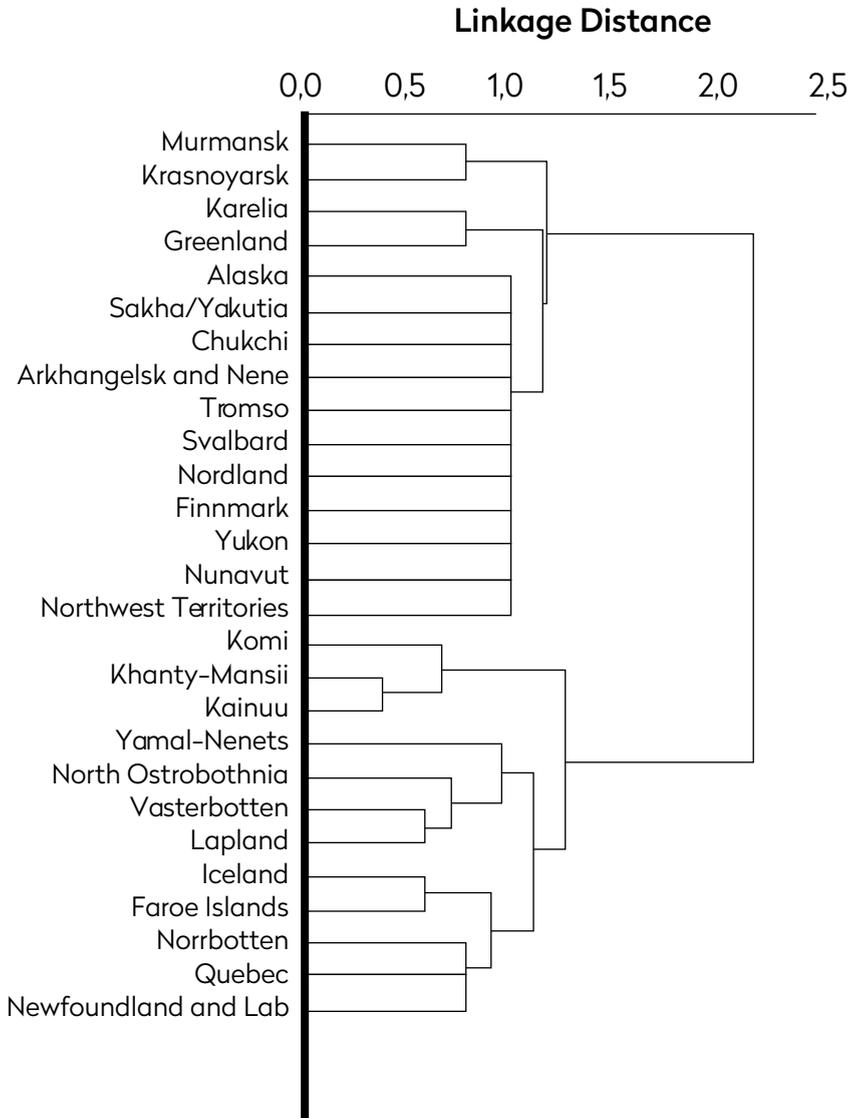
*Figure 3: 2000 Tree Diagram for 27 Cases, Ward's Method, Percent Disagreement (All Variables)*



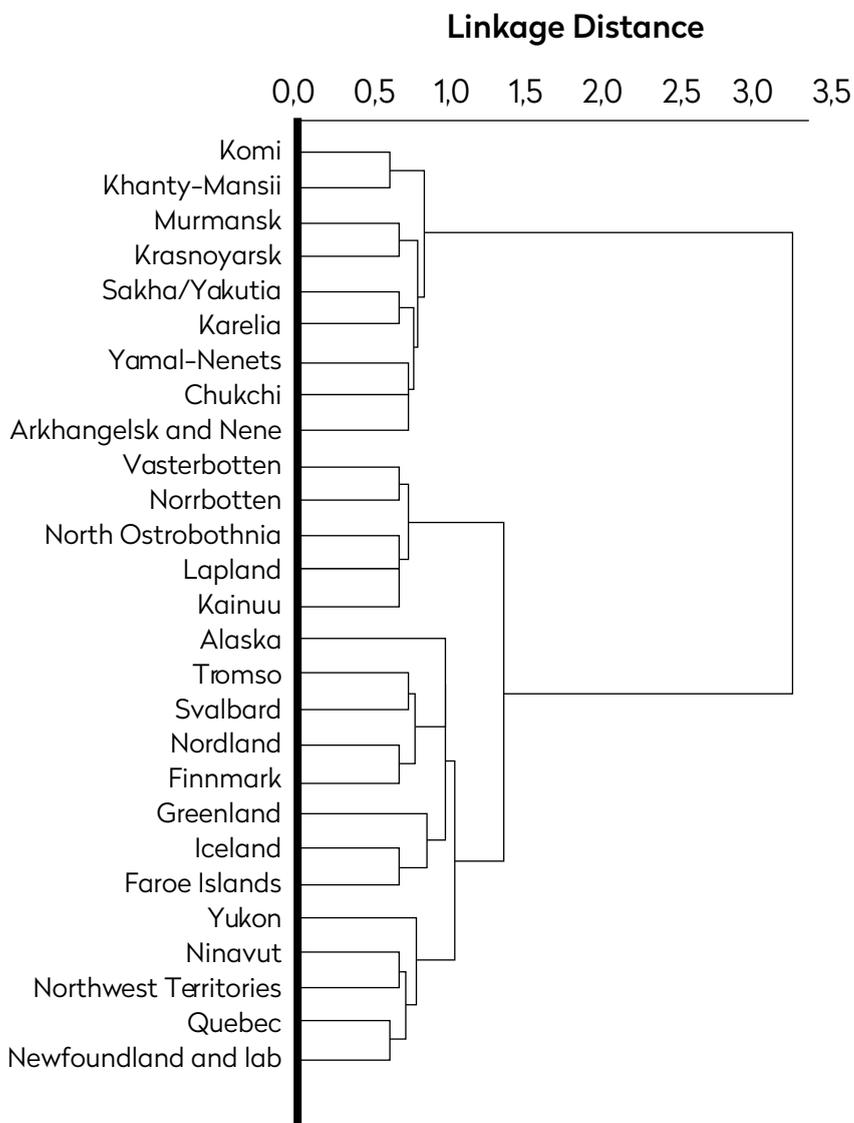
*Figure 4: 2005 Tree Diagram for 27 Cases, Ward's Method, Percent Disagreement (Geographic Variables)*



*Figure 5: 2005 Tree Diagram for 27 Cases, Ward's Method, Percent Disagreement (All Variables)*



*Figure 6: 2010 Tree Diagram for 27 Cases, Ward's Method, Percent Disagreement (Geographic Variables)*



*Figure 7: 2010 Tree Diagram for 27 Cases, Ward's Method, Percent Disagreement (All Variables)*

## Summary, Discussion and Directions for Further Research

This analysis differentiates Arctic provinces according to 16 specific attributes, in order to determine whether geographic and geopolitical groupings coincide and whether these groupings are stable throughout the first ten years of the new millennium. The analysis has revealed two groups based on the clustering of geographic attributes and three groups based on clustering of geographic and geopolitical attributes (the 'Inner Ring,' the 'Outer Ring,' 'North America to Norway,' 'Northern Europe' and 'Russia,' respectively). Membership stability in all groupings is not lower than 93%. The null hypothesis is therefore falsified. In practice it means that, despite popular rhetoric, neither geographic nor geopolitical configuration of the region has not changed dramatically. Besides, the widespread belief that Norway, Iceland and Denmark are part of Scandinavia is false: their position in Arctic geopolitical system consisting of 16 attributes has been shown to be more similar to the ones of Canada and the US than to the other Northern European countries, Finland and Sweden.

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Geographical clustering divides the Arctic provinces according to their relative location and temperature; geopolitical clustering does not respect this grouping and provokes a deviation in the model. Such deviation causes modern Arctic geopolitics to have a conflict nature. On the one hand, given the current extent of the Arctic ice cover the first geographic condition for interstate conflict, the threat of proximity, is present in areas where one group faces (an)other group(s) in the conventional (i.e. not transpolar) manner. There are 11 such areas: Murmansk, Karelia and Chukchi belonging to the 'Russia' group; all areas except North Ostrobothnia belonging to the 'Northern Europe' group; and Finnmark, Tromsø, Nordland and Alaska from 'North America to Norway' group. However, Murmansk, Karelia and Chukchi cases are different from all other cases due to Russia's isolated status within the regional economic and military integration framework.

On the other hand, four cases of membership instability (Yamal-Nenets, Sakha/Yakutia, Iceland, and Faroe Islands) are due to fluctuations in two temperature-related variables. The melting of the Arctic ice as a driving force of regional geopolitical transitions is empirically confirmed so the second geographic condition for interstate conflict, temperature change, is present within the Arctic geopolitical system. This presence is, however, unequal; while seven provinces demonstrate zero change in average temperatures in January or July (Murmansk, North Ostroboth-

nia, Iceland, Nordland, Svalbard, Tromso,<sup>2</sup> Khanty-Mansii), 19 provinces experience 1°C variation (Quebec, Greenland, Kainuu, Lapland, North Ostrobothnia, Iceland, Finnmark, Svalbard, Arkhangelsk and Nenets, Chukchi, Karelia, Khanty-Mansii, Komi, Krasnoyarsk, Murmansk, Sakha/Yakutia, Yamal-Nenets, Norrbotten, Vasterbotten), and this number drops to 6 if we search for provinces with a variation of at least 2°C (Quebec, Khanty-Mansii, Komi, Krasnoyarsk, Murmansk, Norrbotten). Because they experience the greatest variation of temperature, the latter 6 provinces should be more prone to involvement in interstate conflict than the other Arctic provinces. When this effect is controlled for the internal configuration of Arctic geopolitical classification, it is clear that the central positions of three Russian provinces and one Canadian province (within the 'Russia' and the 'North America to Norway' groups, respectively) make them less prone to conflict than the Murmansk province, as the latter is located on the border with provinces belonging to two different geopolitical groups, the 'Northern Europe' and the 'North America to Norway.' At the same time, Norrbotten belongs to the 'North America to Norway' group but borders the 'Northern Europe' group.

Again, the distinction should be made between the Norrbotten and Murmansk cases. It seems reasonable to believe that the Murmansk area is more prone to conflict. While the Murmansk province is area where "isolated" Russia borders the EU, with the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement as the deepest form of integration, the Norrbotten area is involved in an advanced stage of regional integration with the northernmost members of the EU. Keeping in mind the lack of variables reflecting the internal political organisation of the Arctic provinces in the dataset, and the horizontal approach to the quantification of intraregional integration, it is so far impossible to identify most 'conflict' cases. Additional analysis of the relationship between Arctic geography and interstate conflict is necessary.

The results of this study provide a preliminary, diagnostic geopolitical map of the Arctic region. It is important to understand whether the four exceptions challenging the stability of the clusters (Sakha/Yakutia, Yamal-Nenets, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands) are due to the inconsistency of raw inputs into the ARA Dataset, or because there exists a hidden geopolitical development which is not evident at the current stage of analysis. It is also crucial to ascertain whether the inclusion of Norway and Denmark in the 'North America to Norway' cluster is altered by the

introduction of additional indicators of regional development. Moreover, both cluster analysis and the ARA Dataset have certain limitations, so the next step would be to obtain data on other aspects of geopolitical development in the region (among others, the level of technological advancement, intrastate political configuration, the ecological situation, density of transportation, and labour force specifics) and support current findings by other analytical approaches (regression-based techniques, qualitative analysis).



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## Notes

- 1 Monte Morin (2012), 'Record Loss of Arctic Ice May Trigger Extreme Weather,' Los Angeles Times, 13 September 2012. Available at: <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/sep/13/science/la-sci-sn-arctic-ice-melt-20120912> (accessed 15 May 2013).
- 2 American Meteorological Society, 'Climate Change,' Information Statement, 20 August 2012, <http://ametsoc.org/policy/2012climatechange.pdf>, p. 1-7 (accessed 19 May 2013).
- 3 Bert Chapman (2011), *Geopolitics: A Guide to the Issues*, Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011, p. 56-8; E.C.H. Keskitalo (2004), *Negotiating the Arctic: the Construction of an International Region*, New York: Routledge, p. 25.
- 4 Niels Einarsson (et al) (2004), *Arctic Human Development Report*, Akureyri: Stefansson Arctic Institute, p. 18.
- 5 ArcticStat [www.arcticstat.org](http://www.arcticstat.org); The CIA World Factbook [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2012.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2012.html); Daft Logic: Advanced Google Maps Distance Calculator [www.daftlogic.com/projects-advanced-google-maps-distance-calculator.htm#loginbox](http://www.daftlogic.com/projects-advanced-google-maps-distance-calculator.htm#loginbox); Encyclopaedia Britannica [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com); Finnish Defence Forces [www.puolustusvoimat.fi/en/](http://www.puolustusvoimat.fi/en/); International Borders Research Unit 'Maritime jurisdiction and boundaries in the Arctic region,' [www.dur.ac.uk/ibru/resources/arctic](http://www.dur.ac.uk/ibru/resources/arctic); Norwegian Armed Forces [mil.no/organisation/](http://mil.no/organisation/)

- about/norwegianmilitarybases/Pages/default.aspx>; OANDA Historical Exchange Rates Database <[www.oanda.com/currency/historical-rates](http://www.oanda.com/currency/historical-rates)>; Rosstat <[www.gks.ru](http://www.gks.ru)>; Sea Around Us Project <[www.seaaroundus.org/eez/](http://www.seaaroundus.org/eez/)>; SIPRI Military Expenditure Dataset <[milexdata.sipri.org/files/?file=SIPRI+military+expenditure+database+1988-2012.xlsx](http://milexdata.sipri.org/files/?file=SIPRI+military+expenditure+database+1988-2012.xlsx)>; Statistics Canada <[www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)>; Statistics Finland <[www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi)>; Statistics Greenland <[www.stat.gl](http://www.stat.gl)>; Statistics Iceland <[www.statice.is](http://www.statice.is)>; Statistics Norway <[www.ssb.no](http://www.ssb.no)>; Statistics Sweden <[www.scb.se](http://www.scb.se)>; Statistiska centralbyrån. 'Kust och stränder i Sverige,' MI 50 SM 1301. Sveriges officiella statistik / Statistiska meddelanden, 2013. <[www.scb.se/statistik/M1/M10812/2012Ao1/M10812\\_2012Ao1\\_SM\\_M150SM1301.pdf](http://www.scb.se/statistik/M1/M10812/2012Ao1/M10812_2012Ao1_SM_M150SM1301.pdf)>; Swedish Armed Forces <[www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/Organisation/The-Swedish-Army/](http://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/Organisation/The-Swedish-Army/)>; United States Census Bureau <[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)>; Weather Dashboard <[weatherspark.com](http://weatherspark.com)>; 'Russia in the Arctic,' Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, July 2011, (accessed 13 July 2013), <[www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1073.pdf](http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1073.pdf)>; 'Canada: First Nations' World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples, 2013, (accessed 17 July 2013), <[www.refworld.org/docid/49749d4137.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/49749d4137.html)>; 'Canadian Forces Bases' The Canadian Encyclopedia, 2012, (accessed 12 July 2013), <[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/canadian-forces-bases](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/canadian-forces-bases)>; 'Military of Iceland,' Princeton University, 2013, (accessed 10 July 2013), <[http://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wikirook/docs/Military\\_of\\_Iceland.html](http://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wikirook/docs/Military_of_Iceland.html)>; 'Circumpolar Military Facilities of the Arctic Five,' Vancouver: The Simons Foundation, 2013, (accessed 15 July 2013), <<http://thesimonsfoundation.ca/arctic-security>>; 'Tasks in the Arctic and the Northern Atlantic,' Copenhagen: Ministry of Defence, 2012, (accessed 13 July 2013), <[www.fmn.dk/eng/allabout/Pages/TasksintheArcticandtheNorthernAtlantic.aspx](http://www.fmn.dk/eng/allabout/Pages/TasksintheArcticandtheNorthernAtlantic.aspx)>.
- 6 The Arctic Ocean spans over 14 million square kilometres.
  - 7 Arkhangelsk, Nenets, Novaya Zemlya and Franz Josef Land are aggregated; Nordland and Jan Mayen are aggregated; Labrador is incorporated into Newfoundland and Labrador; Nunavik is incorporated into Quebec; Chukchi includes Koryak; and Krasnoyarsk includes Evenk and Dolgan-Nenets provinces and Severnaya Zemlya. Distorted results are possible in case of Alaska, Quebec, Krasnoyarsk, and Sakha/Yakutia provinces – the share of non-Arctic area exceeds 50% of the total area.
  - 8 As defined under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1994), EEZ denotes exclusive economic zone adjacent to the territorial sea extending to 200 nautical miles (370 km) from the coast, within which the littoral state has sovereign rights over economic exploitation and exploration of natural resources (both living and non-living), production of energy, establishment and use of artificial islands, installations, and structures having economic and scientific purposes; and preservation of the marine environment.
  - 9 Traditional, sector-based delimitation of the High North assumes five Arctic states (Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the us) to have territorial sovereignty over all land and islands enclosed within a triangular sector defined by a baseline or the contiguous land mass of the claiming state

- and two lines of longitude traced to the point at which they converge at the Pole – И. Барциц, “О правовом статусе российского арктического сектора,” *Право и политика* 12 (2000), p. 1+. [I. Bartsits, ‘On Legal Status of Russian Arctic Sector,’ *Law and Politics* 12 (2000), p. 1+], (accessed 06 July 2013, <[http://geo.iseptember.ru/view\\_article.php?id=200700102](http://geo.iseptember.ru/view_article.php?id=200700102)>).
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# Shooting training of the CSI staff

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This article focuses on firearms training in the commercial security industry. The article is divided into three parts: in the first, the authors provide a description of firearms in the commercial security industry (hereinafter referred to as CSI). The second part presents and explores some general problems of training and orientation for the conditions of CSI. Analysis centres on target situations, types of targets, and the importance of stress and time elements. The final part of the article is aimed to the differences in the needs of the individual functions in the CSI and identifying common grounds with connecting elements, which are specific to each function in CSI.

*Keywords: the commercial security industry, firearms, targets, target situations*

## Introduction

Nowadays, more and more agencies providing protection of persons and property are forced to wear the defensive instruments, and also the strongest of them: the firearms. It is because of the increasingly aggressive behaviour of thieves and muggers. Actions that proved sufficient are now useless.

If we look at the conflict between the commercial security industry workers (CSI) and the offender, we can say that every CSI staff will be in a less favourable situation than the perpetrator. This is so for several reasons. These include self-preservation, when the CSI staffs have no interest in dying for client property, but the main reason is that the CSI staff must obey the law while providing protection. These of course the offender does not follow.

It is therefore necessary for the CSI staff working in this high-risk environment to have adequate means to prevent the attack. The most common are self defence tools which have the disadvantage of short



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distance action. Also the application of certain defence tools is limited by environment, such as the use of aerosol spray in the room.

Use of firearm then presents psychological advantage, when its mere presence can resolve or avert conflict situation. But the ability of carrying a firearm requires a comprehensive training and then subsequent repetition and retraining. The main disadvantages are the need to carry weapons concealed or the fact that CSI staff only has the same competence as an ordinary citizen. The firearm can be big advantage, but it also requires a high degree of responsibility and self-control.

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### Professions with option to carry firearm

Spread of Firearms in the commercial security industry is very low, since most jobs do not require a gun, and if so, it is only in exceptional cases. The other professions requiring the carrying of firearm can be divided according to how often the CSI staff wears them.

For professions that require carrying firearms only in exceptional situations, we need more intensive training. It is because of the lack of skills due to minimum time of carrying firearm and also for prevention of accidents.

### *Professions with firearm usage on daily basis*

These professions require firearm carrying on daily basis. The presence of weapons is here because of the great material or moral responsibility.

Bodyguard - the bodyguard usually wears two guns, the main and backup, when both arms are worn covertly. For this reason, there are preferred compact weapons that are smaller than standard models. The backup arm need to be small due to for example concealed carry on ankle case. Usually the subcompact smaller calibre weapons are used. Firearm can be used in situations in which the protected person or the bodyguard are attacked. The used of firearms then subject to section 29 of the required defence. At this stage, the most important thing is training and experience of defender. An important factor is the speed with which the defender is able to evaluate the possibility of an attack. These reactions may be improved by tactical exercises, training to deal with situations that may occur, gun handling, shooting and of course practice and experience.

Transporting money and valuables - This profession belongs to one of the riskiest in the CSI. Crew comprises three members, two of them armed – the protector and the courier. Weapons of standard size are used. The emphasis is mainly on stopping power, magazine capacity and comfortable wearing and also the immediate availability to draw the firearm. As an additional protection CSI staff used bullet-proof vests. They are strained by high demands on the professional competence and training. The course must be adapted to their needs, i.e. the priority is the training techniques of shooting in a car and its immediate surroundings. However, this increases the price of the services; it is often the case that due to cost reduction ordinary workers without the necessary training are employed.

Task Force – Task force crews are most often used in situations where the protected object is attacked. In combination with electronic security alarm, which is connected to the ARC, the task force team can respond flexibly and catch the perpetrator in the crime action. In this situation they may arrest him using a firearm, which is intended solely as a deterrent.

### *Professions with rare firearm usage*

CSI staff in this category carry firearms irregularly, decisions of the presence of firearms depends on the severity of the contract or the personal discretion of the CSI staff.

Private Detective - Detective operates primarily covertly. For this reason, it is a minimal chance of a situation where he had to use his weapon. This profession does not put special needs and training requirements on the gun owner. The weapon is a rather personal matter.

Guarding of buildings - Main activities of these workers is to protect the trust property against intrusion, theft, or vandalism. Whether the security staff has, or does not have weapon is mostly due to the value or importance of the protected object. The advantage of the firearm is the speed of response and its effect against unwanted persons. CSI staff can threaten with firearm or defend himself more effectively from a safer distance than by using for example a telescopic baton.

Couriers - Transport not only goods but also people. The presence of weapons is again given by the importance of transported property or person. High level of importance has the transport strategy, selection of track and so on. For couriers it is crucial the tactical firearm training in car.

## Professions with no need to carry firearm

This sector includes work as a detective in the supermarket, PCO staff, housekeeping, receptionists, etc. These activities have no reason to carry firearms at work.

The need to carry a weapon while on duty is questionable matter in the CSI environment. Since the guard cannot carry this weapon visible, the gun will not help him to initially deter potential offenders. In addition, the use of weapons is strictly limited by laws and shall be allowed only in cases of self-defence, arrest and sometimes in extreme danger.

But criminals do not respect the rules and laws and CSI staff must remember this fact. Similarly, you can use weapons as a deterrent, which can avert the attack of a larger group of attackers. When often simply a demonstration or show of force is enough to effectively protect the entrusted property, CSI staff must arouse respect and power that can discourage the attack.

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## Types of firearms spread in CSI and their psychological impact

Every CSI staff whether wearing a uniform or not is only a citizen of the Czech Republic who does not possess the power of a public official and therefore must comply with all the rights and obligations of ordinary citizens. The same applies to the carrying of weapons by CSI staff. Furthermore as has been said the CSI staff must carry a concealed weapon and cannot have automatic weapons. Therefore, in the commercial security industry we meet primarily with pistols and revolvers.

### *Pistols*

The typical feature for pistol is a movable slide and stack stored in the handle. For action it uses the energy of combustion of powder charge cartridges. Before the first shot, the slide must be manually pulled back. Return spring it then returns to its original position and at this step the first round is picked from the tray into the chamber. At the same time the firing mechanism and trigger mechanism is loaded. During fire the empty shell is pushing on the slide which moves backwards and this step takes the empty cartridge out of the gun. Forward movement is ensured by a return spring and the ammunition is re-charged into the chamber and the trigger mechanism and firing mechanism are loaded.<sup>8</sup>

## *Revolver*

Revolvers are characterized by a cylinder with chambers for bullets rotating around its own axis. Rotation of the cylinder by one position is caused by mechanical force of the shooter – by pushing the spring in the hammer by either stretching thumb pressure on the hammer or the pressure on the trigger. The chambers of cylinder, one after the other level with the barrel and play the role of the chamber. After firing, the cartridge remains in the cylinder.

According to the design of the striking and trigger mechanism revolvers are divided into:

SINGLE (single action - SA)

DOUBLE (double action - DA)

Only with trigger tension (double action only - DAO)

For single-action revolvers, the shooter must stretch the hammer before each shot as the hammer remains in the rear position. Simultaneously, the cylinder rotates in order to join the barrel to the following chamber. Widespread type is the double-action revolvers that allow use of both single-action system and trigger tension. Here the stretching of the hammer is happening in the first phase of the pressing of the trigger. There is a need to develop a much greater strength than in the single-action system. The hammer is moved to the rearmost position, while the drum rotates. The hammer does not stay in the rear position, but its movement is returned and the shot occurs (second stage of the trigger pressing). For the next shot it is needed to release the trigger to the starting position.<sup>8</sup>

## *Psychological impact*

The presence of weapons has a big psychological impact on both the defender and the attacker and can dramatically change the entire course of the conflict. By showing the firearm and by potential threat the defender can discourage the attack even of a larger group of aggressors. It is however necessary that the defender stays confident, keeps a cool head and does not let himself being provoked into uncontrolled action. Therefore, it is necessary to undergo training with the weapon so the gun will be his advantage and not his disadvantage. Anyone who has ever held a gun in his hand knows how it feels and how the confidence of the person rises. Self-confidence is a crucial element in self-defence situation, and it decides the outcome by eighty percent. Firearm in this

regard has a great effect on the psychic on both sides of the conflict. For defender the firearm is an encouraging element and on the contrary for the attacker its presence is a compelling reason for retreat.<sup>6</sup>

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## Target situations for firearm training

There is a plethora of training method. Each company and instructor has its methods, its procedures and emphasis on different details. But all use the same Target devices, and compile a similar target situation that the shooters have to deal with.

When talking about the target situation, it means the placement of targets during the exercise. Whether it is shooting at one target or multiple targets and they are placed according to the needs of the exercise. Target situations are the basis of any stay at the shooting range, whether in training, competition or free recreational shooting.

### *Static target situation*

The concept of static target situation is based on the static position of the shooter. The shooter can be asked to shoot at any number of targets, but he shoots from one place without moving. This is a simple shooting as the shooter does not have to think about the movement and about safety features while moving with weapon.

### *Dynamic target situation*

Dynamic situation requires the shooter to change his positions during shooting. In the initial position the shooter cannot see all targets, therefore, following the completion of visible targets the shooter has to move to a new position from which he can continue shooting at the hidden targets. This situation a bit more challenging and requires a higher level of shooter experience because he has to move and think not only on shooting but also on the safety of the movement.<sup>10</sup>

## Types of target device

The basis for each target device is the target itself. For the purpose of quality training it is not possible to use only one type of target, but it is necessary to use multiple types of targets according to the require-

ments and focus of the training. Sport shooters will be satisfied with standard pistol target, but the CSI staff needs to simulate during the training the most realistic conditions that he can meet while carrying out his profession.

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In today's market we have a choice of many types of paper targets in random colour variations. The basic division of paper targets is on black and photo-targets.

Another type of target is the popper. It is a foldable metal target, which may have any shape. For this target is not evaluated place of hit, but only hit. It is mostly used for the practice of rapid fire.

### Basic types of target

The basic types of targets are international pistol target, zone target and metal folding targets – poppers. On these targets then are based all kinds and variations of targets used in various shootings, or training.

#### *International pistol target 50/20*

This is a classic pistol target representing the basic type of target that assesses the precision of the shooting at the centre. [1] This target is suitable for classic sports shooting and basic understanding of the gunfire.

#### *Zone target*

This target is divided into hit zones Alpha, Charlie and Delta. It is used for training of faster firing when there is no need to aim at a small target point, but just hit the zone. This type of target is the basis for the photo-targets and silhouette targets

#### *Metal foldable targets – poppers*

These are metal silhouette of figures, or parts of them, that will fall to the ground after being hit. For these targets it is not evaluated the place of hit. They are used for training fast shooting where it is necessary only to hit the target.

## Follow-up targets

These targets are based on the basic types and are always made for specific purpose of the training. The basic principle is still the same: to hit centre, zones, or fold targets.

### *Tactical target series*

These targets already have the photo-image of the possible offender. The key effort in the development of these targets is to maximize the experience of real engagement and they are used just for training shooters who need to learn to shoot a man. These targets have the ability to change the target so that the shooter has to first assess whether it is the offender or civilian. This series, however, are based on the basic zone target.

The criteria for the realization of this series have become:

1. colour and the most realistic appearance
2. Two scoring zones, vital centre “lethal hit” and marginal “hurtful”. Apart from these it was necessary to mark the “no-point border”, the area where the hit may mean a scratch, but not significant impulse to stop the opponent
3. Lines dividing zones. These lines should be hard to see from greater distance as they are meant only for final result assessment.
4. Anatomically rendered diagram of internal organs that gives at least a rough idea of effectiveness of hit according to its current location.
5. blurred “smears” background that would not “shine” at night or twilight and allows effective “night” training, in addition it does not create a clear outline of the figure in the terrain or from a distance.<sup>2</sup>

### *“Hostage and offender” targets*

They are used for practice shooting against a partly shrouded target. It is therefore a situation where the opponent is partially obstructed in his position. A variant of such target can also be an opponent overlaid or hiding behind a hostage. The usage of different types of targets again varies by the requirements of training. For the base training with a firearm the most basic types of targets are suitable as they serve to better understand the principles of shooting and aiming. The advanced

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training would use rather the photo-targets that are more challenging the perception of the shooter.<sup>7</sup>

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## Evaluation methods

Different types of targets are the result of different needs in training. Because of the diversity in types of basic targets, we need different evaluation methods for different types of targets.

### *Classic target*

The classic pistol target is evaluated by the sum of all the numbers hit. The closer is the hit to the middle, the higher is the number. Achieved sum is then divided by the maximum possible number of achievable points and multiplied by one hundred to achieve percentage success of shooter.

### *Zone target*

This target is used mostly for shooting with time-limit. Hits are evaluated by awarding penalty seconds. For hit in the alpha zone there are no penalty seconds. For hit in the Charlie zone one second is added to the achieved time and for each hit in the delta zone two seconds are added to the achieved time.

### *Metal folding target (popper)*

Here we evaluate the number of hit (fallen) targets. The number of rounds fired is not usually taken into account here. It is then always possible to include into the evaluation the time factor, which is a time-limit or counted time required to meet the goal of shooting practice.

## Training with firearm and its evaluation

CS1 staff is forced to pull a gun only in threat to his own life. At that moment he is struggling with heavy stress, time pressure and with the knowledge that he must not endanger any bystanders. It does not help the peace of his mind that he is aware of that if he fails; he will be unable

to correct his mistake. For this reason, it is necessary to assemble the whole training much more complex than at sporting shooters training, who would not be in life-threatening situation if he miss. Therefore, the evaluation is aimed on several factors (speed of response, the correct assessment of the situation, precision shooting, safe handling, etc.). During the training it also needs to be taken into consideration that he will not be shooting in optimal shooting conditions with appropriate clothing, giving him comfort during shooting and all of these conditions must be taken into account when evaluating the results.

### **Basic problematic of the training**

During the training with a firearm it must be kept in mind that more factors than just the gun and the shooter have effect on the result of shooting. These are the two principal factors, to which it must be added five other factors and these are the ammunition, situation, the method of shooting, the environment and equipment.

The shooter - has a major impact on the outcome of the shooting. It is he who pulls the trigger and who decides at what moment he fires. During training is necessary to take into account his physical and mental condition, his previous habits and possible experiences.

Weapon - Firearm affects the outcome of shooting with its technical condition. If it is maintained, it is possible that even worse shooter can achieve good results. If the weapon is neglected, even the best shooter fails to achieve satisfactory results. Another parameter is the right choice of weapon according to the needs and physiology of the shooter. Here must comply with weight, grip, sights readability, etc.

Situation - reasons that forced the shooter pulled out a gun and shoot. Every situation is different and its evaluation is not simple. Also, methods of shooting and the behaviour of CSIO vary with weapon each time. Whether the shooter attacks a dog, one attacker or more attackers with multiple weapons.

Ammunition - Ammunition plays a significant role in influencing the outcome of the shooting. The main argument here is the power of bullet. Low power can cause malfunction of the weapon (insufficient pressure kickback for the ejection of empty cartridges and filing a new charge to charge chamber). High power makes difficulties to the shooter who must "fight the firearm".

Method of shooting - it is a way of shooting. Every time shooter will not have the opportunity to stand in the primary shooter's stance and aim carefully. Therefore it is necessary to train the shooter for other modes of shooting, such as shooting one-handed, kneeling, sitting, etc.

Environment - Environmental influences during training are often neglected, even though it has significant influence on the results of the shootings. It is different to shoot on a sunny day in open range and in the rain in an abandoned factory, where there can be bystanders. The shooter should be trained in different environmental conditions to be able to properly assess the situation and hit the target even in degraded conditions. A significant influence has the presence of the media. When the shooter knows he is being captured by the camera, the peace of his mind might be ruined.

Accessories – Many other things that affect the result of shooting here are included here. For example, what is the shooter wearing, which accessory to the weapon he has (Snap type holster, etc.). There is a difference in shooting wearing jacket or tactical vest. Personnel should be trained to such equipment, that they will be using so they can get used to it.

The number of factors influencing the outcome of shooting is much higher than is commonly stated or counted with. It is therefore necessary to adapt the training to all these factors, and count with them in the design of training and in the final evaluation.<sup>3</sup>

## Evaluation methods

The basic criteria for evaluation of firing are accuracy and time. When these terms are variously influencing each other and combining.

### *Selection of appropriate evaluation method*

The selection of an appropriate evaluation method is determined by the training objectives. The training and evaluation must be specialized to the needs of a given profession since diversity of functions in the commercial security industry requires training to be different as well as its final evaluation.

Each training and the final evaluation can have several stages. In the first instance it is evaluated the accuracy of fire in unlimited time. The

next stage then evaluates the accuracy again, but with a given time limit. There is then the possibility to distinguish whether the evaluation will count only shooting accuracy or achieved time needed to hit all targets.

Other possibilities of evaluation arise with use of metal pitfall targets. Where the main evaluation variable achieved is time and as other the number of shots required to hit all targets. When again, these two criteria can be combined according to the required focus of the training and assessment.

To select an appropriate method of evaluation is often more difficult than to design the actual training. Therefore it is needed to set priorities, requirements and target training, according to which suitable final evaluation is then selected.

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### *Time vs. accuracy*

Time and accuracy of fire; at first glance it might seem that these are two contradictory and incompatible requirements. Since that for high accuracy of fire, you need time and tranquillity in the shooting. Conversely, when it comes to time it is required to shoot at targets as soon as possible, at that moment, accuracy plays a minor role. If it is given to the shooter an unlimited amount of time to shoot, he always achieves better results. As an element of stress acting on the shooter even the mere presence of the timeout (albeit very exaggerated) affects the accuracy of fire. Even if the shooter knows he can handle the situation without problems in 5 seconds once this limit was officially specified, he gets to stress that has quite significant impact on accuracy.

Therefore, it is necessary to combine these elements and the training to ensure their consistency. CSI staff who perform their activities with weapon must be trained and prepared for a situation where it will have to be used. In that moment, he will not have enough time to rest and carefully aim, as is the case of the shooting range.

During training is necessary to take account of these conditions and to adjust them to the content and concept of training. Training should prepare staff to best of the situation when they will be under time pressure, the stress and the fire must not endanger bystanders. Therefore, the training must include situations that must be resolved in a decreasingly smaller time. If it we will put the shooter developed to

too much pressure, it is a big risk that he can not handle the situation. By gradually reducing the time that is allowed for an action shooter learns to deal with this kind of stress gradually and thus achieves better results.

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## **Training levels and their needs**

Training activities can be divided into basic and follow-up. Basic activities that are common to each type of training consist of weapons familiarization and basic activities. These activities must the shooter have rooted deep in his consciousness at the end of training in order to perform them without hesitation and almost automatically, without thinking. Follow-up activities will then vary according to the focus of training. Every profession in the commercial security industry requires a slightly different orientation of the training which is setup to its requirements. Porter will not need intensive shooting training in the car and vice versa for the member of the intervention group it will not be sufficient to be able only to shoot from the basic attitudes. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully study the requirements of individual professions, their needs and ways. Then, according to the draft set top portion of the training. Despite all this, you can create a universal training model, the output of which would be called shooting class. Training system would then lay in the tiered rankings skills when higher level characterized by deepening knowledge from previous levels and adds more skills in dealing with firearm.

## **What should be the basic**

The basic element of any training course shall be strictly the principles of safe gun handling. This means essentially only directing to the destination (safe) area. And both shooting and handling a weapon (gun grip, charging, etc.). Because what would we have from shooting results when the shooter threatened everyone in the vicinity. Therefore, safe handling is one of the basic pillars of the treatment arms.

Another essential element is the mastering of aimed shooting from a fixed position in the two-handed weapons possession. Here the shooter learns proper stance and grip of the arms to be able to smooth aim and shoot at the target. Shooter must not be unbalanced by kickback of weapons, or any uneven terrain at the position.

The third and final essential element of the training is to eliminate defects caused by the weapon during firing. This may be a cartridge “jammed” in the ejection port, unfired cartridge in the chamber, dropped tray from the storage pits, etc. The shooter must know his weapon and in the case of this kind of defect repair it safely to continue shooting. During the removing these defects it is of course necessary to maintain the safe handling of weapons. These elements are the very basics of shooting a firearm. Their ignorance may cause danger to shooter himself and all the people around.

### **Following elements of the training**

Follow continuation of training after mastering basic skills may differ slightly. It depends on the needs of the individual focus in the job functions of commercial security industry. Common features include follow-up training movements with weapons, shooting one-handed, or using of covers. Other elements of training are already different, there are already included in the training elements, among them the use of a car, training in clothes, that the CSI staff will be wearing, use of a backup weapon, etc. These are just some of the options with which we can meet.

### *The differences in follow-up elements for different CSI specializations*

Intervention group – This specialization requires very large follow-up of basic training. Since the intervention unit leaves for guarded objects, where an armed offender must be expect. Training must then contain the shooting in tactical clothing, use of car movement with drawn weapons, cover skills, especially communication and coordinated cooperation between members of the response team.

Bodyguard – The most difficult profession falling under the commercial security industry. Bodyguard is constantly moving between people, of which anyone can be a potential offender. Therefore, the need to focus training on defensive shooting skills, art of rapid assessment of the situation, the use of backup weapons, communication and manipulation of the protected person.

Cash and valuables transport – These workers are mostly at risk while travelling by car or when moving in its close proximity when handling

valuables. Hence there is a need to focus and to adapt the training to the usage of the car. Shooting from the car; the use of the car as cover; moving in close proximity and safe gun handling in confined spaces and coordination of individual members.

Object guarding – Security staff is moving within the trust building or campus. There is sufficient basic training follow-up that focuses on the move with drawn weapons and the use of covers.

Courier – Courier services, are again on the move, as well as the transport of valuables are at risk in the ambush of a car or near the transmission of shipment. Training should then be focused and adjusted to this fact and therefore designed for maximum handling and shooting the car and its close.

Private detective – Private detective in his work will not appear in a situation when he has to use the weapon of their duties. In his case the use weapons is acceptable only in self-defence. For this reason, the investigator is not obliged to carry a gun and the extent of any training is his decision.

### *Shooting classes*

Shooting classes are based on the outcome of the universal model training. This is a set of five stages, starting from the fifth grade, which is the basic knowledge and skills for the use of firearms. Each higher class then extends the knowledge of previous classes and adds the new element. The highest is the first class that contains elements of movement, cover and shooting from awkward positions. Training of each class then concludes the practical examination, which will test the knowledge of the elements practiced in the classroom. Following table contains the overview of the knowledge required for particular shooting class.

Because of the diversity of functions in CSI and system requirements the shooting classes cannot cover all the knowledge required for each function. The system of shooting classes is therefore designed as a basic level, which then follows the specifications required for each function.<sup>10</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The CSI staff is moving around in environment that not only includes many other people but simultaneously it contains many side effects that are affecting the shooter.

| <i>Class</i> | <i>Required knowledge</i>  |
|--------------|--|
| V class      | Gun handling, two-hand shooting at a static target   |
| IV class     | Gun handling, two-hand shooting + one-handed at a static target  |
| III class    | Gun handling, two-hand shooting + one-handed at a static target, movement with arms  |
| II class     | Gun handling, two-hand shooting + one-handed at a static target, movement with arms, two-hand shooting at a dynamic target, use of covers, non-standard shooting positions   |
| I class      | Gun handling, two-hand shooting + one-handed at a static target, movement with arms, two-hand shooting at a dynamic target, use of covers, non-standard shooting positions, shooting on the move, non-standard charging, shooting in worse lighting conditions |

*Table 1.  
Shooting  
class<sup>10</sup>*

The basis is that the CS1 staff is able to keep track of the situation, is able to assess the situation quickly enough and follow safety rules. Real environment has little to do with the shooting at the shooting range where shooters are not affected by so many factors. Therefore, it is necessary to focus the shooting training of CS1 staff on multiple factors in order to make him adequately prepared for the situation. Also it should not be forgotten that the CS1 staff during their work does not move in a sport shooter's clothing so that his clothes will not provide the kind of comfort and freedom while shooting. Hence it is needed for the training to be suitably adapted to all conditions and take account of them in the evaluation of the results.

During the final evaluation it is often forgotten the impact of time factor or its impact is taken very lightly. As the CS1 employ carries a firearm, he needs to be trained to deal with situations he will need to use it. However in such situation there will be not enough time to aim as it is on the shooting range. For this reason it is necessary to integrate the time limitations into the training and its evaluation in such way that the CS1 staff will learn to deal with the stress.

Related to this issue is the problematic of shooting instructors, as many companies in the CS1 are hiring the shooting instructors from

other companies. These companies specialized on shooting training do fulfil their contract but previous experience of the instructors from practice have significant impact on the quality of the training. Instructors with long practice in state sector may lack the view of civil CSI staff and this may lead to that, important abilities for the civil sector e.g. the communication or threatening with uncovered firearm may be omitted from the training. It is therefore important that the instructors are able to use their previous experience from practice but in the same time not to forget the specification of the CSI environment and that the training must be adjusted to specific needs of CSI sector.

It is also very important not to forget that CSI employee that carries a firearm during his profession duties does not have equal right as state sector employee but only as a civilian. This must be taken into account when the CSI employee is making the decision to carry a firearm. The firearm can be big advantage, but it also requires a high degree of responsibility and self-control.



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# The Hybridity of Terrorism

*Reviewed by Michael Becker (Northeastern University)*

In recent decades, as the incidence and deadliness of terrorism have grown, so too has the academic literature on the causes, nature, and consequences of the phenomenon. In *The Hybridity of Terrorism*, Sebastian Wojciechowski proposes a new lens through which to understand terrorism. Breaking it down into several constituent parts (subject, actors, forms, causes, spaces, and features), each of which is the subject of one chapter, Wojciechowski argues persuasively that terrorism cannot be explained or understood – and therefore combated – without appreciating its complexity, and the extent to which it is driven by interactions between diverse forces, milieus and actors.

Wojciechowski's work draws significantly on that of other authors who have remarked that one-dimensional analyses of terrorism – including terrorist actor “profiles,” mono-causal theories of the roots of terrorism, and even the various proposed definitions of terrorism – fail individually to cover more than a fraction of its actual incidence. Martha Crenshaw, Audrey Cronin, Bruce Hoffman, and David Rapoport, among others, have made arguments to this effect. However, while these authors tended to emphasise the complexity of one aspect of terrorism in particular—its causes, say – Wojciechowski sets himself a much more ambitious task. He aims to elucidate the complexity of terrorism along a whole multitude of dimensions, a task manifestly too big for one book. Take two chapters as an illustration. Chapter II represents terrorism as a manifestation of relations between actors and their environment, and proposes chaos theory, decision theory, spatial competition theory, salience theory, exchange theory, black box theory, theory of disaster, expected utility theory, and topology methods, among others, as possible methods of understanding these relations (pp. 75-81). Chapter VI, by contrast,

considers terrorism as a series of “features” that can exhibit positive and negative traits, horizontal and vertical dimensions, calculated and spontaneous aspects, broad and narrow features, and an evolutionary as well as a constant character (pp. 153-156).

The reader cannot help but wonder how these rather disparate ideas are connected. In total throughout the six chapters (plus an introduction and a conclusion) the author proposes dozens of ways of interpreting, classifying and understanding terrorism, without developing clear links between them, or explaining when, or if, the theories he outlines obtain empirically. As a result, the overly ambitious scope of the project generates confusion and a lack of clarity with respect to the most salient aspects of terrorism as a research subject. It is uncertain whether, and in what ways, the various schemas proposed throughout the seven chapters relate to each other.

This lack of clarity, fortunately, does not negate the book’s many positive aspects. One of the book’s most important contributions is its excellent compilation of the literature in each domain of the study of terrorism, from the nature of its practitioners, to its historical evolution, to its very definition. The author provides in each chapter a quite thorough review of the relevant literature, including useful perspectives other than those written by the usual British and American suspects (though he does not neglect the latter). Another positive feature of Wojciechowski’s work is his ability to see innovative possibilities for future research projects, such as exploring the distinct integrational and disintegrational aspects of terrorism (p. 158).

In general, this book is most valuable when read as a roadmap for the study of terrorism. It provides a meticulous treatment of the main theories and methodologies used in terrorism studies, and proposes novel ways of bringing together approaches, including some from other disciplines, in order to generate (future) insights about the phenomenon. Yet despite claiming to make progress toward a better understanding of what terrorism is and what drives it, the author largely leaves this task to others. Perhaps as a consequence of the enormity of the project he takes on, Wojciechowski’s book largely consists of summations of past research, peppered with interesting ideas for future research, but few original substantive conclusions. Nevertheless, a broad audience, including laypersons as well as policymakers and scholars, will find Wojciechowski’s book useful both as a primer on the topic of terrorism, and as a source of promising ideas for future research projects.

# Why Some Politicians are More Dangerous than Others

*Reviewed by Katerina Kjirovska*

James Gilligan, in his book *Why Some Politicians Are More Dangerous than Others*, sets out to solve a mystery: a murder mystery. He claims that ‘as cigarette smoking has been shown to increase the rates of lung cancer, so the presence of a Republican in the White House increases the rates of suicide and homicide.’

It is significant that the author of this book is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of New York whose aim was conducting research on suicide and homicide and probably never thought that his findings might influence elections in America. He set this mystery by posing two questions. First, ‘why homicide and suicide tend to increase and decrease together’ although motives and performers of each of them can be different. Second, why does this rate ‘fluctuate so enormously – sometimes more than doubling and at other times dropping less than half – within the population of the us over a time period too brief to allow for significant changes in the individuals composing the population?’ Gilligan spent years analysing the differences between the “mountains” and the “valleys” of this epidemic lethal violence (both suicide and homicide) trends and he discovered that rates of suicide and homicide skyrocket when Republicans are in power and drop when Democrats occupy the White House.

Logically, the main cause for this behaviour was not the label of the political party or the president itself, but the policies undertaken by the Republicans. From the authors view ‘if there is a causal relationship

between party and violent death, rather than chance correlation, then it would seem almost self-evident that it must lie in the differences between the policies and achievements of the two parties, and the effect that those differences have on people's behaviour.'

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The timeframe of this study is the period from 1900 up to 2007 since, according to Gilligan, 1900 is when annual suicide and homicide records began to be recorded. Gilligan evidenced three key periods when rates of lethal violence were identified as being extreme were followed by non-epidemic declines. It is also important that the author omitted the period before the Great Depression (1929) as well as the period before and after WWII in order to prevent data influenced by a 'great but unique historical event, rather than the party in power at the time.' A fascinating fact about this book is that the author deploys not his own but US government data so, in a way, he shot the Republicans with their own bullet.

Finally, this book is unique for the idea of connecting the socio-economic behaviour and the psychology of ordinary Americans accompanied with the ability of Gilligan to correlate these elements with America's political life. This book is definitely a must read for scholars and students of politics. This book could serve as a warning bell for politicians in search of legacy to seriously consider the impacts of their policies lest they be held to account for inadvertent murder.

# Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War?

## Perceptions, Prescriptions, Problems in the Congo and Beyond

*Reviewed by Katerina Krulisova (Nottingham Trent University)*

The academic and political recognition of sexual violence as a weapon of war undoubtedly marks a historical success of the activism of the feminist movement, widely defined. Sexual violence during armed conflicts represents an acute, and serious, global security problem that requires a coordinated policy action – such action, however, is only possible via prior recognition of the phenomenon as a threat and the subsequent securitisation of it. By moving from the unproblematic side-lining of rape as an unfortunate by-product of war to granting it a spotlight in the news and international organisations' reports as well as top social science journals, however, an unproblematic and, more importantly, unquestioned, hegemonic narrative of rape as a weapon of war was successfully created. This dominant understanding, despite its progressive appeal, inevitably constrains the boundaries of understanding of the issue and may lead to the further production and reproduction of gendered violence.

In their truly eye-opening book, Eriksson Baaz and Stern deconstruct the dominant discourse on rape as a weapon of war to reveal its limitations and they test their theoretical presumptions on the infamous case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), often nicknamed as the rape capital of the world.

Starting by contrasting the 'Sexed' and 'Gendered' stories – the dominant understandings of incentives to rape, the authors highlight the well-known *sexgender* paradox of feminist scholarship – showing how the theory produces the women/men which it later claims to represent. In the case of the Congo, rape and rapists are at the same rendered as exceptional through racialised narrative, and subsequently normalised by gendered militarisation narrative. Since gender became a measurement of modernity and rapists are understood as gendered in a wrong – militarised - way, they need to be cast as non-human or bestial. If they were human, then all the (male) humans would be potential rapists, which is a rather unsettling thought.

The nodal point of the hegemonic discourse – the assumed 'strategicness' of sexual violence – implies the possibility of change. Rendering rape as a weapon of choice or conscious strategy rationalises the intention of the rapists and implies accountability, therefore making the action preventable and offering a hope for a better future. By offering a possible liberal progressive solution, the discourse becomes normatively attractive for policy-makers and academics alike, driving any biological impulses firmly out of the reasoned intentions. The notion that militaries may not always be embodiments of order and control problematises the notion of strategicness together with acknowledgement of the sociological research on forward panic and spirals of violence and influence of those upon the combatants.

Rape and sexual violence clearly overshadow other conflict-related violence when it comes to reporting as sexual violence becomes a buzzword for journalists, which leads to the commercialisation of rape and feeding into the colonised story of evolutionary development. This, in practice, leads to trivialising other forms of violence, and possibly encourages victims to represent themselves as victims of rape to be eligible for critical funding.

Eriksson Baaz and Stern's critical analysis of the dominant discourse clearly identifies the exclusions and ethical dilemmas of the unproblematic reading of rape as a weapon of war when it comes to the case of the Congo, and forces its readers to leave the comfort of the rationally Westernised picturing of the unmodernised colonial beasts engaging in barbaric sexual violence as a part of savage warfare tactics. The book represents a brave disruption of the hegemonic discourse and may encourage a more nuanced and conflict-specific research into the global problem of wartime sexual violence, which will inevitably lead to more effective policies aimed at combating sexual violence.

# The Horn of Africa (Hot Spots in Global Politics)

*Reviewed by Kateřina Struhová*

In *The Horn of Africa* Kidane Mengisteab, comprehensively introduces readers to the complex socio-political situation of the region. The book's title may be somehow confusing for some readers, as traditionally the region consists of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and entities that emerged within Somalia. Mengisteab's book however, covers a wider region – the so-called the Greater Horn of Africa – by adding Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda to the previously listed countries.

The region is, seemingly, endlessly torn by conflict, prone to number of humanitarian disasters and struggling with economic underdevelopment and comes to the attention of many scholars. But *The Horn of Africa* is one-of-a-kind book. The author's intention is to provide a comprehensive analysis of key factors that have created fertile ground for regional conflicts over the past sixty years – post-decolonisation – and explore new political and institutional arrangements that could contribute to transforming such factors and relieve the region from perpetual conflict.

The book is divided into eight substantive chapters. The first 'The Greater Horn of Africa: Hot Spot in the Global System,' serves as a brief introduction and sets out the conceptual framework of the work. In chapters two to seven ('Conflicts in the Greater Horn,' 'The Legacy of Empires,' 'The State as a Source of Conflict,' 'Failures of Governance and Nation-Building,' 'Regional Instability and External Intervention,' 'Poor Resource Management and Environmental Degradation') Mengisteab introduces the reader to the problems the region faces, while providing a solid theoretical background. The last chapter, 'Prospects for Democracy, Integration and Stability' closes the book with summary of key points and suggestion for a solution that could improve the conflict-prone situation in the region and alleviate its problems.

As conflicts of the Greater Horn are multi-dimensional, Mengisteab attempts to provide overall picture reflecting the topic's complexity. He defines six categories of conflict-generating factors: first he deals with historical factors, such as state formation in pre-colonial era and colonisation, and their legacies. Decentralised state-systems, kingdoms and empires of pre-colonial period left future generations legacy including the culture of cattle raiding, which is one of the major factors of communal conflicts (p.45), conflicting land-ownership, differing modes of production and institutional systems as well as socioeconomic context of fragmented ethnic groups. State-building was not followed by proper nation-building in the Greater Horn region, leaving the doors open for many ethnic, clan and other clashes. Following colonisation triggered resistance struggles and wars of liberation and notably left behind improperly created state-boundaries that continue to fuel interstate conflicts in various parts of the region (p.51).

Second, Mengisteab focuses on the nature of post-colonial states, and explains how state structures themselves foster socioeconomic problems, and bad leadership. Fragmented institutional systems impeding democracy and peaceful nation-building, the lack of executive branches' independence (p.75) – which undermines accountability – and poor quality of leadership (and presence of the leaders that divert state into an instrument for preservation of their own power), are defined as factors contributing to (and often creating) conflict-prone conditions.

The third cause of instability is poor management of ethnic diversity and issues of nation-building. Mangisteab argues that social, ethnic, religious or clan diversity does not lead to conflict per se, but failure to integrate such diversity into functioning state does. Nation-building, as a process of establishing a community sharing common institutions, requires accommodation of political and economic interests as well as cultural values of all identities within the state. Failure in diversity management and establishment political representation of all identity groups and inability to foster accountability is likely to result in failure of nation-building, which can further implicate various kinds of conflicts as well as for example continued economic crisis and obstacles in the democratisation process (pp. 85-110).

The fourth category is the absence of effective management of disputes over boundaries. This is closely connected with the lack of effective regional institutions, weak or absent mechanism of peaceful settlements inter-state disputes and intolerance between countries. Another factor

is related to the global socioeconomic environment and external actors' interventions. The author argues that external interventions can play positive role in conflict-reduction or in mitigation of effects of various disasters, but often they rather intensify the conflict, undermine democratic processes and adversely affect both inter- and intra-state relations (pp. 6 and 111-113). He focuses on both military and non-military interventions and provides examples of external interventions during Cold War as well as of Post-Cold War Eras, including War on Terror and piracy. Unfortunately, while discussing current geopolitical interests of the West and mainly Chinese influence in this region that further undermines the Greater Horn state institutions' accountability by supporting oppressive dictators, Mengisteab somehow fails to mention other important players whose influence has been growing in recent years, such as Turkey, India, and various Arab countries.

Finally Mangisteab deals with an issue that still does not receive enough attention in literature on Greater Horn of Africa; environmental degradation. As already seen in the past, environment factors can cause large-scale disasters (re: famines, livestock starvation or malnutrition, but also recurring violent conflicts over the arable or pastoral land). The author discusses both external causes of environmental degradation, such as the global climate change, and internal causes, such as growing number of population, inadequate land policies and development approaches or expansion of commercial farming – all factors that result in socioeconomic disruption of regions' societies.

Mengisteab closes the book with a theoretical chapter dealing with methods for advancing peace in the region. The Greater Horn countries suffer from obstacles that prevent liberal democracy to succeed: dichotomous economic and institutional systems, deformities in state structures and blurring distinction between government and state and the absence of institutions of diversity management (p. 189). Instead of focusing on establishment of the election-centred democracies, the author suggests implementation of a 'contextualised approach' (pp. 191-195), which would focus among others on democratic governance that would reconcile the fragmented economic and institutional systems as well as on creation of trustworthy and accountable state structures. He also stresses the need for regional integration scheme that would help to mitigate conflicts by for example developing mechanisms of diversity management or mediation, or promoting regional economic development by intra-region trade (pp. 195-205). A drawback of this final chapter is

that despite being saturated with ideas that could help to improve the situation in the region, Mengisteab suggests only generalised solutions without proposing specific changes to particular states' policies that could serve as a basis for a realistic action-plan.

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The book fills a gap in the literature, where the complex view of both structural and historical origins of various conflicts in the Greater Horn of Africa was missing. The author, however, sometimes simplifies the causes resulting in today's socioeconomic situation of the region and does not attempt to cover every single cause in great depth. There are also parts of the book where he does not distinguish between countries. Nevertheless, Mengisteab does a great job in explaining the complicated conflicts in this part of the world and this work comes highly recommended.

# Muslim Nationalism and the New Turks

*Reviewed by Ahmet Gencturk (Panteion University, Greece)*

Since the popularisation of neo-liberalism in the late 1970's the centrality of the nation-state has faced a comprehensive challenge. A key criticism holds that the nation-state is, by its very nature, incompatible with the concept of democracy since it seeks to create homogenous political communities. Adopting a more Western understanding of nation-state building, late (19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century) Ottoman and, later, Kemalists followed a top-down approach. Islamism, which stands in fundamental opposition to Ottoman / Kemalist efforts is the subject of White's work.

A main quality of the work is the author's personal experiences in Turkey, as student and scholar, which allowed her to develop connections from almost every socio-economic stratum in Turkish society. She utilised these well in arranging both formal and informal meetings, interviews, house-visits, and with them, insights. White blends her deep knowledge of anthropological theories with field experiences. This book is truly unique.

White argues that some historical dynamics played a role in the formation of the Kemalist ideology's perceptions of non-Muslim minorities, non-Turkish but Muslim ethnicities, the role of Islam and a deep distrust towards the West. She rightfully argues that the sufferings of the Balkan Muslims, and their forced deportation to Turkey between 1878 and 1912, drastically influenced Kemalist cadres many of whom were also from the Balkans. She also asserts that European powers often intervened in the Ottoman Empire's internal affairs under the pretext of safeguarding Christian minorities in 19<sup>th</sup> century and this played reinforced Kemalism's wariness toward both the Western world and Turkey's Christian minorities.

Another fascinating insight is White's depiction of the shallowness of Turkey's secular, upper-middle class – the *White Turks* as White puts it – can be in their understanding of being modern. By listening to any genre of Western music, by drinking whiskey instead of raki (a traditional Turkish spirit) one can claim to being modern and despises the others who do not have same dietary or musical tastes. As result, the secular Turkish upper class is perceived as 'comprador bourgeoisie' by the majority of the society and existing divisions in the society transform into polarisation.

As White discussed in the book, since the Islamist Justice and Development Party came to power (2002), there has been a reinvigorated interest in Turkey's Ottoman heritage though Turkish Islamists have consistently deployed pro-Ottoman sentiments since this was the "golden age" of the Caliphate when the Ottoman Empire represented the true form of Islam, maintained an efficient administrative system, had tolerance for diversity and was on par or even more advanced than many in the West. The Islamist re-imagination of the Ottomans serves two major purposes: it is deployed as the most important instrument of the Islamist *Kulturkampf* waged against Kemalism and is essential in the construction of the *Muslim nationalism*, as White coined in the book.

On a critical note, the book falls short in discussing whether this new Muslim nationalism concept, with its strong references to the Islam and Ottoman heritage, can be an emancipating alternative to Kemalism, which White criticised harshly. In addition to the fact that Turkish society consists of numerous ethnicities, theoretical understanding and the practices of the Islam vary greatly. Under such conditions, any kind of non-secular solution is unlikely succeed to create a new comprehension of civic citizenship.

Since this book was published in 2013, Turkey has witnessed some important developments such as the anti-governmental Gezi protests in the summer of 2013, the presidential elections in 2014 that elevated Islamist PM Erdoğan to the presidency with enhanced powers, a serious deterioration in relations with the EU, the US and major Arab countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Nevertheless, this book remains relevant to understanding the complex nature of Turkish society, the role of Islam in it, and the nation-state building experience in Turkey. Thus, the book is strongly suggested to scholars and students of Turkish studies as well as those who interested in an unprejudiced, truly scientific research on the fault lines in contemporary Turkish society.











