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FOREWORD

C . A L E X A N D E R O L T E A N U , E D I T O R - I N - C H I E F

As the Rules-Based Liberal International Order (RBLIO) is increasingly challenged by powers who aim to re-shape its rules, norms and institutions in accordance with their own strategic interests, the return to an era of Great Powers' competition seems to be now at hand. Emerging authors whose subjects of interest intersect the field of International Relations (IR) increasingly focus their research on regional developments with global impact, so as to shed some light on the various causes and historical context of this crisis of multilateralism. Uncovering the historical roots of regional powers' strategic moves, as they attempt to impose their will on and restructure their immediate environments to their advantage, is a critical step in this direction. This edition of the Student Strategy and Security Journal (3SJ) has therefore as its main theme the investigation of how history and strategy interconnect in Great Powers' decisions to both cooperate with and confront each other at both the regional and global levels.

The twelve authors whose work is presented are at various stages of their academic careers – from those who are pursuing undergraduate studies in politics, to Masters' and PhD candidates, all the way to post-doctoral professionals with significant teaching and research responsibilities. This aligns well with 3SJ's mission statement, "Mentoring emerging academics to shine", and with our objective to work closely with them to ensure that their insights, analysis, and recommendations are published in time to make an impact on the debates, discussions and decision-making processes they address in their studies. In this, the editors and reviewers who are part of the 3SJ team are fortunate to be now joined by an outstanding

Council of Academic Advisors composed of eighteen individuals drawn from universities across the world. Professor Beatrice Heuser of the University of Glasgow has been instrumental in helping bring together this eminent group and has graciously agreed to act as Chair of the Council; for this, we express our gratitude to her and look forward to working closely with all our Academic Advisors as we continue to grow and pursue our mentorship mission.

RE-SHAPING THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST

The first two articles presented here zero in on the processes that are currently re-shaping the Middle East and on the powers that seek to play a leading role in doing so. Both Türkiye and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states share a vision of their region as not only an arena of competition for the global superpowers of the day, but as the home of powerful actors who can take on the role of agents of change in the international arena alongside states such as the United States of America (US), China and Russia, and supra-national organizations such as the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). They both seek to address the colonial past of their region and overcome the divisions and conflicts created by the imposition of arbitrary boundaries between states by European powers after the First World War, such as the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Treaties of Sevres (1920) and Lausanne (1923). This signified the end of the Ottoman Empire, a great colonial power itself that had dominated South-eastern Europe, North Africa

and the Middle East for close to five centuries, and the emergence of not only a number of Arab states, but also of a post-imperial nation, Türkiye, who took on the complex legacy of its Ottoman predecessor. Ever since, the dynamics between Istanbul and the various Arab capitals of North Africa, the Levant and the Gulf have shaped the multi-layered political developments in what is now known as the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Türkiye all vying for regional leadership. Our two authors chose two case studies that adopted diametrically different strategies in doing so, determined by their unique geography, resources, and historical inheritances. Both these strategies, however, have in common an attempt to problematise the currently accepted international borders of sovereign states and question the enduring relevance of the nation-state as the dominant form of political organization of the RBILLO – a guiding theme that runs in one form or another across all twelve papers of this edition.

In “Türkiye’s Contested Regional Power Role from an Arab Perspective under the AKP rule”, Shaimaa Magued explores Türkiye’s attempts to proactively re-claim its Ottoman past as the dominant regional player since the rise to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002, under the leadership of the country’s two most recent Presidents, Abdullah Gül and Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Dr. Magued sets herself as task to expand national role theory, a middle-range foreign policy analysis theory focusing on “the interaction between a wide range of interests and worldviews among national elites during national role formulation” in order to show that “similarly to the local state elites... external actors do not just accept a country’s national role as structured by its central leadership and foreign policy elites but develop calculated perceptions and reactions

towards it that express their expectations and conditions for accepting such a role—thus contributing to its formulation and implementation.” Her focus in doing so is the dynamic and evolving interaction between Ankara and various Arab capitals both before the beginning of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings that engulfed the entire region, and in the period following them, up to the present day. Her research findings lead her to conclude that before 2010, the Turkish and Arab leaders’ expectations from Türkiye’s role as a regional power coincided, thus legitimating Ankara’s deployment of soft power tools such as mediation, normative leadership, economic interdependence, and multilateralism in pursuit of its foreign policy objectives. However, the surge of disagreements between President Erdogan and his Arab counterparts following the Arab uprisings narrowed Türkiye’s room for manoeuvre and undermined its credibility with the region’s Arab political elites. This contributed significantly to Ankara’s dramatic shift over the past decade from mediation to confrontation and from the use of soft power to that of hard power tools, up to and including military intervention across international boundaries, to impose itself by means of intimidation and force as the Middle East’s regional hegemon. This narrative thread will be picked up in a subsequent section of this edition, discussing the articles investigating Russia’s bid for regional hegemony after the collapse of the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1991.

The second article discussing sub-regional efforts by Middle Eastern states to overcome the heavy legacy of colonialism and to attenuate the effect of artificial boundaries on governments’ abilities to effectively address often urgent transborder challenges and crises is Mona Ali’s “A Solidarity of Fear? Risk Society Perceptions in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries After COVID-19”. Dr. Ali focuses on the recent COVID-19 health crisis to

xplain how a common risk – that of a severe global health pandemic, affected public threat perceptions in the GCC region and led to the consolidation of a vibrant pan-Arabic public sphere of shared ideas, debates, critiques, and solutions but also of alternative-facts and conspiracy theories. The author deploys German sociologist Ulrich Beck's notion of the 'risk society' to explain how the perception of risk and threats in GCC countries, particularly those not related to traditional, military security issues, has significantly increased since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through her close content analysis of opinion columns authored by intellectual elites and published in news media in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar, Dr. Ali notes both how "individuals in these societies have played a more active role in confronting these threats compared to the past, when states assumed responsibility for addressing such issues", but also how "leadership for managing the crisis and confronting the pandemic remained the exclusive domain of the state and its safety and health authorities", thus reinforcing governments' abilities to control the behaviour of their citizens by means of emergency legislations and new technologies at times of public emergency. The author also highlights that the trust in their governments and how the crisis was handled in the countries being studied remained high throughout the pandemic among the intellectual elites publishing public opinion pieces, even giving rise to favorable comments when comparing Gulf states' success in doing so and the performance of Western countries. This reinforced the legitimacy of national governments and their capacity to lead their respective countries at such times of crisis and the shared willingness of most public opinion leaders, across national boundaries, to support their public officials' attempts to develop the mechanisms, procedures and technologies to "return to the pre-risk society... and eliminate the chaos that prevails amid disasters". In doing so, Dr. Ali points out an

on-going process of securitization of health issues across the GCC that is not only largely unquestioned by opinion leaders and citizens at large but is fully endorsed by them and even lauded with a sense of pride and achievement as a break-out moment on the international stage for the GCC countries being studied.

MANAGING MINORITIES IN NATIONALIZING STATES

The third article of this 3SJ issue retains a focus on the MENA region, but addresses a different, inward-directed type of securitization: that of nationalizing states' efforts to manage and control ethnic and religious minorities. As such, it is one of three papers zeroing in on the fate of minorities in Europe and Asia when faced with governments whose official policies consider them either as communities to be assimilated in the dominant nation of the state, or as actual threats to the integrity of the state itself, and therefore to be at best marginalised and silenced, at worst downright eradicated as groups with their own, unique identities, cultures, and faiths. The perception of the ethno-cultural minority as the Other of the state-building nation, whose fate is to ultimately disappear as an identifiable, organised community in favour of an ethno-culturally homogenous society capable of legitimating the rule of the dominant nation's elite was born in nineteenth century Europe. It became the foundational norm of the emerging international order whose basic unit of analysis was to be the nation-state. After the end of the First World War and the signature of the Treaty of Versailles, whose guiding principles were enunciated in US President Woodrow Wilson's famous Fourteen Points, proclaiming in particular the right of all nations to self-determination, the European model of the nation-state was transplanted first in Eastern Europe and, over subsequent decades, across the world as the

process of decolonisation took hold. Yet the borders drawn by former empires and the populations the new states encompassed rarely conformed to the European norm of ethno-cultural homogeneity. Ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, often overlapping in different combinations was the rule rather the exception in the emerging post-colonial states, thus giving rise to the most powerful internal security dilemma of all these nation-states: how to preserve the territorial integrity of the new state and the political legitimacy of its ruling elite when faced with the demands for recognition, autonomy, and sometimes even independence of minorities claiming the right to self-determination proclaimed by President Wilson and consecrated by the Treaty of Versailles.

Ghazaleh Darini's "The Islamic Republic of Iran's Domination of Iranian Religious Minorities" examines the fate of religious minorities in Iran both during the reign of Shah Reza Pahlavi, before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, and under the rule of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his successors, after the proclamation of the Islamic Republic of Iran. She focuses in particular on the fate of three non-Muslim communities: the Jewish people, Zoroastrians, and Baha'is. The author finds that although both authoritarian regimes treated each minority differently in accordance with the level of threat they perceived each group to pose to their state-building projects, Shah Pahlavi's primarily secular state adopted an attitude of benign toleration and inclusion towards them, based on the modernising state's self-interest in taking advantage of these communities' knowledge, skills, and international power connections. In contrast, Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic Republic considered religious minorities as critical threats to its very existence and systematically set out to dominate, marginalise or exterminate them: "The new regime's initiative to make the state an Islamic theocracy disempowered religious minorities'

organizations." The effectiveness of its policies of domination can be gleaned from the decline of the combined numbers of these groups: from 5.2% during the Pahlavi era to less than 2% under the Islamic Republic. Ghazaleh Darini proceeds to engage in a detailed analysis of the methods for managing and eliminating differences by the Iranian theocracy, and in particular 'minimization' and 'erasure', and how they were applied differently to each of the three groups identified above, depending on the level of perceived threat each of them was considered to pose to the religious and political legitimacy of the new state. She concludes that whilst the Iranian Islamic theocracy sought to actively minimize the religious teaching of the Jewish and Zoroastrian communities, not considered to pose major threats to the official state ideology, it responded to the Baha'is, originally an Islamic religious offshoot and therefore deemed to pose a critical challenge to the internal cohesion of Iran's majority Shi'a population, with a more violent form of domination – erasure: "The Islamic Republic of Iran has sought to erase Baha'is from the national narrative using discrimination and violence".

Bella Aung picks up the theme of the state's management of national minorities whilst aiming to create and cultivate a common national identity in her paper entitled "Building National Identity through Schooling and Language Policies: Burmanization as a Diversity Management Strategy". Drawing on France's nation-building experience in the 1800s, and in particular on Eugen Weber's theory of assimilation through schooling and education, she examines the policies employed by four successive Myanmar governments, from 1962 to today, using different minority management techniques, ranging from accommodation and integration all the way to assimilation. The author first lays out the country's enormous ethnic diversity, including seven ethnic minority states as well as Chinese and Indian

communities, and specifies that “118 languages are spoken in Myanmar today” – with Burmese being the official language of the country and Bamar its majority, state-building nation. Contrary to the Islamic Republic of Iran, whose ongoing aim is to minimise or erase its non-Muslim religious minorities, Myanmar’s rulers, civilian and military alike, have “promoted Burmese nationalism and the Burmese national identity for all its citizens, regardless of their ethnic origins” ever since the country gained its independence in 1962 from its colonial master, the United Kingdom. Bella Aung proceeds to analyse the effectiveness of four streams of Burmanization policies aiming to weaken ethnic minority students’ identification with their ethnic communities: first, imposing Burmese as the only official language of instruction; second, denying the instruction of minority languages; third, setting all educational institutions for ethnic minority youths under the control of the Ministry of Border Affairs; and finally, indoctrinating all students to support the unity and cohesion of the Union of Myanmar and eventually turning them into “faithful civil servants”. She concludes that Burmanized education and language policies deployed by successive governments in Myanmar were indeed effective in creating a Burmese national identity among different ethnic groups and therefore, that “Weber’s take on diversity management through schools and schooling as an ethnic conflict regulation strategy remains relevant in contemporary politics”.

Claire Parsons’ “National Security Effects of Ukraine’s Failure to Manage Its Minority Ethnic Population and a Recommendation for Decentralization” examines another newly independent state’s management of its largest national minority, but this time in a case where that minority’s neighbouring kin state, the Russian Federation, weaponizes the minority’s ethno-cultural identification to weaken the cohesion of

the host state as a country and eventually to dismantle it as a sovereign state: the case of Ukraine and its Russian-speaking national minority in the contested Donbas region. This paper succeeds in contextualising the on-going Russian-Ukrainian conflict by examining successive Ukrainian governments’ state-building efforts since Ukraine gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, through assimilation and domination efforts of its Russian-speaking minority concentrated in the Donbas region, on Russia’s western border. It argues that, far from strengthening the fledgling Ukrainian state, such repressive policies provided President Vladimir Putin of Russia with the motive of intervening both indirectly and directly in the country’s internal affairs in order to “protect its ethnic kin in a foreign state led by a Nazi regime”. The author then examines Latvia’s example of extreme domination of its Russian ethnic minority to argue that such a management technique is not only inappropriate, but downright harmful to Ukraine’s national security interests and very survival as an independent state. Claire Parsons goes on to offer a solution allowing Ukraine to escape the current vicious circle it finds itself in (the more it attempts to repress its Russian speaking citizens, the more it empowers President Putin to persist in continuing its war of aggression against Kyiv) fully in line with the norms, values and principles of the European Union it seeks to soon join: a decentralization and possible federation of the unitary Ukrainian state. To justify her position, the author demonstrates that the Donbas secessionist movement does not attract majority support even among the region’s Russian-speaking population and that, in fact, since the start of the Russian military operation, in February 2022, strong feelings of Ukrainian patriotism have further developed in this population segment – feelings the Ukrainian government would be well advised to capitalise on. The key advantage of such a decentralising and

federalising approach in Ukraine would be “to both weaken the Russian Federation’s influence on Ukrainian internal ethnic management, as well as to strategically position Ukraine closer to its Western allies”. As a result, Ukraine would stand a good chance to bring about an end to the current military conflict devastating the country and its people and to finally attain a significant degree of internal stability and external security for the first time since independence.

UNPACKING THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT

Claire Parsons’ paper manages a seamless transition to this issue’s next major theme, which proposes to unpack the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict – the largest and deadliest military clash of arms in Europe in three-quarters of a century, since the end of the Second World War, in 1945. Whilst her article focuses on Ukraine’s management of its Russian national minority in the Donbas region and the impact of such policies on President Putin’s aim to re-establish Russian hegemonic control over its largest western neighbour state, the next three contributions switch perspective and examine the roots and conduct of the conflict from Moscow’s perspective. The leitmotiv running through these three papers is the fact that the Russian Federation has been led for the past two decades by President Vladimir Putin and an increasingly narrow inner circle of advisors who share his background and training in the Soviet Union’s intelligence service, the KGB. Consequently, they fully support Putin’s famous comment that the collapse of the USSR was the greatest geopolitical disaster of the twentieth century, as well as his unflinching determination to reverse what he considers to be but a temporary setback for the Russian nation. Their ultimate objective is to re-establish Russia as one of the world’s leading Great Powers, entitled to sit at the

same table with the USA, China, India and the European Union, and to play a key role in shaping what the Russian leader sees as the coming global multi-polar era, soon to replace America’s vanishing ‘hegemonic moment’. This view of the international order as an arena of Great Powers’ competition, where each of them controls its ‘near abroad’ as a regional hegemon, and where together they both compete and cooperate in setting and enforcing the rules of the emerging multi-polar world order, is the complete opposite of the RBLIO defended by the United States and its allies in Europe, Asia and across the world. The leaders of these nations are well aware that a viable, sustainable and resilient RBLIO must itself change and adapt to the rise of the Global South and to the demands of these states and of their citizens to have their voices heard and interests taken into account during this process, as well as in crafting the new iteration of the RBLIO. So, the choice is not between the old, Euro-centric, American-dominated RBLIO and President Putin’s dystopian multi-polar world of Great Powers competition where some states are ‘more equal than others’. It is, rather, between a thoroughly revamped RBLIO that is more diverse, more inclusive, fairer and more equitable for all its members, and a world where authoritarian rulers in Russia, China and Iran among others are given free rein to dominate their neighbours and repress their own citizens in the name of a false ‘cultural diversity’ weaponised to serve the interests of these countries’ ruling elites rather than to improve the current lives and future opportunities of their populations. This is the real import of the current Ukrainian conflict and the fundamental reason why all NATO members must remain steadfast in their support for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s objective to safeguard Ukrainian sovereignty and right to freely choose its allies, partners and democratic system of government.

Pieter Zhao's "Intelligence Transformation in Post-Soviet Russia: Attempting to Reconcile the Irreconcilable" is a timely and important contribution to a growing number of academic attempts to understand the causes of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict as well as the true motivations and war aims of its ruling elite, led by President Vladimir Putin. The author focuses on patterns of change and continuity in the Soviet and Russian intelligence services, as they survived and transitioned from the USSR to the Russian Federation over the past four decades. His key argument is that the dissolution of the Soviet Union did not bring about systemic, structural change to Russia's post-Soviet intelligence apparatus. To the contrary, the KGB's successor organizations remained ensconced at the center of power, in Moscow, and became equally, if not even more influential in policy choices and decision-making processes – thus rendering them likely to repeat the patterns of their Soviet past. To do so, Pieter Zhao first analyses the lessons learned from the effect the dissolution of the Soviet Union in general, and the August 1991 attempted coup against President Mikhail Gorbachev in particular, had on its intelligence services. It then shows how the KGB's partitioning in separate agencies in the 1990s did not last long, ending up in a largely reconstituted service under a new name – the Federal Security Service (FSB). Zhao draws the particularly important conclusion that, unlike Germany's successful de-Nazification efforts after the Second World War, Russia after 1991 failed in its de-Bolshevization attempt and that in fact, the new Russian leadership "came straight from the Communist Party or even the KGB". This new ruling elite, drawn from the ranks of the old Soviet intelligence agencies had therefore "no interest in democratization or establishing a legal framework within the rule of law, as this would be incompatible with their former functions and methods under the Soviet Union, creating a vested

interest to preserve the former system". This essential continuity of worldviews, personnel, and practices between the old Soviet Union's and new Russia's intelligence services goes a long way to explain Vladimir Putin's comment quoted earlier, that the collapse of the USSR was the greatest geopolitical disaster of the past hundred years, as well as his long-term strategy to reverse this setback and re—establish Russia as one of the world's Great Powers, culminating in the current Russian invasion of Ukraine and attempt to dismantle it as an independent sovereign country and reintegrate it into a reconstituted Russian sphere of influence that would be nothing less than a new, autocratic Russian Empire.

Madison Farhood adopts a classical realist analytical lens to examine the balance of forces in the Russo-Ukrainian conflict and to predict its final outcome in "Might vs. Will: A Realist Assessment of the Russo-Ukrainian Conflict and its Probable Outcome". She distinguishes between 'apparent' and 'effective' power to explain why, against almost all analysts' initial expectations, Ukraine survived Russia's initial military onslaught, reversed many of its territorial gains, and established a virtual stalemate more reminiscent of the First World War's trench warfare than the Second World War's Blitzkrieg. The author first discusses the key tenets of classical realism as elaborated by German-American academic Hans Morgenthau, and more recently re-formulated by US international relations specialist Johnathan Kirshner as attentiveness to global anarchy's inexorable dangers, deep respect for the realities and limits of the adversary's and one's own power, and awareness that world politics is characterised by conflicts of interest in the context of deep uncertainty. She then shows their enduring relevance for the international politics of the twenty-first century in general, and for the Russo-Ukrainian conflict in particular, by distinguishing between apparent power – the inventory of material and human military resources

a country disposes over, and effective power – including quality of military and civilian leadership, legitimacy of war aims, support network among key allies, and troops morale and determination to fight on to the end. She concludes that Russia and Ukrainian disparities in various types of power nevertheless balance each other out on the battlefield, thus ultimately resulting in the need for a peace settlement negotiated in good faith and acceptable to all parties involved – even if not meeting their respective interests and aims in equal measure. However, Madison Farhood finds such an outcome unlikely from a realist perspective and posits that a more likely sustainable solution would be for Ukraine to join NATO as soon as possible and thus deter President Putin's Russia from further aggressive military moves on its neighbour's territory – albeit at the risk of possible nuclear escalation. Her paper “ultimately demonstrates the importance of states to keep power, to increase power, and to demonstrate power along multiple vectors, as seen through the Russo-Ukrainian war”.

Brooke Lewinsky also focuses on the causes and potential outcome of the current Russo-Ukrainian conflict in “The Ukrainian War as Catalyst to Bringing Russia In from the Cold Into the Western Alliance”. Her primary aims are twofold: first, to examine, through the prism of the Ukrainian case study, how President Vladimir Putin's Russia has consistently attempted over the past two decades to undermine the sovereignty and freedom of action of Central and Eastern European countries formerly members of the Soviet Bloc by exploiting both their internal and external weaknesses; and second, to deploy the relatively new lens of ontological security to provide a prescriptive narrative as to how a post-Putin Russia could be empowered to transition from being an adversary to being a partner, if not an ally, thus avoiding a new Cold War era pitting liberal democracies such

as the US and its allies in Europe and across the globe against authoritarian dictatorships led by China, Russia and Iran. The author first focuses on President Putin's efforts to deny Ukraine any meaningful agency as an autonomous state on the world stage by controlling its foreign policy decisions through intimidation, coercion, and even the threat of military intervention. Second, it examines how Russia actively and consistently interfered in Ukrainian internal politics ever since its independence, in 1991, by backing pro-Russian presidential candidates as well sponsoring corrupt oligarchs willing to play Putin's game in Kyiv, and by triggering so-called ‘gas wars’ by restricting the supply of Russian gas to Ukraine and Western Europe flowing through Ukrainian pipelines. However, Brooke Lewinsky's most original contribution is the deployment of the concept of ontological security to both explain the oftentimes irrational behaviour of Russian elites in pursuit of what they perceive to be their country's national interest, and to outline how such elites' ontological insecurities could eventually be overcome, so as to allow Russia's reintegration in what Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev once hopefully called “our common European home”. For Lewinsky, “ontological insecurity is provoked within states whose self-constructed experiences or perceived memories of the past suddenly become challenged” by rapidly changing realities that no longer align with their dominant autobiographical narrative. This requires either a radical intervention to bring reality in line with such reassuring self-generated, masculine narratives, even when it does not conform to other actors' expectations of what a rational actor would do in such circumstances; or else, a profound reflexive modification of the dominant autobiographical narrative so as to disrupt constructed grand narratives generating such ontological insecurities and replacing them with new, more flexible, more empathetic stories and storytelling “which are more characteristic of

the socially constructed female identity". The author concludes by outlining a realistic path to "bring Russia In from the Cold" as a partner rather than an adversary after the conclusion of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, thus avoiding a new Cold War between liberal democracies and authoritarian dictatorships, including Russia and China.

PLANNING FOR WAR: US MILITARY STRATEGIES ACROSS THREE CENTURIES

The final section of this 3SJ issue dedicated to 'History and Strategy in Great Power Politics' focuses on two centuries of military strategic planning and practice by the world's still dominant, if no longer quite hegemonic, super-power: the United States of America. Bringing in historical context and perspective is just as important for understanding US foreign policies in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ukraine as it has been for unpacking Russian leading elites' ontological insecurities which played a significant role in unleashing the current European conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The United States' self-constructed narratives about its 'Manifest Destiny', variously described as 'The shining city on the hill', 'The last, best hope of mankind' or 'The world's indispensable nation' are deeply rooted in the story of its revolutionary origins, in particular in its 1776 Declaration of Independence, as well as in the Civil War often conceived in retrospect as a 'Second Founding' designed to expunge America's "original sin" – the scourge of slavery, which pitted the Union North against the Confederate South between 1861 and 1865.

Andrea Pezatti's creative counter-factual narrative entitled "Trading Space for Time: The Confederate Army's Strategy Revisited" re-examines Confederate strategy during this conflict which, more than any other, marked the collective memory of the young

American Republic. He notes that General Robert E. Lee devised a strategy for the Confederate Army drawing on the then popular work of famous Swiss-French military strategist Antoine-Henry Jomini entitled *Summary of the Art of War*, first published in France in 1838 and just becoming available to American military professionals in the two decades preceding the outbreak of the Civil War. In it, Jomini draws from his personal experience of Napoleonic warfare in Europe at the cusp of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to favour a strategy of aggressive attack, so as to destroy the enemy's center of gravity by means of a superior concentration of forces at the right time and place. Pezatti argues that such a transposition of military strategy from Europe to North America was deeply flawed, because it did not properly take into account the unique manpower and materiel resources of the two US belligerents, nor correctly evaluate the potential resources and pitfalls of the natural terrain constituting the battlefield upon which this conflict was fought over a period of five years. Instead of relentless attack despite inferior numbers and resources, Pezatti posits that the Confederate army should have adopted "a defense-in-depth strategy [which] would have allowed the Confederacy to trade space for time and, eventually, to exhaust the Union army and resources... thus enhancing its chances for victory". The author first addresses the influence of Jomini's writings on American Civil War military strategies and notes that Confederate generals failed to fully account for his notion of 'exhaustion', which requires defendant armies to stonewall their opponent through strenuous resistance grounded on a judicious use of favorable terrain features, with the ultimate aim "to disrupt its willingness to continue the fight rather than seek a risky decisive battle". He then develops his counterfactual narrative based on this revised strategic approach and explains how the South could have implemented exactly such a defense-in-depth

strategy taking advantage of Virginia's favorable geographic features, to eventually blunt the North's attacks and exhaust its military power and political will to carry on fighting with little prospect for ultimate victory in sight. Instead, the author posits that by adopting a relentlessly aggressive strategy of attack, General Lee wasted his precious manpower resources in long, drawn-out battles like Gettysburg, where his armies suffered horrendous human losses that could not be easily replaced, if at all. Pezatti concludes by noting that these offensive military strategies so popular at US military academies due to the writings of Jomini before and during the Civil War ultimately condemned the Confederacy to defeat.

In his "Airpower Strategy in the Cold War: How central was value targeting and city "busting" to NATO and Soviet conventional and nuclear airpower strategy?", Patrick taube picks up the narrative of US strategic military planning almost a century later, at the height of the Cold War, when US and Soviet nuclear arsenals were interlocked into in an aptly named 'MAD' strategy of Mutually Assured Destruction. His key research objective in his paper was to find out how truly MAD was this strategy – in other words, whether the two adversaries actually targeted with both conventional and nuclear weapons their largest population centres, or merely publicly claimed to envisage this as a realistic option for mutually dissuasive, deterrence purposes. The author undertakes original research in the analysis of NATO documents and consults secondary literature to first introduce the reader to the strategic theory of airpower, including the four schools of air targeting: the strategic or city bombing school, the key industries and lines of transport and communication targeting school, the military targets school, and finally the political signalling school. He then proceeds to establish the extent to which NATO and its opponent, the

Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) actually targeted for destruction high-value targets such as their largest population centres – and therefore, to determine which of the four targeting schools were most influential in practice on both sides during the Cold War. taube carefully documents the evolution of both NATO and WTO strategies from the Korean War in the early 1950s to the very end of the Cold War, in the late 1980s. He finds that NATO adopted a flexible response strategy emphasizing credibility of use for effective deterrence. Accordingly, it elaborated an escalation ladder devising three pillars of credible deterrence, first in case of limited conflicts, second to fend off more ambitious conventional attacks, and finally to respond to a nuclear attack. In contrast, the author finds that "the WTO was indeed preparing for selective nuclear use. In the Soviet mind, any war against NATO would be a global, all-out nuclear war, which requires combined nuclear and conventional airstrikes from the outbreak of the war". Despite this official WTO position, taube concludes that ultimately, neither NATO nor the Soviet Union deliberately targeted populations centres to break the enemy's morale, but primarily targeted instead each other's military capabilities with both their conventional and nuclear arsenals. As a coda, he notes that in the ongoing Ukrainian conflict, current Russian air power strategy has deliberately targeted civilian infrastructures and population centres, with the aim of breaking the Ukrainian people's will to fight. He thus raises the truly disturbing question of the extent to which the era of strategic air targeting restraint might be coming to an end, in favour of a re-emerging strategic 'city busting' school.

The last two papers of this section both focus on US war aims and strategy in the Second Iraq War, from 2003 to 2011 – but with a twist. Each article adopts a different theoretical lens to explain the origins of this war and arrives at starkly different

conclusions. This highlights the enduring importance of IR theoretical approaches in both the practice of military strategy and in the evaluation of actors' performance in such conflicts - and, ultimately, their success or failure in attaining their core strategic objectives. In "Weapons of Mass Self-Destruction: How United States Foreign Policy in Iraq Backfired" Julian King adopts an offensive realist perspective to explain the US intervention in Iraq in 2003 as the rational action of a "self-interested state seeking to secure its unipolar hegemony through power maximization". He then posits that the subsequent US military and political failures in Iraq were due primarily to the US leaders' departure from the key tenets of realism and adoption of liberal internationalist and neoconservative objectives of nation-building and democratisation in a hostile socio-political context, objectives which could not be accomplished by the deployment of military power alone. Finally, the author explains the end of the conflict from a US perspective as a shift, under the incoming Obama administration, "to defensive realism through more restrictive and prudent policy regarding US foreign presence", leading the new US President to the conclusion, in 2011, that the US national interest dictated the repatriation of all American ground troops.

Matthew Garofalo adopts a idealist approach to IR in "The Second Iraq War: How Idealism Undermined the United Nations" to explain why the United Nations Organization (UN) was unable to prevent the outbreak of this conflict by examining key factors both endogenous and exogenous to the UN. Garofalo begins by defining idealism as rooted in the Wilsonian belief that a peaceful world is an eminently achievable objective by means of establishing international institutions such as the League of Nations at the end of the First World War and its successor after the Second World War, the UN. Yet he simultaneously notes that the UN

Security Council includes five permanent members with veto rights, a stark departure from idealist principles of collective action, and more aligned with a realist approach to IR. He therefore posits that "[t]he UN, because of its Security Council, where Great Powers have a veto—a very realist concept—is not an entirely liberal internationalist organization capable of restraining its members from using military force". The author then focuses on factors exogenous to the UN, rooted in US domestic politics. He explains that domestic US public opinion in the wake of the 9/11/2001 attacks was overwhelmingly in favour of an attack aiming to destroy terrorist operations outside Iraq and of removing Iraqi president Saddam Hussein from power. President George W. Bush also wanted to be re-elected in November 2004 and could not risk being labeled as the President who saw the Twin Towers fall on his watch - and did not do everything in his power to pursue all perpetrators to the fullest extent possible. Finally, Garofalo shows how economic non-state actors, such as large US defence contractors, heavily influenced the outbreak of the war both through ties with key officials at the heart of the Bush administration, and through lobbying activities designed to influence Congressional bills and votes. These three contributory causal factors are, according to the author, factored in by the idealist IR lens, but not by classical realist one, which rejects both the importance of domestic politics and the relevance of non-state, economic actors, in the conduct of states' foreign policies. He concludes that, in the final instance, contrary to realist but in line with idealist assumptions, "actors such as voting citizens and private corporations had greater influence over the decisions the U.S. made in the Middle East than the United Nations" and consequently, that ironically, "idealism's own core assumptions undermined the very institution it sought to uphold", as the UN ultimately failed to prevent the US invasion of Iraq in 2003.

THE LAST WORD

The twelve papers included in the current issue of 3SJ all highlight a particular aspect of global strategy and security practices demonstrating the critical importance of History and Strategy in the conduct of Great Power politics. They are grouped in four sections, each focusing on a topic that is highly relevant to the current conduct of international relations and to the quickening pace of change we are experiencing in the RBLIO that has structured the global community since the end of the Cold War, in 1989 – and arguably for much longer, since the end of the Second World War, in 1945. These papers discuss and analyse cross-cutting themes, concepts and ideas that complement, challenge and complete each other. This Introduction has attempted to highlight these connective elements that criss-cross the articles published in this issue, in order to emphasize the complexity and connexity of the global forces that shape the conduct of global politics in the first half of the twenty-first century. Above all, it has endeavoured to showcase the extraordinary efforts of all authors who researched, wrote and refined, with the help of 3SJ's dedicated team of reviewers and editors, the texts whose final versions appear here in print. In doing so, the 3SJ Team and all authors are proud to have done their outmost to live up to the Journal's motto and mission statement: Mentoring emerging academics to shine.

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RE-SHAPING THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST



AN ARAB PERSPECTIVE ON TÜRKİYE'S CONTESTED REGIONAL POWER ROLE UNDER THE AKP'S RULE

SHAIMAA MAGUED

ABSTRACT

How would a state's regional power role be impacted by foreign leaders? Building on the national role theory's interactive approach, this study argues that Arab countries have contributed to the concretization of Türkiye's regional power role in the Middle East before the Arab uprisings and its marginalisation following their eruption in 2011. While national role theorists have underlined the potential rise of disagreements among ruling elite members in national role formulation, they overlooked the impact of foreign leaders on the formulation and crystallisation of this role. Relying on the triangulation of three qualitative research methods, findings support the significant impact of external actors on the formulation and concretization of a state's national role, taking as a case-study Arab countries' perceptions of and reactions toward Türkiye's power role before and after the Arab uprisings, from 2002 until 2021.

Keywords: *National role theory, Turkish foreign policy, Turkish-Arab relations, Middle East politics*

INTRODUCTION

Former Turkish Prime Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, conceived Türkiye as a regional power in the Middle East in light of its geography and history (Davutoğlu, 2001). This role was to be concretized through economic interdependence, mediation, multilateralism, and normative leadership among neighbours. The longevity of the Justice and Development Party's (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, or AKP) rule and the abrupt shifts in Turkish policy in the Middle East after the Arab uprisings raise questions about Arab countries' perceptions of Türkiye's regional power role and their impact on its formulation and operationalization.

While copious studies have examined changes in Turkish foreign policy since the AKP's rise to power in 2002, they have strictly focused on the internal decision-making process, the AKP leaders' characteristics, and conservative business actors' and NGOs' involvement in the formulation and implementation of Turkish policy (Cuhadar et al., 2017; Taner, 2015; Altunışık and Cuhadar, 2010). Arab countries' perception of and reactions toward the AKP's role in the Middle East were left unaddressed.

Also, International Relations scholars have highlighted an existing gap between external actors' and national leaders' expectations from a country's foreign policy without addressing the factors underpinning this gap (Thies, 2010 and 2014; Brummer and Thies, 2014). National role theory, being a derivative of foreign policy analysis middle range theories, sheds light on the interaction between a wide range of interests and worldviews among national elites during national role formulation. Being the expression of a state's function and position on the regional and international levels, on the basis of its material assets and rulers' perception of its image and interests, national role is believed to rely on two main pillars: role expectations and performance (Holsti, 1970). However, by solely limiting their analysis to that state's ruling elite's bargaining processes and disagreements, national role theorists have overlooked external actors' divergence over a country's national role and their contribution to that state's foreign policy formulation and manifestation. This study fills a theoretical and empirical gap by addressing Arab countries' perceptions of and reactions to Türkiye's power role in the Middle East before and after the Arab uprisings in order to identify how they contributed to its foreign policy formulation and implementation.

In answering this question, the study argues that, similarly to the local state elites (Malici and Walker, 2014), external actors do not just accept a country's national role as structured by its central leadership and foreign policy elites but develop calculated perceptions and reactions towards it that express their expectations and conditions for accepting such a role—thus contributing to its formulation and implementation. Accordingly, since 2002, Arab countries' different positioning toward Türkiye's power role in the Middle East has variably impacted its implementation through reactions ranging from support, to resistance, to opposition. Although the AKP has conceived Türkiye as a regional power, this conception was differently perceived by Arab countries due to an existing gap between Arab leaders' and Turkish elites' expectations. This resulted in a variety of reactions that have either contributed to the concretization of a Turkish regional power role, or to its deemphasis and marginalisation. While Arab and Turkish elites' expectation differences were minimal before the Arab uprisings, they became irreconcilable from 2011 onwards, thus overshadowing Türkiye's role as a regional power and limiting its foreign policy visibility as such. The study relies on the triangulation of data obtained from three qualitative research methods. It utilises a rigorous text analysis of Arab scholarship on Türkiye's role in the Middle East before and after the uprisings, has recourse to 20 extensive open-ended and semi-structured expert interviews conducted by the author with Turkish officials, businessmen, and NGOs' activists from 2010 until 2012, and carries out a systematic analysis of the AKP leaders' speeches, notably those of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and former President Abdullah Gül, between 2002 and 2012.

CONTESTED ROLES: TÜRKIYE'S NATIONAL ELITES' AND EXTERNAL ACTORS' EXPECTATIONS

This study borrowed Cantir and Kaarbo's concept of 'contested roles,' conceiving roles as a changing dynamic that is neither predetermined nor preconceived, to unveil external actors' impact on a

country's external role formulation and implementation due to the latter's irreconcilable expectations with those of that state's national elites (Cantir and Kaarbo, 2016: 23). While Cantir and Kaarbo used this concept to examine local elites' bargaining processes during national role formulation, this study will employ it to highlight divergences dividing national and external actors in order to examine their impact on national actors' role formulation and concretization. In this respect, the study examines the positive impact of Turkish leaders and Arab countries' reconcilable expectations on Türkiye's regional power role in light of Arab countries' supportive reactions, with few exceptional cases of resistance, before the Arab uprisings of 2011. In the same vein, it shows how a growing gap between Turkish and Arab expectations regarding Türkiye's external power role after 2011 has limited the latter's regional room of manoeuvre and prompted it to take an increasingly aggressive attitude in the region.

In other words, external actors' expectations are a primordial component in national role formulation. Unlike in the original theory, therefore, in this study, actors' expectations do not only emanate from the national level but also from the external level (Harnisch, 2012). In line with this rationale, a country's national role on the regional and international levels is negotiated in a bargaining process involving local and external actors, which can lead to either congruence in national role conception, or resistance, rejection, coercion due to conflicting expectations (Bengtsson and Elgstrom, 2012). While external actors' clashing expectations and reactions toward the local elites' role conception might lead to regional instability, the conciliation of both parties' perceptions in role conception can promote cooperation (Barnett, 1993; LePestre, 1997). By disaggregating external actors in function of expectations and reactions toward a state's national role as a foreign policy actor, this study sheds light on the Turkish elites' strategic mobilisation of their national discourse in justification of Türkiye's external role representation

directed not only towards its own population, but also towards neighbours in order to achieve a wider recognition (Aras and Görner, 2010).

This interactive dimension paves the way for an in-depth analysis of external actors' perceptions of and reactions toward Türkiye's external national role and allows to make some realistic assessments regarding their contribution to its national role formulation and implementation. To do so, this study employs the interactive school's constructivist dimension, which perceives external national roles as a means for states' adaptation to the global order's exigencies, a tool for ensuring their structural and normative survival, and an expression of their identity through the adoption of a set of behaviours and attitudes toward external issues (Wendt, 1992; Adler, 2000).

Furthermore, this study relies on the triangulation of three qualitative research methods: discourse analysis, text analysis, and expert interviews held by the author from 2010 to 2012. As for the first method, this study considers AKP leaders' speeches and statements on Turkish policy toward Arab countries from 2002 until 2012, focusing on Erdoğan, Gül, and Davutoğlu's speeches about Türkiye's external power role based on their perception of geography and history and its operationalization through economic interdependence, mediation, multilateralism, and normative leadership.

This analysis depicts the pillars of AKP's strategic policy in the Middle East, its formulation process, and its implementation geared towards the concretization of a concrete and coherent Turkish external power role. Furthermore, this study relies on a rigorous text analysis of Arab scholarship on Turkish foreign policy from 2002 until 2021 to determine Arab leaders' perceptions of, expectations of, and reactions toward the AKP's policies in the Middle East. It tracks keywords related to economic interdependence, mediation, role model, and multilateralism, throughout academic and journalistic writings addressing Egypt, Libya, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the Emirates' leadership perceptions of and reactions toward Türkiye. Finally, it draws on the author's 20 in-depth open-ended and semi-structured expert interviews conducted

with Turkish officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Prime Minister's Office (PM), and Ministry of Economy (ME), in addition to conservative business associations and NGOs.

ARAB COUNTRIES' EXPECTATIONS AND REACTIONS TOWARD TÜRKIYE'S POWER ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST BEFORE THE ARAB UPRISINGS (2002-2010)

Findings from a rigorous text analysis of Arab scholarship and open-ended expert interviews on Türkiye's external power role before the Arab uprisings revealed conciliatory expectations among Arab and Turkish leaders and, subsequently, supportive reactions toward the concretization of its role with only few exceptions. This data was verified based on a meticulous examination of leaders' speeches and official statements about Türkiye's regional power role manifestations through mediation, economic interdependence, multilateralism, and normative leadership. Building on the national role theory, this analysis showed how convergent expectations between Türkiye and Arab countries resulted in positive reactions that supported the formulation and implementation of Türkiye's power role in the Middle East before the Arab uprisings.

Normative Leadership

Building on Türkiye's common historical and cultural heritage with Arab countries, the AKP perceived Arab countries as constituting a central pillar in the conception of Türkiye's regional role model. This perception rallied extensive support from Arab leaders, especially in Syria, Palestine, the Gulf countries, and Libya. Leaders of both Türkiye and Arab states were convinced that Western powers' negative view of the latter as countries that condoned terrorism, conjoined with Türkiye's institutional ties to the West, paved the way toward the concretization of a Turkish regional model by securing ample Arab support for the AKP's efforts to facilitate mutual understanding with the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) (Magued, 2010-2012). The AKP's promises of integrating Arab

countries into the global order, its call for their ideological moderation and democratisation, and its emphasis on the West's history of injustice and colonialism convinced Syrian, Palestinian, Gulf and Libyan leaders of Türkiye's ability to secure their demands and to alleviate the global order's inequalities they had incurred for decades.

In particular Syria, being internationally and regionally isolated, supported the Turkish regional role model in light of the AKP's promises of integrating Arab countries into the global order during political and economic summits. Being negatively perceived by Western countries, Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad, capitalised on Turkish strategic ties with the US and the EU in facilitating mutual understanding (Akram, 2010). The AKP's self-portrayal as 'conservative democrats' and 'moderate secularists' convinced al-Assad that it was the most suitable partner for Syria's reconciliation with Western powers and its consequent elimination from the list of countries that support terrorism. Syria's rapprochement with Türkiye was believed to boost its regional legitimacy and international profile in addition to conveying a positive message about al-Assad's ruling regime in light of the US conception of Türkiye as an example to follow towards democratisation, economic development, and social integration.

Unlike the majority of Arab leaders, former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak did not positively perceive the AKP's normative leadership due to its promotion of Islamic ideals, provision of an example for Islamists, and takeover of Egyptian traditional leadership in the region (Magued, 2016). The Turkish role model revived Mubarak's concerns over historical and ideological ties with the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest Islamist opposition group in Egypt, dating back to former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's nationalist view, Milli Görüş. Constituting the AKP's ideological benchmark, the Brothers' intellectual writings enriched Milli Görüş's normative foundations and enabled the mobilisation of notions like the Islamic state, the Muslim nation

(Ummah), and the Islamization of the nation-state (Ayyash, 2020). A natural relationship and a shared sentimentality were crystallised during regular conferences that were attended by AKP leading figures. Coated into a universalistic language, the AKP's worldview echoed the Brothers' transnational Islamic solidarity in the Arab and Muslim world. Similarly to the Brothers, Erbakan himself developed his vision of Islamic transnational outlook and slogan of Just Order (Adil Düzen), while Davutoğlu established his worldview of an Islamic civilizational space where Türkiye would act as a central state through an active engagement and mediation between the North and the South, in an attempt to rectify the global order's premises (Al-Labbad, 2011). In other words, the AKP's normative leadership in the Arab and Muslim world mirrored the Brothers' resentment toward Western injustice vis-à-vis Muslims and visions of Islamic solidarity that bypassed nation-states.

Qatar did not express concerns over the AKP's ideological credentials since it had exceptionally embraced its Islamist opposition, favouring a positive reception of Turkish normative leadership (Kawtharani, 2011). In contrast with Egypt, who perceived the AKP as a means for Islamists to criticise the regime's corruption, negligence of citizens' welfare, and alliance with the West, the Qatari regime perceived the AKP as an ally and regional partner (Magued, 2020). To the Qatari government, Islamists' sociopolitical integration was a step forward toward a credible and visible regional role, to be obtained in coordination with the AKP. In this perspective, the Qatari regime successfully mobilised its media infrastructure in portraying the AKP as a role model for Arab and Muslim countries on TV shows, news' reports, and al-Jazeera Center for Studies (Noureddine, 2003).

Arab countries supportive of Turkish normative leadership have contributed to the crystallisation of its role model in many instances. Within the Alliance of Civilizations initiative, Arab countries took part in boosting Turkish goals of rapprochement among

nations, tolerance toward cultural difference, and the fight against stigmatisation. Türkiye's co-leadership with Spain dwelt on the former's representation of the Arab-Muslim world as part of its efforts to ensure its integration into the world order exigencies. Turkish representation role and mediation between the West and the Arab world was concretized through an inter-civilizational dialogue based on regular meetings and summits within the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Arab League. Following the US war on Iraq in 2003 and the Madrid bombings in 2004, Arab countries supported the AKP leaders' dissociation of Islam and resistance against occupation critiques of the global order's perpetuation of injustice, prejudices, and anti-Islamic feelings on the one hand, and terrorism on the other (Magued, 2010-2012). Arab countries convened in 2006 at the Arab League summit in Khartoum and supported the Turkish-Arab forum's initiative where Erdoğan (Erdoğan, 2006) adopted a critical discourse toward the West's discriminatory practices against Muslims. In reaction to the Danish cartoons that negatively portrayed Prophet Muhammad, Qatar hosted the Alliance's second meeting in 2006 and contributed to workshops for promoting inter-civilizational dialogue and disseminating educational programs on civilizations at schools and universities. In response to Turkish calls for Arab countries to play an effective role in the Alliance, Egypt hosted the World Economic Forum in Sharm el-Sheikh in 2006, where Gül and Erdoğan urged other countries to help the Alliance spread international awareness about its principles. Similarly, the African Union invited Erdoğan in 2007 to its summit, in preparation for his public address about the initiative.

In the same vein, the OIC unanimously adopted in 2004 the 'Istanbul Declaration' that reflected the AKP's call for democratisation in the Arab world. The AKP, acting as a credible reference for its Arab-Muslim neighbours in line with global exigencies, underlined that the difference between civilizations lied in their normative and practical evolution toward democracy. According to Davutoğlu (2010), Arab and Muslim countries' support enabled Türkiye to play the role of a regional referee in guaranteeing stability

and managing intra-regional interactions. This role continued for a short period following the 2011 uprisings. Following Mubarak and Ben Ali's overthrow, Türkiye had recourse to public diplomacy with Egypt and Tunisia by organising national and regional meetings, conferences, and discussion panels within the framework of the Arab-Turkish Congress of Social Sciences in order to address a wide range of audiences. The AKP aimed to induce rapprochement with Arab countries, correct mutual historical prejudices and stereotypes, and exchange intellectual and academic views through scholarships for Arab students as well as the inauguration of an Arabic speaking media (Magued, 2010-2012).

In addition, Türkiye's sending of humanitarian convoys to Syria since the uprising in 2011, Palestine from 2008 onwards, and Somalia during the famine of 2010-2011, induced Arab countries to trust the AKP's conciliatory character in defending and supporting them against perceived international injustices. On multiple occasions before 2011, the OIC and the Arab League supported Erdoğan's criticisms of Israeli violations of Palestinian rights, as well as the Turkish Mavi Marmara Convoy's humanitarian trip to Gaza in defiance of the Israeli blockade. The Sudanese and Syrian regimes developed personal ties with AKP leaders on the background of the latter's support before Western powers. In addition to the initiation of economic and commercial ties with Former Sudanese President, Omar al-Bashir, Erdoğan refused his prosecution by the International Criminal Court over charges of ethnic cleansing in Darfur (Magued, 2010-2012). Similarly, Erdoğan pleaded for Syria's removal from the list of countries that support terrorism.

Mediation

The AKP has successfully appealed to Arab countries by referring to its mediation role as that of a fire brigade (*itfaiye*) that puts down fires within 'wooden houses': a reference to the perturbed regional countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It has also capitalised on its cultural Ottoman

heritage and historical archives as supportive tools in the resolution of the Palestinian issue. A wide range of Arab leaders, notably former Libyan President Muammar al-Qaddafi, Syria's Bashar al-Assad, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) President Mahmoud Abbas, supported the AKP's prioritisation of justice over order in its regional policy and criticism of Western countries' double standards toward the region. On the other hand, while the AKP came up with the slogan 'we talk to everyone in order to come up with suitable and inclusive solutions for all parties', Egypt expressed reservations over the AKP's inclusion of Hamas into peace talks, supportive stance toward Iran, and sponsorship of Islamic civil society organisations such as the İnsan Hak ve Hürriyetleri Vakfı (Magued, 2010-2012).

The Syrian regime welcomed Turkish mediation with Israel and Lebanon. In light of the rise of international and regional pressures on the al-Assad regime to initiate significant political reforms toward democratisation, withdraw its troops from Lebanon, keep distance from Hezbollah, and resume peace talks with Israel, Türkiye represented a significant support for the regime by providing al-Assad regime indirect means of engagement with Western powers and neighbours (Abul-Fadl, 2013).

On the contrary, in light of the AKP's facilitation of the Palestinian reconciliation in Doha and intervention in the Iranian nuclear program's negotiations with the European Troika, Mubarak had particular concerns over Türkiye's takeover of the Egyptian traditional mediation role in the Palestinian question (Magued, 2010-2012). Although the PLO had always perceived Egypt as the main guarantor of its security and a credible supporter of the Palestinian cause, Egypt had in fact adopted a passive attitude by confining its regional role to limited manoeuvres, in line with the US regional directives for Mubarak's rule consolidation (Helal, 2008). Following the Israeli refusal to cooperate with the PLO leader Yasser Arafat, the former Head of Egyptian Intelligence, Omar Soliman, had

coordinated direct talks with Israel since 2004. Yet, Egypt failed in convincing the parties to conclude a reconciliation proposal because of Mubarak's attempts to sideline Hamas during negotiations (Shama, 2013). This stance, together with the detention of Hamas leaders, the closure of common borders and strains in the relations with the Brothers, limited the prospects for an effective Egyptian mediation.

Willing to boost their regional profile and international visibility, the Saudi and Qatari regimes endorsed Turkish mediation for solving regional crises. Unlike the Mubarak regime, embarrassed to see the AKP taking over its role, both Saudi Arabia and Qatar capitalised on Turkish initiatives and Western ties, thus vicariously contributing to mediation efforts in the peace process since 2004, and in the Lebanese crises of 2005 and 2008 (Abul Gheit, 2020). Alongside Syria, they appreciated Turkish innovative tools of mediation, such as the structural prevention and the socio-psychological conflict transformation. Therefore, the AKP successfully initiated political and legal actions in managing and solving conflicts through the construction of social capital and the creation of a suitable environment for antagonistic parties. In addition, it introduced inclusive mechanisms for conflict transformation, such as facilitation, interaction for pacification, conflict resolution training, and post-conflict rehabilitation.

Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine validated Turkish regional perception as a mediator by inviting Turkish officials to intervene in the resolution of bilateral and internal crises. In 2005, former Iraqi Prime Minister, Nuri al-Maliki invited Davutoğlu in order to convince Iraqi Sunnis to participate in parliamentary elections and urge Iraqi Shiites to consider the former's rights. Following the assassination of former Lebanese President, Rafik al-Hariri, in 2006, coalitions' leaders endorsed the AKP's initiative for convincing Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon and persuading the Lebanese leadership to trust the international tribunal's investigations. In the aftermath of the 2006

Israeli war on Lebanon, the latter supported the renewal of Turkish troops' mandate in United Nations International Forces In Lebanon (Magued, 2010-2012). In the same vein, during the 2008 presidential crisis in Lebanon, Doha cooperated with Türkiye in the proposition of a three stage plan for national reconciliation, the organisation of presidential and parliamentary elections, and the definition of a common vision for Lebanon's political future. Saudi Arabia brokered an agreement between Fatah and Hamas, which resulted in the conclusion of the 2007 Unity Government Agreement in Mecca. Relying on its economic largesse, central position as a regional hub, and media infrastructure, Qatar shed light on the success of Turkish mediation between the Lebanese warring factions toward the conclusion of the Doha Agreement in 2008 and contribution to the Syrian-Lebanese reconciliation.

The PLO similarly endorsed Turkish inclusive and innovative mediation initiatives in the resolution of the Palestinian question by upgrading its relations with Türkiye to the ambassadorial level in 2003. According to respondents in the MFA, the PLO welcomed the AKP's socio-economic and institutional plans of structural prevention that were based on the deployment of material resources and the creation of new development projects. In 2005, Erdoğan concluded agreements for Turkish economic construction of Gaza following the withdrawal of Israeli forces. In addition to the organisation of the International Donor Conference for Palestine in 2007, Türkiye provided 7.7 billion dollars in support for development and reform plans in Palestine, the initiation of institutional reforms in support for the PLO and the Palestinian civil society, and the reconstruction of infrastructure in the Palestinian territories. Also, the Turkish International Cooperation Agency inaugurated a Palestinian Coordination Office for Economic and Social Collaboration in the West Bank in 2008 and initiated the Eretz Industrial Regional Project toward the development of Palestinians' economic and social capacity and the transformation of the conflict into a

potential cooperation.

During peace negotiations, Türkiye's President sought Arab countries' support by referring to the latter's initiatives and road maps underlying the principle of land for peace and by visiting Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia in preparation for the Annapolis conference in 2007. Following the 2009 Israeli Cast Lead Operation in Gaza, Türkiye made diplomatic visits to Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia and met Abbas in order to solve the Gaza crisis and ensure a ceasefire and rapprochement among Palestinian factions under a two-tier plan (Magued, 2010-2012). The AKP took the initiative to organise platforms for facilitating talks between Fatah and Hamas through meetings in Cairo and Damascus in 2007 and called for taking pragmatic steps toward Israel and the PLO, initiating dialogue, preventing violence, and launching a Palestinian constitutional process. Also, Davutoğlu facilitated indirect talks between Syria and Israel in 2008 by securing a place for dialogue, transferring messages, and participating in observation missions. In line with an international recognition of Turkish facilitation in preparation for the World Leaders' Summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, the Arab League acknowledged Türkiye's 'honest' and 'reliable' mediation role, in contrast with Western powers (Magued, 2010-2012).

Multilateralism

In examining Arab countries' engagement with Turkish multilateralism, Arab scholars pointed at the AKP's openness toward dialogue, cooperation, and mutual trust, in addition to its adoption of a positive-sum logic toward national and regional issues (Mouawad, 2011). In this vein, Syria welcomed the AKP's reconciliatory attitude toward Syrian demands of increasing its share in the Euphrates and Tigris water in order to end bilateral conflicts over water partition, hence satisfying the principle of ensuring zero problems with neighbours. Similarly, Gül's (2004) speech in Kuwait was cheered by Gulf leaders who endorsed the AKP's new conception of national interest on the basis of equidistant relations with the Muslim world and the West within a multilateral

framework (al-Labbad, 2011). Syria and Libya applauded the AKP's third-worldist discourse in support for the development of regional initiatives independently from the West and in counterbalance to Israel. Also, Gulf countries were enthusiastic toward the AKP's vision of containing the Iranian and Israeli influences by including the former into Iraq's Neighborhood Initiative and condemning the latter for its Palestinian policy at the Davos Economic Forum in 2008 and the United Nations (UN) in 2010 (Erdoğan, 2008a; Ilyas, 2016).

Syria has also perceived the AKP's multilateralism as a means for solving its longstanding conflicts with Türkiye over the Hatay/Iskenderun region, the Kurdish separatist groups, and the Tigris and Euphrates water distribution (Mahfoud, 2012). In this sense, the AKP's attempts for reconciling Turkish and Arab positions on regional issues were perceived as a hope for addressing stagnant conflicts, including the particularly thorny issue of water distribution.

For their part, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have positively perceived Turkish multilateral initiatives as platforms for extending their political and geostrategic influence, economic investments, and markets toward Europe. The AKP's conciliatory character, combining modernity and tradition, attracted both regimes, but especially the Saudi, to take part in Turkish multilateralism in order to boost their profile as reformist regional actors before the West (Ghanim, 2003). Although Iran's inclusion raised some suspicions from Saudi Arabia and the Emirates, the AKP successfully capitalised on its profile as a Sunni leader to politically contain Iran within the region's moderate camp.

In contrast to most Arab countries, Egypt limited its multilateral engagements with Türkiye to regional issues that touched upon its alliance with the US. Mubarak's conservative, cautious, and non-confrontational character confined Egyptian foreign policy into a reactive mode and a static style, which was manifested by its reluctance toward attempts for improving the regional order (Shama, 2013). Mubarak refused to acknowledge the Turkish regional role and the decline of its own influence

within the Arab League, the main Arab diplomatic forum. Türkiye's rising influence and the consequent relevance of Sunni Muslims could contribute to explain why, following the 2003 US war on Iraq, the new Iraqi government resisted the Arab League's mediation during the rise of inter-confessional strife; the fear of incurring a 'Sunni' pressure that would tilt the balance of power in favour of Sunni Iraqis (Ghali, 2005) could have acted as a deterrent. On the other hand, Kurds questioned the Arab League's intentions in light of the latter's support for Arab regimes' repression of their ethnic minorities across the region. The same predicament was reproduced during the Lebanese presidential crisis in 2006, where Egypt was not able to intervene among Arab countries that exchanged accusations of bias for either one of the conflicting Lebanese parties, the March 14 and March 8 groups, over the selection of the State's president.

Türkiye's Arab neighbours took part in its multilateral initiatives toward the mutual goal of becoming a substitute for the US and EU intervention in the settlement of regional crises. Turkish multilateralism was based on the AKP's notions of regional ownership against foreign intervention and development of common visions about regional issues. According to respondents at the MFA, the wider the cooperation with Arab countries, the more active Turkey was in the region due to the former's accumulated knowledge and experience in solving regional problems (Magued, 2010-2012). In addition to its OIC membership, Türkiye concluded a partnership with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), created free economic zones with Syria, Libya, Iraq, and Jordan, established consultation mechanisms within the OIC, and obtained an observer status in the Arab League. Following the signature of a Framework Agreement and the creation of a Turkish-Arab Cooperation Forum, annual expert meetings were scheduled on the ministerial level in Istanbul (2008 and 2010), Damascus (2009), and Morocco (2011) and ended with declarations and joint recommendations for further cooperation.

According to a former Arab League representative in Ankara, Türkiye and Arab countries shared a vision of regional integration based on the formulation of common projects and the achievement of political and economic interdependence (Magued, 2010-2012). Political interdependence emphasised the reconciliation of Turkish and Arab positions on regional issues and encompassed the development of a strategic partnership in order to overcome common disputes. In this vein, Türkiye's vision of economic interdependence consisted of the development of regional synergies through the diffusion of cooperation mechanisms by means of different levels of interaction.

According to Turkish diplomats, in January 2003, Türkiye launched the Iraqi Neighborhood Initiative in order to develop a common vision about its future and preserve regional stability (Magued, 2010-2012). In order to avoid the outbreak of the war against Iraq, Ankara tried to convince former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to comply with UN Resolution 1441 of 2002 in terms of disarmament. This initiative rallied Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Türkiye, Iraq, and Iran for the formulation of a common regional vision for Iraq's territorial integrity. From 2003 until 2009, the initiative organised nine official and three unofficial summits at the foreign ministers' level in addition to five meetings at the level of ministers of interior, and 3 meetings in Egypt (2007) and Kuwait (2008) that included OIC and Arab League representatives. The initiative's meetings proposed collective projects, such as the railway route between Türkiye and the Gulf countries on one hand, and between Türkiye and al-Aqaba City on the other, for the facilitation of movement of people and goods, as well as an energy pipeline project connecting the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Europe (Magued, 2010-2012).

The Turkish High-Level Council for Strategic Cooperation with Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan reflected an additional framework for cooperation based on the elimination of visa requirements and the conclusion of Free Trade Agreements. These councils managed Turkish water disputes with Syria

and Iraq as a technical issue. They introduced mechanisms for sharing the Tigris and Euphrates rivers' water, such as a systemic and tripartite water needs assessment on the basis of the area of agricultural land and irrigation methods and the development of common mechanisms toward an efficient, optimal, reasonable, and fair use of water (Magued, 2010-2012). In 2007, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for water management and a trilateral agreement established the Joint Technical Committee in order to exchange information on water, manage hydraulic resources, modernise irrigation systems, prevent water loss, and obtain hygienic water.

As for Türkiye's territorial conflicts with Syria and Iraq over the Hatay/Iskenderun region and the Kurdish issue, the three countries concluded Free Trade and visa cancellation agreements in order to bypass the negative effects of the arbitrary process of borders' demarcation, reconsider borders' functions, and alleviate their psychological burden by opening them with neighbours (Erdoğan, 2009). By allowing the free movement of people across borders and the development of twin cities projects and border trade, these multilateral agreements created shared spaces for cooperation across borders in consideration of divided ethnic groups such as the Kurds. In this regard, the Syrian regime ceased claiming Hatay by recognizing Great Britain and France's historic responsibility for regional disintegration through the imposition of artificial borders after World War I (Magued, 2010-2012).

Economic Interdependence

Unlike other tools, economic interdependence rallied an Arab consensus around Türkiye's regional role, bypassing political and ideological differences. The interconnectedness of economic ties with mediation efforts has facilitated an overall Arab acceptance, recognition, and engagement with the Turkish regional power role in the Middle East. The AKP, in fact, met its Arab neighbours' economic expectations through the establishment of economic arrangements that also facilitated the resolution of

regional conflicts, alleviated Iran and Syria's recalcitrant stances vis-à-vis the West, ensured regional integration into the global order, and generated a regional synergy that paved the way toward mutual understanding and cooperation (Erdoğan, 2008b).

Analysts underscored Arab leaders' admiration of the Turkish economy, which has successfully expanded its market and increased its commercial ties through multilateral engagements and agreements and the inclusion of conservative businessmen in decision-making processes (Noureddine, 2009 and Ghanim, 2009). Turkish progress in the EU accession negotiations, adoption of legal and socioeconomic harmonisation packages, and support for professional business associations boosted the AKP's credibility as a reliable economic partner.

Even Egypt started to positively perceive Turkish economic initiatives in support of its own, lagging economy. Suffering from substantive economic crises since the 1990s, Cairo capitalised on Egypt's low cost production and commercial ties with Western and regional partners to conclude economic treaties and trade agreements with private Turkish investors and companies (Magued, 2010-2012).

Trade relations constituted the main pillar of Turkish economic ties with Arab countries. Since 2002, among Turkish National Flight Company's 58 routes, 14 were assigned for the MENA region. From 2002 to 2009, the share of Turkish exports to the Middle East increased from 9% to 18% and reached 30 billion dollars in 2011 while its share in Turkish foreign trade increased by 27% in 2008 and reached 3.1 billion dollars in 2009. Turkish exports to the GCC went from 2.1 to 8 billion dollars between 2002 and 2009 (Magued, 2010-2012). According to respondents at the Ministry of Economy, in May 2005, a MoU was signed between Türkiye and the GCC for developing economic relations, exchanging expertise in technology and information, and establishing free trade areas. Gulf countries designated Türkiye as their economic mediator in

2004 with North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the EU and strategic partner in 2008 in addition to the conclusion of another MoU for the creation of regular consultation mechanisms on economic, political, and security matters.

Iraq and Syria were the main Arab partners in the crystallisation of Turkish economic interdependence efforts in the Middle East. From 2002 to 2009, Syria's trade with Türkiye increased from 773 million to 1.8 billion dollars in addition to the conclusion of 48 investment agreements in real construction, the service sector, and textiles in bordering regions (Magued, 2010-2012). In the same vein, Iraq concluded 40 investment agreements for railways and oil/gas pipeline construction. Iraq's Kurdish Autonomous Region witnessed Turkish investments in construction and infrastructure that constituted 50% of total foreign investments in Northern Iraq in light of truck-based relations, border trade in the service sector and textiles, continuous flights, and Turkish business associations' ties with Kurdish leaders (Magued, 2010-2012). Iraq imported 24% of its needs from Türkiye and established 10% of its economy on Turkish investments in energy and construction in Erbil and Basra.

Starting in 2005, Egypt multiplied its trade relations with Türkiye. Following the conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement in 2007 and the creation of the Common Economic Commission, the Turkish-Egyptian Business Forum, and the High Level Trade Advisory Council, bilateral trade steadily increased from 1.5 billion dollars in 2007 to 2.5 billion dollars in 2008 and 3 billion dollars in 2009 with 44%, 50%, and 115% growth rates (Magued, 2010-2012). In 2008, Egypt approved the 5 billion dollars investments of 300 large and medium-sized Turkish companies. Also, it allocated seven million square metres of land for Turkish textiles companies affiliated to two commercial and business associations with close ties to the Turkish government (Massicard 2014, p. 15), TÜSKON (Türkiye İş Adamları ve Sanayiciler Konfederasyonu - Turkish Confederation of Industrialists and

Businessmen) and MÜSIAD (Müstakil Sanayıcı ve İşadamları Derneği - Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association), with an investment value of 338 million dollars (Magued, 2010-2012).

ARAB COUNTRIES' EXPECTATIONS AND REACTIONS TOWARD TÜRKİYE'S REGIONAL POWER ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AFTER THE ARAB SPRING REVOLUTIONS (2011-2021)

While Arab leaders' expectations coalesced with the AKP's regional initiatives before the Arab uprisings, disagreements have emerged following Erdoğan's explicit stances and varied reactions toward public unrests across Arab countries. In light of the concept of contested roles, national roles are both conceived and successfully implemented through a bargaining process among elites in disagreement (McCourt, 2012; Cantir and Kaarbo, 2016; Aggestam, 1999; 2006; Wish, 1980). According to these assumptions, external actors would only engage in the concretization of a country's regional and/or international role provided the latter meets their expectations as it does for the ruling elite members. Following the Arab uprisings, Türkiye's ambiguous and varied reactions toward public calls for political change antagonised Arab leaders, notably in Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Iraq, by threatening their ruling regimes' political legitimacy. Divergence between Arab and Turkish leaders' expectations has reversed Arab countries' positive reactions toward Türkiye's power role and limited the AKP's regional margin of manoeuvre. The uprisings marked an inflection point leading to the re-emergence of Turkish-Arab tensions, which have distorted the interactive dimension of Turkish power role in the Middle East in light of swift shifts in Arab countries' perception of the AKP's regional engagements. Also, the AKP's staunch support for Islamists in Egypt, Libya, and Syria incited Arab countries to boycott Turkish regional initiatives, which has narrowed Türkiye's regional power role since 2012.

Unlike Erdoğan's supportive position of the Egyptian and Tunisian uprisings, he expressed an understated opposition to public revolts in Libya, Bahrain, and

Oman, in addition to a gradual endorsement of Libya's unrest based on the Turkish regime's interests with each of these countries. While the AKP had limited interests in and ties with the Mubarak and Ben Ali regimes, it developed extensive investment and economic projects with Syria, Libya, and the Gulf countries. Most Arab leaders perceived negatively the AKP's positions toward the uprisings—with Egypt as a temporary exception. The Brothers' success in parliamentary (2011) and presidential elections (2012) introduced a short-lived phase of sociopolitical revival in bilateral relations between Cairo and Ankara. From 2011 until 2013, the AKP's and the Brothers' leading officials exchanged multiple visits and concluded extensive economic agreements toward a political partnership based on a shared vision of regional ownership of the Palestinian question and of economic relations (Magued, 2020; Mouawad, 2011; 2014; al-Labbad, 2011).

Egypt's military establishment, however, remained suspicious toward this rapprochement, especially in light of Erdoğan's and Gül's statements calling for the end of Mubarak's authoritarian rule and power transition to a civil authority. The AKP leaders' regular meetings and provision of financial support to the Brothers' Freedom and Justice Party within the framework of the Turkish-Egyptian High-Level Council for Strategic Cooperation further alarmed the Egyptian army, fearing a strong Turkish influence on national politics (Mouawad, 2014). This suspicion turned into public animosity following the Brothers' ouster in 2013, as exemplified by the AKP's portrayal as a national enemy throughout extensive Egyptian media outlets. As a reaction, the AKP leadership launched a staunch attack against the military coup on international media of communication, openly supported the exiled Muslim Brothers, and legally and financially sponsored television channels that acted as opposition tribunes in Istanbul. The AKP has also supported the Brothers-affiliated former Egyptian President, Mohammed Morsi, and called on the international community to impose sanctions on the new President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi rule in 2014,

which resulted in the downgrading of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Türkiye to the level of *chargés d'affaires* (Magued, 2018).

Gulf countries have followed suit. Under a Saudi-Emirati leadership, the GCC declared its support for the Egyptian military coup, politically boycotted Türkiye and provided Egypt hefty financial packages for revitalising its economy (al-Jarrah, 2020). Gulf countries perceived the Brothers' accession to power in Egypt as an instigation for an Islamist rebellion, as was manifested during the uprisings in Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Bahrain. Together with the al-Sisi regime, they listed the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist group and perceived the AKP's harsh criticism against the new Egyptian President as an illegitimate intervention in Egyptian internal affairs. Gulf countries' solidarity with Egypt put remarkable pressure on the AKP's regional credibility and success, especially considering Türkiye's large economic investments in the GCC. On the other hand, Davutoğlu's frequent pressure on the al-Assad regime for introducing gradual political reforms and satisfying public demands were not only overlooked but also ignited waves of animosity between both regimes (Magued, 2020). By hosting the Islamic opposition and welcoming their political meetings in Istanbul, Türkiye officially declared its opposition to al-Assad's rule, thus marking the end of the Turkish-Syrian friendship.

In addition to the AKP's ambiguous position toward the uprisings, which discredited Türkiye's credibility among Arab countries, Turkish national politics prompted the former to resort to power politics (Magued, 2022). The Arab uprisings coincided with increased turbulence in Turkish national politics. Between 2007 and 2017, the Turkish General Prosecution embarked on a series of investigations over charges against highly-ranked military officials for plotting against the ruling regime and engaging in illicit activities, known as the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer affairs. Also, the regime launched a systematic purge of opponents from administrative and educational institutions in the aftermath of a failed military coup in 2016. Following the Gezi Park

protests in 2013 (the year that witnessed its ally's ousting in Egypt) in contestation of the party's decision of turning a public park into a commercial business project, this coup resulted in the intensification of the AKP's sweeping arrests campaign against opponents and censorship over freedom of expression. In order to tighten its grip on power, the regime disrupted its alliance with a grassroots Islamic philanthropic group, known as the Gülen movement or Hizmet, and broke its truce with Kurdish militants by launching repressive military campaigns against Kurdish cities and villages. Starting in 2018, this national instability had a spillover effect on Turkish regional policy that condoned a rising nationalist tone within the ruling coalition, which included the Nationalist Movement Party (Milli Hareket Partisi).

Türkiye's recourse to military power in response to the Arab uprisings' massive externalities that threatened Turkish regional interests dissipated the possible persistence of a consensual power role in the Middle East with the support of Arab countries (Mouawad 2014; Emirates Policy Center, 2020). Partly as a result of the narrowing of its room for manoeuvre as a regional power following the rise in tensions between it and many Arab countries following the 2011 Arab Spring revolutions and partly for internal political reasons, Türkiye adopted starting in 2013 a regional policy based on antagonist adventurism and interventionist moves. This resulted in a vicious circle of further sharp decline in the AKP's popularity in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan as revealed by the Arab Barometer's survey about Turkish perception in Arab countries (Ceyhun, 2018). The lack of control on common borders, the surge of Syrian and Turkish Kurd demands for regions with autonomous administration similar to the Kurdish Regional Government of Iraq, and the Islamic State's establishment of a self-styled 'caliphate' in Syria and Iraq and its ongoing exploitation of refugees' dire conditions for recruiting members incited the AKP to abandon soft-power tools and develop irreconcilable expectations and interests with Arab leaders. This

normative and operational shift in the foundations of Türkiye's regional policy has entrenched a gap between the AKP and Arab leaders' expectations of a Turkish power role in the Middle East on the basis of a normative leadership, economic interdependence, multilateralism, and mediation.

As a result, coercion has regionally isolated the AKP and strained its relations with Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Libya, and the Gulf countries (Magued, 2018). Turkish frequent military excursions into Syrian and Iraqi territories, such as the Euphrates Shield Operations in 2016 and the Olive Branch Operation in 2018, have interrupted bilateral relations with Syria and instigated Iraq's reservations over the AKP's financial and logistical support for the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and the Islamist faction of al-Nusra Front (Louis et al., 2018). The AKP's raids against al-Assad controlled territories in Syria, opposition to the Iranian and Russian pro-Assad policies, and security coordination with the Kurdistan Regional Government in managing Kurdish insurgents contrasted with Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki's support for al-Assad, tight relations with Iran and Hezbollah, and opposition to the presence of Turkish intelligence in Northern Iraq. Similarly to his predecessor, Iraqi Prime Minister Mostafa al-Kadhimi expressed his concerns over Turkish military incursions in Northern Iraq and attacks against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê, or PKK), which spurred tensions in Turkish relations with the Kurdish Regional Government and the Iraqi Central Government (Magued, 2021). Iraqi officials condemned the resulting civilian death toll, the frequent visits of Turkish officials, and presence of military bases in Northern Iraq where PKK fighters were still active. Similarly, the al-Assad regime perceived the AKP as an interventionist and pro-Western agent conspiring against Syria's national unity and territorial integrity (Khakani, 2017).

The AKP's military support for Fayez al-Sarrag, the Islamist leader of the Tobruk House of Representatives, over the military-backed Presidency

of Khalifa Haftar in Tripoli, through the dispatch of troops and Islamist fighters undermined Turkish investments in Libya and strained its relations with Gulf countries and Egypt. Turkish ties with al-Sarrag antagonised Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, and Egypt who, in line with their fight against terrorism and the rise of Islamist regimes, cooperated with Haftar and supported the deployment of Egyptian troops in Libya in case of Turkish intervention (Emirates Policy Center, 2020). In response to the AKP's signing of two naval and security MoUs and a maritime demarcation deal with al-Sarrag in November 2019, Haftar approved the dispatch of Egyptian troops to Eastern Libya in 2020 (al-Salibi, 2020).

In light of Turkish ties with radical mercenaries in the region, Egypt endorsed Iraqi Prime Minister Mostafa al-Kadhimi's proposition of quadrilateral coordination involving Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria for maintaining regional stability vis-a-vis Türkiye's regional excursions (Magued, 2020). Turkish unilateral exploitation of gas fields in the East Mediterranean zone prompted Egypt, alongside Greece and Cyprus, to initiate the East Mediterranean Forum encompassing neighbouring countries in addition to international and regional observers in October 2018 (al-Desuqi, 2020). Acting as the moderator of a regional platform, Egypt signed a separate maritime demarcation deal with Greece in August 2020 in the aim of protecting mutual rights of gas exploitation vis-a-vis what they perceived as Turkey's violation of their maritime borders.

CONCLUSION

By over-emphasising disagreements and divergence among national elites over a country's external role formulation, the national role theory's interactive approach has overlooked external actors' influence on a state's national role conception and crystallisation. Unlike the existing literature's focus on the national dimension, this study addresses convergence and disagreements between a country's national elites and external leaders in the formulation and implementation of that state's

national role on the global stage. To do so, it relies on the triangulation of the results obtained by applying three qualitative research methods: the text analysis of Arab scholarship addressing Türkiye's foreign policy, the author's open-ended and semi-structured expert in-depth interviews with Turkish officials, and the analysis of the AKP leaders' speeches between 2002 and 2012. Combining the influence of local elites and external leaders' disagreements in expectations and reactions on role formulation and manifestation, this study argues that a state's regional role cannot be conceived and concretized without the conciliation by a state's foreign policy elite of external leaders' expectations, in order to receive a supportive reaction from them. Borrowing Cantir and Kaarbo (2016)'s contested roles framework, this study argues that the convergence of Turkish and Arab leaders' expectations from Türkiye's regional power role contributed to its successful formulation and implementation in the Middle East from 2002 until 2010, whilst the surge of disagreements following the Arab uprisings of 2011 narrowed Türkiye's room of manoeuvre as a regional power role and undermined the credibility of its soft power tools, such as mediation, normative leadership, economic interdependence, and multilateralism. Before 2011, in spite of Egypt's opposition to Türkiye's regional power role, the conciliation of Arab and Turkish leaders' interests and expectations from the AKP's regional initiatives and projects had incentivised the former to eventually take part in them and, thus, entrenched a regional recognition of Türkiye's role as a mediator, economic initiator, multilateral player, and regional leader. The AKP's involvement of Arab leaders and the latter's positive reaction have not only endorsed Türkiye's position as a regional power but also nullified Egypt's reticence toward Ankara's gradual takeover of its traditional leadership role. Yet, the eruption of Arab revolts in 2011 have challenged the normative foundations of Türkiye's emerging regional role in light of its ambiguous positioning toward the different uprisings in function of common interests and its unilateral pursuit of security interests with military force. In line with the

contested roles concept, the growing gap between Arab and Turkish leaders' regional expectations and interests has abruptly ended the conciliation period and underlined mutual tension as a major hurdle toward the crystallisation of a Turkish regional power role. Arab leaders' changing perception of the AKP's regional intentions and interests in light of its varying stance toward the different uprisings, support for Islamists' ascendance to power, and pursuit of security interests with military means have discredited Türkiye's external power role and prompted Arab countries' rejection of the AKP's tools of action, perceived as violations of their countries' sovereignty and right of self-determination.

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"A SOLIDARITY OF FEAR?": RISK SOCIETY PERCEPTIONS IN GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL (GCC) COUNTRIES POST-COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

The coronavirus pandemic has brought to the forefront the concept of "risk society", first proposed by Ulrich Beck in the 1980s. Based on this concept, this paper attempts to analyse the ongoing changes to threat perception in the GCC region and the new risk culture formulated during the coronavirus pandemic in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar. The paper relies on a qualitative content analysis of a sample of writings by Gulf intellectual elites reacting to traditional and non-traditional threats in GCC countries, in order to identify changes in the features of risk-society perceptions in the GCC region.

Keywords: Coronavirus, Risk society, Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia

INTRODUCTION

On January 29, 2020, the first coronavirus infection in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries was announced in the UAE (Turak, 2020), followed shortly thereafter by Qatar's announcement of its first case on February 29, 2020 (Reuters, 2020), and Saudi Arabia's first coronavirus case on March 2, 2020 (Saudi Ministry of Health, 2020). Cases in the countries under study increased gradually to the degree that Gulf states' governments initiated lockdowns and curfews and took extraordinary and unusual measures.

Considering this extraordinary situation, many sociologists have reconsidered the concept of risk society put forth by sociologist Ulrich Beck in the 1980s. Although Beck focuses specifically on the risks stemming from technological and scientific advances, some studies have already expanded the

concept of risk society to a wider study of risks than he initially mentioned (Alauddin et al., 2020, p.502). This has encouraged social science theorists to apply the concept to the Coronavirus case (Covid 19), especially since much of what risk-society theorists have studied applies to the situation in post-pandemic societies.

This research paper attempts to apply the concept of risk society to three Gulf states—Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Qatar—focusing specifically on how Gulf intellectual elites have reacted to the post-pandemic risk society and their perceptions of the nature of the threats and the post-coronavirus shape of the world. This was done through a content analysis of opinion columns written by Gulf intellectuals, writers, and university professors.

The paper argues that the perception of risks and threats in GCC-countries has increased significantly following the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic. It also proposes that individuals in these societies have played a more active role in confronting these threats compared to the past, when states assumed responsibility for addressing such issues. These transformations have empowered and expanded the role of individuals and societies and have also brought greater attention to non-traditional threats.

RISK SOCIETY IN THE LITERATURE

The idea of risk was brought to the forefront of sociological theorization in 1986 with the publication of Beck (1992)'s book, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. Beck later presented many writings on risk society, and Anthony Giddens (1999) helped refine this concept.

The thesis of "risk society" has gained greater

traction over time, especially given the complex and interconnected challenges that countries face. Modernity and the processes accompanying the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial society are associated with a set of global risks created by escalating scientific and technological activity. Paradoxically, in order to handle these risks, societies have a greater need for science and technology, which alone can provide the conceptual and technical tools that enable humanity to understand, identify, assess, classify, and protect against these risks (Boudia and Jas, 2007, p. 317).

Beck emphasised the historical nature of the existence of risks. According to Beck, risks are not a novelty of the modern age but have been with humans throughout various time periods. However, in the past, risks were personal rather than global (Beck, 1992, p. 21). Individuals have always faced risks, but fate (*fatum*) and chance (*tyche*) provided them with reasonable explanations for these risks. Another key difference between the risks of today and the past is that in the past, risks were perceived with the five senses, while today they are intangible. Beck argues, "It is nevertheless striking that hazards in those days assaulted the nose or the eyes and were thus perceptible to the senses, while the risks of civilization today typically escape perception and are localised in the sphere of physical and chemical formulas" (1992, p. 21).

There are also "environments of risk" that collectively affect large masses of individuals in some cases, and possibly everyone on Earth, as in the case of environmental disasters or nuclear war (Giddens, 1990). Risk society is a product of reflexive modernity. Society first went through the pre-modernity stage, known as 'traditional society', followed by the 'simple modernity' of the industrial society during which rapid industrial development and the accumulation of wealth appeared, and finally, 'second modernity', the period of ongoing industrial progress during which society faces many

problems stemming from economic and technological advancement. The basic principle of industrial society is the distribution of goods. In contrast, the main principle of reflexive modernity is the distribution of "bads," or dangers, such as pollution and contamination, etc. (Lash and Wynne, 1992, p.3). The word reflexive refers to a 'boomerang' effect, where mostly unplanned results of production processes in modern societies backfire on these societies and force them to change—certainly not a consciously planned chain of events (Wimmer and Quandt, 2007). By contrast, Anthony Giddens (1999) does not believe that society faces worse risks than previous societies but has become more desirous of controlling the future and more focused on achieving safety.

Beck and Giddens have faced several critiques of their focus on risks arising from technological advancement and scientific development. The first critique is that they ignore the many social benefits of science and technology. For example, Alan Irwin notes that Beck was overly critical of science and technology and insufficiently aware of the progressive potential of the new technologies. The second critique comes from Meryn Ekberg's insightful study of risk society, in which he notes that risk-society theorists have pointed out that what distinguishes risk society is increased technological risks compared to natural risks. However, he notes that natural disasters, including epidemics and meteorological and geological disasters, cause greater loss of life and property damage than any technological accident (Ekberg, 2007, pp. 360-362).

Generally speaking, theorists have differed over the sources of threats in a risk society and whether there is intentionality in the creation and spread of risks. However, the tacit agreement among the majority of these thinkers is that there is a realisation of risks and an awareness even of those that have not occurred. Ulrich Beck notes that modern society has become increasingly preoccupied with discussing, preventing, and managing the risks that it has produced. The matter is further complicated within what Beck calls a "world risk society" and de-localization, meaning that the causes and

consequences of risks are not limited to a geographical location or defined space (Beck, 2006, p. 333).

Moreover, limiting incalculableness, in one form or another, reduces the consequences and effects of risks. The third principle depends on non-compensability in the event of a disaster or risk. In this context, the principle of "precaution through prevention" is pushed as an alternative to the logic of compensation. The main goal is to attempt to anticipate and prevent unverified risks (Beck, 2006, p. 334).

Despite all the scientific progress and technological development, a state of uncertainty prevails that negatively affects awareness of and preparation for potential risks—or what some literature calls "uncertain risk" to refer to the uncertainty regarding the presence or absence of risks (Jansen et al., 2019, p.659).

In a risk society, everyone faces risks equally, regardless of class. Beck believes that this is because of the boomerang effect, where even the wealthiest people and those who benefit the most from the production of risks cannot escape risk society because shrinking "private escape routes" create equality between the rich and the poor (Curran, 2013, p. 48). However, Beck contradicts himself when he notes that "Poverty attracts unfortunate abundance of risks" (1992, p. 21). Furthermore, according to Beck, risk society refers to a global distribution and shared experience of risks, which is not reflected in contemporary reality because the global distribution of "bads" appears unequal and disproportionate among nations (Mythen, 2007, pp.799-800). Notwithstanding the criticisms directed at Beck in this regard, he drew attention to the fact that no one is completely safe from risks, which leads to a solidarity of fear rather than a solidarity of need (Tavares and Barbosa, 2014, p.22).

Although science and knowledge could be the main exit from risk society, there is a loss of faith in experts and the ability of science to predict and effectively

protect people from these technological risks. Competing claims of knowledge increase the state of doubt, the so-called 'erosion of expert consensus'. In short, scepticism towards science arises, in particular with individuals' awareness of the limits of science (Baxter, 2019, p.305). Fear of those who talk about risks, and not of the risks themselves, is called "scapegoat society," wherein, as Ulrich Beck (1990, p. 68) describes it, "the general anxiety shifts its focus from the risks to those discussing those risks."

Lucas Bergkamp argues that the rise of the risk society represents a crisis in effectively managing risk with a focus on how to distribute risks, and it misdirects resources because of a lack of adequate risk prioritisation, giving birth to the problem of NIMBY-ism, not to mention the crisis of the legitimacy of science in our society. Thus, Bergkamp (2016, pp.1287-1289) believes that the threat comes from the risk society itself: "The risk society is a dead end. Rather than industry, the real threat is risk society itself." This means that the real threat comes from the shortcomings of risk society itself and its inability to adapt to internal and external changes, thus increasing its vulnerability.

FEATURES OF RISK SOCIETY IN THE ARAB GULF STATES

The coronavirus pandemic can be considered a decisive turning point in the vision needed to react to risks in the Arab Gulf region, where, for decades, traditional security threats have been the most pressing concern of decision-makers and public opinion makers vis-à-vis the survival, cohesion, and territorial integrity of states. While non-traditional security threats were not new to the Arab Gulf states, they ranked relatively low among the threats to national security in most of these countries due to the presence of more urgent threats from the viewpoint of the ruling regimes, such as the Iranian nuclear program and the development of Iranian military capabilities—especially ballistic missiles and drones, the activities of sectarian armed militias, disputes over regional primacy, the expansion of political Islam and terrorist organisations, and other security and military threats (Arafat, 2020, pp. 199-200).

The unique situation of 'risk society' in the Arab Gulf following the coronavirus pandemic put non-traditional security threats at the forefront. The statement of Mohammed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, in March 2020—to the effect that "medicine and food are a red line in the UAE that must be secured for our people indefinitely" (UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2020)—perhaps reveals a growing attention to non-traditional security threats and a rising focus on health and food security amidst the turmoil in the medical and food supply chains at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic.

The other key dimension of change in the state of risk society during the coronavirus pandemic is the rising role of individuals in facing non-traditional threats compared to the state's previous dominance in confronting traditional security threats. Numerous groups were empowered and considered the "first line of defence" in facing coronavirus threats, including healthcare workers and volunteers in hospitals and nursing homes (SEHA, 2020; Saati, 2020). Individuals became responsible for stopping the outbreak of the pandemic by following preventive measures and adhering to safety instructions.

In May 2020, within the framework of its plans to counter the coronavirus outbreak, the UAE launched an awareness campaign under the slogan, "You Are Responsible." The campaign focused on warning of the negative impact of individuals and families failing to comply with procedures and instructions. It also called on society to maintain the gains that had been achieved since the beginning of the crisis by adhering to precautionary measures (Amin, 2020).

The responsibility of individuals and society in combating the coronavirus pandemic was reflected in the statements of Dr. Farida Al Hosani (2021), Director of the Department of Communicable Diseases at the Abu Dhabi Public Health Center, in May 2021, on the responsibility of vaccine-hesitant members of the community for the increasing number of infections, stressing that "the delay of some members of the community in getting the vaccine harms the person and those around him."

In the same vein, the Center for Government Communication at the Saudi Ministry of Information launched new awareness campaigns to combat COVID-19 in January 2022, as an extension of the "We Are All Responsible" and "We Return With Caution" campaigns. The new Saudi campaign, under the slogan "Our Immunity Is Life," urged individuals to get the vaccine and booster doses with the goal of returning to everyday life. The identifying colours merged green with blue as an expression of society's solidarity in implementing precautionary measures to reach full immunity (Saudi Center for Government Communication, 2022).

Although individuals and communities bore significant responsibility during the period of combatting the pandemic, leadership for managing the crisis and confronting the pandemic remained the exclusive domain of the state and its safety and health authorities. Committees and institutions for managing the crises and health emergencies established rules and imposed controls and precautionary measures for combatting the pandemic, and individuals were responsible for following these rules, otherwise, harsh penalties would be imposed on them for exposing the community to risk (UAE Ministry of Labor, 2020; CNN Arabic, 2021).

State control was strengthened by the expansion of monitoring and tracking mechanisms and societal acceptance of using various tools to monitor compliance with precautionary measures. Surveillance cameras were deployed in public places to monitor those failing to comply with mask-wearing. Tracking devices were used to ensure that infected people were quarantined in their homes until they had recovered. Health applications were also used to track cases, contacts, and rates of and timely doses of anti-coronavirus vaccines. In other words, this strengthened the state's authority and ability to control the behaviour of individuals during the pandemic (France 24, 2020).

There are several indicators of the high degree of confidence in the state's response to the coronavirus

pandemic, including many videos on social media of citizens and expatriates enthusiastic about the UAE's national activity and expressing their appreciation for the state's efforts to protect them (AlArabiya.net, 'Shāhid,' 2020). Qatar and Saudi Arabia also witnessed similar phenomena (AlArabiya.net, 'Min shurafāt al-manāzil,' 2020). There was also relative acceptance of the authorities' management of the flow of information, starting with statistics on cases and deaths, continuing through the status of the outbreak of the virus and the prevention measures to be followed, and ending with the imposed treatment protocols and procedures for dealing with chronic cases. This can be compared to other countries that witnessed societal rebellion against the state's knowledge-based authority during the pandemic, whether by adopting alternative treatment protocols, rejecting precautionary and preventive measures, questioning the safety of vaccines and their side effects on public health (CDC, 2021), or even politicising the reaction to the pandemic or transferring political divisions to the handling of the coronavirus outbreak (Durkee, 2021).

Citizens' and residents' demand for experiments to test the effectiveness of vaccines in the UAE, for example, is evidence of their confidence in state institutions. Large numbers volunteered to test Russian and Chinese vaccines in the UAE, without coercion from the state, despite being in the initial stages of development (Emirates News Agency, August 2020)—especially since the terms and conditions of the experiments held individuals responsible for taking the vaccines in accordance with the declarations signed by them (Bayoum, 2020). Moreover, vaccination rates have reached record levels in several Arab Gulf states. In the early stages, this also reveals the acceptance of the state's health authority over individuals (National Emergency Crisis and Disasters Management Authority, 2022; Qatar Ministry of Public Health, no date).

POST-PANDEMIC THREATS TO THE GULF STATES

In order to understand how intellectual elites in the Gulf perceive COVID-19 threats and risks, this paper's author conducted a content analysis of opinion columns by Gulf writers in the most widely-circulated digital newspapers in three countries: Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar.

Two newspapers each were chosen from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE based on the most-visited news sites for each country (as per statistics on site traffic generated by Similarweb, which ranks websites from different countries by the number of visitors), excluding papers that lack a full electronic archive of their opinion columns or which do not publish opinion columns. Based on these criteria, the following newspapers were selected: al-Ittihad and al-Khaleej (from the UAE), al-Raya and al-Sharq (from Qatar), and Okaz and al-Riyadh (from Saudi Arabia)

The content analysis was conducted on columns published during the period between 29 January 2020—when the first COVID-19 case was recorded in the Gulf (in the UAE) (Emirates News Agency, January 2020)—and May 2022. There were 903 articles included in the study. Table (1) shows the number of Emirati, Qatari, and Saudi writers whose articles were included in the content analysis, while Table (2) depicts the professional background of the articles' authors.

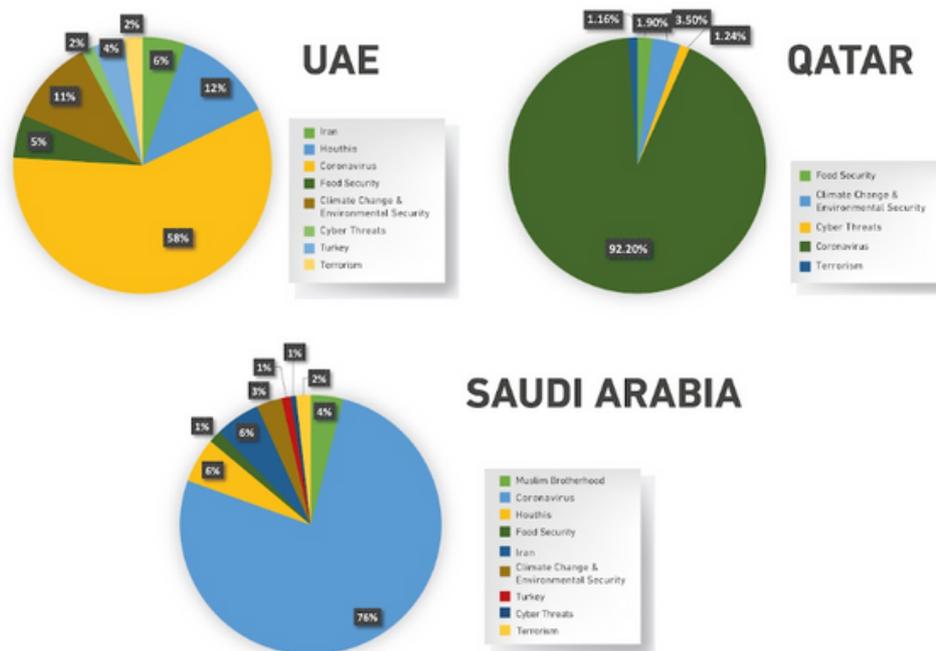
Table (1): Number of Opinion Column Writers by Country

Country	Number of Writers
UAE	73
Qatar	90
Saudi Arabia	164
Total	327

Table (2): Professional Background of Opinion Column Writers

Profession	Number of Writers
Media Professional (editor-in-chief, journalist, TV or radio presenter, etc.)	128
Academic (university professor, researcher, etc.)	113
Government Official (in office either before or after the article was published)	41
Legal Profession (retired judge or lawyer)	12
Physician	16
Religious Profession (official religious position, host of a religious TV/radio program, etc.)	8
Military (retired)	9

Figure (1): Risks Facing Some Gulf Countries According to Opinion Columnists Between January 2020 and May 2022



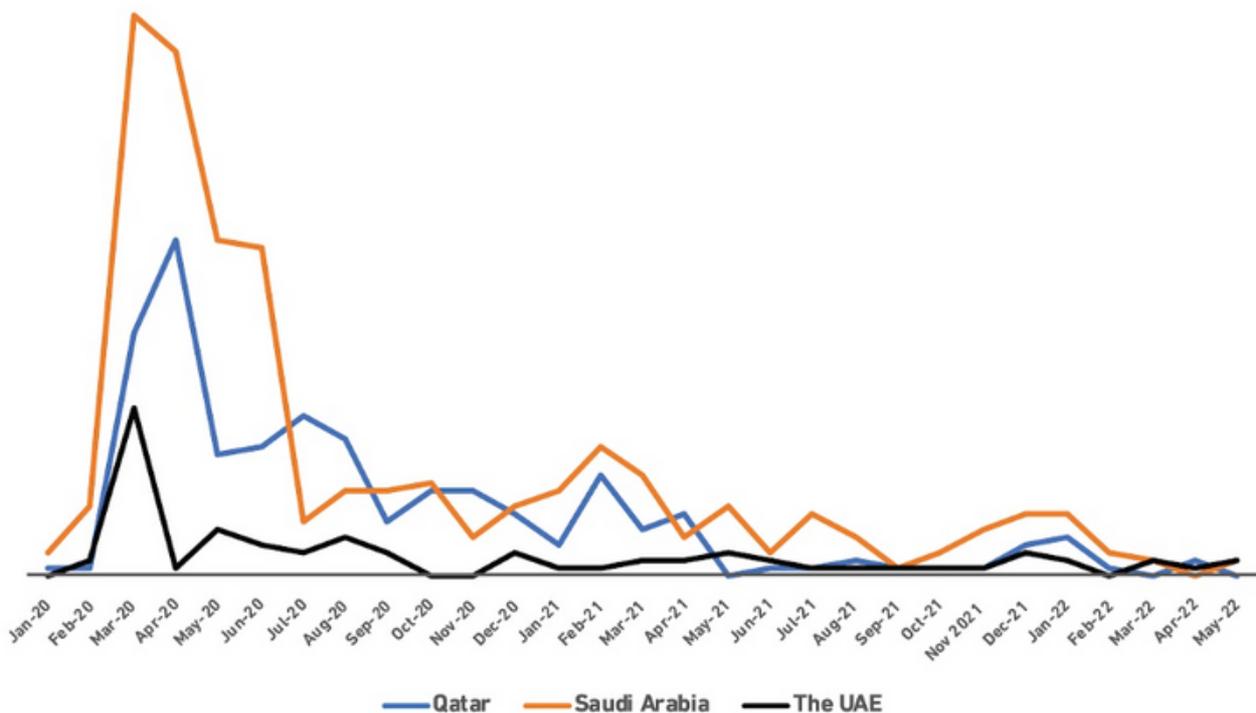
Source: Graphics made by the author based on articles collected from six Gulf newspapers.

Figure (1) shows the number of opinion columns by Gulf writers discussing security risks and threats in articles published during the aforementioned period of time. COVID-19 risks and threats were the main area of focus, and were the subject of 58 percent of articles discussing security risks in the UAE, 92.2 percent of articles in Qatar, and 76 percent articles in Saudi Arabia during this period.

Most of these articles were written between February and June 2020, when COVID-19 first emerged as a threat. Generally speaking, the number of articles discussing the threat of COVID-19 increased during the initial phases of the pandemic, and then decreased as people became more accustomed to living with the virus, as shown in Figure (2) below.

Despite the increasing focus on the threat of COVID-19 in opinion columns, traditional threats remained important issues of discussion. Articles published on traditional security issues in the UAE made up 24 percent of articles on security issues during this period. In the UAE, traditional security issues included Iran, the Houthis, terrorism, and Türkiye during a period of tension between the UAE and Türkiye, especially in Libya. In Saudi Arabia, traditional security threats comprised 16 percent of all opinion pieces on security risks; these threats included the Muslim Brotherhood, the Houthis, Iran, Türkiye, and terrorism. In contrast, the only traditional threat discussed in Qatari opinion columns during the period in question was terrorism, which comprised only 1.16 percent of Qatari articles included in the study.

Figure 2: Number of Articles Published on COVID-19 (January 2020 to May 2022)



Source: Graphics made by the author based on articles collected from six Gulf newspapers.

In all three countries, the expanded focus on COVID-19 was accompanied by growing concerns about other nontraditional security issues, including food security, climate change and environmental risks, and cyber security. These issues were less prominent relative to the threat of COVID-19. Most of the traditional and non-traditional security issues that preoccupied Gulf opinion columnists were similar to those dominating official Gulf discourse during this period. These other security issues existed before COVID-19, but the pandemic prompted opinion columnists to focus more on COVID-19. However, other risks and threats remained a topic of concern. This aligns with British sociologist Hilary Rose's argument that Ulrich Beck was "overly optimistic in assuming that pre-risk society risks have disappeared" (Ekberg, 2007, p. 360). In reality, risk society coexists with pre-risk society to form a hybrid society that includes a debate among the different attitudes toward the priority of traditional and non-traditional threats and risks.

GULF INTELLECTUAL ELITES' REACTION TO THE RISKS OF CORONAVIRUS

According to many writers, Covid 19 represented a turning point and the end of the safe era. For example, Emirati researcher Salem Salmin Al Nuaimi (2021) pointed out that "the global coronavirus pandemic is the culmination of the era of risks and the end of the safe era. Everything has become a danger and a threat." Saudi writer and assistant professor of the history of Islamic civilization, Abdullah Al Rashid, cites Anthony Giddens to the effect that our world is seeing risks never before faced in the past. Al Rashid agrees with Giddens, noting that, despite scientific progress, people are losing control of the Earth, day by day. According to Al Rashid, the greatest question that must be asked is, "Were the tsunami in the Indian Ocean, the tsunami in Japan, the spread of coronavirus, and the like, merely natural occurrences or the result of human misuse of the resources of planet Earth?" He also poses another question: "Are floods, earthquakes, epidemics, famines, and droughts

natural events or the result of human influences that have led to the disruption of Earth's balance?" (Rashid, 2020).

Many opinion columnists adopted conspiracy theories and narratives lacking scientific evidence because of information failures in the initial stages of the Covid 19 outbreak. For example, the Saudi journalist and media affairs researcher Badr bin Saud (February 2020) implicitly accused the United States of being responsible for spreading the virus as part of its efforts to curb China's rise. Qatari writer Abdullah Al Emadi (2020) believed that coronavirus might have been manufactured to achieve gains for a select few globally, perhaps in the form of countries, transnational corporations, or the like. The Saudi writer, Ahmed Awwad (2020) agreed with him, pointing out that coronavirus may have been leaked from a medical laboratory or spread by a country's intelligence services to achieve specific goals. Some writers thought that Covid-19 might be natural but speculated that the virus would be used against third-world peoples and that secret arrangements for dividing gains between the Western countries might be carried out in the post-coronavirus world (Flamerzi, 2020). Some conspiracy theories were politicised: for example, the former editor-in-chief of Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper, Mohammed al-Saed (2020), indicated that Turkish President R.T. Erdogan intentionally spread coronavirus into Europe through an elaborate plan. Most of these articles were published amid the initial confusion surrounding the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic. Conspiracy narratives usually spread with each occurring crisis and epidemic. An atmosphere of fear, ignorance, uncertainty and chaos prompts some individuals to seek out the secret, or even known, party behind the crisis to spin an explanatory story that creates meaning for them amid the events and daily interactions in times of epidemic (Ali, K.H., 2020). On the other hand, some articles maintained a degree of rationality in explaining the epidemic and tried to refute conspiracy theories with logic, especially since the GCC governments were characterised mainly by rationality and the debunking of myths (Makki, 2020; Mohammadi, October 2020; Awadi, 2020).

Given the absence of clear explanations and practical solutions on the part of science, especially in the early stages of the pandemic, some opinion writers were sceptical of the science and experts due to the conflicting opinions of experts and the World Health Organization when coronavirus first emerged. For example, Saudi journalist Emad Al Abbad (2020) noted that "at the beginning of the coronavirus crisis, the world turned to the WHO as the most important authority for handling such pandemics that threaten human health...What it published became the sole guide for dealing with the epidemic, given its expertise and the large army of experts working with it. However, this confidence in the WHO shifted to doubt and distrust because of the obvious confusion in its messaging."

Similarly, Abdulla Al Suwaiji, the director of the Higher Colleges of Technology in Sharjah, gave several examples of how the WHO's confused statements and exaggeration frightened people. For example, the WHO suggested that Covid 19 is transmitted by touching contaminated surfaces, and it overstated its reassurance by declaring that those infected with the virus acquire long-term immunity. The WHO later had to retract these statements (Suwaiji, 2021).

Scepticism towards experts is not due solely to their conflicting opinions. It is also caused by the perception that they are attempting to serve the interests of certain actors. For instance, Qatari writer Aisha Al Obaidan (2022) claimed that the fourth shot of the vaccine was being promoted to serve the interests and increase the profits of the companies producing these vaccines. Some opinion writers worried that science was being forcibly injected to achieve political ends that serve the interests of certain countries and major institutions. Despite the media's attempt to push for a return to normal, its focus on societal fear and anxiety turned it into a greater spreader of fear than the coronavirus itself.

People seek solace in religion during difficult and uncertain times. Many columnists opined that the solution to the crisis could be found in God; some considered the pandemic a test from God; and many

used religious slogans, Quranic verses, and hadiths of the Prophet (Yamani, N., March 2020; Hilabi, 2020; Shamsi, 2020, Jassem, 2020; Ishaq, M., 2021).

Religious slogans were used to emphasise that adherence to preventive measures was a matter of obedience to the ruler and should not be violated. Likewise, stories from Islamic heritage were used as evidence that quarantine is a prophetic Sunnah or tradition, that must be followed, and that adherence to the government's precautionary measures is the essence of Islam in warding off corruption and preserving oneself (Nuaimi, May 12, 2020; Dari, 2020; Shahwani, 2021; Anzi, 2021). With the emergence of the coronavirus, the turn to religion increased in various countries throughout the world (Pew Research Center, 2021). Some studies show that, during crises, religion helps individuals cope with and resist the insecurity spreading around them and that religious narratives help overcome the present moment and accept the current situation (Meza, 2020, p.220).

Conspiracy narratives and doubt in experts have gradually begun to recede, especially after the Gulf states managed the coronavirus crisis more effectively than many other major countries (Rossi and Kabbani, 2020). The Gulf states used their financial resources early on to combat the pandemic and deployed surveillance systems to track and control cases of the disease. They were also able to impose lockdowns without public opposition, given that the Gulf states could control food reserves and medical resources (Lynch, 2020, p.3).

The writings of Gulf intellectual elites reflected support for the state's official discourse on the pandemic, confidence in the scientific opinion issued by the state's experts (Tunaiji, 2020; Shaiba, 2020; Shamrani, 2020; Saad, March 2020), and the spread of nationalist discourses confirming the excellence and uniqueness of the Gulf states in managing the crisis. Coronavirus represented an opportunity to eliminate the West's "superiority complex," especially in the former colonising countries (Talib, March 20, 2020). Many writers made comparisons between the Gulf states and the developed Western countries, noting that the former were able to outperform the latter in their ability to contain the disease and

reduce the number of deaths. For example, the Saudi writer and television host Khalid Al-Sulaiman (2021), noted that "Saudi Arabia came out of the coronavirus pandemic ahead of first-world countries!" This tendency to prove superiority over Western countries can be explained by the desire to show the legitimacy of the achievement and the state's ability to lead society during the pandemic compared to other countries. A sense of reassurance also comes from superiority over others and better results than countries that are considered the measure of progress in medical care globally.

Likewise, the Qatari writer, Ahmed Al Mohannadi (April 2020), stated that "For the first time, I do not see the West doing more than us in dealing with coronavirus, and perhaps less than us...For the first time, I see the West recognizing and thanking us for what we are doing for them." Emirati writer Sultan Al Jasmi (2020) pointed out that the UAE has become the most suitable country in which to live post-coronavirus due to its ability to manage this battle successfully, and that the virus represented an opportunity for the UAE to establish its leadership through the humanitarian assistance it offered to other countries during the pandemic (December 2021).

Attention to the human dimension was not limited to foreign countries but also included a focus on solidarity and the individual's responsibility for the health security of the group. The role of individuals is central to the Gulf states' coronavirus strategy, which prompted some of these countries to launch slogans like "We Are All Responsible," "We Return With Caution," and other such slogans that indicate that fighting coronavirus is the joint responsibility of the state and the community (Ali, M., 2020). In this context, many articles were critical of individuals who violated precautionary instructions and measures, exposed others to risk, or behaved irresponsibly by spreading rumours and circulating news on social media without confirming its authenticity (Otaibi, 2020; Wabel, 2020; Daoud, 2020, Jasmi, January 2021; Jasmi, June 2021). Some writers described

compliance with precautionary measures as a national duty (Anzi, 2021; Kuwari, K., 2021), with one of them going so far as to call violators of precautionary measures traitors to the nation (Saad, June 2020). Some articles called for harsher legal penalties against those who violate precautionary measures or conceal coronavirus patients (Kaabi, 2020; Sulaiti, 2021; Kuwari, R., 2021), and the publication of the violators' names, job details, and specialisations (Mulla, 2020).

This relates to the individual as the centre of risk society, as the end and the means at the same time. The individual is exposed to threats and is the main actor who is able to confront them. Individualism becomes an essential feature in risk society, making the decisions of individuals highly influential on society. This individualism increases as a result of experts' failure to manage risk. Moreover, political institutions sought to promote the alignment of individuals against threats due to their institutional inability to find solutions apart from directing the choices of individuals. Hence, the focus on appealing to individuals to take responsibility and show discipline in confronting the pandemic emerges because the well-being of society, according to political institutions, depends on an endless series of individual choices (Mythen, 2005, p. 132; Beck, 2009, pp. 7, 54-55)

GULF INTELLECTUAL ELITES' PERCEPTIONS OF THE POST- CORONAVIRUS WORLD

From the first weeks of the spread of coronavirus, many articles were published on the post-coronavirus world. The prefix 'post' dominated many articles about the virus, even though the state of emergency and lockdown caused by the pandemic had not yet ended. These articles discussed all the expected impacts of coronavirus on all aspects of life, lifestyles, education, values, the health sector, etc. The focus of this section is on opinion writers' perceptions of the post-coronavirus world regarding the coming risks and threats and regional and international interactions.

The coronavirus epidemic caused many opinion

writers to be more attentive to non-traditional threats. They feared that coronavirus represented the emergence of a new pattern of biological threats. They also speculated that biological warfare could replace traditional warfare (Bin Saud, February 2020), especially because biological weapons are available for manufacture in the major countries without the capacity for the mutual deterrence of conventional wars. Saudi writer Talal Saleh Banan (2020) projected that the next world war would be biological:

"The choice to use biological weapons is available, especially in the major countries. Efforts are focused on developing viruses with greater lethality, a longer incubation period, and precise genetic selection ability to select their targets and infect specific human races, and on developing antivirals to be used selectively during an epidemic, or even before or during biological warfare."

The Emirati researcher, Salem Salmin Al Nuaimi, expected that an era of "biotechnology terrorism" was beginning, which will use cyberspace to achieve its goals of disturbing biological security. Terrorists may attempt to penetrate water and irrigation networks or research centres specialising in the study of viruses and bacteria (Nuaimi, 2021). In general, coronavirus has made opinion writers attentive to the next epidemic or pandemic, whether it is spread by certain actors to achieve specific interests, or naturally (Nuaimi, August 2020; Bin Saud, May 2020).

Thus, some writers have called for a national biological security strategy that builds defence capabilities that are ready and able to combat and keep abreast of biological risks in the event of an intentional attack or accident, foresight systems for virus-related threats, and increased spending in the health sector (Hamza, 2020; Morished, 2020).

This means the transformation of the coronavirus pandemic, in their perception, from a threat to health security into a traditional security threat. The latter requires a military strategy in the framework of expanding the securitization of non-security

phenomena and environmental and biological threats resulting from the interaction of individuals with the surrounding environment. Saudi writer Hammoud Abu Talib called for the establishment of a global health security council with the ability to issue decisions under Chapter 7 that require the use of force if countries fail to enact emergency procedures when an epidemic spreads (Talib, March 13, 2020).

All the writers consulted agreed that the coronavirus represents a decisive turning point in the international order and that the issues and crises that accompanied it pose new challenges to the international order and cast doubt on the ability of the current international institutions to address major crises, including the economic crisis that followed (Khashaiban, 2020; Makki, March 2020). In this respect, Qatari writer Iman Abdul Aziz Al Ishaq (2020) noted that "shrinking expectations of growth rates, economic stagnation, stagnant markets and stock exchanges, and the inability to predict the future will accelerate the drawing to an end of modern history."

There was near consensus that the new international order will be multipolar and will witness the rise of the role of China and Russia and an increasing desire of European countries for independence from the United States (Makki, August 2020; Nuaimi, 2022; Ishaq, I., 2020). Saudi thinker Youssef Makki (August 2020) predicted that European leaders would draw closer to the countries of the East in their search to find an alternative to Washington. Overall, the map of international alliances will change, which will have an impact on the region's crises.

Some writers believed that the coronavirus would call into question isolationism and restore regard for multilateralism, such as Deputy Prime Minister and official spokesman for the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Majed Mohamed Al-Ansari (2020). On the other hand, Emirati researcher Salem Salmin Al Nuaimi (2022) and Qatari writer Iman Abdul Aziz Al Ishaq (2020) argued that the globalist system will face many challenges in addition to the rise of right-wing nationalist movements and the declining ability of international organisations to impose their rules.

Some writers put forth proposals for the Gulf states to have an influential presence in the new international order. For example, retired Emirati Major General Abdullah Al-Sayed Al-Hashemi (2020) called for the drafting of a plan for rebuilding the world and transitioning to a new post-coronavirus world order, noting that the UAE's leadership of reconstruction efforts in the Middle East represents a care pillar of this plan. Saudi writer Mashari Al-Naeem (2020) also pointed to the need to develop scientific research systems and technological development in order for the countries of the region to have an important presence in the new world order.

These visions reveal the perceptions of a general consensus that a change in the international order is inevitable and necessary in order to adapt to the changes resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. According to previous perceptions, the new world is characterised by multipolarity, the rise of non-Western powers in the world order, and the changing map of international alliances. Furthermore, the world is divided between two approaches, one pushing towards isolationism and the other towards further globalisation. The perceived role of the GCC countries is to support the coming scientific and technological revolution and to benefit from its returns in strengthening its position in this new global order.

CONCLUSION

Opinion columnists' perceptions of the coronavirus world were a typical application of what Ulrich Beck imagined about risk society, since, in the early stages of the emergence of coronavirus, a state of uncertainty and scepticism towards science spread in light of its inability to deal with the pandemic effectively in the initial stages. Likewise, there was loss of faith in experts, and some instead adopted conspiracy theories or resorted to religion as a safe haven in the midst of chaos.

This state of confusion was reflected in the behaviour of some individuals who violated the precautionary guidance and instructions for

coronavirus and spread rumours and panic among the rest of society, prompting Gulf intellectual elites to demand that more restrictions and tighter control be placed on individuals and their movements. By contrast, they praised the conduct of the Gulf-state governments, which was characterised by guidance and quick reaction in dealing with the crisis. Contrary to the perceptions of risk-society theorists of the existence of a central role for individuals in the face of hazards, and although the strategies of the Gulf-state governments placed responsibility on individuals for the first time to combat risks and threats, the chaos and confusion among members of society led to a lack of confidence in the judgement of individuals and gave more power to the already powerful Gulf states.

In contrast to Beck's implicit assumption of risk society as a permanent state in which society remains inextricably bound, it is clear from a review of the writings of Gulf intellectual elites that there is an ongoing pursuit of coexistence, the development of mechanisms to return to the pre-risk society, and an attempt to restore confidence in science and technology and eliminate the chaos that prevails amid disasters. Risk society makes individuals more aware of future threats and risks and more attentive to similar threats, which is consistent with the views of risk-society theorists. Individual imagination is also active in imagining risks and developing scenarios for hazards that have not previously occurred, wondering about the extent of their possibility in the future, and demanding proactive measures before the next disaster occurs. According to the content analysis of the writings of Gulf intellectual elites, risk society makes individuals more aware of non-traditional threats. Future researchers will find a fertile ground of inquiry in exploring and analysing these GCC elites' views and of their counterparts in other regions of the world opening that the advent of the risk society constitutes the turning point of the current world order, after which the form and scope of threats differ and the nature of relationships between states and international balances of power irreversibly changes.

CONCLUSION

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MANAGING MINORITIES IN NATIONALIZING STATES



THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN'S DOMINATION OF IRANIAN RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

GHAZALEH DARINI

ABSTRACT

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 drastically changed the fate of religious minorities in Iran. During Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi's reign, the previous Iranian state was increasingly more tolerant towards all its religious minorities. However, in the decade following the Revolution, the new Head of State, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, incessantly targeted specifically non-Muslim minorities. The new Iranian Islamic theocracy's aggressive strategies in response to diversity have proven effective. As of 2012, non-Muslim minorities constitute less than 2% of Iran's 75.2 million population, a drastic decline from 5.2% during the Pahlavi era (Choksy, 2012). This paper examines the increasingly belligerent transformation that ensued following the Iranian regime change in 1979 and its consequences for religious minorities. Accordingly, this paper identifies and assesses how the Islamic Republic of Iran responds to ethnic diversity and argues that its strategic approach to the country's religious minorities is hegemonic control; however, the domination approach varies depending on each target group. While the Iranian Islamic theocracy dominates all minority religious communities, this paper will focus in particular on the treatment of three non-Muslim communities: the Jews, Zoroastrians, and Baha'is.

Keywords: domination, religious minorities, Iranian Zoroastrians, Iranian Jews, Baha'i, Pahlavi government, Iranian religious intolerance, revolution

INTRODUCTION

Religion, ethnicity and nationality are pivotal factors in assessing how states govern deeply diverse populations. This is particularly the case when evaluating the implication of these divisive identity

markers for minority groups within authoritarian states. It is necessary to empirically and normatively assess how states respond to diversity and the strategies they adopt in order to understand the treatment of minorities.

As a case study, the Islamic Republic of Iran, with a heterogeneous population, demonstrates potential strategies a state can adopt in response to ethnic diversity. This specific case provides an in-depth examination of the motives behind state strategies and the conditions under which they are successful. Accordingly, this paper identifies and assesses how the Islamic Republic of Iran responds to ethnic diversity and argues that this Islamic theocracy's strategic response to religious minorities is hegemonic control; however, the domination approach varies depending on the targeted group. While the Iranian state dominates all minority religious groups, this paper will focus in particular on the treatment of three non-Muslim communities: the Jewish people, Zoroastrians, and Baha'is. To demonstrate the sharply contrasting domination response of the Iranian Islamic Republic with its preceding regime, this essay first assesses the treatment of religious minority groups during the Pahlavi era. Subsequently, it addresses how the Islamic Revolution of 1979 changed the fate of Iran's minority groups by focusing on the three non-Muslim communities mentioned above. Perfunctory integration and two methods of domination, minimization and erasure, are identified as the approaches adopted by the succeeding Islamic theocracy to address the perceived threats posed to its official ideology by these religious minority groups

BACKGROUND

Prior to becoming the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian response to diversity was vastly different from current practices. The Imperial State of Iran under Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1941-1979)

was substantially more tolerant towards its religious minorities. However, the former regime's tolerance was predominantly a product of state interests. The rationale behind inclusivity and tolerance was the recognition that religious minorities served as assets and were tools for advancing the state's agenda. In particular, the courteous treatment of Iranian Jews was primarily a result of the state's desire to uphold its close ties with Israel (Sternfeld, 2014: 602).

After persisting discrimination under the Safavid Dynasty (1501-1736) and its successors, the Pahlavi regime (1925-1979) was the first Iranian government in centuries to be congenial towards Iranian Jews. During the Pahlavi era, Jewish minorities enjoyed increased political activity and cultural freedom, freely associating, organizing and practicing their faith in newly built synagogues (Sanasarian, 2012). By the 1970s, their growing political and social involvement gave way to the creation of The Association of Jewish Iranian Intellectuals (Jamicah-i Rawshanfikran-i Yahudi-yi Iran) This organization transformed into a flourishing Jewish community where activists freely engaged and participated in political affairs (Sternfeld, 2014). As a result, the Shah's government enjoyed the unwavering support of Iranian Jews (Sternfeld, 2014).

Zoroastrian Iranians were supported by the Pahlavi regime, on most fronts by Mohammad Reza Shah himself, for the purpose of advancing nationalism (Stepaniants, 2002). The religious group's traditional roots and historical ties to Persia - Iran's ancient name - made it a valuable asset for the Pahlavi regime, also officially known as the Imperial State of Persia. Given its nationalist efforts to ensure loyalty to the king, the Pahlavi regime was highly cognizant of the Zoroastrian religion of pre-Islamic Iran (Zenoozian et al., 2016). The state regarded its ancient Zoroastrian civilization to be equally influential as its Islamic society. The favorable attitudes of the Pahlavi government provided Zoroastrians with military career prospects, which implied that they were near-equals to their Muslim counterparts. The Shah's reliance on Zoroastrians as wealthy and influential societal figures, such as

bankers and intellectuals, further contributed to their fair treatment (Stepaniants, 2002).

The Pahlavi government's inclusive treatment based on self-interest extended to Baha'i Iranians. While Reza Shah never formally acknowledged their religion, he recognized that the Baha'is were important agents of modernity whose activities were promoting his own Iranian development strategy (Sanyal, 2019). As pioneers in health and education, the Baha'i community members were instrumental to the Shah's modernization ambitions. Therefore, many of them were appointed to high-profile jobs and positions to bring out their full potential in the service of the state. They were also permitted to open their own religious schools, which the Shah's children attended. In order to appease Iran's majority religious elites, the Pahlavi government rarely made public remarks about the Baha'i population. However, the Shah was aware of this community's unwavering loyalty and capabilities, so his government was significantly more tolerant than its successor regime (Sanyal, 2019).

TREATMENT OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AFTER THE 1979 REVOLUTION

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 drastically changed the fate of religious minorities in Iran. Unlike many other revolutions designed to break away from traditional values, the Iranian revolution re-established such sentiments. The revolution, led by the Shi'a clergy, went against all the efforts and ambitions of the Pahlavi regime. Its strong anti-Western and anti-modernization attitudes drew in people from all socio-economic classes, including intellectuals who had previously supported Reza Shah. In defiance of modernization and secularization, the revolution instead called for the recognition and dominance of an Islamic theocracy (Jahanbegloo, 2007).

The revolutionaries, spearheaded by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, wanted to insert religion into all domains of public and private life, including

education and government. Therefore, life for all religious minorities, and for non-Muslim communities in particular, became increasingly challenging. The new regime's initiative to make the state an Islamic theocracy disempowered religious minorities' organizations. The new authoritarian state had no motive to uphold the minorities' treatment policies of the previous regime since it was trying to reverse the advancements of the Pahlavi era. In the decade following the revolution, the new Head of State, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1979-1989), incessantly targeted minorities by declaring, "every aspect of a non-Muslim is unclean" (Choksy, 2012: 271).

The Islamic Republic of Iran's aggressive strategies in response to diversity have proven effective. As of 2012, non-Muslim minorities constitute less than 2% of Iran's 75.2 million population, a drastic decline from 5.2% during the Pahlavi era (Choksy, 2012: 271-272). The increasingly belligerent theocratic transformation that ensued following the Iranian regime change in 1979 had as consequence for the country's religious minorities the ongoing deployment of varying methods of domination.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Extensive literature has been published to track how states manage deeply diverse populations. One of the most prominent sources is the taxonomy of conflict regulation presented by John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary. Their macro-political taxonomy of ethnic conflict regulation is inclusive in its incorporation of both conflict management and conflict elimination. McGarry and O'Leary (1993) highlight eight distinct approaches states may employ when addressing and regulating diversity. However, in its study of three Iranian religious minorities, this paper will focus on only the two methods that are relevant to this analysis, namely integration and domination.

An analytical framework that incorporates the taxonomy of conflict regulation presented by McGarry and O'Leary will be applied to the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran to demonstrate the

state's integration and domination of religious minorities. The methods for eliminating and managing differences are examined to argue that the Iranian Islamic theocracy's response to diversity varies depending on the group. While each ethnic minority group has its own distinct narrative, they all shared a common fate under the new regime following the 1979 religious revolution that incessantly targeted non-Muslims in particular. The paper will analyze both methods for eliminating and managing differences, specifically integration and domination, to identify and assess the Islamic Republic's response to Jewish and Zoroastrian religious minorities. As the reaction to these two religious groups has been similar, they will be grouped together and evaluated on the same scale. However, as the approach of the Islamic theocracy vastly varied with respect to Baha'i minorities, the domination of that group will be examined separately. While domination is the common strategy deployed against all three groups, it is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, it is used and enforced in manifold ways by the state. This paper will examine two specific forms of domination, namely 'minimization' and 'erasure', as the Iranian state has specific motives underlying its varying responses to its religious minorities.

INTEGRATION

Given its intolerance towards religious diversity, the Islamic Republic of Iran has resorted to domination as a tool for managing differences. However, to mask said domination, it employs integrationist policies in response to Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities as per the criteria outlined in the taxonomy of conflict regulation developed by McGarry, O'Leary and Simeon (2008). As these authors explain, integration as a method for eliminating differences seeks to promote a single and uniform public identity. While cultural and ethnic differences within group identities can exist, they must be privatized and ignored by the public. The existence of differences distinguishes integration from assimilation. Integrationist policies do not seek to erase diversity; instead, they merely privatize it. Integrationists turn a blind eye to ethnic, national, and cultural differences

in public spheres as they identify group-based partisanship as a source of conflict. Therefore, diversity can only be accepted and addressed in private realms (McGarry et al., 2008: 41-43).

In an earlier study, McGarry and O'Leary (1993) noted that while assimilation aims to merge different groups, integration policies advocate for reducing ethnic segregation. Building on this work, McGarry, O'Leary and Simeon (2008) posit that integrationists justify privatization by asserting that group-based political differences are the causes of political instability and tension, and believe that in order to eliminate conflicts, a state must refrain from serving the ethnic and cultural interests of different communities. Therefore, integrationists oppose granting religious minorities official public roles. Their motive for maintaining a common public culture is to ensure that all citizens are equal before the law in all public domains (McGarry et al., 2008: 41). By limiting diversity to private sectors, integration policies bind citizens to one common homogenous unit and outlaw ethnic discrimination (McGarry and O'Leary, 1993: 17). These integrationist policies outlined above were evident in the Iranian Islamic theocracy's response to Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities following the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The new regime took various measures to ensure the integration of specific religious minority groups. Following the Revolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran created its own constitution that paradoxically was the first legal document officially acknowledging religious minorities (Stausberg, 2012). Article 16 of the official document recognized Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian Iranians as the only religious minority groups (Choksy, 2012). The formal recognition of these groups as *dhimmi*s guaranteed them legal protection as non-Muslims living in an Islamic theocracy. Under the Islamic constitutional framework, Jews and Zoroastrians were allowed to hold government positions. Each group was permitted to have one elected national legislator to represent them in the *Majles*, the parliament, among the other two hundred and ninety Muslim members

(Choksy, 2012). Beyond government involvement, Article 13 of the constitution outlines that "within the limits of the law" Jewish and Zoroastrian Iranians "are free to perform their religious rites and ceremonies, and to act according to their own canon in matters of personal affairs and religious education" (Stausberg, 2012: 187).

Numerous non-Muslim schools, including the Jewish system of Alliance Israelite Universelle schools, were allowed to continue operating and were incorporated into the state education system (Choksy, 2012). Article 14 of the constitution provides more protection for non-Muslim religious minorities by calling on the duty of Muslim citizens to "treat non-Muslims in conformity with ethical norms and the principles of Islamic justice and equity, and to respect their human rights" (Stausberg, 2012: 187). By creating constitutional boundaries aimed at holding its Muslim citizens accountable, the Islamic Republic of Iran proclaimed its commitment to equality in the presence of ethnic diversity. Thus, in its response to religious diversity, the new regime implemented integrationist strategies by allowing differences to exist in private sectors and treating citizens as equals before the law, in the public sphere. However, upon deeper examination, it becomes evident that many of these policies were merely perfunctory.

DOMINATION

Contrary to its integrationist claims, the Islamic Republic of Iran is not treating all its citizens equally before the law. In fact, its use of integrationist policies constitutes a perfunctory facade to mask the state's underlying use of domination strategies. As McGarry and O'Leary (1993) detail, hegemonic control is the most commonly used tool of management that allows authoritarian regimes to control the diverse cultural groups existing within their territory. Instead of privatizing differences like integration, domination seeks to suppress them (McGarry & O'Leary, 1993: 23-25). Hegemonic control fosters a one-sided relationship in which one side maintains superiority and ensures stability by constraining the political opportunities and endeavors of the other side. The domination approach to resolving differences is the "effective exertion of the superior power" to serve the

interests of superordinate power (Lustick, 1979: 330). Within authoritarian states, the exertion of power does not require majority support. The driving force for domination in such nations is control over the coercive state apparatuses such as the security services and police systems. When a regime enjoys the loyalty of its security apparatus and does not fear military rebellion, it can confidently enact its domination policies. By successfully controlling the security sector, a state can coerce a group into domination through intimidation. Many controlled groups refrain from expressing dissatisfaction because they lack security and support (Phillips, 2018: 2-4). These policies of coercive domination have been heavily apparent in the Islamic Republic of Iran's response to ethnic diversity ever since the 1979 Revolution.

Domination as a difference management tool is not a one-size-fits-all strategy. When there are multiple dominated groups within a state, as in Iran, it is expected for a regime to treat such groups differently. In the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities are subject to a less violent method of domination compared to Baha'i minorities. The state responds to ethnic diversity using two forms of domination: *minimization* and *erasure*. The Iranian Islamic theocracy seeks to minimize the religious influence of Jews and Zoroastrians. However, it actively ignores the Baha'i population.

DOMINATION STRATEGY: MINIMIZATION

While the Iranian constitution grants Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities official recognition, the seemingly generous legal document is largely conditional and manipulated by the Iranian Islamic theocracy to justify its arbitrary treatment of non-Muslims. There has been a "dramatic reduction" in the positive perception and fair treatment of such groups following the 1979 Islamic Revolution (Sanasarian, 2012: 316). Their effective disempowerment has rendered their official legal and social status virtually irrelevant.

The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran is

grounded in the application of Shari'ah legal principles (An-Na'im, 1987). Thus, the legal document creates a tension between its foundational religious principles and its commitment to fair treatment of minorities, which allows for interpretations by the theocracy's legislature, the Islamic Consultative Assembly - the Majlis, that discriminate against non-Muslim minorities. Article 12 of the Iranian constitution recognizes the Twelvers Shi'a sect as the official and dominant faith of the state. Under this distinction, the Islamic Republic of Iran overtly endorses religious discrimination, increasingly prevalent with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism (An-Na'im, 1987: 1-2). Following the 1979 Revolution, the official Islamic identity of Iran bears exclusive authority over all aspects of the country's life, as outlined in Article 4: "All civil, penal, financial, economic, administrative, cultural, military, political, and other laws and regulations must be based on Islamic criteria. This principle applies absolutely and generally to all articles of the Constitution, as well as to all other laws and regulations." (Stausberg, 2012: 187).

The Islamic Republic of Iran implemented these policies following the Revolution to prevent ethnic challenges to its rule. Contrary to its integrationist provisions, the theocracy's disempowerment of Jews and Zoroastrians prevents their equal treatment before the law. These religious minority groups are not entitled to the same equal treatment that the Shi'ia Muslim majority enjoys (An-Na'im, 1987). Shortly after the Revolution, in the 1980s, Iranian Jews and Zoroastrians began facing heightened job discrimination, losing opportunities they had under the previous regime (Stausberg, 2012). To reinforce the official Islamic identity of the state, careers in the army and public sector are exclusively reserved for Shi'ia Muslim citizens. Religious minorities, including Jews and Zoroastrians, are "blocked" off from participating in such career paths (Stausberg, 2012: 188). Therefore, Jewish and Zoroastrian representatives previously admitted to the Majlis under integration policies lost their positions under the domination strategy.

The lack of official and political representation significantly affects the religious influence and freedom of these minorities. The constitution's Article 13, granting religious minorities freedom to act according to their cultures "within the limits of the

law" has proved to be more restricting than liberating (Stausberg, 2012: 187). While Iran's integrationist commitments promise religious minorities the freedom to engage in their private canons and religious education, such is not the reality in practice. Instead, the Islamic theocracy dominates these private spheres and continues to implement and reinforce its own official Islamic values. The Islamic Republic's Ministry of Education and Training interferes with religious minority schools to override their teachings and instead enforce state-approved Islamic course materials. In the state-assigned textbooks distributed in non-Muslim religious schools, non-Muslim minorities are commonly referred to as infidels, *kāfers*, with Baha'is specifically targeted as "followers of a false sect" (Choksy, 2012: 276).

Educators in Jewish and Zoroastrian religious schools have reported that government officials and officially-sanctioned Islamic religious leaders are persistently present in academic settings to ensure state-endorsed Islamic values and teachings supersede those delivered by the religious minority group. These domination tactics are evident in the Iranian Islamic theocracy's educational requirement of *konkur*, which includes an Islamic exam for non-Muslim students, necessary for admission into state-controlled universities (Choksy, 2012). The controlling approach of the state has actively sought to reduce the role and influence of Jewish and Zoroastrian minority groups by actively degrading the autonomy and relevance of their education systems.

The persistent attempts of the Iranian Islamic theocracy to diminish the role of Jews and Zoroastrians have rendered the prospects of these religious minority groups to pursue vibrant community lives virtually impossible. However, despite their misfortunes, minorities in Iran remain relatively silent and passive because they are fully aware that any form of perceived resistance would trigger brutal retaliations by the Islamic authorities (Stausberg, 2012). The state uses coercive domination and elite co-optation to control these religious minority groups. Thus, the domination policies of the Iranian Islamic theocracy to manage differences has proved to be effective over time: not only did these minority groups lose their influence, but most of their members left the country.

A 2011 census revealed that Zoroastrians constituted 0.003% of the population and Jews 0.012% (Choksy, 2012: 272). Prior to the Revolution, in the 1970s, 75–80,000 Jewish Iranians lived in Iran; however, the number had decreased to 20–30,000 individuals by the 1990s. The most recent national census reports that the number of Jews living in Iran has fallen to only 9,250 (Sanasarian, 2012: 314). A similar pattern is evident across the Zoroastrian population living in Iran. Before the Islamic Revolution of 1979, an estimated 30,000 Zoroastrians lived in Iran; however, the 2012 national consensus reported the new figure to be between 13,000 to 15,000 (Choksy, 2012: 272). The minimization of their religious influence has discouraged these religious groups from living in an Islamic theocratic state.

DOMINATION STRATEGY: ERASURE

Despite their limited rights as religious minorities, Jews and Zoroastrians were nonetheless treated better than Baha'is after 1979. The Islamic Republic of Iran responds to its Baha'i population with a more aggressive method of domination: erasure. To assist in erasing Baha'is from the country's narrative, it employs discrimination and violence. Following the Islamic Revolution, the persecution of Baha'i minorities intensified because the state perceived them as a direct defiance to the official Islamic ideology.

It is widely accepted amongst Shi'ia leaders that Baha'is are heretic Muslims (Choksy, 2012: 274). Warburg (2012) explains how the Baha'i religion emanated in nineteenth-century Iran as Babism, acting as a heterodox view of Shi'ia Islam. Their religious leader Báb presented himself as the Hidden Imam, and the movement quickly attracted followers. The gradual radicalization of Babism resulted in its official repeal of Shi'ia Islam. By the summer of 1848, the Babis announced the end of Islam and the dawn of a new religion. The Islamic government retaliated against this revolution with military force to suppress the movement. The Babism faith would later transform and re-emerge in 1860 as the Baha'i religion. However, Baha'is were still subject to riots and killings encouraged by the Ulama (Islamic scholars) spreading anti-Baha'i sentiments (Warburg, 2012: 195-198). Before the revolution, the Iranian state and the Ulama community constituted different

entities, often at odds with each other. However, following the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the two powers joined forces to become one totalitarian theocratic regime increasingly hostile towards Baha'i minorities.

In their efforts to deal with the perceived threat being posed by the Baha'i minority, the Islamic Republic of Iran's leaders go beyond the minimization of this community's religious influence and freedom; they seek to actually erase them from the national consciousness by refusing to acknowledge their existence. The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran recognizes Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian Iranians as the only religious minorities within the nation. Despite comprising 1.79% of the population and constituting the largest non-Muslim minority group, Iran does not recognize its Baha'i population officially (Choksy, 2012: 272).

One strategy deployed by the Iranian Islamic theocracy as it actively seeks to erase Baha'i culture is to prevent the religion from being taught. Unlike Jewish and Zoroastrian Iranians, Baha'is are prohibited from operating public schools; if caught doing so, the institution is closed, and the parties involved are arrested. In accordance with the widely held perception that the Baha'i religion is a defiance of Islam, under Shar'ia law, teaching this religion is an offense punishable by execution (Choksy, 2012). Pursuant to the same claim of religious heresy, the Islamic Republic of Iran has further sought to delegitimize and erase its Baha'i citizens by proclaiming that their religion is invalid, thus creating a narrative that Baha'ism is merely a political movement of defiance, not a genuine religion. Ayatollah Khomeini initially voiced this opinion to defend his public defamation of the minority group. It has since become a commonly used claim to justify the persecution of Baha'is (MacEoin, 1987: 75-76).

In its efforts to erase the Baha'i population, the Iranian Islamic theocracy resorted to discrimination against Baha'is representatives. Iranian political leaders have publicly declared that Baha'is "are a political faction; they are harmful; they will not be accepted" (MacEoin, 1987: 75) and have constructed false narratives to portray Baha'is as unpatriotic and as supporters of the previous Pahlavi regime, specifically of the Shah's secret police - the feared

SAVAK (Danesh, 1988). The leading Iranian Islamic elites have also continuously accused this minority group of espionage, particularly as foreign agents working for Israel (MacEoin, 1987).

In the immediate years following the revolution, national news publications associated Baha'is with political ideologies criticized by the Islamic Republic of Iran, such as imperialism, Zionism, and Iraqi Ba'athism (Danesh, 1988). Public condemnations have strongly influenced the general national psyche, resulting in a societal sentiment of hatred against Baha'i Iranians (Danesh, 1988). Members of this minority group became isolated and often referred to as "perverted Baha'is", seen as followers of Satan (Danesh, 1988: 5). This public narrative of Baha'is transformed the members of this minority group into national scapegoats during the transitional period following the revolution, when the new theocratic state faced instability and various crises. The negative perception of Baha'i Iranians has led their Muslim counterparts to create anti-Baha'i organizations to exclude them entirely from public life.

Violence is another strategy through which the Islamic Republic of Iran sought to erase Baha'is. Following the Islamic Revolution, Baha'i Iranians were subject to a "systematic campaign of persecution" encouraged by the new religious leaders (Danesh, 1988: 2). They used violence as a means to instill fear and make the domination process more effective. The incoming Islamic theocratic regime began massacring Baha'is to frighten the minority group into submission. The new judge of the Central Revolutionary Court at Evin Prison, Ayatollah Gilani, publicly announced his commitment to exterminate the Baha'i community to "purify the Islamic republic from the wrong ideology" (Ibid.). Such sentiments fostered organized campaigns which soon became full-scale pogroms.

What was initially a method of intimidation soon spiraled into a brutal, murderous campaign. In 1986, two Baha'i teenagers, aged 15 and 16, were beaten and stoned to death by a mob led by a local religious leader. Within the same year, an elderly Baha'i couple were drenched in kerosene and set on fire (Danesh, 1988: 6). Within the first seven years of the revolution, over 100 Baha'is were killed by mob violence or execution (MacEoin, 1987: 75). The Iranian Islamic theocracy specifically targeted Baha'i

leaders; as a result, by 1980 all members of the National Council of the Bahá'ís were kidnapped and murdered (Danesh, 1988: 5). In addition to inflicting physical harm, the new regime also targeted their homes and cultural identities. All Baha'i property, particularly places of worship, was arbitrarily destroyed or confiscated (Warburg, 2012: 198).

Similar to Jewish and Zoroastrian minority groups, the domination of Baha'ís proved to be an effective strategy for managing diversity within the Islamic Republic of Iran. In 1979, the number of Iranian Baha'ís was estimated to be 400,000. However, thousands of Baha'ís fled Iran over the following years. Those who remained were brutalized and forced to renounce their faith. By 1981, according to estimates, the number of Baha'ís living in Iran had decreased to 300,000 (Smith, 1984: 296).

It remains challenging for researchers to have an accurate account of the current number of Baha'i Iranians due to their status as an officially unrecognized and oppressed religious minority. Baha'i Iranians predominantly live in extreme secrecy and conceal their faith (Smith, 1984). A prominent majority of Baha'ís carefully hide their faith and publicly identify as Zoroastrians instead (Choksy, 2012). Therefore, the Iranian Islamic theocracy's use of erasure domination as a means to manage religious diversity has been successful, as Baha'ís are now largely removed from society. This outcome illustrates that in all methods of domination, the relationship between the superordinate segment and the subordinate segment is "penetrative" (Lustick, 1979: 330): the superordinate extracts what it requires and desires from the subordinate group and arbitrarily returns only what it deems favorable (Lustick, 1979).

The reason for the differential approaches of the Iranian Islamic regime to the management of the country's various religious minorities becomes evident when examining its key internal and external political interests and objectives. The laxer form of domination of Jewish and Zoroastrian minority groups can be attributed to the fact that their religious beliefs do not threaten the regime's core ideology. While the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to undermine and stifle the influence of Jewish Iranians, it realizes that it must maintain a modicum of accommodation towards them because Judaism is

one of the Abrahamic faiths (Sternfeld, 2014). It also recognizes that its Jewish minority enjoys international protection and support from Israel (Sternfeld, 2014). Therefore, to avoid international conflict, it is in Iran's best interests not to persecute its Jewish population. The Islamic Republic of Iran perceives its Zoroastrian population as an unthreatening and relatively cooperative group, which helps explain its nonviolent domination strategy. It also publicly honors Zoroastrian Iranians who served as soldiers in the Iran-Iraq war (Stausberg, 2012: 189). Therefore, members of the Zoroastrian minority group, which comprises only 0.003% of the population, are treated with less aggression because their small population does not pose a substantive risk to the Islamic regime, as well as because they have proved their loyalty to the state. However, the Iranian Islamic theocracy has greater incentives to resort to violent means in its domination of Baha'ís because this religious minority group is considered to actively undermine its official ideology and its legitimacy as the country's ruling government.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the strategic response of the Islamic Republic of Iran to religious diversity and has argued that it has employed different methods for managing and eliminating diversity. This research has focused on the treatment of Jewish, Zoroastrian, and Baha'i minority groups. This paper asserts that the Iranian Islamic theocracy's response varies depending on how it perceives the level of threat posed by each religious minority group to the country's official ideology. While it applied to its Jewish and Zoroastrian minority groups a policy of integration, it is evident that this proclaimed approach was merely a perfunctory facade. The de facto response of the post-1979 Tehran regime to religious diversity has been domination. However, the domination strategy is implemented in two distinct ways: minimization and erasure. The Iranian Islamic theocracy has actively minimized the religious and cultural influence of its Jewish and Zoroastrian populations by interfering with their religious teachings. However, because it perceives the Baha'i population as a major ideological threat, it responds to them with a more violent form of domination – erasure.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has sought to erase Baha'is from the national narrative using discrimination and violence. These findings inspire further research to determine whether religious minorities in other theocratic states have had similar experiences and share similar fates.

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BUILDING NATIONAL IDENTITY THROUGH SCHOOLING AND LANGUAGE POLICIES: BURMANIZATION AS A DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

B E L L A A U N G

ABSTRACT

States use assimilation, integration, and accommodation in various ways to regulate ethnic conflict and cultivate a common national identity. This paper discusses the importance of policy making around language and education in building a common national identity, using the case study of Myanmar from 1962 to the present day. By comparing the Burmanization process by different Burmese governments to French nation-building through schools and schooling in the 1800s, this paper argues that the successful sustenance of diverse states draws from effective long-term diversity management through education reforms. It analyzes different Burmanization policies employed by four governments of Myanmar using the categorizations of different diversity management techniques. From Myanmar's example, the article concludes that diversity management through schooling as an ethnic conflict regulation strategy remains relevant in today's politics.

Keywords: Burmanization, Diversity Management, Ethnic Conflict, Ethnic Minorities, Identity Politics, Myanmar, Residential Schools, Nation-building, South Asia, Southeast Asia.

INTRODUCTION

States use assimilation, integration and accommodation in various ways to regulate ethnic conflict and cultivate a common national identity. A prominent example of this is the case of French nation-building through schools and schooling in the 1800s (Weber, 1976). There are many different sectors for which states can create public policies to manage diversity. Some examples include the

military, employment, religion, electoral politics, and education. This paper will discuss the importance of policy making around language and education in building a common national identity that can help manage ethnic conflict in the long run. By examining Myanmar as a case study of nationalizing through language and public education systems as a long-term diversity management strategy, this paper aims to determine whether Eugen Weber's theory of assimilation through schools to create a successful national identity amongst diverse ethnic communities can be generalizable to the Burmese case.

This paper seeks to answer the question of 'How has Burmanization through schooling and language policies contributed to the sustenance of the Union of Myanmar despite it being a deeply divided society?' This is an important topic as analyzing the research question will show whether assimilation through schools and language policies is still a relevant and effective strategy of diversity management for contemporary states, particularly those with high levels of ethnic and linguistic diversity. This paper concludes that the Burmanized education and language policies allowed for the creation of a Burmese national identity among different ethnic groups. Therefore, Weber's take on diversity management through schools and schooling as an ethnic conflict regulation strategy remains relevant in contemporary politics.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

One must understand the ethnic and linguistic demographics as well as the history of Myanmar to fully grasp the process of Burmanization and its impacts on ethnic minority populations. Myanmar boasts enormous ethnic diversity, consisting of 135 officially recognized ethnic groups and seven ethnic minority states in addition to seven divisions populated mainly by the Bamar majority (Minority Rights, 2020). The seven ethnic minority states: Kachin, Kayah, Karen, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan,

are named after the largest national minority groups of the country. Chinese and Indian ethnic minorities comprise a sizable portion of the overall population in Myanmar, with the former making up to 3 percent of the total population and the latter 2 percent (Ibid.). However, only large ethnic minority groups indigenous to Myanmar get ethnic minority states named after them. In terms of linguistic diversity, 118 languages are spoken in Myanmar today. Burmese is the official language of the country (CIA, 2020).

BURMANIZATION

Burmanization, as the term suggests, is a process in which education, repressive laws, religious proselytization, economic exploitation, and often brutal force are used to wash away ethnic minorities' own identities (Gray, 2018). A British colony from 1824 to 1948, the Western influence was dominant in Myanmar (then Burma) until 1962 (Holmes, 1967). However, since the military coup in 1962, different governments of Myanmar have promoted Burmese nationalism and the Burmese national identity for every citizen regardless of their ethnic origins.

Four governments have ruled Myanmar from 1962 to 2021. These governments were the single-party Socialist government (1962-1988), the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) government (1990-2010), the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) Government (2010-2015), and the National League for Democracy (NLD) Party Government (2015-2021) (BBC News, 2018). The years 1988 and 1989 saw nationwide unrest and anti-government unrest without a government. During this time, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) was formed to declare martial law and persecute proponents of democracy (BBC News, 2018).

ANALYSIS OF THE POLICIES EMPLOYED IN THE BURMANIZATION PROCESS

In order to examine the education policies employed in the Burmanization process from 1962 to the present day, this paper first defines assimilation, integration, and accommodation using the explanations of these concepts by McGarry et al. (2008). Although the two popular sets of public

policies applied by democratic states to manage diversity fall under either integration or accommodation, assimilation also provides ways to manage diversity, albeit through erasing it and building an overarching national identity altogether (McGarry et al., 2008).

According to McGarry et al. (2008: 42), assimilationists "seek the erosion of private cultural and other sorts of difference among citizens as well as the creation of a common public identity." This common public identity can be created through either fusion or acculturation. The former involves two or more communities mixing to form something new whereas the latter means that one community adopts the culture of another and consequently, is eventually absorbed into it. Assimilation erodes both the public and private differences between and among different groups (McGarry et al., 2008).

Integration promotes a common public space. While integrationist practices respect cultural differences in the private sphere, they eliminate differences in the public sphere. It responds to diversity through institutions that "transcend, crosscut, and minimize" differences and aims to achieve public homogenization through common citizenship (McGarry et al., 2008).

Accommodation promotes more than one public identity, and accommodationist policies encourage institutional respect for differences. Accommodationists seek to make sure that each group enjoys a public space where every group can: "express its identity, protect itself against tyranny by the majority, and make its own decisions in domains of critical importance" (McGarry et al., 2008: 42). In other words, accommodation strategies encourage the maintenance of cultural differences in both the public and private arenas (McGarry et al., 2008).

BURMANIZATION POLICIES BY DIFFERENT GOVERNMENTS IN MYANMAR

Different governments in Myanmar employed four streams of Burmanization policies to weaken the sense of national identity amongst ethnic minority

students. These four streams are: (i) declaring Burmese as the official, and virtually only, language of instruction in all educational institutions, (ii) denying the instruction of ethnic minority languages, (iii) establishing various educational institutions for ethnic minority youths from middle school to post-secondary levels controlled by the Ministry of Border Affairs, and (iv) training students enrolled in the aforementioned institutions to advocate for the sustenance of the Union of Myanmar and later turning them into faithful civil servants.

In the following sections, this paper discusses the Burmanization policies employed through schooling by different governments from 1962 until present.

Socialist Era (1962-1988)

Myanmar's federal government was abolished in 1962 when General Ne Win took over the country by leading a military coup. General Ne Win's government was highly ethnocentric and employed various nationalist policies in different sectors such as the economy, citizenship and immigration, and education (Holmes, 1967; Smith, 1992; BBC, 2018). In terms of the education sector, all the country's educational institutions, including over 800 private schools, were nationalized (Smith, 1992). The government limited teaching English to middle school and higher levels of education only (Holmes, 1967). Limited allowance for the teaching of minority languages at the primary school level continued (Bianco, 2016). However, no such allowance for teaching or research in any minority language existed in secondary school and higher levels of education (Smith, 1992).

In 1962, Burmese became the official language of instruction for schooling including at the university level, with few exceptions for English language classes (Bianco, 2016). By the 1980s, a majority of schools had stopped teaching in minority languages due to increasingly severe education policy restrictions (Aye and Sercombe, 2014). This is a significant Burmanization policy since it deterred ethnic minority youth from learning and speaking in their native tongues, thereby eroding their cultures linguistically. This language policy under the Ne Win government falls under the assimilation banner as it officially refuses to provide public education in minority languages (McGarry et al., 2008).

Under this regime, the Academy for the Development of National Groups was established in 1964 in the Sagaing Division and was highly publicized. This Academy intended to promote General Ne Win's "Burmese Way to Socialism". The Academy was the socialist government's attempt at removing ethnic minorities from their respective ethnic minority states to a Burman-majority division and educate them at residential schools under the government's guidelines. Only national minorities indigenous to Myanmar qualified for enrollment (Smith, 1992).

SPDC Era (1990-2010)

Since the education system still primarily operated with Burmese as the official language of instruction under the SPDC government, ethnic minority students whose mother tongue was not Burmese faced linguistic disadvantages. Very few books were legally published in minority languages and those that were permitted for legal publication had to go through strict censorship tests. Ethnic minority teachers and community leaders faced persecution when they promoted their own language and cultures. For instance, in 1991, two ethnic Mon intellectuals were arrested because they promoted the usage of the Mon language (Smith, 1992). Therefore, assimilationist education and language policies continued and even intensified during the SPDC regime.

Given that higher education institutions were located in either urban areas or Burman-majority divisions, the students from ethnic minority states also faced the additional burdens associated with traveling and finances. In 1991, the Academy for the Development of National Groups was reformed as a university under the SPDC government. The legitimacy of this university remained questionable as there was no provision for research (Smith, 1992). The university was not run by the Ministry of Education. Instead, it was run directly by the military junta which is indicative of the increased military control of the state and education apparatus. Students were required to wear uniforms even at the post-secondary level. The university trained its ethnic minority attendees as Burmese language teachers

for the ethnic minority states and also to promote the Myanmar national identity along with Buddhist culture. Ethnic minority leaders saw the new university as an instrument by the Burman-majority government to suppress minority cultures *Ibid.*

Following the establishment of the University for the Development of National Groups, the Ministry of Border Affairs founded its Education and Training Department in 1999. The department was founded with two main aims: firstly, to educate ethnic people residing in border areas through basic and tertiary education along with vocational training, and secondly, to improve the human resources of people in the area (Ky, 2019). The establishment of such state-sponsored education institutions for ethnic minorities is assimilationist due to the extreme nature of physically removing ethnic minority children from ethnic minority states and then training them to become advocates of Burmese nationalism.

USDP Era (2010-2015)

Myanmar officially began its transition to a democratic government after the 2010 national elections. The first civilian government was led by the military-backed USDP and ex-general Thein Sein served as the President of the Union of Myanmar (BBC News, 2018). A National Education Bill was passed in July 2014 with 25 suggested amendments by the President. The bill did not allow the teaching of ethnic minority languages at the primary school level despite the demands of ethnic education groups (Myanmar Times, 2014). However, unlike previous regimes since 1962, the USDP government expressed some willingness to allow the teaching of ethnic minority languages outside of school hours in government buildings. The law still did not allow any deviation from the standard curriculum issued by the central government or instruction in a medium other than the Burmese language except for certain English language classes as mentioned in the discussion of education policies under the previous governments (Zobrist and McCormick, 2013).

According to Zobrist and McCormick (2013), one significant exception under Thein Sein's government was the Mon National Education Committee (MNEC) and its education system. MNEC largely operated in

ethnic communities that were formerly controlled by the New Mon State Army. It provided education to ethnic Mon children, often in the form of monastic schools or by incorporating Mon language and history lessons in government schools informally. Although MNEC was not funded by the government, it taught the local language and content and also worked as a bridge for Mon students to transition into the public school system. The MNEC education system was not legal. However, as it both satisfied demands for an "ethnic" education favored by the ethnic community and promoted an integrated nation as desired by the central government, this system was permitted to exist as part of a ceasefire agreement. This exception is worth mentioning as among the 135 officially recognized ethnic groups, the Mon people are the only ones who benefitted from an exception in the education and language policies. As a result, the government accommodated some Mon content to be taught as long as the MNEC system did not become standardized or replace the Burmanized education system (Zobrist and McCormick, 2013).

Under this exception, certain Mon students were allowed to learn their language and culture as part of an informal arrangement that came with the ceasefire agreement between Mon armed groups and the Burmese military. Although instruction of the Mon language was incorporated, this arrangement was never legally recognized, and the government made sure that the Burmese national curriculum and language remain the main medium of instruction (*Ibid.*). Therefore, the Thein Sein government's education and language policies are at most integrationist—i.e. allowing ethnic minority cultures to exist informally but maintaining the dominant Burmese language and culture as the public standard.

NLD Era (2015-2021)

The NLD government was the most democratic government in Myanmar since 1962 (Lewis, 2016). However, ethnic minorities still faced *de facto* discrimination in education. For example, students from ethnic minority states continued to have lower

access to higher education, particularly in professional programs such as engineering and medicine, due to universities being concentrated in Burman-majority divisions. The overarching national identity continued to revolve around the Buddhist religion, Burmese language, and Burman ethnicity (Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index, 2020). The Burmans make up approximately 60 percent of the population of Myanmar and have been the dominant decision-making ethnic group in government since independence.

In a 2019 interview, U Thein Htay Oo, the Director-General of the Education and Training Department at the Ministry of Border Affairs, confirmed that educational institutions dedicated to ethnic minority youth are still operating in full force. In fact, there were more of such institutions in 2019 compared to when the department was first established in 1999. According to the Director-General, there were the Education and Training Department headquarters, University for Development of National Races in Sagaing, two degree colleges for ethnic youth in Yangon and Sagaing, one central training school, 45 border youth development training centers, 9 mechanical schools and 5 women's vocational training schools (Kyj, 2019).

All the post-secondary education institutions operated under the Ministry of Border Affairs are located in Yangon or Sagaing, Burman-majority divisions far from the borderland areas populated by most ethnic minority communities. Aligned with the critics' concern of turning ethnic minority youths into teachers who promote Burmese nationalism back in their homelands, the degree colleges for ethnic youths are best known for giving out degrees in education to their students along with offers to work as teachers in the Ministry of Education. As of 2019, the Ministry of Education has employed more than 10,000 alumni from these degree colleges as high school teachers (Ibid.). These teachers help perpetuate a culture of state control and Burmanization through the education system.

The youth development training centers accept students as young as 10 year-olds. Ethnic minority youths in border areas are given free middle school

and high school education at these centers (Ibid.). However, once they complete their education at the training centers, their post-secondary education opportunities are limited. According to the Ministry of Border Affairs official website, "To pursue higher education for the nationalities youths who pass the basic education high school to have opportunities to study the courses in the University for the Development of the National Races of the Union and Nationalities Youths Resource Development Degree Colleges" (Ministry of Border Affairs, 2019). The website also lists that these programs aim to consolidate the Union Spirit among the ethnic minority youths and to nurture all national people to "constantly safeguard non-disintegration of the union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty" (Ibid.). Through these programs, the government employs systematically Burmanized ethnic minorities to recruit more youths from their respective homelands into the same nationalist education system.

Post-Coup d'etat Era (2021-Present)

A military coup led by General Min Aung Hlaing took control of Myanmar in February 2021 (Maizland, 2022). The country has been in political turmoil since then, with the military regime and the pro-democracy government in exile, the National Unity Government of Myanmar, constantly competing for full control of Myanmar (National Unity Government, 2023). Civil wars and armed conflicts have become and still remain part of the daily lives for the people of Myanmar today. The education sector of the country has suffered due to political instability post-coup d'etat.

Schools and universities across Myanmar were closed in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They remained closed immediately after the coup as many students and teachers refused to participate in the junta-led education system. In November 2021, the military regime announced that education institutions were to be reopened. However, classrooms remain almost completely empty with students and teachers boycotting the military rule (Mendelson, 2021). Schools became dangerous for students as security forces often occupied schools and universities and sometimes carried out armed attacks on education

sites. One such instance is the Let Yet Kone airstrike on an elementary school, killing at least eleven children (Agence-France Presse, 2022). As of today, teachers in Myanmar, whether they support or oppose the military regime, are facing threats, including death threats, in many parts of the country from both armed pro-junta and opposition groups as schools reopen under the junta's orders (Voice of America, 2022). Due to these exceptionally dangerous situations in schools and universities, the education sector and language policy are not actively used as a tool of diversity management by either the junta or the NUG.

CONCLUSION

Since 1962, different governments of Myanmar have engaged in the Burmanization of ethnic minorities via education and linguistics policies. Some regimes were more robust and explicit in imposing such policies on ethnic minorities (socialist and SPDC regimes) whereas others were more subtle (USDP and NLD governments). Regardless of Myanmar being a deeply divided society, different governments were able to sustain the "Union" of Myanmar. This successful sustenance of the state draws from effective long-term diversity management through education reforms. The Burmanized education and language policies allowed for the creation of a Burmese national identity among different ethnic groups. This very identity allowed for the continued existence of Myanmar as a Union by weakening ethnic minorities' sense of identity. Therefore, Weber's take on diversity management through schools and schooling as an ethnic conflict regulation strategy remains very relevant in current day Myanmar, and in a broader scope, in contemporary politics.

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NATIONAL SECURITY EFFECTS OF UKRAINE'S FAILURE TO MANAGE ITS MINORITY ETHNIC POPULATION AND A RECOMMENDATION FOR DECENTRALIZATION

CLAIRE PARSONS

ABSTRACT

Ukraine's national security and even its existence as an independent state have been at constant risk since its independence in the 1990s. This is due to intense pressure from both the Russian Federation, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, to remain in its sphere of influence, as well as from potential Western allies to become a geopolitical partner for the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO). After Russia's invasion in early 2022, however, the question of the state's national security has evolved beyond pure military defense, as secessionist movements within the contested Donbas region gained power through Russian support. Previous research has shown that secessionist support is highly manipulated by the Kremlin and ethnic conflict between Ukrainians and Russians living in Ukraine is manufactured. Although the largest point of contention between the two groups, language, is territorial, nationalist loyalties to Ukraine remain strong among its Russian-speaking citizens. This paper investigates how Ukraine could accommodate Russian speakers in its eastern border areas in order to maintain its territorial integrity as a sovereign state and thus, to effectively resist the Russian Federation's political influence in this region and ongoing annexation attempts. It then looks at the case of Latvian management of ethnic difference through assimilation and domination and argues that this strategy would not best fit the Ukrainian case. Instead, it offers a decentralized approach better suited for the unique geopolitical pressures Ukraine is currently subject to.

Key Words: Ukraine, Russia, Latvia, Security, Decentralization, Donbas, Ethnic Conflict, Nationalism, Language, Secession, Assimilation, Domination

INTRODUCTION

At the forefront of most modern conflicts one finds historical tensions rooted in histories of disagreements between governments. Post Ukrainian independence, after the fall of the Soviet Union, evolved a 'Ukrainianess' that was inherently tied to a rejection of the Sovietization and Russification of the past (Mitchnik, 2019). Generations of individuals who had grown up under Soviet rule now had the opportunity to build their own identity as Ukrainians. With several Presidential administrations now behind them, Ukraine has, thus far, maintained a civic nationalism that has been able to withstand revolution, annexation, and invasion. The current situation in Ukraine is dire, with previously insinuated tensions between Ukraine and Russia reaching a boiling point after the invasion by the Putin regime into Ukraine in early February 2022. Thousands of Ukrainians have died at the hands of Russian soldiers and cities have been traded back and forth between the two countries as the invasion drags out of its second winter. The justification of the invasion is rooted in a Kremlin based narrative that Moscow must protect its ethnic kin in a foreign state led by a Nazi regime (Eras, 2022). This narrative, born of discriminatory policy in Ukraine, has been the primary propaganda tool of the Putin regime to maintain the support of the Russian people as well as the immensely controversial support of the separatist Donbas region of Ukraine (Mitchnik, 2019; Eras, 2022). As a result, the Russian invasion has focused on areas of high Russian ethnic and Russophone density; these regions also conveniently sit on the border of the Russian Federation.

The Donetsk and Luhansk regions, which make up the area known colloquially as the Donbas, have been the dominant battlegrounds of Russification and Ukrainification (Mitchnik, 2019). The region is primarily composed of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers who occupy the region as well as the public administrative sectors of the area. As the war progresses, questions have arisen to determine

what could have been done to reduce the influence of Russophones and Russian ethnics within the region, since they are considered to have given Russia the authority and proclaimed legitimacy it required to pursue an invasion policy. There are also strategies and informational campaigns in place to reduce the overall effect the Russian narrative has had on not only the Russian citizenry but the entire world. Touching upon the progressive ideology of freedom from discrimination, the capitalization of Moscow upon the delicate nature of the Donbas is even more dangerous. This paper will argue Ukraine must properly accommodate its Russophone and Russian ethnic citizens in order to ensure its own national safety and security as an independent state. The failure of previous assimilation and domination tactics and a case study of the extreme domination of the Latvian government against Russian ethnics will demonstrate the harm previous ethnic management has had on Ukraine. This paper will then also present a proposed solution of decentralization in order to resolve the tensions between the Donbas and Ukraine.

REVOLUTIONS AND RUSSOPHONES: WHY THE DONBAS MATTERS

Known as the melting pot of Ukraine, the Donbas region was a key congregational point for refugees who were fleeing persecution after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Mitchnik, 2019). The region industrialized quickly as people started careers in the mining industry and Russophones and Ukrainophones coexisted as nationalism was built alongside de-Russification and de-Sovietification. Ukraine's primary goal at this time was to build an identity that broke away from the previous dominance of the Soviet Union. The rejection of Russia and Russian identity was bottom-up and while Russophones were highly condensed within the Donbas region they were immediately categorized as a minority (Kulyk cited in Mitchnik, 2019: 439). The Donbas region sits on the Eastern side of Ukraine, bordering the Russian Federation, and is composed of 30% ethnic Russians and an additional 11% of individuals who identify as both Russian and Ukrainian (Giuliano, 2018). Identity in Ukraine is built upon language, either Russian or

Ukrainian, as the dominant categorizing feature of both groups (Aliyev, 2019). Aliyev (2019: 1203) adds that distinctive ethnic identities collapsed after Soviet influence on the region vanished and language was the only distinction that remained. This is why the linguistic composition of the Donbas region matters for the ethnic management attempted within the region, because all attempts by the Ukrainian government to undermine the secession movement were linguistic in nature (Giuliano, 2018).

Post-independence Ukraine was building a national identity around the Ukrainian language and populations of Russian speakers directly limited that mission. Olexi et. al. (2019: 686) define the Ukrainian identity as follows: "Ukrainian ethnicity is best understood in terms of four distinct dimensions that overlap only partly: individual language preference, language embeddedness, ethnolinguistic identity and nationality". As such, Ukrainian as a language was the primary method by which Ukraine was hoping to rebuild itself, even though most of the population opted to speak Russian after the original break from the USSR (Mitchnik, 2019). Viewed as a fifth column due to Russia's overinvolvement in post-Soviet Ukraine, Russian minorities were an unwelcome but populous reality in the Donbas. Keeping Russian as their primary language was seen as a threat to the developing Ukrainian identity. This has resulted in a secession movement building within the region in which rebels have attested that a majority of those living in the Donbas would be in favor of seceding from Ukraine (Olexi et. al., 2019). This information is fabricated, as a majority of those in the Donbas do not support a separatist movement in Ukraine and identify themselves as Russian speaking Ukrainians, not Russians living in Ukraine (Mitchnik, 2019: 436). In fact, according to a survey done by Elise Giuliano (2018: 165), only 29% of those in the Donbas were strongly in favor of secession with only 45% of the previously mentioned 29% being those of Russian ethnicity or Russophones. This is a distinct difference when looking at the issue of the secessionist movement, as Ukrainian patriotism clashes directly with Russian primary speakers as an identity is developed in the

heart of the country. As such, there are questions remaining as to how to resolve an issue of secession that does not have majority support of the public.

With a lack of majority support for secession in the Donbas and an ongoing Ukrainian identity being tied to Ukrainianness, why would the state of Ukraine see any reason to manage the ethnic diversity of its Russian population? The answer, of course, lies in the fact that Russia is a constant militaristic and aggressive threat to Ukrainian sovereignty and the presence of Russian minorities as a fifth column group has no reason to fade (Eras, 2022). Ukraine has already experienced two revolutions within its brief existence as an independent country, both aiming to unseat Russian puppet leaders. The Euromaidan and Orange Revolutions ultimately resulted in a lack of both political stability and true Ukrainian identity for a majority of the country to lean on (Aliyev, 2019). The Russian Federation's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, a single region away from the Donbas, also provided no comfort to the average Ukrainian. As such, the policies put in place by the Ukrainian state to limit Russian language usage and to dominate the minority population threatening secession is not an uncommon government response to tensions between two bipolar groups. However, by leaning upon these management techniques, Ukraine has unintentionally offered its adversary its clearest pathway to legitimacy as a kin-state for Russophones and Russian ethnics (Mitchnik, 2019).

The concept of kin-state relations between both ethnic groups and their viewed homeland is not a new concept in political studies; however, the weaponization of this kinship in the context of the Donbas is new. A kin-state, according to Udrea and Smith (2021: 67), is a state that has interests in co-ethnics abroad due to a shared sense of ethnicity and nationhood. This can then translate to a productive relationship between the two states in which the rights of minority populations are well accommodated (Udrea and Smith, 2021). Brubaker (1996) refers to this process in his landmark novel, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, as Transborder Nationalism. This form of nationalism is at its most dangerous when the views of the home state, for the

sake of this paper, Ukraine, conflict with the interests of the kin-state abroad. The fundamental interest of Ukraine is to continue a nationalization process in which the Ukrainian identity deviates from previously held Soviet ties. As Udrea and Smith (2021) argue, there is no issue with transborder nationalism as long as both the home-state and the kin-state are in agreement about how to best accommodate a minority group; it is when this agreement is not present that the home state's sovereignty is threatened. Therefore, Ukraine finds itself in a position where its territorial integrity and sovereignty are at odds with its management of its Russian-speaking and ethnic Russian citizens. In particular, this paper will focus directly upon the attachment of Ukrainian citizens to the Russian language as a key distinguisher of ethnic difference (Cheskin and Kachuyevski, 2019). The following section of this paper will describe Ukraine's attempts at ethnic management and explore why these methods have been a generalized failure for both Ukrainian identity development and for its own national security.

UKRAINE'S ETHNIC MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

Ukraine has made several efforts to manage its Russophone population, particularly since the annexation of Crimea in 2014. Eras (2022: 16) remarks in their work on ethnic responsibility in East Ukraine, that the divisions and laws in place are not about civic or ethnic identity but about linguistic groups. These language groups have only been further divided by the presence of war, especially as the main aggressor is the kin-state of one side of the conflict (Olexi et. al., 2019). Alongside the secessionist movement is the invasion executed by Russia, pairing together to appear as an existential collective threat to the very existence of the Ukrainian state. The secessionist rebels have claimed that the Ukrainian state has engaged in deprivation of the region in order to dominate the Donbas and its Russophones (Olexi et. al., 2019). This method of deprivation used by Ukraine against the Donbas region consists in the extensive reallocation of

Donbas funds in a method of payments to other Ukrainian regions. Ukraine's regions are economically diverse, with several regions struggling to bolster their economies whilst other regions being incredibly lucrative (Giuliano, 2018). However, balancing out the economy over the entire state territory is not the only benefit the central government derives from pulling regional profits from the Donbas. By limiting the amount of funds that the Donbas has access to, the Ukrainian government limits this region's ability to fund secessionist movements as well as to engage in institutional development in order to bolster its own state-like structures (Giuliano, 2018).

Deprivation to dominate is not the only method that Ukraine has attempted to use to engage in ethnic management. Another tactic utilized by Ukraine on the Donbas has been assimilation, specifically through limiting Russian language use. In order to continue the development of a Ukrainian national identity, Ukrainian has become the official language of the state and the use of Russian has been limited. This is because Ukraine is attempting to build the Ukrainian identity as the core state-building nation, a group in which a single ethnic group has full control of a state as defined by Brubaker's triadic nexus (Brubaker, 1996). Brubaker describes what is occurring in Ukraine as a Nationalizing nationalism, in which a Core Nation assumes official cultural and ethnic ownership of the territorial state and claims its totality for that Core Nation (Brubaker, 1996: 5). The reason this is important for the Ukrainian case is that by attempting to build its own nationhood and reinforcing Ukrainian as the language of the rightful owners of the state, the Ukrainian state impedes the Russian Federation's goal of reinforcing its ties of kinship with Russian-speakers in Ukraine. By limiting the use of the Russian language, Ukraine has thus already engaged in some form of assimilation which forces those ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers living in the state to prioritize Ukrainian over their native Russian. In the education system, this linguistic assimilation effort is even more distinctive. Olexi et. al.'s (2019) work on identity and war describes this process succinctly through citing Stebelsky, who writes that:

"...the number of secondary school students studying in Russian was 96 percent in Donetsk and 93 percent in Luhansk oblasts (though in independent Ukraine it considerably decreased: to 50 percent and 46 percent correspondingly in the 2013-2014 academic year)" (Stebelsky cited in Olexi et. al.: 687).

It is not just in the education sector that the use of the Russian language has been limited. Within civil society itself there was pressure upon Russian speakers to switch over to Ukrainian, since Ukrainians dominated not only official institutions like the armed forces, but also informal civil society environments. Mitchnik (2019: 423) interviewed several Russian speakers in his article on identity shifts within Ukraine, one of whom stated:

"The Ukrainian language became almost 'number one', and next to it nothing should prevail. I know people who used to talk and write in Russian and they flipped. They started writing in Ukrainian, trying to talk in Ukrainian. For them, for many in our city, the Ukrainian language became a super-language."

Despite this enforced assimilative conversion of Russian speakers, there is still a fierce patriotism for Ukraine instead of Russia in the Donbas. In fact, many Russian speakers believe the two languages can coexist despite the aggressive ethnic management techniques of Ukraine (Aliyev, 2019: 1221). If this is true, why is the Ukrainian state still adamant on assimilation and domination?

That is where the Russian Federation's impact comes into the picture. The Kremlin has observed the partial successes of Ukraine's domination and assimilation techniques and has viewed an opportunity to approach Russians, specifically in the Donbas, as a kin state (Mitchnik, 2019). Russia has deliberately woven Ukraine's ethnic management tactics into its narrative to justify its invasion despite the fact that the trauma of Crimea's annexation in 2014 is what had turned Ukraine towards aggressive ethnic management originally. This has only exacerbated the intense tensions between the groups as well as the fifth column mentality which

serves neither Ukrainians nor Russian ethnics. Eras (2022) cites Jackson in stating that “stereotypes stem from real or perceived conflicts and competition over scarce resources” (Jackson cited in Eras 2022:, 4). Ukraine, upon watching Russia invade from the east, had full reason to believe that secessionists in the Donbas as well as other Russophones and Russian ethnics were adversaries of their state, especially in light of the profitable nature of the Donbas alongside the annexation of Crimea just a few years prior. This thus brings up the question as to what Ukraine was meant to do about its Russian population in order to protect its national security. The Ukrainian state's attempt to dominate and assimilate its Russian population resulted in a twisting of the narrative by Russia as a kin state of the minority population of Ukraine. The natural impulse would be to learn from Latvia, another post-Soviet state with ethnic management strategies for a Russian minority; however, as the following section of this paper will show, to do so would be a drastic mistake for Ukraine.

LATVIA'S ETHNIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ITS LACK OF EFFECTIVENESS IN EAST UKRAINE

Firstly, an explanation is necessary as to why turning focus to Latvia is beneficial to our understanding of the Ukrainian situation. Latvia, like Ukraine, is a state that reclaimed its independence in 1991 from the USSR and found itself with a significant Russian minority within its newly drawn borders (Karklins, 2021). Latvia's Russian population makes up 24.7% of their population and is largely condensed on its Eastern border (Karklins, 2021, 456). Like Ukraine, Latvia also approached de-Russification and the building of a new identity through a regulation of language. Part of the original strategy involved a citizen and non-citizen agreement in which those who had no familial ties to Latvia were de-naturalized. This resulted in 6-11% of all Latvians (and Estonians who also utilized this policy in neighboring Estonia) not being citizens of the state (Ekmanis, 2020). While technically a voluntary arrangement, the policy resulted in mass migrations back to Russia by ethnic Russians and Russophones as well as a disproportionate elderly population whose members do not hold full citizen status (Ekmanis, 2020).

As independence receded in time, Latvia started to increasingly adapt its human rights and citizenship policies to those of the EU, which it wished to join, and adopted other, less harsh, management techniques that were similar to Ukraine's. Its education system remains similar to the Ukrainian system, in which a single language is picked for each school but minority language schools are not limited (Karklins, 2021). Instead of assimilation, Latvia opted for integration techniques of the Latvian and Russian languages; for example, mixed marriage is fairly common with 20% of Latvians being in a mixed marriage (Karklins, 2021). The Latvian example has also had a high degree of success as Latvian is the most common language amongst Latvian youth; therefore, if the standard for identity in the post-Soviet east is based on language, then Latvian identity development is well on its way (Karklins, 2021). The state has achieved what Ekmanis (2020: 492-494) has called 'banal integration' which “reflects a social cohesion among individuals that is so much part of everyday life, it is barely quantifiable; it goes unnoticed by the society which lives it.”

Most notably for this essay's case study, the city of Daugavpils in the Southeast of Latvia has a highly condensed Russian population where, instead of Latvian, Russian is the dominant language (Ekmanis, 2020). Banal integration has not been achieved here, Russian kinship is high and support for Russia's foreign affairs elsewhere in the world also garners far stronger support here than it does anywhere else in the country (Karklins, 2021). Vast majorities of the schools teach exclusively in Russian and the city holds the moniker 'Little Russia'. Even though there are regulations in place to operate in Latvian due to the cultural regulations set in place by the government, the city has Russian cinemas and patrons default to Russian upon entering a storefront. Even the approximately 20% of residents who identify as ethnically Latvia speak in Russian as a default (Ekmanis, 2020). This is, in effect, Latvia's equivalent of the Donbas and while the city attests that it is loyal to Latvia, the Latvian establishment has fair evidence to believe that these Russian speakers

also fit the 'fifth column' categorization that molds them into a Russian threat. In a referendum held on whether or not to make Russian a second state language, the city was highly in favor (85%) while the referendum was fervently rejected by the rest of Latvia at 75% (Ekmanis, 2020; Karklins, 2021). Voter turnout for the entirety of Latvia was 72%, some of the highest turnout Latvia has ever seen (Karklins, 2021) That 85% figure is drastically important because the percentage of ethnic Russians is lower in Daugavpils than 85% - meaning that ethnic Latvians were voting in favor of the referendum as well (Ekmanis, 2020). Another key factor to note is that there is no secessionist movement brewing or existing in Daugavpils. Thus, why has Russia not preyed on Latvia and Daugavpils as it has on Crimea and the Donbas? Why should Ukraine not view Latvia as an example and attempt to remold its own system in order to achieve Ukrainian 'banal integration'?

There are a couple answers to these questions. The first, most obvious answer, is that Latvia has remained untouched because it is a NATO and EU member (Karklins, 2021). The West's influence on this former Soviet territory blocks Russian operatives' ability to undertake a disinformation campaign as they did in the Donbas to promote a secessionist movement (Mitchnik, 2019). As such, Ukraine does not have the luxury of initiating integration and assimilation policies without international response. Furthermore, since there is already a secessionist movement under way and the use of the Russian language remains prevalent in Ukraine, its education system cannot be built in the same way as Latvia's. In Latvia, due to migration and population changes many Latvian parents have placed their children in Russian language schools because there is availability (Karklins, 2021). The reason that this is acceptable is because Latvian is already solidified as the dominant language; however, Ukrainian has not yet achieved this level of dominance in Ukraine. Lastly, Latvia's ethnic minorities are better represented within state governance with a proportional representation system that allows ethnic political parties to represent the Russian minority (Karklins, 2021). The status of governance in Ukraine has been inconsistent in Ukraine's thirty years of

independence due to Russian interference and revolutions; thus there has been no opportunity for the political sphere to be a place of cohesion and unity for both Ukrainophones and Russophones (Giuliano, 2018). More so, the support for Russian to be the second state language of Ukraine is very high, but to hold a referendum on such a topic would give further legitimacy to the Kremlin's narrative that Russians are being discriminated against in Ukraine. With a secession movement still ongoing, what is the alternative for Kyiv, if not the Latvian method?

AN ARGUMENT FOR DECENTRALIZATION

In order to ensure national security and proper ethnic management in Ukraine's East, a proper concession in order to satisfy both the Donbas region and appease the Ukrainian general public would be to decentralize the state's unitary government (Olexi et. al., 2019). This hypothetical proposal of federalism remains an ongoing debate within Ukraine itself, but also faces several roadblocks. As such, this proposal is presented as a normative and optimal solution for a deeply complex issue. To begin with, a contextual explanation is provided as to why decentralization is still a favorable option despite the clear obstacles it faces, to be followed by an outline of the direct benefits of decentralization as a whole. The ongoing issue with decentralization is that the current constitution of Ukraine does not permit decentralization (Olexi et. al, 2019). However, since the Euromaidan revolution, potential amendments to the constitution have been floated politically. Olexi et. al. (2019: 696) explain that the decentralization amendments would allow some self-governance to non-government-controlled areas (NGCA), an amendment recommended by Western allies. The amendment is also supported by 61% of the public, according to a nationwide public opinion survey done through Democratic Initiatives, though the issue is deeply controversial and requires two thirds support in order to pass (Democratic Initiative Foundation in Olexi et. al, 2019: 696). Beyond being supported by the majority of the public, there are

several other benefits to decentralization for Ukraine's ethnic management issue.

The most beneficial aspect of decentralization is appeasing the separatist movement in the Donbas. Some federalist and power sharing scholars do argue that decentralizing a state with a secessionist movement tilts further advantages and power to secessionists as it gives them a taste of independence (Roeder, 2009). This is a valid criticism; however, one must recall the fact that the secession option is not as popular in Ukraine's Donbas region as Russia claims it is. Survey data from the region continues to show that Russians in the Donbas have no interest in secession and many feel that the movement has been capitalized upon by Russia (Aliyev, 2019; Mitchnick 2019). Without the Kremlin's influence and resource backing, secessionists in the Donbas would lack popular support as well, since they would not be able to garner enough resources on their own given Ukraine's deprivation tactics. However, there is a vast amount of support for decentralization which would allow the Donbas to control aspects of its self-government as well as utilize Russian - its dominant language (Mitchnik, 2019). This patriotism that remains within Russian speaking Ukrainian citizens has created a popular mentality in the region that recognizes Russia as a kin state but rejects the Putin regime. Many Russian ethnics attest that the two language groups can live in harmony and that the Ukrainian patriotism they feel constitutes a separate identity from their Russian speaking identity (Mitchnik, 2019). This identity shift is attributed to partial ethnic defection, but also shows civic responsibility from Russian ethnics who also identify as patriotic Ukrainian citizens (Aliyev, 2019) There is no widespread desire of Donbas residents to secede and as a result, the worry that a majority of Donbas Russian speakers would opt to secede once given regional power holds no weight. There is already a secessionist movement ongoing and had Russophones held such separatist motivations, they already had an opportunity to side with the secessionists (Mitchnik, 2019).

Furthermore, this decentralization tactic would also improve the strength of the country as a whole, as Romanova and Umland (2019: 2) write in their work on decentralization:

"Ukraine's decentralisation seeks to strengthen local governance via the unification of weak municipalities into larger territorial communities that are able to better provide basic public services and foster local development; fundamentally reform the territorial division of the state; and increase regional and sub-regional self-government via the introduction of executive committees appointed by elected councils."

By engaging in this decentralization process where sub-regional and municipal governance structures are prioritized, Kyiv would allow the Donbas to represent its own interests concerning its economic affairs, which directly addresses the issue of potential deprivation (Olexi et. al, 2019). Romanova and Umland (2019: 105) also argue that decentralization would secure the southern and eastern regions of the country despite secession threats and previous attempts of ethnic management. They argue that given the amount of decentralization based on the previous federalist structures proposed to the Ukrainian public, enough checks and balances would be put in place to remove any possibility of a true secessionist movement taking hold of a future regional government (Romanova & Umland, 2019). Part of the reason for this is that the Donbas would then be blended with other regions of Ukraine, becoming a new type of Amalgamated Territorial Community (ATC) and the region would not be dominated by purely Russian speakers (Romanova & Umland, 2019). These strategies are less aggressive than previously attempted military actions to settle the secessionist movement; instead, they recognize the desires of the secessionist movement without providing sufficient regional power to allow this movement to accumulate sufficient authority and legitimacy to secede without the influence and help of Russia (Romanova & Umland, 2019).

The last key advantages for Kyiv derived from decentralization would be to both weaken the Russian Federation's influence on Ukrainian internal ethnic management, as well as to strategically position Ukraine closer to its Western allies

(Romanova & Umland, 2019). The Kremlin's tactic in the east of Ukraine is known as coercive diplomacy; it truly picked up after decentralization debates began post the Euromaidan revolution in 2014 (Alim, 2020). Russia has invested a lot of funds and work into strengthening the Donbas secessionist movements. Aligning with Roeder's (2009) argument that decentralization would cause the secessionist movement to grow, Russia would view decentralization as a concession from Ukraine to Russian claims for regional dominance. However, as previously shown, such a decentralization would be beneficial to Ukraine's government structure and ethnic management of Russophones (Olexi et. al., 2019). Should Ukraine balance the Russian Federation's kinship claims with Russians in Ukraine by appeasing the interests of Russophones and secessionists in the Donbas, Ukraine would then optically appear to be compromising with the Putin regime. In practice, however, such a policy would significantly appeal to Russophone Ukrainian patriotic sentiments. More so, decentralization is also a policy recommendation of Ukraine's Western allies, who argue that a revised governmental structure comprising additional self-governing regions would produce the kind of social stability existent in federal states like the United States, Germany, and Switzerland (Alim, 2020). As Ukraine has also been leveraging its alliances aiming at obtaining economic and security protections between the West and Russia, it should be noted that this middle of the road option appeases both major stakeholders in Ukraine's ethnic management. Ukraine would also position itself in a safer position by accommodating both parties and appeasing both sides of its ongoing internal conflict.

There are critics of pluri-national federalist states who argue that should a state decentralize power, there are no hopes of the state maintaining its territorial unity. As mentioned above, Roeder (2009: 207) maintains that a secessionist movement given an inch will take a mile. He argues that a civic nationalism can never replace an ethnic nationalism—meaning that, if Roeder is correct, Russophones will never identify as Ukrainian citizens. However, the survey data provided by Mitchnik (2019) makes it clear that both a Ukrainian national identity and Russophone linguistic identity are

salient markers for Donbas residents. Therefore, if both these identities are simultaneously present within an individual, then why would this not continue to be the case at the regional level in a plurinational federation? This is the argument of McGarry and O'Leary (2009), who choose to highlight the Canadian case as a successful pluri-national federation. They attribute this success to power-sharing mechanisms, in which ethnic minorities have both entrenched protections and governance responsibilities in order to ensure the respect of their own rights. This is the case in Canada, where the Francophone minority was given self-government and autonomy powers as well as guaranteed representation at the federal level (McGarry and O'Leary, 2009). Furthermore, with Ukraine's continued commitment to democratic practices through Nationalization, McGarry and O'Leary (2009) argue that a federal state where democracy is in place will always be stronger than a pseudo-federal country where federalism would be used as a false promise of autonomy. This was indeed for Ukraine itself, while it was under Soviet rule. Thus, a decentralized approach to governance for Kyiv would not only constitute a resolution to the Russian kin-state interests in Ukraine, but also provide it with a far more long term path towards stability and security as a sovereign state.

CONCLUSION

The Russian ethnic minority in Ukraine has established a complex political situation in which the management of language remains paramount to the stability of not just the country itself but also of the entire region. The background of the post-Soviet independence of Ukraine as paired with the history of the Crimean and Donbas regions exemplify the context of how important language remains as an identity marker (Olexi et. al., 2019). More so, investigating the roots of the Donbas secessionist movement and contrasting its importance to the Kremlin as opposed to its importance to actual Russophone and Russian ethnic citizens of Ukraine contextualizes what Ukraine should do to achieve effective and legitimate levels of ethnic management

within the Donbas region and beyond (Giuliano, 2018). There is also the importance of looking outwards and dispelling any misplaced generalizations of Baltic countries' policies. By reviewing the similarities and differences between Ukraine and Latvia, this paper highlighted that while both states attempted to implement very similar methods of assimilation and integration, they would not end up with the same results. Latvia has the luxury of Western protection as well as less physical territory for the taking (Karklins, 2021). The influences of Russia and to a certain extent, the West, on the politics of Ukraine are also important to note in order to examine what the realistic ethnic management possibilities are for the Ukrainian state. Russia is indeed a kin state—Russian ethnics and Russophones do not deny that—but their patriotic commitment to Ukraine continues to hold stronger for them. Ukraine needs therefore to maintain a firmer grip on these sentiments instead of creating in this particular section of its population a deep disdain for the central government in Kyiv.

Decentralization is thus the optimal solution for Ukraine's conflict and ethnic management plans. Not only does it go a long way in appeasing both Russia and the West, it also satisfies Ukraine's own citizens, Russian ethnics and Russophones and Ukrainian ethnics alike (Romanova & Umland, 2019). The decentralization of Ukraine, which could become more feasible in the future after further constitutional review, would result in an amendment to the constitution that would strengthen the Ukrainian identity as a whole. Alim (2020) argues that the Putin regime is the only major roadblock to a cohesive Ukrainian identity and that with proper checks and balances on Russia to ensure Ukrainian security, Ukraine will be able to progress to a time and place where its nationalism would no longer be threatened by the Russian Federation's kin-state appeals to its Russophone citizens. A constitutional amendment enshrining decentralization is also far more likely after the inherent nationalization of the country once the on-going war comes to an end. Any opportunity to keep the Putin regime's troops and agents out of the country after two violations of Ukraine's territorial sovereignty within a decade should be top priority for Kyiv. It is also important to highlight that since Ukrainian is a growing language

within the state, a decentralized Ukraine would allow Ukraine to focus on regions that do not have populous minority groups in order to promote the use of the language, as was done in Latvia (Karklins, 2021). Overall, decentralization would still allow Ukraine to allocate state resources as it sees necessary, whilst adding checks and balances on the Kremlin's influence on its internal politics, and also meeting some of the demands of the minority secessionist groups in the Donbas. Such accommodations could bring long-term state stability for Ukraine for the first time in its three decades of freedom.

Further research is recommended on how to promote decentralization in Ukraine as well as how to design constitutional remedies for restructuring the state through a federalist approach. It could be beneficial to look into other cases comparatively both within the Baltic region and throughout Eastern Europe to ensure common factors could be tied to both neighboring regions. It is also recommended that further research be done on how to balance Russian and Western influence on decentralization. Different types of federalist approaches might be favored by either side and as a result, it is important to understand which form of decentralization would be most beneficial for Ukraine itself. Of course, Ukraine is an independent state which has its own sovereignty, but such sovereignty is fragile with less than half a century of governance behind it (Eras, 2022). Especially with the country's early 2022 invasion by Putin's Russia, there are new considerations that need to be taken into account, as without proper legitimization of Ukraine's nationalism by the international community, the invasion itself will be considered legitimate. However, peace in Ukraine is essential for both ethnic Ukrainians and its Russian minorities, since without peace Ukraine may never get a chance to resolve its own internal minorities' issues and risks seeing Russia's 2014 Crimean annexation strategy be replayed soon in the Donbas region.

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UNPACKING THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT



INTELLIGENCE TRANSFORMATION IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA: ATTEMPTING TO RECONCILE THE IRRECONCILABLE

PIETER ZHAO

ABSTRACT

Fundamental political transformations such as a revolution or coup d'état often leave a country's security and intelligence agencies in an existential crisis. Following such a change, the security and intelligence apparatus suddenly have to structurally transform in order to suit the newly-defined needs of the recently established government, oftentimes in contrast to the needs of the previous regime, as illustrated by the breakdown of the Apartheid regime in South Africa, for example. However, patterns of continuity within a country's security and intelligence apparatus following a political transformation can also be observed, especially when the underlying bases of power and security paradigms persist. Accordingly, following Russia's recent intelligence failures surrounding the ongoing war in Ukraine, this paper analyzes the transformation of Russia's post-Soviet security and intelligence apparatus. It argues that the dissolution of the Soviet Union failed to bring structural change to Russia's post-Soviet intelligence apparatus: despite removing the KGB's ideological umbrella, the KGB's successor organizations remained equally influential in the Russian Federation, making them bound to repeat the patterns of the past.

Keywords: Intelligence, Security, Soviet Union, Russia, Political Transformation, KGB

INTRODUCTION

There is no such thing as a former chekist.
Vladimir Putin, 2005

In 2005, Russian President Vladimir Putin publicly used the above phrase, quoting an aphorism inherited from Russia's Soviet legacy. The term

'chekism' finds its origins in the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission (VChK), the first Soviet secret police organization, which was commonly known as the 'Cheka.' Chekism is therefore used as a concept describing the situation in the Soviet Union in which the security and intelligence apparatus controlled all spheres of society (Anderson, 2007). In turn, a 'chekist' refers to an officer of a Soviet or post-Soviet Russian state security and intelligence service. The above phrase had been popular within the KGB for decades to illustrate the organization's pride and elite nature, similar to how the United States Marine Corps uses the phrase "there is no such thing as a former Marine" (Riehle, 2022: 61). Putin's public use of this Soviet-era phrase, therefore, suggests a certain historical continuity surrounding the position of security and intelligence agencies within Russia following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As a result, questions arise regarding the ways in which this fundamental political transformation affected the security and intelligence apparatus within Russia in the post-Soviet era.

Fundamental political transformations often leave a country's security and intelligence agencies in an existential crisis. For example, following the breakdown of the apartheid regime in South Africa (1994), its intelligence sector had to completely transform from a militarized and highly repressive instrument of internal control into a more transparent, civilian-led, and democratically accountable intelligence community designed to inform policy-makers (Dombroski, 2006). Indeed, South Africa's experience highlights how the reform of the intelligence sector can be considered a vital element of a country's democratization process following a fundamental political transformation. The dissolution of the Soviet Union—where the Committee for State Security (KGB) deeply penetrated both state and society—therefore brought hopes of democratic reforms, which would ultimately

translate into less power for the security and intelligence agencies that succeeded the KGB.

This paper analyzes how the dissolution of the Soviet Union affected the intelligence agencies of post-Soviet Russia in order to identify the general lessons learned from this particular experience, which Putin termed the “greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th-century.” After briefly defining the intelligence apparatus of the Soviet Union, the paper considers the transformation process surrounding the KGB following the August 1991 coup attempt. By analyzing these developments concerning the subsequent disintegration of the KGB, the paper argues that the KGB’s partitioning into separate agencies failed to bring structural change to Russia’s post-Soviet intelligence apparatus due to the persistence of the underlying security paradigms. In doing so, the paper uses a qualitative methodology based on historical content analysis.

THE KGB: AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

The origins of the KGB can be traced back to the 20th of December 1917, a date still celebrated in present-day Russia, when the Bolshevik regime established a political police system that quickly built a reputation for its skillfulness, comprehensiveness, and brutality. In fact, the system was so effective that even the Soviet’s arch-enemies carefully studied it, mirrored it, and refined it in order to help them seize power, consolidate their control, and ultimately remain in power (Waller, 2004). To describe the security and intelligence apparatus of the Soviet Union – chronologically known as the Cheka, GPU, OGPU, NKVD, MGB, and ultimately the KGB – Dziak (1991) coined the term ‘counterintelligence state’ due to its all-encompassing nature. He described a counterintelligence state as a state where the security and intelligence apparatus penetrates and permeates all societal institutions, including the military (Dziak, 1987). As a result, although the KGB was responsible for various security and intelligence tasks that would usually be separated in western security and intelligence agencies, such as foreign and domestic intelligence, counter-intelligence, operative-investigative activities, and border security,

among others, it was mainly concerned with neutralizing threats to the regime itself (Riehle, 2022).

The KGB possessed a high degree of penetration, which Gill defines as the ability of any security intelligence service to “gather information and exercise power with a particular context of law and rules which facilitate the state’s efforts to maintain security and order” (Gill, 1994:80). This, in turn, translated into its organizational structure as well. Estimates of the KGB’s size range significantly, with official reports from 1991 stating a strength of 490,000, while Yevgenia Albats estimates a true size of around 720,000 officers (Albats, 1994). Consequently, when subtracting the 12,000 officers working for the First Chief Directorate (foreign intelligence) and the 220,000 border guards, the remaining personnel concerned with domestic security range between 258,000 and 488,000 (Muldoon, 1999). Thus, there was a drastic difference between foreign and domestic intelligence, illustrating the priorities of the KGB.,

Moreover, while the KGB had a considerably larger overseas presence than other countries’ primary intelligence services, its analytical component was relatively small and weak. Within the intelligence cycle, the analytical component refers to the stage that succeeds in the collection and exploitation of raw intelligence material, in order to establish the significance and implications of the processed intelligence. Although the KGB’s operational branches had thousands of employees, its main analytical branch, the Directorate of Intelligence Analysis, had a staff of around 250 people, primarily responsible for completing and editing intelligence reports from the field instead of producing finished analyses. This does not only highlight the inefficiency of the KGB’s analytical component but also the KGB’s culture of ignoring analyses altogether (Pringle, 1998; Ates, 2020). Instead, important intelligence information was passed directly to the Central Committee staff to be analyzed and consumed by the leadership without any input from intelligence professionals. This weakness within the intelligence cycle was historically inherited from Stalin’s tendency

to read intelligence reports directly, instructing his intelligence officers not to bother him with analyses. This practice continued unabated into the Gorbachev era, with some senior KGB analysts merely flavoring their few finished intelligence analyses with ideological statements about the west (Pringle, 1998).

As a result, the KGB cannot be considered purely as an intelligence agency but rather a secret police agency with foreign intelligence capabilities. It was an ideologically-infused organization that operated as a guardian of the ideology and regime of the USSR. Consequently, the KGB was more concerned with party interests instead of national security interests (Walther, 2014). The KGB only answered the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), which was not a purely governmental institution but supra-governmental (Muldoon, 1999). As a result, the KGB lacked formal oversight mechanisms besides the Party and acted as a semi-autonomous actor within the Soviet Union. The fact that Yuri Andropov, the fourth chairman of the KGB, succeeded Leonid Brezhnev as General Secretary of the CPSU highlights the KGB's influence within both the state and society.

THE TRANSFORMATION: FROM THE SOVIET UNION TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Gorbachev's liberalization of the Communist Party within the context of perestroika and glasnost did not sit well with the ideologically-infused KGB. It feared a destabilization of the whole country, which would also affect the KGB's powerful position (Walther, 2014). These tensions culminated in the August 1991 coup attempt, in which Soviet hardliners failed to forcibly seize control from Gorbachev. The KGB was one of the primary actors in the failed coup attempt, leading to anti-KGB protests and the toppling of the statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky, the founder of the Cheka. Consequently, the reform-minded Vadim Bakatin was appointed as the new director of the KGB, with the mandate to dismantle the KGB (Muldoon, 1999).

Dismantling the KGB

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the rise of Boris Yeltsin as President of the Russian Federation, calls for reforms regarding the intelligence apparatus emerged. In doing so, Bakatin, with the support of Yeltsin, devised a three-point program: (1) 'disintegration' or vertical dismemberment of the KGB to break its monopoly of power by splitting it into separate organizations along functional lines – foreign intelligence, domestic intelligence, counterintelligence and internal security, presidential security, electronic intelligence, and border security; (2) 'decentralization' to partition the KGB horizontally along geographic lines to decentralize the counterintelligence and internal security sections among the Soviet republics; and (3) 'de-ideologization,' what Bakatin defined as the 'repudiation of the ideology of chekism' (Waller, 2004: 343). Indeed, due to the sudden dissolution of the Soviet Union, and specifically the part played by the KGB in accelerating this process following the August Coup, there was a realization among the Russian leadership that the KGB presented a dangerous, ideologically-motivated, and ultimately ineffective intelligence agency that needed to be dismantled. During the Soviet era, Yeltsin himself had been the target of KGB surveillance and harassment; he, therefore, promoted the idea of having several smaller intelligence agencies rather than the all-encompassing KGB (Muldoon, 1999; Ates, 2020).

Accordingly, the KGB dissolved into three separate organizations: the SVR, foreign intelligence; the Ministry of Security (MB); and the Main Administration of Protection (GUO), tasked with protecting senior leaders and government facilities. The MB included the majority of the former functions and personnel of the old KGB, leading to concerns among reformers like Yeltsin about the potential threat it could pose to the governing power. As a result, the MB was separated into three different agencies: the Federal Counterintelligence Service (FSK), which inherited the counterintelligence functions; the Federal Agency for Government Communications and Information (FAPSI), tasked with communications security and signals intelligence; and the Federal Border Guard Service

(FPS) (Riehle, 2022). Thus, the KGB was ultimately dismantled into five independent Russian agencies.

The breakup of the KGB seemingly undermined the KGB's omnipotence, depriving it of its unique role in the country's domestic and international affairs. Western observers regarded the reorganization of the Russian security and intelligence apparatus as a significant improvement and a step towards democratization. As independent agencies, with foreign and domestic intelligence tasks separated, the new arrangement seemed to indicate a less penetrative and oppressive Russian security and intelligence apparatus (Muldoon, 1999). The Russian intelligence agencies, therefore, directly mirrored western-style intelligence communities. There were even efforts to democratize the oversight mechanisms over the intelligence agencies, with the Russian parliament agreeing that the services should be under parliamentary control (Muldoon, 1999). However, simultaneously, a spirit of competition arose among the five agencies, and failures, such as the failed Budyonovsk hospital hostage crisis of June 1995, left the services looking incapable and weak (Riehle, 2022). Consequently, following the Budyonovsk debacle, the FSK was renamed and reorganized into the Federal Security Service or FSB, which still exists today.

Old Patterns Resurface

Despite Yeltsin's genuine efforts to reform Russia's intelligence apparatus, he faced the same dilemma that every Soviet leader had faced. While he wanted to bring the security and intelligence agencies under the rule of law, he also desired a powerful (but not too powerful) and personally loyal intelligence apparatus. These contrasting objectives, therefore, frustrated any chance of true reforms (Waller, 1994). By 1993, Yeltsin had already sought the support of the state's intelligence organs in his constitutional conflict with the parliament, which was ultimately resolved by force, illustrating the first cracks within the promising reform efforts (Walther, 2014). Moreover, the reform-minded leadership and the chairmanship of Bakatin intensely embittered many conservative chekists, who often remained in top

positions within the newly established agencies (Walther, 2014). For example, the first Head of the FSB, Sergei Stepashin, was replaced by Mikhail Barsukov in 1995, who was replaced by Nikolai Kovalev in 1996, who Putin eventually replaced in 1998. All of these men were seasoned KGB veterans and therefore molded in a 'KGB mindset,' unlikely to initiate or welcome change in the structure of the intelligence apparatus (Pringle, 1998). The bureaucratic history of these structures and the deep-rooted chekist culture and psychology were instilled among their personnel. Some bureaucratic reshuffling, therefore, failed to change this mentality of impunity (Waller, 2004).

Furthermore, Yeltsin reorganized the FSK into the FSB, giving it more penetrative authority, partly to combat the rampant corruption and crime that characterized the formative years of the Russian Federation. Yet, these policies proved ineffective and even counterproductive, allowing the intelligence agencies to win influence and increasingly dictate their terms. Instead of grounding anti-crime campaigns in the rule of law and judiciary process, Yeltsin's campaigns proved politically motivated, with his political rivals coming under scrutiny while his allies were overlooked. These efforts, therefore, contributed to the failure of implanting intelligence within the rule of law (Muldoon, 1999). Moreover, while the ideology that empowered and motivated the KGB was admittedly gone, this also removed the restraint that ideology put on the KGB, meaning that corruption, which was somewhat regulated under the Soviet system, became rampant (Muldoon, 1999). Indoctrinated in Soviet ideology for most of his professional career, Yeltsin could not come to terms with the inefficiencies of democratic governing within the rule of law. Thus, while Yeltsin genuinely wanted to combat crime and corruption, his approach inadvertently empowered the intelligence agencies, specifically the FSB, allowing them to increasingly undermine the reform efforts.

As a result, when Putin became Head of the FSB in 1998, he witnessed the coordinating problems that the dismantling of Russia's intelligence and security apparatus had created. After being elected

President, Putin gradually re-accumulated the state security functions that had been separated during Yeltsin's time. First, the Federal Border Service was subordinated to the FSB in 2003, followed by the dissolving of the FAPSI, with most of its functions transferred to the FSB and a few to the SVR and Federal Protective Service (successor to the GUO). By 2005, the FSB had regained nearly all but a few specialized functions that the KGB previously controlled, including the return of functions and practices that resembled those of the KGB's Fifth Directorate—censorship and internal security against artistic, political, and religious dissension (Riehle, 2022). Accordingly, old patterns resurfaced under Putin's leadership, which is highlighted by the parallel between Andropov and Putin, who both managed to become heads of state through their influential positions within the intelligence apparatus.

LESSONS LEARNED: OLD CHEKIST HABITS DIE HARD...

Besides removing the ideological umbrella of the Soviet Union and replacing the all-encompassing KGB with the SVR and FSB, respectively, the political transformation failed to structurally reform the culture underpinning the intelligence apparatus of post-Soviet Russia. In the early 1990s, reformers such as Albats emphasized that without accounting for the past, the new security and intelligence establishment would recast itself in the model of Soviet intelligence, which proved to be an accurate prediction (Pringle, 1998). This particular experience, therefore, highlights the difficulty of restructuring a country's intelligence apparatus when the underlying paradigms remain in place.

Unlike the deNazification and subsequent de-Stasification in Germany, which grounded its democratization process, Russia failed in its de-Bolshevization (Knight, 1996). In fact, the new leadership in Russia came straight from the Communist Party or even the KGB. Uprooting the chekists was, therefore, never a priority in post-Soviet Russia. On the contrary, in post-Soviet Russia, due to the hard times following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, leaders such as Yeltsin and Putin

needed their loyal KGB/FSB hardmen, just like Brezhnev needed Andropov before (Waller, 2004). Moreover, unlike other former Soviet bloc states, Russian services suffered from the absence of a historical culture of legality and the rule of law (Waller and Yasmann, 1995). Additionally, while other former Soviet bloc states experienced the breakdown of occupation, Russian leaders emphasized the breakdown of an empire (Knight, 1996). Accordingly, the chekists had no interest in democratization or establishing a legal framework within the rule of law, as this would be incompatible with their former functions and methods under the Soviet Union, creating a vested interest to preserve the former system essentially. As the first FSK Director stated on Russian television: "I am in favor of the violation of human rights if the person involved is a bandit and criminal" (Knight, 1996: 97). Thus, with such leadership rooted in the old chekist paradigm, it proves extremely difficult to reform a country's intelligence apparatus structurally.

As a result, these similarities can also be recognized in the present. As in the past, a drastic size difference between domestic and foreign intelligence capabilities continues to exist, with an estimated 200,000 employees in the FSB against the mere 12,000 employees of the SVR (Muldoon, 1999; Riehle, 2022). In fact, when combining all the agencies, present-day Russia boasts more security personnel per capita than the Soviet Union—nearly three times the number of people working in KGB successor organizations per capita than state security had in the Soviet Union – again indicating a penetrative service and a 'weak state,' according to Gill (1994, pp. 69-70). Moreover, the SVR descends directly from the KGB's First Chief Directorate. Accordingly, foreign intelligence is primarily looking for, sometimes fabricating, connections between domestic and foreign threats, echoing a typically chekist modus operandi (Riehle, 2022). However, the Main Intelligence Directorate (GU) or GRU, Russia's military intelligence agency, is reportedly the largest foreign intelligence agency within Russia. Yet, unlike the KGB, the GRU remained intact following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, illustrating further continuity (Reuters, 2009). Finally, Russia's current intelligence

apparatus remains heavily invested in information collection with typically poor analytical capabilities. This stems from the intelligence apparatus's historic legacy, with the leadership often acting as their own intelligence officers, preferring their personal judgment over that of intelligence analysts, besides the already-existing pressure to provide favorable information because of the individual and professional risks of doing otherwise (Davies and Steward, 2022).

CONCLUSION

While western intelligence has experienced an 'intelligence revolution,' – consisting of (1) open government; (2) shifting from 'need to know' to 'need to share'; and advances in collection and processing capabilities in both (3) intelligence surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), and (4) in open-source intelligence – Russia has failed to keep up, with its leadership deeply invested in an outdated intelligence and security paradigm (Davies and Steward, 2022). As a consequence, Russia's political transformation failed to bring structural change to its intelligence apparatus because the sources of power remained the same. While Yeltsin admittedly removed the ideological umbrella from the intelligence services, he nevertheless retained the mentality of a party bureaucrat that simply could not imagine a governing system without a KGB-like apparatus supporting it.

Thus, unlike South Africa's example, Russia's leadership remained rooted in a chekist paradigm, which could not come to terms with the principles of democratic government and the rule of law, as this would be incompatible with the intelligence apparatus that controlled the bases of power. While the chekists previously operated under the control of the CPSU, in Putin's administration they essentially became the ruling elite themselves (Matthews, 2016). The case-study of Russia, therefore, highlights the difficulty of reforming a country's intelligence apparatus when the former paradigms remain in place. As a result, Russia's current intelligence agencies are bound to repeat the patterns of the past. This can partly explain Russia's underwhelming performance in its war in Ukraine (2022) which is

dogged by intelligence failures at every command level. This, among other aspects, includes the poor assessment of the likelihood and shape of a unified western response and the extent of Ukraine's determined resistance to Russian military force (Davies and Steward, 2022).

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MIGHT VS. WILL: A REALIST ASSESSMENT OF THE RUSSO-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT AND ITS PROBABLE OUTCOME

MADISON FARHOOD

ABSTRACT

As the Russo-Ukrainian war has continued to unfold as a weaving and complex conflict over the past year, this paper takes an often overlooked approach by using the core assumptions of realism to describe the power balance that has emerged between the two combatant forces over this time period. While this paradigm has been critiqued for being inconsistent with the modern realities of global politics, this paper demonstrates that realism can still be relevant in analyzing international war and conflict. The theoretical analysis begins with a brief overview of classical realism, so as to explain the innate desires nations have in maintaining and increasing their power and influence, and then moves to compare these motivations. By analyzing the use of different power sources by Russia and Ukraine, based on realist assumptions of apparent power versus effective power, this paper claims that while Russia holds stronger apparent military power than Ukraine, Ukraine has more effective military power, thus creating a continuous warfare environment. The article concludes by attempting to provide a 'realist' solution grounded in a reasonable negotiation process respecting the rational interests of all participants. Ultimately, this theoretical perspective attempts to demonstrate the continuing influence that 'power' plays in international relations today, as seen through the case study of the Russo-Ukrainian war.

Keywords: realism, effective power, military power, balance of power, international relations, Russo-Ukrainian war, resolution.

INTRODUCTION

Millions of citizens displaced, hundreds of thousands of soldiers dead, and an aspiring country in ruins, is the result of the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine with only relatively small advances being made by the aggressor (Hayden et al., 2022). This paper takes a realist perspective arguing that in the Russo-Ukrainian war, power plays a large role in understanding reasoning, motivations, and the current context of the war. We find that when we compare the 'apparent' military power of both Russia and Ukraine to the 'effective' power they each possess, the two states currently balance each other, creating a somewhat equal playing field between them. Therefore, through the frame and core assumptions of realism, this paper claims that while Russia holds stronger apparent military power than Ukraine, Ukraine has more effective military power, potentially resulting in a never-ending warfare environment. The findings of this analysis explain why there is confusion in the media and general public about Russia's inability to effortlessly sweep through Ukraine, like many commentators initially believed would happen in the beginning stages of this conflict. This prolonged clash of arms between equally balanced powers has resulted in continuing violence and uncertainty as to how the war will conclude.

The paper begins by discussing the core assumptions of Morgenthau's classical realism to set up the theoretical frame of its analysis of the Russo-Ukrainian war. By creating a base-line understanding of realism, this paper is able to deconstruct the multifaceted reasoning behind Russian President Vladimir Putin's desire to invade Ukraine, grounded in his determination to preserve Russia's international standing as a Great Power and to protect its security in Eastern Europe.

By understanding the importance that power plays in the war, this paper then moves to a comparative critique that analyzes the two belligerents' deployment of 'apparent' military power versus 'effective' power. This comparison demonstrates that there are clear disparities in nations' respective capacities to demonstrate and use power. This leads to the conclusion that the two adversaries find themselves in a power stalemate calling for a solution acceptable to both sides to end the conflict. A realist approach of a cessation of hostilities would be based on good-faith negotiations between both nations, resulting in a fair and sustainable peace agreement. It is important to note that this short paper is time sensitive and is documenting the events of an ongoing conflict; therefore after publication, information may no longer reflect new realities on the ground.

WHAT IS REALISM? POWER FOR ALL

Although realism as a paradigm of International Relations (IR) is widely critiqued today, its arguments for states' innate desire for power can have weight in interpreting the Russo-Ukrainian war. Many scholars have critiqued realism for being too narrow (Boyd, 1983). Rosenberg expands on this statement in saying that realism is too limited in multiple ways, mainly in its conception of an anarchic international political order being rooted in the global exploitation of power dynamics by strong states at the expense of weak ones. He believes this conception ignores the many other factors that could contribute to fabricating an anarchical society, such as racial or religious contentions, making the argument limited (Rosenberg, 1990: 299-300). Scholars further believe that realism is limited in other ways such as the paradigm's universal belief that all state interactions are perennially grounded in the same national security motivations. This conception disregards other plausible factors, considerations, and circumstances that could influence states to act in ways of power, such as the various modern globalization processes which were not present during the fabrication of the realist paradigm (Rosenberg, 1990: 297).

Overall, while realism is critiqued as being too shortsighted and unidimensional to explain the complex dynamics of modernity, the next area of this article tackles to show how its core assumptions are still relevant.

Realism emerged as the dominant paradigm of IR after the Second World War in an attempt for scholars to comprehend the motives behind another global conflict and foster a cure to prevent future world conflagrations (Dunne & Schmidt, 2020: 131). A multitude of scholars emerged in the field of IR arguing that idealism, being the prior paradigm enframing the study of war and conflict in the inter-war period from 1919 to 1939, was underestimating "the role of power while also overestimating the degree to which nation-states shared a set of common interests" (Dunne & Schmidt, 2020: 131). Scholars of the time built on the theories of Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* and Jean-Jacque Rousseau's *State of War* to develop the paradigm of realism, focusing on states' constant objective to maintain and gain global power (Rosch, 2013: 7). While there are many types of realism, this paper will focus on Hans Morgenthau's classical realism as a lens to deconstruct the current Russo-Ukrainian war.

Dunne and Schmidt summarize Morgenthau's classical realism approach as anchored by the central belief that "international politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power," which Morgenthau justifies through an explanation of human nature (Dunne & Schmidt, 2020: 136). Morgenthau believes that human interests are consistently driven by the pursuit of power and "opportunities to increase their own power" (Ibid.). Dunne and Schmidt compile Morgenthau's conception of the struggle for power among states into three basic patterns: to keep power, to increase power, and to demonstrate power. Ultimately, through these three basic patterns, Morgenthau attempted to create a universal explanation for why states participate in wars and seek control.

Perhaps the best definition of classical realism has been provided recently by Jonathan Kirshner

(2022) in *An Unwritten Future: Realism and Uncertainty in World Politics*, where he states that:

"Classical Realism is defined by its attentiveness to the inexorable dangers implied by anarchy (latent or present), a need to respect the realities of power (the capabilities of others, the inevitable limits of one's own), and an anticipation that world politics is characterised by conflicts of interest (with the resolution of one disputation soon followed by another), all in the context of irretrievable uncertainty" (Kirshner, 2022: 18).

Classical realists proceed to argue that global peace is maintained by an international balance of state powers, whereas nations balance each other to prevent complete global domination by one of their peers (Dunne & Schimdt, 2020: 137). Ultimately, to realists, power determines outcomes in moments of global contention, such as the current Russo-Ukrainian war (Smith & Dawson, 2022: 131). While it could be argued that realism has been irrelevant in this war as it has been unable to accurately predict any specific 'outcomes' thus far, this paper attempts to disprove such statements and highlights realism's ongoing relevance to the war by comparing and contrasting the two adversaries' different types of power. Before engaging in this comparison, this paper will show how classical realism can provide a baseline explanation of the rationale behind Vladimir Putin's motivation to invade Ukraine. President Putin's desire to invade Ukraine sparked from two motivations rooted in power considerations: namely, to enhance Russia's world status as a Great Power to be feared by enemies and respected by allies, while also to ensure his country's national security by protecting it from the threat posed by an expanding Western alliance of states structured around what he considers to be the Cold War relic of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Realism in Practice: Explaining the Russian Reasoning for War

Classical realism as a paradigm of international relations can provide a basic understanding of Russia's decision to invade Ukraine. Prior to the war, contemporary discussions revolved around the

gradual decay of Russia's international power, ongoing since the fall of its previous incarnation of the USSR in 1991 (Boyd, 2022). Russia is slowly losing its global Great Power status to other dominant and rising nations, namely the United States of America (U.S.) and China (Heim & Miller, 2020: 1-3). Recent sources have described Russia as a "nation in decline" (Nye, 2019: 1). While this decline has been due to a multitude of factors like falling education standards and quality of life, Nye concludes that this comes down to the economic decline Russia has faced from resisting transnational processes of globalization and open international market forces. In contrast to Russia's failing economy, nations like the U.S. and China have flourished by promoting the emergence of highly effective open market forces, which have enormously increased their status as superpowers and their ability to use this power to their advantage to reap economic benefits and further create international alliances (Nye, 2019: 1). It could be argued that Russia's loss of international status has consequently resulted in a decline of its global power. Realism, as demonstrated above, describes this ongoing shift in the distribution of global power as highly concerning to Russia, and therefore rationalizes Russia's decision to take military action to maintain its relative power by reasserting its status as a regional hegemon in Eastern Europe (Kirshner, 2022: 16). Therefore, reasserting control over countries like Ukraine allows Russia to demonstrate its enduring international strength and protect its status as both a historical and present-day dominant nation. This paper will show that President Putin's targeting of Ukraine was thus not a random event but rather a rational, calculated, strategic move on his part.

Ukraine, in recent years, has begun aligning itself more with Western nations which has outwardly been of high concern to Russia (Boyd, 2022). This concern is due to the recent expansion of Western alliances and their promotion of a democratic ideology toward eastern European countries, which poses a threat to Russia and its totalitarian regime (Kasparov & Khodorkovsky, 2023). Since the fall of

the Soviet Union, Russia views itself in stark opposition to the West, thus creating ongoing tension between itself and the U.S. who is viewed as one of the engines promoting the transnational global democratization processes that Putin has often stated to fear (Kasparov & Khodorkovsky, 2023). Due to the existential threat the U.S. poses to the Russian regime, Russia has also felt directly challenged by NATO, a military alliance of which the U.S. exerts an exceptionally large influence over (Boyd, 2022). NATO is a Trans-Atlantic alliance of states whose main objective is to deter Russia's attempts to expand territorially in countries that before 1991 were part of the USSR or members of the Warsaw Pact— a region Russia tellingly designates as its 'near-abroad' (Schnauffer, 2021).

Prior to the start of the recent war, Ukraine was attempting to join NATO and President Putin was alarmed by the eastward movement of the alliance; in particular, he remains concerned with having westward aligned states surrounding Russia for the reasons above (Boyd, 2022). This brief realist analysis depicts Ukraine as the perfect target for two reasons: it allows Russia to conquer land with an aim to regain and maintain its identity as a global power, and second, conquering Ukraine for security reasons allows Russia to protect itself from being encircled by NATO nations who threaten Putin's totalitarian vision of government. Realist John Mearsheimer argues for a similar explanation of the war, namely that the eastward expansion of NATO provoked Russia's sense of insecurity and prompted it to lash out to demonstrate its military power and enhance its strategic security (Edinger, 2022: 1875). This theoretical explanation shows that deep down, Putin's motivations fall under a realist explanation of power for these two reasons. However, analysts challenge the relevance of realism by arguing that power has been so far unable to determine the outcome of the current military conflict (O'Brien, 2022).

What is Wrong: Who Defines Power?

Morgenthau's conception that power determines outcomes remains relevant to the current study and

understanding of international conflicts in IR. Kirshner (2022: 51) recently posited, in support of this assertion, that "[f]or classical realists, then, international politics is less of an active, present struggle for survival... and more about the clash of interests, with outcomes determined by power". However, this approach is not without its own limitations, since it centers its theory around the critical concept of 'power' but never accurately defines the term or how it is measured (Dunne et al., 2020). Rather, classical realists leave their central term of power more or less open for interpretation. This leads individuals to easily associate the complex concept of 'power' with the common conception of apparent power being objective measurable military force of physical resources like the number of guns, soldiers, and tanks that a nation holds (Rosen, 1995). Open interpretation of the term power by realists is why many analysts suggest that Russia has more 'power' than Ukraine, as Russia does have more objectively measurable physical military hardware and manpower in comparison; however, this neglects other forms of power that also play a large role in predicting conflict outcomes (Kirby, 2022). This general assumption – that physical military power equals absolute power – overlooks the importance of 'effective power'. Rosen explains effective power as a set of assets expanding beyond physical force which includes quality of leadership, legitimacy of the cause, morale of the troops, loyalty of the country's population, and allies' support (Rosen, 1995). Classical realism alludes to the importance of both physical apparent power and tactical effective power, however, this is not always clearly articulated by realist analysts.

The remainder of this paper will compare Russia and Ukraine's apparent and effective power levels from a realist perspective. Its findings demonstrate that the two actors involved have equal absolute power, but differential distribution patterns, thus creating a virtual unstable stalemate in the ongoing conflict. The common understanding of apparent military power alone has been unable to determine the outcome of the war because it excludes additional

forms of power which have been vital to Ukraine in resisting Russia's aggression. This paper asserts that the concept of power can still provide explanations of the conduct of current conflicts, and foresees that the most likely outcome of the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war is a sustainable and long-term power rebalancing process between the various actors involved.

CONTRASTING UKRAINE AND RUSSIA'S APPARENT AND EFFECTIVE POWERS - WHO WINS?

Advantage Russia: Apparent Military Power Base

Russia is one of the world's leading nations in terms of military assets. It is ranked second in the world out of 142 nations on the GFP scale on its active military manpower (2023 Military Strength Rating, 2023). Russia's intense focus on military force, defined in terms of hardware and manpower, is demonstrated by its President, Vladimir Putin's nationalist ideology and devotion to authoritarian leadership practices. IR scholars recognize how a leader's ideology that is focused on maximizing its country's power can influence the conduct of international relations. Kirshner (2022: 18) states that although "Classical Realism models its actors as rational... the range of choices they might make... [are] shaped... by varying, implicit theoretical models of how the world works and informed by distinct historical experiences" -and therefore, are impossible to predict". Pisciotta (2020: 87) applies this theoretical approach to present-day Russia and concretely describes Putin's warfare mentality as "a vision of the 'new world' that is one of constant escalation aimed at altering the status quo. He has refused to play by Western rules and does not fear political isolation". This aggression is then reflected in his foreign policy embedded in the history of the Cold War and of the Soviet Union (Kumar, 2016: 211). Carleton, a Professor of Russian Studies, notes that Russia has historically been a militarized country, putting emphasis on security and force measures as illustrated by the conquest of the city of Kazan, on the Volga river, from the Tatars by Russia's first Tsar, Ivan the Terrible, in the 16th century, which

"set imperial expansion" patterns for successive Russian rulers (McNeil, 2022). He further notes that when we look at Russia's warfare history, the nation has often taken the approach of "defensive expansion" like in Kazan's early case, and is rarely seen playing the offence position (McNeil, 2022). Carleton considers this to be a historic legacy that Putin continues to carry today, with his perception of a belligerent and domineering U.S. that attempts to threaten his world vision with the expansion of NATO and the promotion of democracy at Russia's expense. Putin's ideology and Russia's historical context of warfare create fertile grounds for this nation's security strategy to be built upon high levels of apparent military power.

Putin, throughout his time as Russian ruler and to this day, continues to hold statist views supporting strong authoritarianism which sets the tone for Russia's current conceptualization of military power. Analysts and common IR practice suggest how state "defense spending is one of the most commonly used measures for gauging a country's potential military power" (Kofman & Connolly, 2019). In 2021, Russia's military expenditure was 4.1% as a percentage of GDP, whereas Ukraine's was 3.2% (Stockholm International Research Institute, 2023). Russia spent an estimated U.S. \$61.7 billion on defense in 2020, an amount that has slowly been rising (Gatehouse & Leung, 2022). This includes funds for advanced research in the development of hypersonic weapons and air defenses, followed by maintaining a stockpile of nuclear weapons. Research has suggested Russia to have more nuclear warfare materials than all NATO nations combined. BBC News reports how experts "estimate around 1,500 Russian warheads are currently 'deployed', meaning sited at missile and bomber bases or on submarines at sea" (The Visual Journalism Team, 2022). Further, Russia has almost one million active soldiers in Ukraine out of a total reserve of a possible two million troops (Gatehouse & Leung, 2022). These statistics overall encapsulate the scale of Russia's military strength and commitment to apparent power. This statistical

analysis justifies why most analysts believed Russia would effortlessly sweep through Ukraine when it originally invaded it (McNeil, 2022). Although Russia maintains high military strength in terms of hardware and manpower resources, journalist Philips O'Brien accurately notes that, "having good equipment and good doctrine reveals little about how an army will perform in a war" (O'Brien, 2022).

While Russia has a high degree of apparent power, it falls short in terms of effective power, which consists of assets beyond physical resources such as allies' support, quality of leadership, legitimacy of the cause, morale of the troops, and support of the country's population (Rosen, 1995). Russia faces strong global opposition to its invasion as U.S. President Joe Biden has declared to strongly support Ukraine. The Biden-Harris Administration continuously "reaffirms the United States' unwavering support for Ukraine" (Gatehouse & Leung, 2022). Ukrainian President Zelensky has also made an international trip to Washington D.C. during which he tweeted, "On my way to the US to strengthen the resilience and defence capabilities of Ukraine" (Bachega & Tobias, 2022). During this visit, Zelensky was invited by Biden to deliver a speech to the Joint Houses of Congress. Through this speech, Zelensky was able to actively communicate the environment and stakes of the war at hand. He insisted that "[t]his battle is not only for the territory...The battle is not only for life. This struggle will define in what world our children and grandchildren will live," in which he encompasses the fight against totalitarianism and right versus wrong (Segel, 2022). This resulting outpouring of American emotional support alone demonstrates that the largest world power will continue to actively oppose President Putin's aggressive strategy in Europe, as the US historically has always done, resulting in dire consequences for Russia's invasion plans of Ukraine. America's opposition to Putin's attempted takeover of Ukraine is in large measure grounded in the illegitimacy of Russia's cause for taking such action. Putin declared that Russia had "no other choice" than to invade Ukraine as there were "neo-Nazi

grass-roots in the region" that were threatening Russian-speaking Ukrainians (Yellen, 2022). This was a claim found not to be grounded in truth by the Biden-Harris administration, thus having Russia act against both international law principles and the United Nations (UN) Charter, which angered many other nations that abide by these rules (Kirby, 2022). The Kremlin's illegitimate claims for unleashing this war have thus led to poor leadership by Russian military and political officials and lack of support from Russian civilians for this military operation.

Russia's illegitimate justifications for invading Ukraine and poor planning for this military operation's execution have led analysts to also critique Putin for his weak leadership. Kirby describes how the Russian President's ambition to be recognized as a great world leader made him believe he was above the law and beyond failure (Kirby, 2022). He went against international law, and with little planning, believed the sheer size of his military force would easily overturn Ukraine and force it to surrender without putting up much of a fight (Kirby, 2022). Due to high confidence, Putin miscalculated his aggressive takeover attempt and Russian troops were unable to conquer the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv. Kyiv was viewed as the ultimate objective in the war as its capture would topple the Ukrainian government, determining the outcome of the invasion. Due to Putin's poor military leadership and planning, Russian soldiers withdrew from the area north of Kyiv after six weeks of combat (Kirby, 2022). This personal failure can be attributed to a change in Putin's leadership style including multiple factors like age, character, experience, change in beliefs, as well as increasing isolation at the top and unwillingness to listen to opposing points of view (Kaarbo, 2022). Analysts studying the Russian President conclude that these factors can explain his recent blatant "intoxication by power" (Kaarbo, 2022). They note that these changes can have a potential effect on his leadership style becoming self-centered, but these are only hypotheses to support the change in Putin's demeanor observed during this ongoing war (Kaarbo, 2022).

Finally, studies have been collected demonstrating questionable support by Russian citizens for the current military operation, illustrated by the fact that only “one in four Russians support the war” (Lindstaedt, 2022). Researchers find that Russian support for the invasion is not homogenous and somewhat mixed. They further note how this violence has caused contested disputes in the Russian Federation, which from an effective power standpoint, negatively affect Russia’s ability to successfully conduct military operations (Volkov & Kolesnikov, 2022). Ultimately, President Putin has demonstrated a poor quality of leadership, has an illegitimate cause for invasion, few minor allies in support but rather coalitions of powerful states in opposition, and questionable loyalty from his own citizens. This analysis, therefore, determines that Russia has high apparent military power but low effective military power. This is highly different from Ukraine’s situation, which is detailed in the next section.

Ukraine’s Sources of Power: Effective Power

Ukraine’s apparent military power is severely underwhelming in comparison to Russia. While Russia allotted nearly 62 billion USD on defense spending in 2020, Ukraine spent only a mere 5.9 billion USD (Gatehouse & Leung, 2022). This is only a tenth of Russia’s defense budget and is therefore reflective of how limited Ukraine’s overall military is in comparison. Ukraine trails Russia in military hardware and manpower in every capacity, be it through its number of war planes, tanks and armored vehicles, as well as soldiers (Gatehouse & Leung, 2022). Ukraine’s overall lack of military force leaves little doubt in how they place against Russia in terms of apparent military resources; however, Ukraine’s effective power resources are more substantial than Russia’s.

While Russia has might, Ukraine has will. Prior to the invasion of Russia, Ukraine was slowly aligning itself more with the West and was aiming to join NATO. This worked in President Zelensky’s favor as it helped Ukraine gain the assistance of its most vital ally: the United States. U.S. President Joe Biden came

forward at the beginning of the war to show undivided attention to Ukraine; in September of 2022, he reaffirmed this support by stating that “we will stand in solidarity against Russia’s aggression, period” (Shivaram, 2022). Biden’s solidarity comes out of disagreement with Putin’s decision to both disregard the Rules-Based Liberal International Order (RBLIO) and ignore the United Nations Charter (Shivaram, 2022). President Biden and a majority of the US population at large believe in supporting Ukraine to severely sanction Russia’s aggressive actions and to demonstrate the need to maintain international peace and order (Shivaram, 2022). The United States’ demonstration of solidarity with and support for Ukraine includes both economic and security assistance. The United States has been a leading partner for Ukraine, committing humanitarian, financial, and security assistance. Overall, the Biden-Harris Administration has allocated by the end of 2022 a total of 105.7 billion dollars to the nation of Ukraine (Cancian, 2022). Further, the US - the nation with the world’s largest military expenditure - has also decided to supply Ukraine with a Patriot missile system that will help Ukraine “increase its air defence capability” which was originally inferior to the higher technological level of Russia’s offensive military equipment (Bachega & Tobias, 2022), as well as with 31 M1 Abrams Tanks -The US Army’s premier main battle tank (Seligman, 2023).

Analysts have argued that US military aid has completely “changed battlefield dynamics” (Martinez, 2022). Sources note how America’s military assistance has allowed the Ukrainian military forces to “reclaim 54% of the land Russia has captured since the beginning of the war” (Reinhard, 2022). Thanks to such assistance, Ukrainian troops were able to push northward from Kharkiv and force Russian troops to hastily retreat (Martinez, 2022). The United States is only one of many nations supporting Ukraine, but is by far the most important one financially. Others include NATO nations who also stand firmly against Russia’s invasion. This undivided support has included the majority of these

nations providing Ukraine with extensive military resources, such as Germany “sending units of its Iris-T air infrared-guided air defence system” and agreeing to send, together with other European allies, German-manufactured Leopard 2 tanks to the Ukrainian battlefield (Popli, 2022). Further, since the invasion of Russian forces, Sweden and Finland have applied to join NATO to aid Ukraine, thus demonstrating the expansion of global support for Kyiv (Chaterjee, 2022). Also, the European Union as whole has imposed multiple sanctions against the Russian Federation to demonstrate solidarity for Ukraine while attempting to impede Russia’s unacceptable military aggression (Popli, 2022).

Although allied support is vital to Ukraine’s effective power, its success in this conflict is also due to a large extent to the organizational skills and outstanding moral leadership of its President, Volodymyr Zelensky. President Zelensky has gained international prominence as a determined and inspiring leader of Ukraine’s resistance to Russia’s invasion. He has struggled hard for the survival of Ukrainians as he persists to fight Russian troops alongside his citizens. While many world leaders advised him to flee his country, he remains determined to stay home so as to motivate his people - something not expected based on the experience of previous Ukrainian leaders (Susarla, 2022). This heroic attitude also helps foster additional international support from other nations. A news report captures how he makes daily videos inspiring his people to stay resilient while addressing the pain Ukrainian citizens feel (Susarla, 2022). Zelensky’s devotion to inspiring his people has sparked collective action from most Ukrainian citizens and unanimity in their determination to oppose Russia. Ukrainian citizens have dominated international news as being heroic (Tokariuk, 2022). In 2022, the U.S. Times Magazine recognized President Zelensky as “Person of the Year” for having a strong influence on global events (Radford, 2022). Further, fearless Ukrainian citizens have been seen protesting in the cities of Kherson, now liberated, and Melitopol, still under Russian control (Tokariuk, 2022).

The above analysis and evidence capture Ukraine’s tight network of supportive allies, morale of its troops and citizens, and the high quality of leadership President Zelensky exercises, thus generating high levels of effective power. This conclusion demonstrates that while Russia has strong apparent military power and low effective power, Ukraine has high effective power despite mustering only relatively low apparent military capabilities. Through a detailed understanding of the concept of power, the power balance of the two combatants in this war is shown to be relatively even, thus making possible conflict outcomes look unpredictable and uncertain. Ultimately, good-faith negotiations are the only rational and reasonable way out of this conflict for both Russia and Ukraine.

NOW WHAT? REALISM SAYS GOOD-FAITH NEGOTIATIONS

The above comparison demonstrates how there is a stalemate articulated by differing types of power between the two states in conflict. This analysis of differing types of power balancing the forces of the two adversaries explains why a simple understanding of ‘military power’ alone is seen as having been unable to determine the outcome of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict. A nearly perfect balance of power in confrontations such as this results in a stalemated, ongoing war. Consequently, further non-military action must now be taken to create peace. A classical realist, Morgenthau, argues that national decision-makers act in a rational manner (Smith & Dawson, 2022). A classical realist will argue that the conflict can only be resolved in a sustainable, long-term manner by determining the rational outcomes for both Russia and Ukraine and ensuring that Presidents Zelensky and Putin find a common ground through the negotiation process. Zelensky desires for peace to return to Ukraine whilst also maintaining its state sovereignty. Therefore, rationality to Zelensky is to pursue war when necessary, that is, when his country’s independence is threatened, which he has demonstrated as shown above. On the other hand,

Putin wants Russia to be recognised as a regional hegemon in Eastern Europe, thus creating a more powerful and respected country, capable of remaining relevant internationally as a great power; he is also going on the offensive for security reasons, to prevent any further expansion of NATO in Russia's 'near-abroad' back-yard. Rationality to Putin would, therefore, entail ending up with more territory than when he entered the war, so as to justify the destruction he caused in both nations. Therefore, a realist would argue for the conflict to be resolved through negotiations in which Russia is awarded those border territories comprising a majority of ethnic Russians who manifest the desire to join it by means of free and fair referendums, but not enough to take away Ukraine's autonomy of action as a sovereign, independent nation.

Putin has stated that he is determined to retain the regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia, an area of approximately 35,000 sq. mi., amounting to about 15% of Ukrainian territory, occupied by the Russian army during its initial offensives and proclaimed as integrated into the Russian Federation in September 2022, after a series of "sham referendums" rejected as invalid by the international community (Serhan, 2022; The Visual Journalism Team, 2022). Negotiations could include giving Russia full authority over Crimea, a Ukrainian province it annexed in 2014, along with two of the other regions he proposes to capture that are closest geographically and culturally to Russia. Rationality would grant Putin the area of Luhansk, as he maintains military control over this area, possibly along with the Donetsk region close to the Russian border, also within current Russian control. A realist would argue for this negotiation as a resolution because it serves the rational interests of both leaders: Putin can justify this 'operation' to his Russian citizens and Zelensky can regain peace and sovereignty for Ukraine and its people. Henry Kissinger, former US Secretary of State, proposes a similar solution. Kissinger, in drafting a peace plan proposes that Russia withdraw its troops from the areas of Ukraine it has occupied this year, except for

previously annexed Crimea, and that the future of these formerly occupied territories be settled through a supervised referendum (Kissinger, 2022). While this solution makes sense in theory, in practice a realist lens creates gaps in the argument presented in this paper. Although a realist supports negotiations to be conducted based on rational outcomes for both leaders, Kissinger's advice is flawed. He argues that Russia's motives are driven by power considerations in accordance with realist principles; however, a state driven by realist power considerations would not simply agree to withdraw from the battlefield gains it has been working tirelessly and at great sacrifices to achieve. Commanding troops to leave the occupied areas of Ukraine would rather demonstrate a loss of power and a sense of defeat for Russia, regardless if negotiations might eventually grant Russia some territorial gains. At the same time, this negotiation solution of allowing Russia to keep some of the areas it annexed by force could have adverse consequences for the stability and survival of the RBIL. This resolution allows for the possible consequence of rewarding Putin for initiating a destructive war at the heart of Europe in violation of international norms and UN principles, which poses the possibility of creating the precedent that aggression works in international conflicts and for other aggressive state actors to act similarly to reach their strategic objectives.

This analysis demonstrates that the classical realist resolution to international conflict leaves somewhat to be desired in the current Russo-Ukrainian war. Although not a strict realist resolution, another peace path that has been offered is that Ukraine should be accepted as a NATO member as soon as possible (Khurshudyan & Rauhala, 2022). Analysts have argued that this could deter Russia from any further invasion as this would trigger the security pact of the alliance to intervene in case of continuing or future Russian military aggression (Hoef, 2022). In this case, it would be Russia's rational national interest to remove troops from a conflict that would bring it in direct confrontation with all NATO

member states, and in particular with the U.S.. Although this would work in favor for Ukraine, current NATO members are wary of allowing Ukraine alliance membership at this time, as it would result in all the nations having to join the battle and it is unclear whether this would actually deter Russia, or rather push Putin to escalate the conflict, by deploying nuclear arsenal (Hoef, 2022).

CONCLUSION

While many see realism as dead, this paper reasserts the current relevance of this paradigm and capacity to conceptualize how a sophisticated concept of power provides an explanation of actors' actions in times of conflict, even in the case of the unpredictable Ukrainian-Russian war. The lens of realism explained Putin's motivations behind unleashing the war to be driven by power considerations in two ways: for prestige purposes - to demonstrate and maintain Russia's status and title as an international Great Power, and also for security purposes - while also to protect Russia's near-abroad from being encircled and ultimately absorbed by Western alliances. Furthermore, by comparing the two nations' 'apparent' military power with their 'effective' power, it is apparent that the two balance each other out in terms of overall force, resulting in a prolonged, stalemated conflict. Ultimately, realism demonstrates that this balance predicts the outcome of a continuing war between two nations balancing each other militarily, albeit with mirror-opposite components of apparent and effective power. Realism further asserts that negotiations based on the rational interests of both national leaders is necessary to move forward towards sustainable, long-term peace. This paper ultimately demonstrates the importance of states to keep power, to increase power, and to demonstrate power along multiple vectors, as seen through the Russo-Ukrainian war that constitutes the case study analyzed here.

It is critical to note that this paper was researched and written during an ongoing conflict and is therefore somewhat time-dependent. While the

current facts and understandings within this paper will not change, the outcome of the war remains uncertain. When, if, and how the war actually ends will provide new and interesting information to contrast the solutions this paper purposed from a realist perspective compared to how it actually ends. Based on the future outcome of the Russo-Ukrainian war, the analysis and prognosis of this paper could potentially either prove or disprove the criticism that realism faces today as being too narrow and outdated, as opposed to potentially still relevant. Further, from the perspective of a paper exploring the relevance of the concept of power in the Russo-Ukrainian war and in the conduct of international relations generally, if Russia ultimately defeats Ukraine and annexes a sizeable part of its territory, troubling questions arise as to the destructive nature of the precedent being set for the future course of global politics and as to the very future survival of the Rules-Based Liberal International Order.

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THE UKRAINIAN WAR AS CATALYST TO BRINGING RUSSIA IN FROM THE COLD INTO THE WESTERN ALLIANCE

B R O O K E L E W I N S K Y

ABSTRACT

This essay has two primary purposes. First, it seeks to examine how Russia has employed a strategy of weakening or even rejecting the autonomy of Central and East European countries, formerly members of the Soviet Bloc and the Soviet Union, by taking advantage of their external and internal weakness to subvert their efforts to consolidate their status as independent countries. Second, it uses an ontological security lens to understand the origin of the ontological insecurity of leading Russian political elites, and more specifically, of Russian President Vladimir Putin, effectively in power for over two decades since 2000. Additionally, it helps to conceptualize how these insecurities influence their behaviours. By introducing a feminist ontological security lens, this essay provides a prescriptive narrative for a post-Putin Russia where its transition to democracy is a reaction to the disruption of existing male dominated narratives that characterise Russia's present nature. This paper analyses the case study of Ukraine so that we may better navigate towards a prescription for a post-Putin Russia where we may empower Russia's pro-European/Western foreign policy direction and ultimately avoid a new Cold War era.

Keywords: autonomy, internal and external weakness, ontological insecurity, post-Putin Russia

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its continuing military offensive aiming to dismember its neighbour has shattered Europe's 'zone of peace' that many have taken for granted. International responses to the invasion of Ukraine manifested themselves in a

series of waves, beginning with an overwhelming form of moral and political support for Ukraine (Gvosdev, 2022). The subsequent response was to develop a series of bans on Russian goods and services, further closing airspace and travel and cutting off access to international financial markets (Gvosdev, 2022). These sanctions have imposed costs on Moscow that can be eased should Russia take the steps necessary to de-escalate the invasion in Ukraine. Worldwide, many countries have backed the dramatic escalation in the conflict with Russia. Germany's new Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, has significantly increased his country's defence budget (Schuetze, 2022). The USA has risked escalating the conflict further by supplying the Ukrainian army with the necessary artillery (Staff Writer with AFP, 2022). Reluctant to joining NATO for 75 years, Finland and Sweden have now both applied for membership at the same time (Brewster, 2022).

To map out both a short- and long-term strategy to address this transformative event and ensure it will not happen again in the future, we must develop a clear view as to why Russia's President, Vladimir Putin, has unleashed this war now. It is at the culmination of a two decades long consistent strategy of challenging the outcome of the Cold War and of reasserting Russia's dominance in what he calls its 'near abroad'—that is, the former territories of the Soviet Union (USSR) and the Warsaw Pact, that Russia has initiated aggressive intervention. In effect, to reverse what Putin himself called "the greatest geostrategic disaster of the 20th century" (Putin, 2005-06: 401), the Russian President has employed, ever since coming to power in 2000, a strategy of weakening or even rejecting the autonomy of Central and East European countries, formerly members of the Soviet Bloc and USSR. He has done this by taking advantage of their external and internal weaknesses

to subvert their efforts to consolidate their status as independent countries.

This paper substantiates this argument by examining the specific case of Ukraine, the country where this Russian strategy was most aggressively pursued and was most successful to date. It uses an ontological security argument as an explanatory factor to help better understand Russia's actions toward Ukraine, focusing chiefly on the ability of a feminist ontological security lens to disrupt existing ontological security theory (OST) narratives. Finally, the ontological security argument is of further assistance by prescribing an action plan for post-Putin Russia. In this paper, 'Russia' refers to the current Russian governing elite led by President Putin and his team, in power in Moscow for the past two decades. Parts II and III of this paper examine, in turn, the external and internal factors, focusing primarily on the political legitimacy crisis that has defined Ukraine's politics, that validate the above argument. Part IV analyses ontological security as the explanatory factor for Russia's actions in Ukraine, and Part V provides a prescriptive view of Western countries' grand strategy for post-Putin Russia.

PART 2: EXTERNAL FACTORS

President Putin was unable to come to terms with the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Similarly, he has never been able to accept the grounds on which Ukraine became independent. To Putin, Ukrainians and Russians are still very much the same people, and they remain interconnected by a shared history and culture. Today, Putin seeks to legitimize breaking up the United States/North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO) global hegemony so he may establish a multi-polar global balance of power with Russia playing a pivotal role among other superpowers. Ukraine is a necessary factor in implementing Russia's strategy due to Russia's perceived ownership of Ukraine as well as its significance to the identity of Russia. Therefore, Russia has deployed a wide variety of methods that continue to influence, both externally and internally, Ukraine's ability to operate as a fully independent country and act as an autonomous agent of the world stage.

Russia has used its sphere of influence to threaten the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine by challenging and opposing its possible alliances with the Western World, especially its stated desire to join NATO. Russia has dismissed the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine by making various public declarations cautioning the West not to expand its presence in its 'zone of privileged interests', which includes Ukraine (Cross, 2015: 153). Historical context shows that every Russian President has conveyed a lasting disapproval of the expansion of the NATO alliance, especially as NATO began to expand eastward (Cross, 2015). This central Russian strategic objective was outlined in Moscow's foreign policy concept in July 2008, where Russia referred to 'protecting' Russians living outside its borders from a so-called 'Nazification' (Tabachnik, 2020: 302) resulting from an increase in Western influence in Ukraine (Cross, 2015). This strategy laid the seeds for what later resulted in the annexation of Crimea (Cross, 2015). It is worth noting that this is not a stand-alone incident, as Russia invoked a similar approach to intervention in Georgia around the same time (Cross, 2015). Importantly, this demonstrates Putin's determination to act along multiple fronts using similar strategies to re-establish hegemony over what it considers Russia's historical sphere of influence.

Most recently, and most aggressively, Russia has ignored the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine by threatening its deepening relationship with the West by using physical force to control parts of this country and strip its legitimacy as a sovereign state. The illegal annexation of Crimea and the increased support for separatists in the eastern regions of Ukraine have deterred NATO from engaging in a formal relationship with Kyiv, as doing so could drastically escalate the ongoing conflict (Oğuz, 2015). However, with the expansion of the current conflict, NATO member states leaders, including US President Joe Biden, backed by Congress, are making substantive enhancements to NATO's forward defence force posture. This is likely to include permanently stationing troops in Eastern Europe,

which, up until now, had been on a rotational presence only due to the fear of provoking Russia. As for the current conflict, NATO has continued to dismiss the demands of Russian elites, who continue to push for an end to NATO's "open door" enlargement policy (Congressional Research Service, 2022: 2). This brings up questions surrounding NATO's existing obligations to Ukraine and NATO's support of the Ukrainian military that, up until recently, had been left to defend the country on its own. President Putin has essentially learned two vital truths during the ongoing conflict: first, that NATO remains risk-averse and will do everything to avoid antagonizing Russia, and second, that Ukraine will eventually escape from Russia's sphere of influence if not stopped in time (Anon, 2006). These two considerations show that President Putin's attack on Ukraine now is not an impulsive action but a rational and well-thought-out course of action aiming to pursue what the Russian President considers his country's vital national interest – namely, the consolidation of Russia's re-emerging status as a respected and feared global superpower.

This argument is further demonstrated by current tensions within Ukraine, as Russia invokes war in the region and continues to perform numerous war crimes to destabilize the country, degrade its legitimacy, and deter Western influence from expanding eastward. The Ukraine case study demonstrates the Russian strategy to control the external politics of Ukraine by using coercion, as well as large deployments of violence to prohibit the expansion of Western influence. This contradicts the national interest of Ukraine to act as an autonomous agent internationally and attempts to deny its efforts (as well as that of some of its Eastern European neighbours) to apply for NATO membership.

PART III: INTERNAL FACTORS

Russia adopted a double-pronged strategy to deny Ukraine's sovereignty by putting pressure on its ability to act as a sovereign actor on the international stage as well as by taking advantage of internal Ukrainian weakness to degrade its efforts to consolidate its status as an independent country.

The plan pursued by Russia was to forge a weak Ukrainian government with poor levels of political legitimacy. In addition, Russia used hard power to coerce policymakers into becoming more supportive of Russian interests. Hard power is defined here as coercion, force, or payment to secure one's interests (Feklyunina, 2016: 775). Evidence of this is seen in Russia's support for a pro-Russian candidate, Viktor Yanukovich, in Ukraine's 2004 presidential contest (Shevtsova, 2020). During the Orange Revolution, citizens engaged in widespread protests challenging election fraud throughout major Ukrainian cities and opposing the choice of Viktor Yanukovich as a presidential candidate. As Ukraine has grown cautiously distant from its eastern neighbours, Russia has expressed a sense of alarm regarding its remaining level of influence over Ukrainians, seen in effect as 'little Russians'. By backing pro-Russian candidate Viktor Yanukovich, Russia was able to prevent any threat that could jeopardize the Russian narrative of Russian-Ukrainian interconnectedness, to preserve its status as a great power, and to protect the "cradle of Russian Orthodoxy" that is Kyiv and the historical memory it evokes of Kievan Rus, generally accepted as the first 'Russian' state in Europe (Shevtsova, 2020: 139). What follows, from Putin's Russia perspective, is that without Ukraine, its own, self-constructed identity becomes fragile, deprived of its historical context, and devoid of all historical narratives, thus forcing Russia's political elites to find new methods of unifying Russian society. This affects Putin's grand strategy and timing towards Ukraine, in that a large-scale invasion, such as the one that is actively occurring now, seemed almost inevitable in retrospect. To Putin, preserving control over the Ukrainian 'territory', an essential component of Russia's historical Soviet roots, was necessary for maintaining the Russian identity. However, one must not underestimate the degree to which Russia's identity has yet to change as its military continues to capture a ravaged and lost Ukraine.

Concurrently, Russia has imposed a series of so-called 'gas wars' where it has temporarily cut off or

reduced gas supplies to Ukraine. Regardless of Ukraine's position as a transit country for Russian gas to Europe, Moscow has prioritized the "pursuit of political leverage over Kyiv" rather than its economic interests with the EU (Bozhko, 2011: 369). This was done to pressure Ukrainian policymakers to act in accordance with Russia's wishes (Shevtsova, 2020). Both of these instances demonstrate Russia's meddling in internal Ukrainian politics. This has influenced Ukraine, prior to the 2022 intervention, in that its government became an increasingly illegitimate government that was forced to give course to the demands of Russia's national interests rather than those of Ukraine itself.

A third strategy used by Russia to deny Ukraine its independence was to exaggerate significantly the threat posed to Russia by internal Ukrainian political developments, and then use these fabricated narratives as tools to mobilize public opinion against the new Ukrainian government in Russia so as to ultimately legitimize military intervention (Loshkariov and Sushentsov, 2016: 311). The new Ukrainian government elected in 2014 was perceived by Moscow as highly anti-Russian and frightened ethnic Russians living in Ukraine (Loshkariov and Sushentsov, 2016). As a result, Russia intensified its propaganda against Ukraine's government and labeled its members as "pro-Western Fascists." This had a significant impact on Ukrainians living in the east of the country, and especially in Crimea, where more substantial divisions between pro-Russian and pro-Western populations exist (Loshkariov and Sushentsov, 2016: 303). At this point of heightened Ukrainian internal weakness, Russia manipulated significant sections of its neighbour's population into seeing the annexation of Crimea as highly legitimate. This has shaped Ukrainian politics in that it has put into question the legitimacy of Ukraine as a sovereign state and prepared the ground for the current Russian full-scale invasion and resulting outright territorial annexation attempts.

PART IV: OVERCOMING RUSSIAN ONTOLOGICAL INSECURITIES

This paper deploys the analytical tool of ontological security theory (OST) to develop a grand strategy for the future of a post-Putin Russia, which must be peacefully reintegrated into a democratic 'Common European Home' (Gorbachev, 2020: 106). This section provides insights into the application of OST in International Relations, illustrates the significance of OST in interpreting the often-irrational behaviour of elites, and, lastly, demonstrates how Western states may overcome ontological insecurities within Russia in the future.

OST is concerned with the state's conception of the 'Self', which has been assumed to be constructed through a dominant autobiographical narrative. This narrative is built upon the historical experiences of the Self that are used to formulate reassuring narratives during times of increased ontological insecurity and existential anxiety (Delehanty & Steele, 2009: 3). Thus, OST is essentially built upon the notion of prioritizing the state's self-identity needs. States achieve ontological security by establishing and consolidating fixed narratives of their past. This is at the forefront for states' needs as 'ontological insecurity' is so intolerable that it must be defended against by whatever means available (Krickel-Choi, 2021: 9).

Consequently, ontological insecurity is provoked within states whose self-constructed experiences or perceived memories of the past suddenly become challenged (Rumelili, 2018). History is necessarily remembered and experienced differently from one group to another. Therefore, national communities must develop a degree of reflexivity so they may disrupt constructed grand narratives that often dictate much of their lives (Donnelly & Steele, 2019). This paper argues, as do Delehanty and Steele (2009), that a competing feminist narrative can help societies to rewrite the dominant norm that is masculinity, and instead integrate forms of empathy and storytelling, which are more characteristic of the socially constructed female identity, that may help to alleviate existing ontological insecurities. Using OST, it becomes abundantly clear how challenges to states' biographical narrative by the Other can

stimulate as much anxiety in a ruling elite, such as that led in Russia by President Putin, as an actual physical threat, such as war.

This relatively new approach to International Relations aims to understand the emotions of ruling elites and citizens and to explain why leading politicians often act irrationally, even when it is against their state's rational best interest. This paper views Vladimir Putin's trauma in 1989 in Berlin as a young KGB officer witnessing first-hand the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the eventual collapse of the USSR has fueled the current Russian President's ontological insecurity with respect to the West's intentions to destroy Russia. This explains in part his grand strategy regarding Russia's 'near abroad' in general and Ukraine in particular. Russia's policies towards its 'near abroad' aim to reclaim influence over the Central and Eastern European areas where many of the former USSR and Warsaw Pact states are located, once they re-gained de jure or de facto independence following the collapse of the Soviet Bloc during the 1989-1991 era (Way, 201: 693). Exercising repeated intervention in these neighbouring countries' politics since the 1990s, Russia has taken an active role in preparing and implementing the above strategy by encouraging leaders of the 'near abroad's' autocratic behaviours and continually intervening in the politics of neighbouring states (Way, 2015: 691). This is primarily attributed to Russia's, or specifically President Putin's, ontological insecurity regarding the West's attempts to promote democracy internationally, which became especially prominent following the end of the Cold War (Way, 2015). President Putin was humiliated and disappointed by Russia's incapacity to step into the USSR's role as a global superpower following the collapse of the USSR. He is quoted as having mentioned his aversion to Russia's sliding status as a major international actor as the global political order continued to shift after the dissolution of the USSR, and further endangered his hope to return Russia to its past glory (Grant, 2022). Therefore, the ontological insecurities which motivate the actions of

the Russian political elite led by President Putin are essentially a reflection of the humiliation of witnessing the Eastern Bloc crumble to dust between 1989 and 1991. Today, his actions are part of a Russian strategy to rebuild a sphere of influence in Central and Eastern Europe, with Russia at the forefront of a renewed global political, economic, and military global superpower.

Ontological insecurities can be overcome by adopting a deliberative, reflexive position and engaging with the perceived Other, where competing narratives, such as feminist accounts of a state's sense of Self and time, can be rethought (Hom & Steele, 2020). This is particularly difficult in the case of Russia, as President Putin maintains exclusive control over the country's mass media and social communication networks. However, in post-Putin Russia, the liberal democracies of the Transatlantic Community would be wise to deliberately implement methods of relieving the ontological insecurities currently cultivated by President Putin. It is of utmost importance that these Western allies consider this reality when developing a grand strategy for a post-Putin Russia, as neglecting to do so would be to continue to treat Russia as an enemy, and further push it into an ever-closer alliance with China - another major authoritarian global power. This would encourage an alliance of autocracies headed by two great superpowers and ultimately jeopardize the progress of democratic governance not only within Europe but across the world.

PART V: PREPARING FOR THE POST- PUTIN ERA

President Putin uses ontological insecurity arguments to create perceived identity and security threats against the Russian people, which he then invokes to justify his aggression against Ukraine. These arguments constitute Russia's current dominant narrative connecting its self-understanding about how its past history, present challenges and future fate are inextricably linked. This narrative is used by others to understand the

Russian President's actions even when they seem to go against Russia's rational and reasonable state interests and to predict his future moves.

However, a state's ontological security is not static. Rather, it is diverse and combines a multitude of possible narratives which may inform a state's conception of the Self, until it reinvents its master narrative (Delehanty & Steele, 2009). The internal construction process of a state's identity is likely to dismiss narratives that are deemed too feminine. Confining these marginalized narratives is deemed necessary in order to ensure the continuance of the dominant narrative, lest they threaten a state's identity. Femininity has thus been historically denied its place in becoming a dominant narrative among states as it is socially constructed as "weak, passive, naïve, irrational, illogical, gentle, and is to lack social and political agency" (Delehanty & Steele, 2009: 7).

By adopting or promoting a feminist ontological security approach, Russian opposition politicians could effectively "challenge, subvert and transform the dominant autobiographical narrative" of Russia, which has predominantly followed a male-gendered ontological insecurity narrative (Delehanty & Steele, 2009: 9). Optimal opportunities for contestation are found in moments of national crisis (Delehanty & Steele, 2009: 10) – in Russia's case, like the current conflict in Ukraine. By challenging a state's 'national purpose' in moments of national crisis, regime opponents expect to see a response that seeks to justify engaging in moral action. More specifically, they may utilize these justifications to "highlight contradictions in the use of certain values", and ultimately delegitimize a state's response to claimed existential threats (Delehanty & Steele, 2009: 10). This provides the space necessary for discussing marginalized narratives in a manner that is actually able to shift the state's dominant autobiographical narrative into becoming more feminine: care instead of rejection; compassion instead of conflict; cooperation instead of repression.

In Russia's case, a key foreign policy alternative that has been marginalised in recent decades but is

authentically Russian and deeply embedded in this country's history is portraying Russia as a European society destined to take its rightful place in the European family of nations, based on principles of equality, mutual respect, shared values, and cooperation. This stream, which aligns well with the more feminine narrative of ontological security described above, was favored by both Presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin in the late 1980s and 1990s and even taken by President Vladimir Putin early in his first administration (Gorbachev, 2020).

However, during this period Russia was riddled by terrorism and experienced economic decline as well as a devastating collapse in living standards and was therefore unable to confidently pursue this pro-European foreign policy direction (Gorbachev, 2020: 106). Externally, the United States and its European allies did not have the foresight to assist Russia to recover politically and economically and treated it as a defeated adversary rather than as an equal partner. As a result, President Putin fell back on two other traditional Russian foreign policy streams, that of Great Russian nationalist imperialism and Soviet authoritarian revolutionary expansionism. These streams had been effectively deployed by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin to defeat Nazi Germany and establish the USSR as one of the two global superpowers in the mid-20th century. Putin took this doctrine of revolutionary imperialism and adapted it for his own purposes—namely, to establish and maintain control over Russia internally and recover its place as a major international actor that could not be ignored, on the global stage (Zubok and Pleshakov, 1999).

As the Putin era nears its end, power struggles within the Kremlin as to Russia's future direction – as a unique orthodox Christian messianic power, as a pragmatic geopolitical great power, or as a member of what Gorbachev once called 'our Common European Home' will inevitably take place. It is in the interest of Western leaders not to repeat the mistakes of the late 20th century and treat Russia as an enemy to be opposed, shunned, and isolated because of its actions in Ukraine. This would result in a reinforced

authoritarian bloc including China, Russia, and Iran, among others, that would deeply destabilise the Rules-Based Liberal international Order created and maintained by the Western powers. Instead, Western leaders could assist in the ultimate success of the pro-European faction to re-establish control over Russia's levers of power, end the Ukrainian aggression strategy, and encourage Russia to join Europe as a free, democratic, and increasingly prosperous nation. This paper argues that they can do so by accepting and engaging with Russia's more feminine narrative of its own ontological security, that aligns well with the pro-European foreign policy stream still alive within Russia's governing elites. Western countries could thus use the current Ukrainian crisis to rectify past mistakes and bring Russia 'in from the cold' as a respected and equal European and global partner rather than as a feared and marginalised enemy.

By offering post-Putin Russia the option to join the New Europe conceived in the November 1990 Charter of Paris (Gorbachev, 2017) as well as the wider Transatlantic Community as an equal partner, the West would effectively alleviate Russian anxieties and overcome the fostered ontological insecurities within Russian society for those Russian citizens and elites who exhibit them. Additionally, it would empower the pro-European/Western Russian faction and ultimately overcome the dominant autobiographical narratives of the other two foreign policy streams that have been effectively merged under Putin's leadership – national imperialism and revolutionary authoritarianism. Lastly, it would ensure that Russia, going forward, would not be effectively pushed geo-politically and ideologically into a close alliance with China, but rather with the West. This is of utmost importance if we are to avoid an alliance of autocracies and a return to 19th century Great Power politics at a global level.

To support this prescriptive narrative and claims regarding the feasibility of the feminine approach, the evidence must support the presence of challengers to the existing dominant

autobiographical narrative. Polling data put out in January of 2021 by the International Centre for Defence and Security found that Russians are progressively leaning towards a more peaceful foreign policy following increased displeasure with their current government. At the time, Vladimir Putin's personal approval rating was seen to have dropped from 59% to 31.7% over two years (Kirillova, 2021). While this does not prove an increase in pro-Western sentiment directly, it does suggest that there is room for an ideological shift in the attitudes of Russians in the post-Putin era. Evidently, there exists a segment of Russian citizens who are weary of the militaristic and nationalistic views that drive Russia's confrontational foreign policy and as a result, have expressed a greater desire for a policy that keeps security and social justice in a position of prominence (Kirillova, 2021). A policy of this sort would demand a shift in the state's dominant autobiographical narrative into becoming more feminine. By doing so, there is a chance that the existing ontological insecurities may be alleviated. With the more recent events of Russia's invasion of Ukraine along with Russia's conscription, the social aspirations of Russians have likely shifted further away from achieving "greatness" and more towards the demand for a more ordinary way of life.

A necessary consideration of this outcome is the level of influence these 'challengers' to the dominant autobiographical narrative have and to what extent they may utilise their influence to spur change in post-Putin Russia. In planning for the post-Putin transition, a group of exiled Russians has co-founded The Russian Action Committee which strives to properly compensate Ukraine for the destruction and devastation that has befallen it following Putin's aggressive invasion (Kasparov & Khodorkovsky, 2023). In addition to this, it hopes to hold all war criminals accountable. Its most ambitious, but also most relevant goal in achieving the above objective, is its aspiration to transform Russia from a dictatorship to a parliamentary federal republic. Evidently, there exists a portion of residents, living in exile, who are openly opposed to Putin's "illegitimate

and confrontational regime” (Kasparov & Khodorkovsky, 2023). In the immediate aftermath of Putin’s exit from the political scene, this group plans to capitalize on the aspirations of residents for a more normal life with “human rights and freedoms over abstract state interests” (Kasparov & Khodorkovsky, 2023). In conjunction with an economic reintegration into the West, it is plausible that Russia surmounts its fascist tendencies so it may achieve its demand for peace and freedom. The alternative action for Russia in the post-Putin era is to become a follower of China, consequently phasing out attitudes that support a feminine autobiographical narrative. Nevertheless, attitudes that support a feminist approach to foreign policy seem to trump the latter; making it a feasible outcome.

VI: CONCLUSION

This paper has utilized an OST analysis to better understand the actions of the current Russian political elite, led by President Vladimir Putin, who has effectively employed a strategy of weakening or rejecting the autonomy of Central and East European countries who were formerly members of the Soviet Bloc and the Soviet Union. By leveraging the external and internal weaknesses of other countries, Russia has effectively subverted earlier efforts of garnering independence in the post-Soviet space. By deploying an ontological security-based lens, this paper is able to better discern how Russian elites and their supporters construe and decipher their own past. Likewise, it has engaged in a more in-depth and deliberate examination of the Russian political elite's present behaviour based on the ontological insecurities generated by their constructed narrative of their own past. These two aspects provide the knowledge necessary to develop and articulate a prescription for a post-Putin Russia where Western countries must navigate the future with care and skill so as to avoid another destructive global Cold War. In other words, it aims to contribute to the debates pointing the way towards Russia's transformation from a current adversary to a future ally of the West.

Since the transition from corrupt authoritarianism to democratic liberalism is already well underway in Kyiv, Ukraine constitutes an exceptional case study with regards to the application and use of OST. It helps us to better understand how Russian elites have interpreted their own past in that it clearly shows the ontological insecurities generated from the dissolution of the USSR and the resulting growing influence of the West over parts of Central and East Europe, which have been deemed by Moscow to be part of Russia's natural ‘sphere of influence’. Furthermore, being aware of these Russian ontological insecurities provides insight as to why political elites behave the way they do. This is especially true in times of crisis when an internally constructed identity is most heavily relied upon. The insights provided by OST help us navigate towards a prescription for a post-Putin Russia because such a regime change has already effectively occurred in Ukraine. Moreover, it is exactly because of this reason that President Putin fears that today's Ukraine is providing an example for tomorrow's Russia. Therefore, he cannot allow Ukraine to remain a fully independent actor, inexorably slipping out of Russia's sphere of influence.

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PLANNING FOR WAR: US MILITARY STRATEGIES ACROSS THREE CENTURIES



TRADING SPACE FOR TIME: THE CONFEDERATE ARMY'S STRATEGY REVISITED

A N D R E A P E Z Z A T I

ABSTRACT

The American Civil War is the preferred topic of many military historians and other grand strategy practitioners. It has been widely studied from social, political, economic, cultural, and military perspectives. A lot of books and articles focus on the reasons for the Unionists' victory or the Confederates' defeat. The thesis of the superiority in resources and manpower of the North has been the main explanation for a long time. Other works, like this paper, concentrate on strategy. The years before the start of the Civil War were characterized by great fervor concerning military strategy. The actions of Napoleon and the works of Clausewitz and Jomini had been influencing military thinking from the nineteenth century onwards, with the latter being a particularly strong influence in the United States. I argue that Confederate generalship, in particular General Robert E. Lee's, had an excessively aggressive posture. The focus on relentless offensives caused the depletion of the already limited resources and men of the Confederacy. I suggest that a defensive posture could have been more successful for the South. In particular, a defense-in-depth strategy would have allowed the Confederacy to trade space for time and, eventually, to exhaust the Union army and resources. I claim that through skilled use of Virginia's geographic features, the Confederate army could have created multiple defensive zones along a trenched front with strongholds positioned in various points for coverage and far and wide defense, leading to strong resistance, thus enhancing its chances for victory.

Keywords: American Civil War; defense-in-depth; Antoine-Henry Jomini; Gen. Robert E. Lee.

INTRODUCTION

The American Civil War (1861-1865) has engendered a lively debate among historians and strategic thinkers that is still lasting to this day. Dozens of books investigate the key factors of either the Union's victory or the South's loss, depending on the authors' preferred perspective (McPherson, 1996). While the thesis of the overwhelming numbers and resources of the North lost its impact, current literature tends to focus on military matters (McPherson, 1996; Dwyer, 1999). The strategic choices of the commanders-in-chief have been thoroughly assessed. The war broke out in a period of great fervor concerning military strategy. Napoleon's military thinking and endeavors were still enlivening discussions on the methods of warfare. Carl von Clausewitz's *On War* was published posthumously in 1832, while a few years later Antoine-Henry Jomini issued his *Summary of the Art of War* (1838). The latter was more appreciated than Clausewitz by the American military establishment. Jomini's work on the concentration of superior forces and interior lines of operations significantly influenced the conflict, even though "[d]uring the Civil War adherence to Jomini's principles was far from perfect" (Jones, 1970:128). His principles of war were more suitable for a defensive approach than for offense (Jones, 1970). If Jomini was carefully read, why had Rebel generals like Robert E. Lee decided to conduct an offensive war that ratcheted down his men-at-arms and depleted Confederate resources?

Starting from that point, this essay attempts to demonstrate that the South might have won the war with a defensive approach. In particular, it dwells on the possibility that the Southern army could have carried out a defense-in-depth strategy to exhaust the Union army, with the ultimate goal of forcing it out of the conflict. Defense-in-depth consists in

creating “multiple defensive zones” (Jordan et. al, 2016: 106) along a trenched front with strongholds positioned at various points for coverage and far and wide defense. Mobile units are deployed around the strongholds to provide support. The goal is to resist enemy assaults through the mutual support of strong points, infantry units and artillery. The main tasks of a defense-in-depth strategy are to slow down the enemy's advance by trading space for time and to force the enemy into a war of exhaustion (Jordan et. al 2016; Luttwak 2016). If the strategy is successful, the enemy will be worn out and demoralized. The defending commander could then mass an overwhelming force and prepare a counterattack.

This essay is divided into three sections. The first analyzes the strategy employed by the Confederacy throughout the war. It examines the influence that Jomini had on the strategic choices of the South's leadership. The second section demonstrates, with the benefit of hindsight, why a defense-in-depth strategy would have been a better strategic option for the Confederate Army, leading it to the final victory and, consequently, to independence for the South. The final section restates the thesis and recapitulates the main points.

THE INFLUENCE OF JOMINI: AMERICAN CIVIL WAR STRATEGIES

Jomini was a major advocate of Napoleon's way of war (Elting, 1964). The concentration of superior forces against a weaker enemy at some decisive point became one of his most cited concepts (Reardon, 2012). Besides, his emphasis on “interior lines of operations,” maneuvering, and logistics (“the art of moving armies”) found implementation in the Civil War, during which both Union and Confederate armies utilized the telegraph and the railway to move troops swiftly from one point of the front to another, to mass forces to numerically overwhelm the enemy (McPherson et al., 1992: 50-51). For example, before the Battle of Manassas (July 21, 1861) General G. T. Beauregard of the Confederate

Army telegraphed to request support. Eventually, the units commanded by General J. E. Johnston arrived by railroad and the South achieved the numerical superiority that contributed to the victory (McPherson et al. 1992). On another occasion, before the Battle of Shiloh (April 6-7, 1862), the use of telegraph and railways allowed President Davis to order a concentration of forces so vast within a brief time-lapse that an author claimed that “Napoleon, depending on human and animal mobility only, had employed [that kind of concentration] only within a single theatre of war” (McPherson et al., 1992: 57).

While Unionist generals employed more prudent strategies, enraging President Lincoln because they preferred maneuvering over assaults, Confederate commanders were far more aggressive and often took the initiative. In fact, General Robert E. Lee pursued a war of annihilation. He aimed at drawing the North to a decisive battle instead of securing Southern territories and planning a dogged defense (Freedman, 2013). His strategy was, at times, successful. He won many important engagements, among which was the Seven Days' Battle (June 25-July 1, 1862). Following the Jominian principles of concentration of forces and internal lines of operations, Lee amassed a 96,000-strong army at Richmond because General McClellan's Army of the Potomac was dangerously advancing towards the capital. Initially, General Lee wanted to adopt the tactic of “turning movement” by sending a force to the enemy rear. However, the maneuver failed, and he had to order burdensome frontal attacks. Eventually, the North retreated but the Confederacy lost more than 19,000 soldiers, namely 20% of its army (McPherson et al., 1992). The strategy adopted by Lee thus proved to be notoriously costly. It was the consequence of choosing to accept the battle against superior numbers, at a time when the defense had both the strategic and the tactical advantage.

McWhiney and Jamieson (1984) in their book *Attack and Die*, a telling title, provide a clear explanation. Confederate generalship was influenced by the tactics and art of command employed in the

Mexican War (1846-1848). The main offensive weapon was the smoothbore musket, which was short-range and imprecise. The standard tactic was deploying an in-line formation with soldiers in close ranks to concentrate the fire and improve effectiveness. The infantry aimed at advancing after every volley to get closer to the enemy. Skirmishers, in a more dispersed formation, supported the musketeers' effort by harassing enemy troops through intermittent fire, to slow down their progression and break their line. When the enemy was at hand, a bayonet fight kicked in. The artillery was used extensively both for defensive and offensive purposes. The cavalry was deployed to cover the flanks, as a raiding party, for pursuit purposes or to do reconnaissance. It was not appreciated as an assault regiment, to the point that horsemen often dismounted to fight on foot. Alternative tactical orders were the column and the square. The former was deployed for shock and direct assaults while the latter was used to defend against the cavalry. The in-line formation, column formation, and square formation proved to be effective during the Mexican War. Hence, mindful of that success, American generalship brought them to the battlefields of the Civil War (McWhiney and Jamieson, 1984: 27-37; Phillips, 2011: 565-566).

In 1862, Brigadier-General Silas Casey, a commander of the Union Army, published *Infantry Tactics*. It was a field manual for the army, useful for understanding methods of warfare in the Civil War. The 'formation in order of battle' was composed of two close lines of troops. The front line and the second line were put together in blocks and divided into companies (eight in total), each of them formed by two platoons. Two further companies of skirmishers were placed behind the two main lines to guard the flanks and were ready to intervene to slow down the enemy's advance. Put together, the ten companies formed a regiment. Noticeably, there was no space for cavalry. His work being a manual for infantry, Casey might have omitted it on purpose. The only mounted soldiers mentioned are the officers, who should be on a horse for better mobility and view through the

battlefield (i.e., for better coordination and communication with the troops).

This type of formation seemed, and had to be, ordered, disciplined, and organized. However, it proved not to be on many occasions. Attacking with a two-line formation was dangerous and prone to a high casualty rate because of two main factors: defense superiority and terrain conformation. Again, McWhiney and Jamieson provide useful insights. Defensive lines were armed with rifles. Rifles were more precise and powerful than muskets. In addition, they had a longer range. Since the purpose of defensive linemen was to halt the advance of the adversary, warding the enemy musketeers off was paramount, and the rifle was the most effective weapon to do so at a distance. During the Civil War, different battles ended with a similar outcome. The first line of the offense could not bear the firepower of defending riflemen and broke up. The second line would gather up to support the teetering front line by concentrating fire. Eventually, offensive lines would mix up chaotically with dire consequences – "Intermingling [of successive lines] destroyed formation and order, crippled the command system, and further increased the advantage of the tactical defensive over the offensive," McWhiney and Jamieson assert (1984: 82).

For instance, during the Battle of Shiloh (April 6-7, 1862) the attacks of the Confederate Army failed due to superior defensive firepower and geographical barriers (hillocks, swamps, rivers, etc.). In Murfreesboro (December 31, 1862-January 2, 1863) the same situation occurred. The rocky terrain and the dense cedar forest impeded the army to stay in a close-order formation. Notwithstanding this, General Bragg launched an assault. The difficult terrain, the Union Army's fierce resistance and Bragg's tactical oversights caused his successive lines to merge and, in the end, to withdraw (McWhiney and Jamieson, 1984). Intermingling occurred in many other battles (for example, in the Battle of Chancellorsville (May 1863), in the Battle of Chickamauga (September 1863), and in the Battle of

Sharpsburg (September 17, 1862), and it affected both the North and the South. Alternatives like column formation and mixed formation only worked with seesawing results. The combination of riflemen's firepower, artillery, entrenchments, and harsh terrain provided an advantageous starting point for the defense - something the Confederates did not understand.

Union Army commanders like Ulysses S. Grant were aware of the "dominance of the tactical and strategic defense," and chose to carry out a war of exhaustion (McPherson et al., 1992: 47). Officers recognized the importance of logistics, supply chain, and interior lines to wear the enemy out. The attempt to destroy the adversary, inferior in numbers but likely equal in quality, in its own country, with high morale (initially at least) to face and expel the invader, was deemed too risky. The optimal solution was to spare troops as much as possible by avoiding useless and bloody combats while focusing on disrupting the supply lines and logistics base of the South (railroads, telegraph stations, towns and villages, farms, and so forth). The influence of Jomini is clear. The Swiss military thinker, even though he was an admirer of Napoleon's strategy of annihilation, acknowledged the effectiveness of exhaustion (Jones, 1970: 127). The aim is to erode the enemy's will to fight instead of destroying its army. Although it is often associated with an offensive strategy, like annihilation and attrition, exhaustion can be employed as a defensive strategy too. About defense, Jomini (2004: 73) claimed that:

"A defensive war is not without its advantages, when wisely conducted. It may be passive or active, taking the offensive at times. The passive defense is always pernicious; the active may accomplish great successes. The object of a defensive war being to protect, as long as possible, the country threatened by the enemy, all operations should be designed to retard his progress, to annoy him in his enterprises by multiplying obstacles and difficulties, without, however, compromising one's own army [...] [T]he defense [...] desires delay till his adversary is weakened by sending off detachments, by marches, and by the privations and fatigues incident to his progress."

One can discern a number of key strategic and tactical guidelines from this excerpt. A defensive war can bring benefits if well-planned. Jomini insisted on the importance of taking the initiative to avoid the enemy choosing the place and time of the battle, and the methods of conducting it. Hence, the defense should be active rather than passive. The former refers to the ability to carry out preventive attacks or counter-attacks after the resistance. The latter consists in securing a position by holding out strenuously against enemy assaults without reacting. A defense-in-depth strategy aspires to safeguard strong points and contain the advance of the opponent. If successful, the commander may organize a counterattack to push back the enemy into its territory whilst carefully averting overstretching. The Confederacy did exactly that, however, by advancing imprudently beyond its exterior defensive lines. For example, after Generals Lee and Stonewall Jackson managed to withstand General Hooker's attacks at Chancellorsville (May 1863), Lee asked President Davis to cross the border and seek a decisive battle in the North (Murray and Parker, 2020). The Army of Northern Virginia invaded Maryland and Pennsylvania and suffered significant defeats at Gettysburg and Vicksburg (July 1863). At Gettysburg, Lee lost 30% of his army (22,638 soldiers) while at Vicksburg the army surrendered and was captured (McWhiney and Jamieson, 1992). Confederate leadership should have carried out a more conservative strategy as Southern states were not able to afford such great losses.

This analysis does not discuss whether the North's initial demographic and economic superiority was a major factor to explain the Confederacy's defeat. Nonetheless, it is an important element to explain, at least partially, why the South should have stayed on the defense. The Union had a population of about 22 million against the Confederacy's 9 million (Murray and Parker, 2020). If we consider the 3 million slaves, the children, the women and the elderly, the number of people able to fight decreases drastically. Hence, the South did not have as much manpower as the North to replace the eventual

losses within its army. The Confederacy's avoidance of useless battles and a thorough calculation of the risks that could be afforded were key to preserving its military force. Instead, Confederate commanders often took the offensive with the hope of finding a decisive battle that would compel the Union to abandon the conflict. Lee's obstinate assaults caused more than 120,000 deaths, that is 20% of the soldiers of his army (McWhiney and Jamieson 1992). He was the commander that lost most troops in the entire war. Besides, the Confederacy had an area of about 780,000 square miles. Such large territory was difficult to protect even with a much larger army, which the South did not have. Preserving as many men as possible was paramount to augment the South's chances of survival.

President Davis's primary objective should have been exactly that: survival. The strategy that would best fit such a circumstance would have aimed at safeguarding one's territory, if not in its entirety, then at least its critical strong points (capital city, industrial centers, main harbors, fundamental lines of communication). If successful, such an approach would dishearten the enemy and dissuade it from proceeding further in its military operations. As Jomini maintained, the defenders should try their hardest to "retard his progress, to annoy him in his enterprises by multiplying obstacles and difficulties, without, however, compromising one's own army" (2004: 73). Here lies Jomini's subtle appreciation of the notion of "exhaustion". The defenders stonewall their opponent through strenuous resistance by employing the most suitable strategy and tactics. The goal is to disrupt its willingness to continue the fight rather than seek a risky decisive battle. This paper's central claim is therefore that the best strategy for the Confederacy would have been a defense-in-depth strategy, possibly supported by scorched-earth tactics and guerrilla actions.

DEFENSE IN DEPTH: PRESERVING THE ARMY

Defense-in-depth is a relatively modern concept. The term was extensively discussed by the military strategist Edward Luttwak in the 1970s (Jordan et al.,

2016). Luttwak (2016) claims that defense-in-depth has been employed since the ancient Romans, who used it to protect the borders of their vast empire. According to him (2001: 148), a defense-in-depth strategy serves the purpose of building a "frontal zone," that is:

"neither preclusively protected nor abandoned. Instead that zone is selectively defended by self-contained forces that operate as islands of resistance, forming a grid rather than a line [...]. In modern wars, they have been applied in zones of maneuver. Shielded by favorable terrain or artificial barriers, organized and supplied to fight on their own, such islands of resistance serve to hold important passages along major avenues of approach or to shield valuable infrastructures such as airfields and major depots. But if there is to be a chance of victory, their main function must be to offer protected bases from which disruptive incursions and counterattacks can be launched, ideally in coordination with the main forces kept behind the frontal zone defended only in depth."

A good instance was the Hindenburg Line, a fortified multi-sector defensive area behind which the Germans took refuge in 1917 (Hughes, 1999). Its almost geometrical partition in different zones is quite useful to provide a general idea of how defense-in-depth can be employed.

The first zone would have either natural or artificial hurdles to slow down the enemy assault. Natural obstacles may be rocky terrain, a slope, a river, a swamp, and so forth. Man-made obstacles may be barbed wires, landmines, booby traps, *chevaux de frise*, et cetera. The second defensive line would include entrenchments or outposts, or both, where covering forces would concentrate the fire on the limping enemy. This "self-contained" force acts independently from the main defensive line and performs guard and screening tasks (US Army, 2021). If the attackers manage to overcome the 'killing zone', they will enter the third zone. This serves as a buffer area for the infantry to repel the assault and even begin a moderate counterattack if the opponent has been sufficiently impaired by the

first linemen's firepower. The fourth zone constitutes the major line of defense, and it could be located hundreds of meters away from the first zone. The commander could place a further zone of infantry or deploy the reserve that would form the fifth zone. The reserve would act as a last resort, as support or as a counter-attacking unit. The artillery would be positioned in the last sector (US Army, 2021).

Depth is achieved by creating multiple defense zones instead of a single-line formation. If one sector falls, successive ones could cover it. On the contrary, if the enemy breaks the single-line formation, penetration is successful, and defenders may not ever recover their positions. By employing the defense-in-depth strategy, an army accepts the occupation of land by the enemy. However, the "depth of the defense should prevent the enemy from rapidly exploiting its success," as it should fight and defeat several defensive sectors (US Army, 2021). The key is to trade space for time. A brilliant in-depth defense would exasperate the enemy, who would be forced to battle fiercely for one strong point only to discover ahead the existence of many similar other well-protected points. Constant assaults would turn against the attacking adversary as they would end up depleting its resources and crushing its troops' morale. Therefore defense-in-depth is an exhaustion strategy. Besides, the leadership of the defending force can concurrently deploy a scorched-earth tactic when pulling back towards another zone. It is crucial to destroy any equipment, infrastructure, supply center, and line of communications inside the "islands of resistance" that could be captured and utilized by the enemy to gain an advantage. Furthermore, if the defenders retain the "means and moral capacity," cavalry units can be sent to "launch raids against the supply columns, service units, and lesser detachments that the enemy advance itself brings within their reach" (Luttwak, 2001: 149).

As difficult as this strategy seems to appear at first sight, this paper asserts that with a defense-in-depth strategy the Confederacy could have won the Civil War and obtained independence and sovereignty.

One possible location for establishing a zone of deep defense in Virginia would have been the Eastern front, by far the best geographical area to defend. Although protecting the West would not have been impossible, the East was certainly militarily and politically more relevant for the Confederacy. Moreover, compared to the Army of Northern Virginia, Southern armies on the Western front had been struggling throughout the entirety of the war for various reasons (e.g., worse military leadership, fewer objectives of political relevance, larger front to defend) (McPherson, 1996). In the East, the Confederate Army could have taken advantage of natural obstacles, namely the Appalachian Mountains, the swamps in Virginia and North Carolina, and numerous rivers. The crucial strong point is Richmond, the capital. The first frontal zone could have been established a few miles from the North's capital, Washington - for example, at Fredericksburg (about 53 miles distant), where the Confederates won a battle in December 1862. Here, the main hurdle for the enemy would be the crossing of the Rappahannock River. The second zone could extend down to Spotsylvania Courthouse, where trenches or stonewalls could be built. The third could be established south of Lake Anna, where troops could have been positioned along the North Anna River. The main defensive sector, the fourth, should have been a few miles away from Richmond. Here would be located the major concentration of infantry. The reserve would be placed a few miles outside the city, with the artillery positioned around it. The presence of natural barriers, the application of trenches and barbed wires, the heavy firepower of the frontal lines, and the artillery fire would have significantly slowed down the Union Army, with the hope of causing maximum physical and moral damage. The goal would be to ward off the assault and, through moderate counterattacks and incursions by skirmishers and mounted arms, to force the North to retreat towards Washington. Meanwhile, guerrilla warfare could be conducted in the plains, at the border with Maryland. Irregular units and the cavalry could attempt raids to disrupt the main lines of

communications and supply lines. The objective would be to avoid or at least bottleneck reinforcements entering Virginia. The Corps in Tennessee would guard the border with Kentucky, whilst the Cumberland Mountains in western Virginia would offer a good natural barrier to retard potential backup.

There may be many variables that could hamper the entire strategy. Confederate corps units in the West (Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, above all) should be able to monitor and defend those territories to prevent an enemy's possible turning movement from, for example, Kentucky and Missouri towards southern Virginia (i.e., to reach the rear of the Confederate Army's deep defense in Virginia). Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana are not addressed here on purpose: since an effective economy of force is paramount to concentrate forces in Virginia while having a reasonable number of troops to defend part of the West, those territories could be sacrificed to avoid overstretching, as unreasonable as it may seem at first glance. Texas alone has a surface of about 270,000 square miles (Texas Almanac, 2021). It would be a complex task to preserve it without amassing a sizable army. This would mean depriving the Eastern theater - the primary 'island of resistance' - of critical resources and men. Another issue would be the South's naval capabilities. The Confederate navy was far inferior to the Union's, which imposed a blockade all along the coast from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico and beyond (see map in Parker and Murray, 2020: 238). However, despite its industrial disadvantage, the South managed to acquire several ironclads to attempt to break the blockade, without success. Nonetheless, as a scholar pointed out, "[t]he 'home water' ironclads, [...] should be evaluated for their contributions to the overall strategy of defense. In this they achieved some successes" (Still, 1961: 343). The ironclad was befitting shallow waters; therefore, it was used mainly to guard interior sea lines of communication. The same could be done on the rivers of Virginia to provide a further line of defense within the defense-in-depth strategy.

Among other things, morale would be pivotal. Barricading in defensive positions could be frustrating but a strenuous defense, associated with considered counterattacks, could bring about a significant morale boost for the Southern armies. In addition, Confederates were fighting to protect their country against an invader. Many conflicts in history showed that morale is a key factor in shifting the war's outcome in favor of the underdog. In fact, the United States struggled so much in conflicts like the Vietnam War, the Afghanistan War, and the Iraq War because the enemy "successfully prioritized morale" and was willing to fight the invaders tooth and nail, despite the great discrepancy in strength, means and manpower (Karr and Ware, 2022).

CONCLUSION

It is a complex task to investigate whether the South could have won the Civil War and gained independence and sovereignty if its political and military leaders had used other combat strategies. This paper attempts to provide a different perspective from the usual approaches to explaining this conflict's ultimate outcome. In all truth, General Robert E. Lee's annihilation war almost succeeded: his victories in the Seven Days' Battle, Battle of Second Manassas, Battle of Chancellorsville, and the invasions of Maryland and Pennsylvania almost changed the tide of war in the Confederacy's favor (McPherson, 1996). Nonetheless, his passion for the Jominian initiative and aggressive maneuver strategies led to ferocious battles which, in the end, did not bring any significant achievement. Instead, the numerous combats of attrition he engaged in depleted Confederate resources and caused tens of thousands of Southern deaths. This essay analyzes the possibility that the South might have successfully carried out a defense-in-depth strategy, which is linked to a war of exhaustion rather than a war of annihilation. The main Jominian principle of war, that of the importance of interior lines of operations (or communication) and supply lines, endures - only this time, from a defensive perspective. This paper claims that the Confederacy could have taken advantage of

its territorial conformation and lines of communication to build up a deep defense in Virginia, aimed at repelling Union's assaults, halting its advance towards the great goal, Richmond, and wearing out its resources, men, and morale. The final purpose of this strategy would have been to force the North out of the conflict. With careful planning, a thorough economy of force, and great generalship, the strategy could have worked. It would have been extremely difficult for the North to break through the Confederate deep defense, against a highly motivated enemy who knew the battleground better to exploit the terrain in its favor. The offensive military strategies that were so widespread and appreciated before and during the Civil War did, in the end, condemn the Confederacy to defeat (McWhiney and Jamieson, 1984: 47):

"Whether or not Civil War commanders were much influenced by the advice of the theorists, the advice itself was inappropriate for the battlefields of the 1860s. After the middle of the 1850s, many of the major ideas of the theorists became dangerous: the emphasis on the tactical offensive, the idea that vigorous assaults would overcome entrenchments, the high regard for the bayonet, and the reliance on traditional, close-order formations."

Ultimately, this research focuses on military strategy in the American Civil War. However, it does not imply that the concept of defense-in-depth is historically ascribed to past conflicts. Lessons from the past hold valuable insights to study and understand strategy in current conflicts. Cross-disciplinary research by historians, military strategists, and political scientists could provide ideas on how past grand strategies can still have an impact on the way modern conflicts can be fought effectively and successfully in an era characterized by the employment of advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and drones.

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AIRPOWER STRATEGY IN THE COLD WAR: HOW CENTRAL WAS VALUE TARGETING AND CITY 'BUSTING' TO NATO AND SOVIET CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR AIRPOWER STRATEGY?

P A T R I C K T A U B E

ABSTRACT

After the invention of the aeroplane, it did not take long for militaries around the world to discuss the potential it would have on the battlefield. With the advent of the atomic bomb, the threat from the air was magnified even further. During the Cold War, scholars, generals and politicians conceptualised airpower strategies, heavily influencing North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) conventional and nuclear airpower strategy. This paper will start off by introducing the reader to the strategic theory of airpower, touching on the four schools of airpower targeting. Grounded in the analysis of NATO documents and secondary literature, this paper sets out to analyse the role that targeting of high value targets and the destruction of entire cities had in NATO and WTO airpower strategy, be it conventional or nuclear. The findings suggest that both entities refrained from deliberately targeting the enemy's population centres in their strategies. Nevertheless, the bombing of entire cities was an option for both sides, albeit as an ultima ratio, even being cut out of the NATO strategy from 1968 onwards. However, both strategies prioritised the targeting of the enemy's military capabilities, especially their respective nuclear arsenals.

Key words: airpower, military strategy, Cold War, nuclear strategy, strategic theory, massive retaliation

INTRODUCTION

Three years after motorised traffic entered the third dimension with zeppelins, the brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright successfully conducted four brief flights with the first invented aeroplane in world

history (Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum). From thereon, it did not take long for the technology and its implications for warfare to be discovered by the military, which used aeroplanes and zeppelins to conduct air raids on cities and their industrial hubs during the First World War (Fegan, 2012: 13f.). While airpower came into use in the First World War, writers of military strategy only began to elaborate on airpower strategy in the interwar period. The Italian officer Giulio Douhet (1869-1930) pioneered the research on the role of airpower, putting his ideas to print by publishing his *Command of the Air* in 1921 (Meilinger, 2000: 471).

While there was consensus among airpower theorists that operating behind the front lines and against the enemy's vital centres would bring the greatest results, opinions on which targets to strike differed. This resulted in the establishment of four schools of airpower strategy (Meilinger, 2003: 170). The definition of centres of gravity or vital centres, as coined by Douhet, varies from one strategic thinker to another. However, the definition usually encompasses key industries, political and military command structures and civilian morale of the enemy. Alongside military targets, those centres of gravity became the primary targets of the four airpower schools. The advent of the atomic bomb brought the targeting debate to the forefront, since it would primarily be delivered by air. Given the amplified damage of a nuclear explosion compared to conventional explosives, certain target selections would have shaped the Cold War dynamics in their own way, with an all-out nuclear war being the worst of them. Therefore, this essay will examine the role of value targeting and city "busting" in conventional and nuclear airpower strategy during the Cold War. This will be done by analysing the strategies employed by both the WTO and NATO, before

tracing them back to the four airpower schools and the Cold War's most influential air power strategists.

SCHOOLS OF AIR POWER STRATEGY

The four schools of airpower strategy differ in the roles they assign to airpower both in the pursuit of strategic objectives and target selection. Before presenting the different schools of airpower strategy, it is essential to first define the concept of military strategy applied in this paper, which remains subject to scholarly debate. Following Heuser (2010),

"Strategy is a comprehensive way to try to pursue political ends, including the threat or actual use of force, in a dialectic of wills – there have to be at least two sides to a conflict. These sides interact, and thus Strategy will rarely be successful if it shows no adaptability."(Heuser, 2010: 27f.)

The first school is the strategic or city bombing school, which originates from the pioneer of airpower theory, Giulio Douhet. Drawing on his experiences from World War I, Douhet believed that by attacking the vital centres of the enemy, air power alone could decide the outcomes of wars. Notably, he considered the psychological effect of air raids as more pronounced than the physical effects (Meilinger, 2000: 472). Thus, the primary targets suggested by Douhet were the enemy's major cities. As they were home to many civilians, in Douhet's reasoning, their shelling would unravel the social basis of resistance, diminishing the support for the war and thus rendering the enemy state powerless to continue the war effort. This was the first coercive strategy to be put into practice in the two world wars and culminated with the use of the atomic bomb in the city 'busting' of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Pape, 1996: 59f.; Meilinger, 2000: 472; Heuser, 2010: 317).

In the United Kingdom, which experienced air raids on the civilian population and the subsequent panic first-hand, Douhet's concept of breaking the morale of the enemy's population resonated (Meilinger, 2000: 481). In contrast to the Italians, Hugh Trenchard, the father of the Royal Air Force (RAF),

rejected population targeting. Instead, following the British naval tradition of economic warfare, his school of thought aimed at targeting other vital centres of the enemy, namely key industries and lines of transport and communication (Meilinger, 1996: 244). The rationale behind this target selection corresponds to Douhet's definition:

"[D]irect air attack on the centres of production, transportation and communications must succeed in paralysing the life and effort of the community and therefore in winning the war." (Public Record Office, 1928: 2)

However, Trenchard's idea of a high precision attack on industrial targets was far from technologically possible at the time. Precision-guided ammunition did not enter the scene until the 1970s. Thus, Trenchard's and Douhet's targeting philosophies, while different on paper, would have had a similar outcome when implemented.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the deputy director of the US Air Service, Billy Mitchell, was influenced by Trenchard's target selection (Brent, 2010: 10). Having occasionally worked alongside Trenchard in World War I, Mitchell became an advocate of the so-called military targets school, often termed the denial school and shaped United States (US) air strategy accordingly. However, in contrast to British air strategy and Douhet, Mitchell did not aim to break the enemy's will but rather a country's war-fighting capabilities, employing the same means as the RAF (Overy, 1992: 85; Meilinger, 2003: 175). Regardless of the strategic objectives, the military targets school seeks to thwart the enemy's capabilities through the destruction of their arms manufacturing industries and interdicting their supply chain to the battlefield or disrupting movement and communication in theatre (Pape, 1996: 69).

With the advent of precision-guided munitions, a subcategory of the military targets school flourished late in the 20th century. The so-called decapitation school targeted the enemy leadership, intending to paralyse decision-making and executive abilities (Heuser, 2010: 343). While the decapitation strategy was not essentially new, having been adopted by the

US in both world wars, the new precision of bombs made the strategy technologically feasible and led to the adoption of the strategy in the first Gulf War, although this proved to be somewhat disappointing in its effectiveness (Pape, 2004: 116f; Olsen, 2007: 148).

Finally, the Cold War brought about the fourth school of airpower strategy. The political signalling school is rooted in game theory and economic analytical thinking. It stems from economists who worked with the US Strategic Air Command (SAC) and later the government-funded RAND Corporation think tank, which offers research and analysis to the US Armed Forces since its founding in 1948. Considering the destructive potential of nuclear war, this school aimed to limit warfare both geographically and in its intensity by signalling self-restraint – such as deliberately sparing cities and the civilian population from air raids – in the hopes that the other would make similar concessions (Heuser, 2010: 345). If no concession is made, the employment of military force by the signalling side gradually escalates to encourage the adversary to modify their behaviour. If unsuccessful, they would signal a willingness to escalate further, targeting vital centres or using different weaponry (Meilinger, 2000: 492).

THE EVOLUTION OF NATO'S AIR POWER STRATEGY

As the elaborations on the four targeting schools have shown, questions of targeting are central to any serious discussion of air strategy (Ball, 1983: 1). With both the WTO and NATO having possessed nuclear warheads early in the Cold War, targeting entered the nuclear domain of warfare. While conventional airstrikes remained in the repertoires of airpower strategies on both sides, nuclear strikes and target selection shaped air strategy in the years following World War II until the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Although Hiroshima and Nagasaki changed airpower strategy in the second half of the 21st century, the first armed conflict involving a victorious power of

World War II, the Korean War from 1950 to 1953, showed a remarkable continuity in airpower strategy to the pre-1939 period (Heuser, 2010: 355f.). Throughout the war, the SAC and the US Far East Air Force (FEAF) targeted industries, communication lines, and supply shelters of military value. However, as with most value target campaigns in World War II, the lack of precision in unguided bombs at the time resulted in heavy civilian casualties, which led to some scholars arguing that the SAC actually employed a strategic bombing campaign (Kim, 2012: 474). Speaking in favour of this argument is the fact that the US air pressure strategy aimed at compelling the North Korean government to surrender rather than weaken its military capabilities. Hydroelectric power stations, reservoirs, and cities were targeted and destroyed. Those strikes had little military value but disrupted the energy supply, hindering the ability of North Koreans to produce rice in the hope of breaking morale. Those attacks were justified by assigning military value to each of these targets (Kim, 2012: 487). Moreover, the FEAF used napalm in several airstrikes, deliberately hazarding the consequences of its airstrikes on value targets that were mainly in or near major cities such as Pyongyang (Pape, 1996: 161). To summarise, the SAC defined the concept of military value broadly, which led to the bombardment of targets that would otherwise be regarded as strategic rather than military targets.

Before the outbreak of the Korean War, the Soviet Union (USSR) had completed its first successful test of the atomic bomb, initiating the age of nuclear deterrence (Goncharov and Ryabev, 2001: 91). In 1949, NATO formulated its first strategic concept for the defence of its member states (D.C. 6/1). In this document, the North Atlantic Council states that to implement the defence concept, NATO must “[i]nsure the ability to carry out strategic bombing promptly by all means possible with all types of weapons, without exception.”(North Atlantic Council, 1949: §7a).

As the D.C. 6/1 and the subsequent NATO strategy documents display, strategic bombing entered the

nuclear domain due to the city-busting capability of the atomic bomb (Brodie, 1954: 227). All NATO strategies assumed an initial attack by the WTO. In view of the WTO's conventional superiority in Europe, NATO strategies in the 1950s counted on nuclear weapons to deter any Soviet offensive in the first place, and in case of a Soviet attack, to defeat the Soviet Union as early into the war as possible (North Atlantic Council, 1950: §§6, 7). The allied objectives were to be attained through a strategic nuclear counterattack on industrial and military targets of the USSR (Heuser, 1998: 314). In NATO parlance, the term "strategic attack" is not associated with the strategic bombing school but refers instead to the use of nuclear weapons. As the strategic document 48 of the NATO Military Committee (M.C.) from 1954 points out, the targets envisioned by the North Atlantic Council were the Soviet nuclear facilities and their delivery systems in order to reduce the threat of a Soviet nuclear attack, which was expected from the outbreak of a conflict (North Atlantic Council, 1954: §5). This strategy of an immediate nuclear counterattack on Soviet military targets came to be known as 'massive retaliation'. Although early NATO strategy relied on nuclear use at the outbreak of a conflict against the USSR, it distanced itself from strategic bombing in the sense of city busting. Nevertheless, as the civilian nuclear strategist Bernard Brodie emphasised, 'massive retaliation' risked escalating a local conflict into a large-scale war (Booth, 1991: 29). Aware of the limited success of strategic bombing in World War II, Brodie regarded city busting as pure terrorist destruction and as suicidal given the presence of the nuclear threat.

Alongside Brodie, other civilian strategists developed different targeting and nuclear concepts based on economic models and game theories in the 1950s and 1960s. Schelling, Kahn, and Wohlstetter are just three of the strategists who criticised 'massive retaliation' for its lack of alternatives, suggesting it should be replaced with gradually escalating models of deterrence, from which the targeting school of political signalling originates. Their arguments that

nuclear weapons must be considered instruments of risk bargaining rather than military weapons, that capability without credibility would not coerce the Soviet leadership, and that the destruction of Soviet cities would inevitably lead to a counter-attack on US cities resonated in the Kennedy administration (Wohlstetter, 1959: 12; Schelling, 1962: 4; Rosecrance, 1991: 58). This led to a paradigm shift in nuclear strategy and thus airpower targeting, communicated to the public by the speech of the Secretary of Defence McNamara in 1962 to abandon strategic bombing on cities completely, continuing to focus on military targets instead (McNamara, 1962).

In combination with the increasing influence of the RAND scholars' deterrence concepts, the change of administration in the US impacted NATO strategy. Therefore, M.C. 14/2 recognised that nuclear strikes on NATO territory would probably paralyse morale and leadership, which might pose obstacles to the war's conclusion (Heuser, 1998: 317). M.C. 14/2 thus delivered possible scenarios of limited warfare in which NATO would not resort to nuclear airstrikes to limit the conflict geographically. However, the Military Committee also noted in the report to M.C. 14/2 that there is no NATO concept of limited wars with the Soviets and that NATO would exploit its nuclear capability even in the case of a conventional attack by the WTO (North Atlantic Council, 1957: §§14, 19).

It took several years for NATO to shift from 'massive retaliation' to a flexible response strategy. M.C. 14/3 was a compromise agreement between the European member states and the US adopted in 1968. Whilst cries for gradual escalation and a flexible response were loud in the US, the European members demanded a nuclear deterrent to prevent a war against the WTO. If war were to break out, it made little difference in their mind whether conventional or nuclear airstrikes would destroy their territories. On the other side, the US primarily feared a nuclear strike on their population centres. Thus, they preferred to rely more on limited and conventional strategies to prevent such a strike (Heuser, 1998: 318). This compromise led to France leaving the integrated military command in 1966

since it did not want to deviate from the 'massive retaliation' doctrine, fearing that any flexible strategy would decrease the threshold of a conventional war in Europe. The compromise in M.C. 14/3 comprises a variety of counter-attack options, ranging from covert operations to all-out nuclear war. This strategy defined three pillars of credible deterrence, which can be traced back to the thoughts of Wohlstetter, Schelling and Kahn. The three pillars can be illustrated as an escalation ladder, encompassing on the first level the credible capability to defend against lesser aggressions and limited conflicts; on the second level the capability to fend off more ambitious conventional attacks; and on the third level the credible capability to conduct a nuclear response (North Atlantic Council, 1968: §33). While the gradual deterrence ladder stems from Schelling and Kahn, the flexible response that allows for the credibility of each deterrent can be traced back to Wohlstetter, who emphasised the importance of the credibility of use for effective deterrence (Rosecrance, 1991: 58).

Although NATO strategy did not evolve any further in the Cold War, the war in Vietnam saw the RAND scholars' strategy of gradual escalation being implemented in a conventional conflict. Constrained by domestic and global public opinion, as well as the fear of a third World War, US President Lyndon B. Johnson aimed to coerce Hanoi to stop supporting the insurgency in the South, allowing North and South to enter serious peace negotiations (Pape, 1996: 174). In the first three years of the war, the US conducted the bombing campaign Rolling Thunder to dissuade the North from sending supplies and troops to the South and forcing Hanoi to enter peace negotiations. The targets changed over time, escalating according to Schelling's gradual escalation pattern. The US Air Force (USAF) bombed selected military targets in the first phase, slowly expanding to targeting selected isolated industrial compounds (Pape, 1996: 182). Climbing the escalation ladder, the USAF focused on interdiction of any troop and supply movement to the South in the second phase. With success nowhere in sight, Johnson adopted a Douhetian model in the third phase of the campaign,

targeting industrial hubs on the outskirts of major cities such as electric power plants, railroads and bridges while still abstaining from deliberately bombing cities and the civilian population (Pape, 1996: 184). To signal the political intent of the bombardment, the US paused the shelling in the hope that the pause would bring about the start of peace negotiations and an armistice. Instead, the North used the pauses to resupply and regain strength (Heuser, 2010: 347).

Following the North Vietnamese invasion into the South, the US strategy changed in 1972, now aiming at a controlled withdrawal of its forces and a halt of the North's offensive. President Richard Nixon consequently adopted a denial strategy to interdict the offensive campaign of the North. The campaign *Linebacker I* targeted military objectives in the North and South, mainly logistical hubs, transportation arteries and ports near and within cities, which successfully thwarted the North's easter offensive in 1972 (Pape, 1996, p.199). In the fall of 1972, *Linebacker II* was launched, which was a repetition of the previous campaign at a higher intensity to hamper the North's rebuilding attempts. The *Linebacker* operations successfully coerced the North to sit at the negotiating table (Pape, 1996, p.204).

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS OF SOVIET AIRPOWER STRATEGY

In contrast to NATO strategic documents, there is little access to archives that would provide a definitive answer regarding the WTO strategy. Beatrice Heuser is one of the few scholars who was granted access to the archives of the Nationale Volksarmee, the armed forces of the German Democratic Republic shortly following the Soviet Union's implosion. Based on the reports and plans of military exercises, she was able to deduct some assumptions about the Soviet air power doctrine. While NATO's airpower strategy and its war aims evolved throughout the Cold War, the Soviet military leadership remained committed to the cult of the battle of annihilation, aiming at an absolute victory for Socialism (Heuser, 1998: 323). However, the

Soviet Union's primary objective was to avoid war, spreading the ideology through peaceful means instead (Heuser, 1993: 438). If war was to break out, Soviet doctrine assumed it to be started by NATO which would swiftly cross the nuclear threshold. To survive nuclear war, the Soviet strategy focused on preemptively destroying the enemy's nuclear arsenal, which contradicts the assumption of a NATO-initiated war (Heuser, 1993: 438). There is no indication of a differentiated (signalling) nuclear use on the Soviet side. Instead, WTO's nuclear strategy was largely independent of Western action except for the preemptive launch-on-warning use, in which pre planned launches would be executed (Heuser, 2010: 370, 377). Moreover, Soviet authorities rejected any limited or tactical use of nuclear weapons and a purely conventional phase in a war against NATO (Garthoff, 1958: 107). However, in an analysis of Soviet military exercise plans, Heuser found that the WTO was indeed preparing for selective nuclear use. In the Soviet mind, any war against NATO would be a global, all-out nuclear war, which requires combined nuclear and conventional airstrikes from the outbreak of the war. The primary targets of such strikes were NATO's strategic nuclear capabilities, followed by other military targets (MacFarlane, 1991: 186ff.). Although the WTO did regard nuclear weapons as more than just a deterrent, thus not believing in the power of mutually assured destruction, its nuclear strike plans found in WTO military exercises never included the direct targeting of cities. Nevertheless, the collateral damage to population centres as a consequence of the bombardment of military targets would have been lethal to the population since the USSR refuted the limitation of the conflict to a zone of combat and the sharp distinction between military targets and civilian populations (Garthoff, 1958: 109; Heuser, 1993: 438; 2010: 371). As there is limited evidence of Soviet strategy, it is difficult to trace the air strategy back to strategic theorists. One of the few known strategists was General Vasily Sokolovski, who published his *Military Strategy* in 1962 and provided rare insights into the WTO strategy presented above.

CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to assess the centrality of value targeting and city 'busting' in conventional and nuclear airpower strategy in the Cold War. A commonality of the airpower strategies examined in this paper is their restraint in deliberately targeting population centres. None of the strategies implemented by NATO or the Soviet Union aimed to break the enemy's morale by deliberately targeting population centres. Instead, both nuclear and conventional strategies targeted military capabilities, with the term being broadly defined by the US campaign in Korea and narrowly defined in the nuclear strategies of NATO and WTO, in which the enemy's nuclear capabilities were the primary targets.

Although NATO strategy did allow for the use of the atomic bomb's city-busting capability to ensure the credibility of nuclear deterrence at the political level, the documents of NATO's Military Committee indicate that it was never considered to be applied in practice. Conventional wars fought by the US support this thesis: Cities were not deliberately targeted in conventional airstrikes, neither in Korea nor in Vietnam. Given that precision-guided munition had not been invented until the last decade of the Cold War, the air power strategies of both NATO and the Soviet Union were at least willing to risk the collateral damage inflicted in strikes on targets of military value, with the exception being the NATO strategy from 1968 onwards, which aimed at limiting a potential war by abstaining from any targeting which could escalate the conflict.

To conclude, value targeting was central to conventional and nuclear airpower strategy during the Cold War. However, the definition of military value was occasionally defined somewhat liberally, entering the strategic bombing sphere. In contrast, city 'busting' served mainly as a deterrent to avoid nuclear war. However, given that the strategies throughout the Cold War were primarily focused on destroying the enemy's war-fighting capabilities, and not the morale, city 'busting', as envisioned by

Douhet, did not play as central a role in airpower as it did in deterrence strategy.

Recently, the threat of a potential nuclear strike by the Russian Federation has risen in view of the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. Although President Vladimir Putin's rhetoric has de-escalated in that regard, this war constitutes the first symmetric armed conflict involving a nuclear superpower. Therefore, one cannot fall back on former instances to predict Russian behaviour in the nuclear sphere. Regarding the conventional dimension, technology would now allow any Air Force to strike its target with almost absolute precision, thus reducing the collateral damage inflicted upon the civilian population in a conventional air strike. However, Russian air power strategy throughout the war has not implied that it would refrain from harming civilians. In fact, Russia has done quite the opposite in deliberately targeting civilian infrastructure and population centres, aiming to break the Ukrainian people's will to continue the fight (Restle, 2022). Douhet's strategic bombing school has thus reemerged in Ukraine. It remains to be seen if the Russian targeting strategy initiates a global trend or not.

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WEAPONS OF MASS SELF-DESTRUCTION: HOW UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY IN IRAQ BACKFIRED

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ABSTRACT

The essay examines the perceived failures of the United States in the Iraq War and argues that they were the result of policy objectives that diverged from the principles of realism and instead pursued neoconservative and liberal internationalist ideals. The decision to invade Iraq in 2003 is analyzed through an offensive realist lens, showing how it was motivated by the desire to secure unipolar hegemony through power maximization. It is discussed how post-9/11 and post-Cold War sentiments—alongside suspected weapons of mass destruction in Iraq—influenced the United States actions of self-help in an anarchical international order. The subsequent failures of the United States in Iraq are attributed to attempts to nation build and democratize, which align with liberal internationalism and neoconservatism but are incompatible with a realist approach and are beyond the ability of state power to achieve. The resolution of the conflict under the Obama administration, characterized by a shift to defensive realism through more restrictive and prudent policy regarding US foreign presence, is explained through the recognition that such objectives must be pursued internally by self-interested states and that the national interest of the United States was best served by withdrawing troops from Iraq.

Keywords: Realism, neoconservatism, liberal internationalism, hegemony, democratization, weapons of mass destruction, defensive realism, US foreign policy, Second Iraq War

INTRODUCTION

This piece will argue that the perceived failures of the United States of America in the Second Iraq War (2003-2011) were a consequence of errant policy objectives that strayed beyond the principles of

realism and attempted to achieve neoconservative and liberal internationalist ideals. This will be demonstrated in three steps. The decision of the United States George W. Bush administration to invade Iraq in 2003 will be explained from an offensive realist perspective, justifying the invasion on the basis of the United States acting as a rational, self-interested state seeking to secure its unipolar hegemony through power maximization. The perceived failures of the United States in Iraq will then be addressed through an illustration of how these failures were a product of misguided attempts by the United States government to nation-build and democratise in a foreign state; goals that align with liberal internationalism and neoconservatism and are unequivocally outside the realm of a realist approach. The paper will convey how the United States' initial objective of invasion was successfully achieved, eliminating any rising threat to its hegemony, but the subsequent failures arose as a result of the United States' deviation from the realist approach. Finally, this paper will demonstrate how the Iraq conflict was resolved through the recognition by the Obama administration that objectives of nation-building and democratisation must be pursued internally by self-interested states, and that the most rational course of action for the national interest of the United States was to leave Iraq. President Obama's decision to withdraw troops will be explained as a shift to defensive realism in the United States' approach to international relations.

UNITED STATES INSECURITY

In March 2003, the United States (U.S.) sent military forces to invade Iraq, with the mission to destroy weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) thought to be possessed by Iraqi terrorist groups, and to topple the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein (Laub et al., 2017). Timing was crucial to the decision of the

Bush administration to invade Iraq. In 2003, American sentiments of a near fifty-year period of national tension with the Soviet Union, locked in a bipolar distribution of power, were fresh. The U.S. was determined to maintain its newly-acquired unipolar hegemony, and its decision to invade Iraq reflects this, as Lieberfeld (2005: 2) puts it:

"[The] shift from a two-superpower (bipolar) distribution of power during the Cold war to unipolar U.S. military dominance caused U.S. strategy to shift from policies of deterrence or containment threats to policies of preventative warfare against threatening 'rogue' states."

The Bush administration saw Iraq, which contained Saddam Hussein's regime alongside suspected WMDs, as one of these threatening rogue states posing a threat to U.S. hegemony. Furthermore, in 2003 the experiences of loss and destruction of 9/11 were recent both in the memory of America and the rest of the world. The U.S. aimed to avoid an image of post-9/11 decline by demonstrating its willingness to utilize its immense military-political dominance against any "symbolic or material challenges" (Lieberfeld, 2005: 4).

An Overview of Realist Theories

Realism holds states as the primary actors in world politics and sees international relations as "a struggle for power among states", with each rational state acting to maximize its national interest (Baylis et. al, 2020: 9). Hans Morgenthau (1973: 5) wrote in *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* that the key to understanding international relations is the "concept of interest defined in terms of power". For realists, power determines outcomes, and power is best defined, measured, and exerted through state military force. Structural realism or neorealism, established in Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*, contends that the anarchical nature of international structure, in which no formal central authority exists, leads to "a logic of self-help" where states must be constantly concerned about the capabilities and intentions of other states, and thus seek to maximize their security (Dunne and Schmidt, 2020: 136-137). John J. Mearsheimer expanded upon

this, introducing a branch of neorealism called offensive realism, which describes a "structure of the anarchic international system that strongly encourages states in their unrelenting pursuit to maximize power with the ultimate goal of becoming a global hegemon" (Lobell, 2017: 4). Neorealism and offensive realism both view the world as anarchic, in which states must act in self-interest to prepare and defend against the unpredictability of other state actions; however neorealism says that states "seek to maximize their security" (Dunne and Schmidt: 137), whereas offensive realism holds that states seek to maximize their power at the expense of other states. According to offensive realism, a state "does not strive to be an equal among its great-power peers but to be the most powerful – the hegemon" (Lobell, 2017: 4). The logic of self-help in an anarchical international order holds that if one state forgoes an opportunity for expansion and power maximization, other states will seize such opportunities, gaining at their expense (Zakaria, 1998). Thus, offensive realism hinges on the assertion that in a world of anarchy, "the best guarantee of survival is to be a hegemon, because no other state can seriously threaten such a mighty power" (Mearsheimer, 2001: 3).

U.S. Offensive Realism in the Second Iraq War

The offensive realist actions taken by the United States in their 2003 invasion of Iraq were a reflection of U.S. attitude towards international relations post cold war. By invading Iraq, the U.S. sought to maximize their power in the world of anarchy. They aimed to eliminate a rising rogue regime thought to possess WMD that could pose a potential terrorist threat to the U.S. and its allies, and demonstrated their expansive and dominant military power to challenge the perceived portrayal of post-9/11 decline (Lieberfeld, 2005). The Iraq War was, in this sense, a preventative war serving to weaken and discourage potential challengers to the U.S. newly unipolar hegemony (Organski, 1968).

WHAT WENT WRONG?: THE EMERGENCE OF ERRANT U.S. POLICY GOALS

On April 9, 2003, the United States forces and its allies defeated the Iraqi army, toppling the central force of Saddam Hussein's regime (Laub et al., 2017). Hussein himself was captured in December and in January of 2004 the search for WMD was aborted, with the Bush administration declaring that its prewar intelligence on WMDs in Hussein's Iraq was inaccurate (Laub et al., 2017). Had U.S. objectives remained aligned with offensive realism, this would have marked the end of the conflict, and American troops would have withdrawn from Iraq. With Saddam Hussein's regime toppled and the concern of Iraqi WMDs established to be baseless, any actual or potential rising threats to the United States hegemony were quelled. By utilizing its powerful military force to subdue potential threats, the U.S. had also discouraged future challengers by dispelling the notion of a post-9/11 decline. Ultimately, by 2004 the U.S. invasion of Iraq had served to maximize power and secure its unipolar hegemony, and thus the U.S. had successfully achieved its national interest in a world of anarchy. However, this is when U.S. foreign policy deviated from the realist approach to international relations. Instead of withdrawing troops from Iraq, the U.S. remained in Iraq, engaging in misguided attempts of nation-building and democratisation. From 2004 to 2010, U.S. forces combated insurgencies and attempted to facilitate democratic elections and economic stability in Iraq. The U.S. failed to achieve its goals of establishing a stable democratic Iraqi government and economy and "effectively abandoned its nation-building efforts after 2009" (Cordesman, 2020). It is this inability to achieve its nation-building goals from which the perceived failures of the U.S. in the Iraq War arise. The misinterpretation of these failures as demonstrating the inability of power to determine outcomes in state interactions has led to the Iraq War being viewed as evidence of realism's inadequacies in explaining international relations. The reality, however, is that the failure of the United

States to achieve its goals was not an issue of power, but policy. U.S. policy objectives shifted from offensive realism driven objectives to maximize power and maintain unipolarity, towards neoconservative and liberal internationalist objectives of democratisation and nation-building.

Liberal internationalism emphasizes "foreign policies designed to enhance multilateral cooperation among states" and asserts that international agencies should engage in peacebuilding within states to facilitate such cooperation (Paris, 1997: 59). Liberal internationalists assume that the key to peace and cooperation among states is "a liberal democratic polity and a market-oriented economy" (Paris, 2017: 55), and advocate for peacebuilding through social engineering that "involves transplanting Western models of social, political, and economic organization into war-shattered states in order to control civil conflict" (Paris, 2017: 55). The nation-building efforts of the United States to equip Iraq with Western systems and institutions was a distinct attempt at socially engineering Iraq to be more compatible and cooperative with liberal democracies. The influence of liberal internationalist goals behind U.S. foreign policy objectives in Iraq are apparent.

Neoconservatism aligns with offensive realism on the notion that America should utilize power through military force in order to protect its hegemony (Lieberfeld, 2005), but deviates on how it views American responsibility in the global order. Realists say that in a world of anarchy, states should be concerned with pursuing purely their own national interest, seeing the international system as a competitive arena where states must provide security only for themselves (Schmidt and Williams, 2008). Neoconservatives, however, believe that the United States has a leadership responsibility within the international system to act as a "benevolent global hegemon that uses its power to promote democracy" (Lieberfeld, 2005: 12). U.S. policy objectives that drove it to remain in Iraq and attempt to promote democracy displayed an embrace of the neoconservative sentiment of global responsibility.

The perceived failures of the United States in Iraq arose from a disjunction between American power and objectives. Even a 2007 surge in U.S. forces that further concentrated U.S. power toward its objectives was ineffective in eliminating the root causes of conflict in Iraq (Sky, 2011), which could ultimately only be solved by Iraqis themselves developing the “necessary institutions to manage competition for power and resources peacefully” (Sky, 2011: 117). Military means were not aligned with policy objectives, and thus increased U.S. power could not overcome the reality that nation-building must be achieved internally by states pursuing their own national interest. The United States’ failures arose from ignorant attempts at using force to prop up a government that could not stand on its own (Muravchik and Walt, 2008). Realism posits that power determines outcomes in international relations, but assumes the desired outcomes of states to be inextricably aligned with their own state interest. The inability of the U.S. to successfully nation-build in Iraq can be attributed to American foreign policy objectives straying beyond the national interest-oriented principles of realism and pursuing neoconservative and liberal internationalist objectives that state power was unequipped to achieve. Thus, the perceived failures of the United States in Iraq demonstrate the effectiveness of realism to explain and predict outcomes in international affairs.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION: A SHIFT TO DEFENSIVE REALISM

By 2008, among most Americans, Iraq had become a “distant war”, of which they felt very little sense of ownership or mission (Parasiliti, 2012: 128). Americans had begun to recognize the futility of the war and how their government seemed to pursue goals contrary to the country’s national interest. In November 2008, Barack Obama won the White House campaigning on a promise to withdraw troops from Iraq, and in December 2011 the last U.S. troops left Iraq (Laub et al., 2017). By the time all troops had departed, the United States had spent 800 billion from the U.S. treasury on the war, and

almost 4,500 Americans had been killed (Laub et al., 2017). Realism argues that “rational decision-making leads to the pursuit of the national interest” and that “taking actions that would make your state weak or vulnerable would not be rational” (Antunes and Camisã, 2017: 15). The scale of human loss and wasted expenditure suffered from engaging in a protracted conflict within a nation no longer posing any threat to American national security could not be rationally justified as being in the national interest. Continued conflict in Iraq would only serve to make the U.S. weaker and more vulnerable. The Obama administration recognized that the neoconservative and liberal internationalist goals the U.S. was attempting to achieve by nation-building in Iraq were being pursued contrary to its national interest, and that such nation-building could only be achieved internally, by rational states pursuing their own national interest. In an address, President Obama (2010) declared that “in the end, only Iraqis can resolve their differences and police their streets. Only Iraqis can build a democracy within their borders”. The decision to withdraw troops marked a return to the realist approach in U.S. international relations.

While the Bush administration’s decision to invade Iraq demonstrated adherence to the power maximizing principles of offensive realism and the vision of an uncontested unipolar world, the Obama administration’s withdrawal from Iraq, paired with a more balanced and pragmatic approach to world affairs moving forward, exhibited a shift towards defensive realism (Cox, 2020). Defensive realism contends that “the anarchical structure of the international system encourages states to maintain moderate and reserved policies to attain security” (Lobell, 2017: 1), and says that it is in the national interest of states to seek to maximize security, not power (Layne, 1997). Defensive realists reject the power-maximization of offensive realists and the liberal internationalist and neoconservative objectives of democratisation and human rights (Juneau, 2020). Defensive realism views force as an inefficient tool for state-building and is skeptical of

externally-imposed social engineering (Juneau, 2020). In leaving Iraq, the U.S. finally ended its misguided and ineffective efforts toward externally-imposed nation-building by means of military force. Defensive realism argues that to maximize security states should “refrain from expansionist or aggressive policies and instead embrace prudence” and “exercise restraint, especially in the face of non-existential threats” (Juneau, 2020: 386).

The Obama administration recognized the excessive use of aggressive U.S. policy in a state posing no existential threat to America, and exhibited prudence by completely repatriating American forces. Obama expressed intent to use increased restraint when engaging in foreign intervention, stating that “trying to play a constructive role from the sidelines rather than getting embroiled directly represents not weakness but prudence” (Juneau, 2020: 387). The costs suffered by the United States in its pursuit of liberal internationalist and neoconservative nation-building goals in Iraq made the state weaker and more vulnerable, thus making a continued military presence in Iraq an irrational course of action for the U.S. in the pursuit of its national interest. The abandonment of such goals indicated a return to realist principles holding states’ interests as supreme in international relations and recognizing that successful nation-building must be pursued and achieved from within. This return to realist principles, alongside expressed intent toward a more restrictive and prudent policy regarding U.S. foreign presence, signified a shift to defensive realism in the United States’ approach to international relations.

CONCLUSION

The actions of the United States in the Iraq War, their justifications, and implications are often central to modern international relations discourse. A misconception has arisen that sees the failures of the United States to achieve its objectives in Iraq, despite far superior military power, as evidence against the realist assertion that power determines outcomes in world affairs. To rebut this notion, this essay first examined the decision of the Bush

administration to invade Iraq from an offensive realist perspective, explaining how American sentiments towards world affairs in a post-9/11 and cold war era led to power maximizing objectives that sought to secure the U.S.’ unipolarity by subduing any rising or potential threats to its hegemony. The perceived failures of the United States in Iraq were then assessed, establishing that the U.S. was successful in achieving its power maximizing objectives of offensive realism, effectively securing its national interest through the use of state power. Perceived failures then arose out of a deviation in U.S. policy objectives from a realist pursuit of its national interest towards liberal internationalist and neoconservative goals of nation-building and democratisation in Iraq. By attempting to use military force to achieve goals outside the principles of realism, the U.S. created a disjunction between state power and political objectives that left power unequipped to bring about the desired outcomes. The Iraq conflict was resolved when the Obama administration abandoned liberal internationalist and neoconservative nation-building objectives and adopted a defensive realist approach to American international relations. This shift to defensive realism was exhibited in the decision to withdraw troops from Iraq, signifying a return to the rational pursuit of the U.S. national interest, and the assumption of more restrictive and prudent foreign intervention policies by the Obama administration.

Looking Forward

The sustained existence of an uncontested United States unipolar hegemony seems unlikely. Rising global powers such as Russia and China seem primed to challenge the United States, and a move towards a more multipolar distribution of global power appears inevitable; indeed, many analysts argue that this change has already occurred. It remains to be seen what grand strategy the United States will adopt to maintain its position of power and leadership in an increasingly multipolar global order (Taliaferro, 2001). A polarized American political climate with a growing divide between nationalistic and globalized attitudes will ensure that acrimonious debates between supporters of the

aggressive, expansionary policy of offensive realism and adepts of the prudent, restrained policy of defensive realism are certain to be at the forefront of United States international relations discourse for years to come.

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THE SECOND IRAQ WAR: HOW AMERICAN DOMESTIC POLITICS UNDERMINED THE UNITED NATIONS

M A T T H E W G A R O F A L O

ABSTRACT

This paper uses an Idealist approach to international relations to evaluate why the United Nations failed to prevent the Iraq War in 2003. Idealism, which posits that it is possible to create a peaceful world, has been a dominant paradigm in the International Relations (IR) field of studies since the end of the First World War. However, despite the construction of international institutions such as the United Nations (UN) designed to achieve this goal, global society has continued to be plagued with wars throughout most of the 20th and 21st centuries. A textual analysis of various articles, newspapers, interviews, and public opinion polls demonstrates that factors outside the UN's control inhibited its ability to facilitate peace in the Middle East in the early 2000s. This paper highlights how United States (U.S.) domestic politics, specifically the public opinion of Americans, corporate lobbyists' activities, and the Bush administration's policy of U.S. hegemony, collectively undermined collaboration in the international system. These findings show that bodies such as the UN are vulnerable to external forces, which in the case study of the Second Iraq War (2003-2011) rendered it incapable of resolving this conflict.

Keywords: United Nations, Idealism, Hegemony, State Actors, International, Domestic.

INTRODUCTION

This paper argues that institutions such as the UN are ill-equipped to stabilize the international system and facilitate a world of peace. Using the idealist approach, it evaluates how U.S. domestic politics, such as the Bush administration's policy of U.S. hegemony, the public opinion of Americans, and non-state actors including lobbyists, undermined the UN's ability to prevent the U.S. and its allies from

invading Iraq in 2003. The article first analyzes the George W. Bush administration's principle of American exceptionalism, which led the U.S. to advocate for a 'performative' war in Iraq and produced an uncooperative international environment. Second, it shows how domestic politics in the U.S. influenced foreign policy in the Middle East, since U.S. public opinion favored intervention. Third, it considers the role of non-state actors, such as lobbyists, and highlights their ability to impact international affairs. Finally, this paper concludes by highlighting the reasons underlying the UN's failure to resolve this conflict from an idealist perspective. Based upon the research presented, it is clear that idealism's own core assumptions undermined the UN, the very institution it sought to uphold.

IDEALISM EXPLAINED

Idealism is a theory in IR that is often associated with the notion that it is possible to create a world of peace (Owens, Baylis, and Smith, 2016). After the First World War, in order to solve the problem of how to arrange relations between states peacefully and prevent future wars, prominent figures such as the U.S. American President Woodrow Wilson helped establish international institutions to regulate global anarchy, such as the League of Nations (Noor et al., 2022). The hope was that the integration and cooperation of states and peoples would create over time a shared global sense of identity and belonging. However, the demise of the League of Nations less than two decades after its creation and ensuing conflicts in both the 20th and 21st centuries demonstrate that these institutions and their successors, such as the UN, established in 1945 at the end of the Second World War, failed to facilitate lasting peace in the international arena. One such conflict was the Second Iraq War, lasting from 2003 to 2011. On March 20, 2003, the United States of America invaded Iraq, with President Bush justifying

this preemptive strike against a sovereign nation by claiming that Saddam Hussein, the president of the country, was implicated in the 9/11 attacks against the United States (Altheide and Grimes, 2005).

AMERICAN HEGEMONY AND UNILATERAL ACTION

An idealist approach to international relations posits that the state of nature is one of human cooperation (Steigerwald, 1994). For international organizations like the UN to be effective, it is crucial that members act as a collective and cooperate with one another. However, after the World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001, the U.S. threatened to take an interventionist approach to protect its national interests. In September of 2002, President Bush took the world stage at the UN General Assembly to try and convince the UN's member states to join the U.S. in its mission to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from power, but also stated that the U.S. would act unilaterally if necessary (Chen, 2002). Moreover, administration officials reinforced the idea that as President of the United States, George W. Bush had to act on behalf of the interests of his country (Chen et al., 2002). Rhetoric such as this showed the unwillingness of the U.S. to cooperate with external entities who did not align with its national interests.

The UN Security Council, whose main responsibility is to maintain international peace and security, is heavily influenced by major nations, the most powerful of which, in military and economic terms, is the U.S.. The Council is made up of five permanent members, including the U.S., the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China, and ten non-permanent members (Curtis et al., 2016). Any decisions made by the Security Council must be passed by a majority of 9 of the 15 members, including each of the five permanent members (Curtis et al., 2016). All five permanent members have the authority to veto UN sanctions and peacekeeping operations (Curtis et al., 2016). Since the U.S. has veto power, action by the Security Council to condemn the legitimacy of the Iraq war was improbable even if the issue were to

have been raised. After all, American officials made their intention to invade Iraq clear on many occasions. This paper argues that the UN, because of its Security Council, where Great Powers have a veto—a very realist concept—is not an entirely liberal internationalist organization capable of restraining its members from using military force.

The use of force against Iraq was controversial both politically and legally (Hmoud, 2004). Key U.S. allies and members of the UN Security Council, including permanent members France, Russia, China, and non-permanent member Germany strongly objected to military operations in Iraq and believed that an American invasion was unjustified (Hmoud, 2004). Despite this, it became abundantly clear that the U.S. saw itself as an 'unrivaled hegemon' who could use its veto power to manage the Security Council or to oppose the UN body all together (Mingst, 2003). The 'Bush Doctrine', which refers to American foreign policy principles, famously promoted the idea of American exceptionalism and was unequivocally committed to maintaining U.S. sovereignty when it came to world politics. American exceptionalism refers to the notion that the U.S. is a unique power in international politics and must remain militarily superior to all other states (Mingst, 2003). This attitude is reinforced by the country's large economy and remarkable military power. In the case of the Second Iraq War, the United States contended that it had a 'right' to initiate military operations and, because of its veto power, essentially ignored suggestions made by members of the Security Council to find a peaceful alternative to invading Iraq (Mingst, 2003). As a result of this realist mechanism of veto powers allocated to the permanent members of its Security Council, the UN found itself unable to prevent this conflict despite its liberal internationalist founding principles and mission.

Aside from challenging U.S. authority, the terrorist attacks by Al-Qaeda also exposed America's vulnerability internationally (Butt, 2019). Therefore, the Bush administration argued that it had an obligation to reassert U.S. hegemony by

demonstrating strength on an international scale (Butt, 2019). The decision to engage in a 'performative war' against Iraq was thought to "instill fear into potential enemies and ensure that nations submit to American authority and global order" (Butt 2019: 250). After all, peaceful bargains such as those facilitated by the UN, do not achieve the same effect (Butt, 2019). Therefore, it was not in the U.S. interest to cooperate with the UN since the Bush administration's ultimate goal was not to achieve peace but to ensure that American hegemony prevailed. The idealist notions that human nature is one of cooperation (Steigerwald, 1994) and that international institutions can create peace and stability (Steigerwald, 1994) were not ubiquitous in the American political sphere in the immediate wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Since the Bush administration felt that US public opinion was strongly behind it, it believed that it could take the political risk of defying the UN and going ahead with the invasion despite lacking a UN resolution authorizing it (Foyle, 2004). As a result, it did so with only a 'Coalition of the Willing', including primarily the United Kingdom led by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who strongly supported President Bush's decision to intervene in order to ensure that Saddam Hussein would not develop and use WMDs (Sharp, 2003, p. 62). Consequently, the UN was unable to prevent the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the subsequent war in the Middle East.

DOMESTIC POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY

An idealist approach to international relations believes, contrary to classical realism, that there is no clear division between 'high' and 'low' politics (Noor et al., 2022). This idealist notion potentially undermined the UN's ability to prevent the war in Iraq since U.S. foreign policy was strongly influenced by its domestic politics (Foyle, 2004). After 9/11, as the Bush administration moved the United States towards war with Iraq, public opinion was a central aspect of its deliberations (Foyle, 2004). After all, the terrorist attacks led the public to favor such a war

and influenced Congress to support the White House in its efforts to eliminate domestic threats (Foyle, 2004). According to a Gallup / CNN / USA Today poll produced on September 22, 2001, 84% of U.S. respondents saw the 'destroying of terrorist operations outside of Afghanistan' as very important (Foyle, 2004). Furthermore, 68% of respondents believed that Saddam Hussein should be removed from power (Foyle, 2004). Alternative polls also showed that the American public was increasingly willing to accept U.S. casualties in the fight to eliminate terrorism (Foyle, 2004).

President Bush feared public reaction if he did not act now and Saddam Hussein would be later implicated in another attack against the United States (Foyle, 2004). He specifically stated, "I don't want history to look back and say, "Where was President Bush?" (Foyle 2004: 273). It is important to consider that President Bush was a democratically elected official with future electoral ambitions. To explain, when 9/11 occurred, he was in his first term of his Presidency and he had to consider policies that would benefit his re-election campaign. He was determined to avoid becoming a one-term President, like his father, George H.W. Bush (1989-1993). Therefore, it is possible that President Bush's inclination for personal success and considerations for his re-election in 2004 had a direct impact on the UN's ability to negotiate a peaceful solution to the crisis, since U.S. foreign policy was based upon voters' wishes. This demonstrates how domestic politics has the potential to influence international politics and undermine imperfect liberal internationalist institutions such as the UN

The United Nations' ability to prevent the U.S. and its allies from invading Iraq was also undermined by false testimonies, state-generated propaganda, and media outlets (Foyle, 2004). The Bush administration's most fully articulated case for war was presented in Secretary of State Colin Powell's speech to the United Nations Security Council on February 5, 2003 (Zarefsky, 2007). In his address, Secretary Powell presented what eventually turned

out to be false evidence that suggested Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) (Zarefsky, 2007). Even though this information was later deemed inaccurate, it dramatically changed at the time it was persuasively presented by Colin Powell the opinions of American citizens regarding whether military action against Iraq was warranted (Zarefsky, 2007). According to a public opinion poll after the speech, 62% of respondents said that Saddam Hussein posed “an immediate danger to the world” (Zarefsky, 2007: 295). Furthermore, 63% of respondents favored an American invasion of Iraq with ground troops, up 5% from the period before the speech (Zarefsky, 2007). Corporate media outlets, including ABC, CBS, and NBC aided the Bush administration's “march to war” by failing to air a wide range of debates from diverse perspectives (Hayes and Guardino, 2010: 59).

In evaluating the Bush administration's decision to invade Iraq, evidence suggests that the line between ‘high’ and ‘low’ politics was increasingly blurred. Since domestic politics in the United States dramatically influenced American foreign policy in the early 2000's, the UN was unable to facilitate the emergence of a global consciousness that valued peace, thereby inhibiting its ability to prevent war. A critical argument explaining the outbreak of the Second Iraq War is therefore rooted in idealist principles of international relations that directly contradict a classical realist approach denying any possible spill-over between domestic politics and global power relations.

MULTIPLE ACTORS IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

An idealist approach to international relations believes that there are a multiplicity of actors in international politics (Noor et al., 2022). These include state actors themselves as well as alternative entities such as religious institutions, multinational corporations, and lobbyists (Owens, Baylis and Smith, 2016). Various tactics were used by ‘outside’ actors to influence the Bush administration's decision to pursue military action in Iraq. These

included ‘infiltrating’ the White House with individuals connected to defense and oil companies as well as billions spent by these on lobbying the federal government. Considering this, it is evident that the United Nations’ ability to influence a peaceful negotiation between the U.S. and Iraq was undermined by numerous U.S.-based special interest groups, whose influence on the foreign policies of states is acknowledged by idealism but ignored by classical realism.

Lobbying activities of economic non-state actors have an important influence on the prospects for war (Hartung and Ciarrocca, 2003). The military-industrial complex (arms lobby) has a tremendous influence in Washington D.C. over policy and legislation regarding war (Hartung and Ciarrocca, 2003). This became abundantly clear during the buildup to the Iraq conflict in 2003. Not only did industry-backed think-tanks spend billions of dollars lobbying the U.S. federal government, but defense contractors also conveniently found former executives, consultants, or shareholders holding positions in President Bush’s National Security team. In 2003, Lockheed Martin, the U.S.’ largest defense contractor, had multiple direct or indirect ties to policy makers within the White House. Very prominent figures included Lynne Cheney, wife of Vice-President Dick Cheney, who served on Lockheed’s board of directors from 1994 until her husband's inauguration in 2001 (Hartung and Ciarrocca, 2003). During this period, she accumulated more than \$500,000 in directors' fees (Hartung and Ciarrocca, 2003). Similarly, Northrop Group, which is the U.S.’ third largest defense contractor, had direct links to Air Force Secretary James Roche, who was a former company vice president. Additional companies, including General Dynamics, Raytheon, and Boeing were also said to have direct ties to officials within the Bush administration. For example, Senior Advisor to the President Karl Rove, who actively advocated for the U.S. invasion of Iraq, owned between \$100,000 and \$250,000 in Boeing stock according to disclosure forms at the time (Ibid.).

In an interview conducted by NPR, journalist Steve

Coll outlined the influence that oil giants, specifically ExxonMobil, had in the Bush Administration (NPR, 2012). Coll described ExxonMobil as “one of the most powerful businesses ever produced by American capitalism” and went so far as to say that they are an “extension of the American government” (NPR, 2012). During the Bush administration, the CEO of this oil giant had close ties to Vice-President Dick Cheney (NPR, 2012).

The relationship between multinational corporations and the Bush administration undermined the UN’s effort to facilitate peace. Since powerful individuals inside the White House are ‘bought’ and influenced by companies that tend to profit from war, it is unlikely that they will pursue diplomatic resolutions to resolve conflict. Therefore, it can be argued that the UN was unable to prevent the invasion of Iraq since it was ill-equipped to deal with non-state actors beyond the state, further proving the idealist principle that domestic politics has great influence over a country’s foreign policy.

THE UNITED NATIONS’ FAILURE TO RESOLVE THE IRAQ CONFLICT

In December 2011, President Barack Obama successfully completed the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq; after nearly 10 years of combat, the war was finally coming to an end (Compton, 2015). However, the UN did not have a significant role in the final departure of U.S. troops; rather, U.S. domestic politics continued to influence international affairs. Towards the end of the Bush presidency, the Iraq war had become extremely unpopular among voters (Gartner and Segura, 2008). Americans saw increasing casualties as evidence of a failing foreign policy and were becoming increasingly aware of the fact that the Bush administration lied about the existence of WMDs in the region (Gartner and Segura, 2008). As a result, Republicans lost badly in the 2006 midterm elections and exit polls found that 57% of all voters disapproved of the war in Iraq (Gartner and Segura, 2008). During the 2008 Presidential Election, then-

candidate Barack Obama, leader of the Democratic party, made it a firm campaign promise to end the war (Compton, 2015). In what was seen as a retribution against George W. Bush’s administration, voters elected Democrats to the White House for the first time in eight years in an electoral landslide. Since the withdrawal of American troops in Iraq was reliant on the outcome of domestic elections in the United States, the idealist notion that there is no clear division between ‘high’ and ‘low’ politics stands true again (Noor et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

This paper uses an idealist approach to international relations to analyze why an institution such as the United Nations was ill-equipped to stabilize the international system, facilitate a world of peace and avoid war in the first decade of the 21st century. It begins by evaluating how American hegemony created an uncooperative international environment. It argues that the ‘Bush Doctrine’, which promoted American exceptionalism, influenced the U.S. to act unilaterally in its response to the terrorist attacks that occurred on 9/11, 2001. Next, the paper explains that U.S. domestic politics had a heavy influence on the Bush administration’s foreign policy in the Middle East. It explains that the blurring between ‘high’ and ‘low’ politics limited the UN’s ability to promote a global consciousness regarding how peace should be achieved in Iraq. Third, the paper analyzes the role that lobbyists and multinational institutions have in the conduct of national governments’ foreign policies. It argues that the UN is unprepared to deal with actors beyond the state that put their own commercial or individual profit-based interests ahead of their country’s rational national interest. Finally, the paper highlights the UN’s failure to resolve the Iraq conflict by reiterating the importance that domestic politics has on foreign affairs. Despite the fact that idealist efforts after the First World War lead to the creation of the League of Nations to regulate global peace, which was succeeded after the end of the Second World War by the UN as the world’s central liberal

internationalist institution, idealism's own core assumptions undermined the very institution it sought to uphold. The arguments presented in this paper outline how the United States political and economic system ensures domestic politics shapes the country's foreign policy. In the final instance, actors such as voting citizens and private corporations had greater influence over the decisions the U.S. made in the Middle East than the United Nations.

The analysis outlined in this paper can also be applied to Russia and the conflict in Ukraine and explains why President Biden has strongly argued in favor of fundamental reform of the UN, who was again widely criticized for being unable to prevent this conflict in the heart of Europe. After all, in February of 2022, shortly after the Kremlin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, "Russia vetoed a draft UN Security Council resolution that would have deplored Moscow's invasion" (Nickols and Pamuk, 2022). Further research is necessary to examine the conditions under which, in accordance with idealist principles of international relations, internal public and non-state pressures on the five veto-holding permanent members of the Security Council could in fact lead to such fundamental reform taking place, thus refuting the classical realist assertion that no such member would ever be willing to renounce its veto powers at the UN.

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