Volume 15, Issue 4, 2021

CEJISS

CENTRAL EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AND SECURITY STUDIES

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Explaining the Absence of a Regional Hegemon in the Central African Sub-region

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METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY PRAGUE PRESS

Central European Journal of International and Security Studies
C/o Metropolitan University Prague
Dubečská 900/10, 100 31, Prague, Czech Republic
Tel.: +420 724 587 171, Fax: +420 274 817 190, *info@cejiss.org*

CEJISS is published by Metropolitan University Prague Press
Printed in the EU

ISSN: 1802-548x e-ISSN: 1805-482x
DOI (journal): 10.51870/CEJISS.XKVV3716

Contents

Volume 15, Issue 4, December 2021

Research Articles

4 Conceptualising the Arctic as a Zone of Conflict
Gabriella Gricius

32 Explaining the Absence of a Regional Hegemon in the Central African Sub-region
Enongene Rex Nkumbe, Makolo Joseph Njie

48 Examining the Role of Trust and Ideological Disparities in India-EU BTIA Negotiations
Malcolm Katrak, Blanche Devos

Book Reviews

82 Czechoslovakia Behind the Curtain: Life, Work and Culture in the Communist Era
Reviewed by Tomáš Kratina

86 Foreign Policies of the CIS States
Reviewed by Jan Měřička

88 List of Reviewers in 2021

Central European Journal of International and Security Studies
Vol. 15, No. 4, 2021, pp. 4-30

DOI: 10.51870/CEJISS.A150401
Research article

Conceptualising the Arctic as a Zone of Conflict

The winner of the 15th anniversary award*

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Abstract
The Arctic has been conceptualised as a zone of geopolitical competition, an international zone of peace and the dreamlike realm for extractive industries. While states such as Russia and the United States have commenced a militarisation and nuclearisation of the Arctic, other Arctic states like Canada and Norway have mobilised support for Arctic cooperation. Due to changing geopolitical pressures, the desecuritisation of the Arctic in the late 1980s was not successful. This lack of attainment begs the question as to why today, the Arctic seems to be heating up faster than ever.

This article aims to determine how the Arctic is conceptualised as a zone of conflict by the United States and Russia. In doing so, the article examines different analytical dimensions that play a role in this conceptualisation, including the changing natural environment, evolving historical context such as the changing power dynamics between countries, and domestic politics. These different framings of a securitised Arctic help to explain how and why security becomes involved in Arctic discourse. To do so, I draw upon discourses in target states and examine the extent to which these particular discourses are manifested in practice and build on critical geopolitics.

Keywords: *conflict, Arctic, Russia, geopolitics, the United States*

* The winner of the 15th anniversary award for the best paper by a PhD candidate, a postgraduate (Master's) student or a recent graduate.

First published online on 22 December 2021, issue published on 22 December 2021

Introduction

The Arctic has been conceptualised as a zone of geopolitical competition, an international zone of peace and the dreamlike realm for extractive industries. While some states have continued to treat the Arctic like a zone of exception that stood apart from ordinary politics, other states have not. For the purpose of this research, I compare two cases of the United States and Russia from 2016 onwards. This research aims to answer the question of which dimensions play a role in how Russia and the United States are conceptualising the Arctic as a zone of conflict. In doing so, this research examines different analytical dimensions that play a role in this conceptualisation, including the changing natural environment, the evolving historical context – such as changing power dynamics between countries – and domestic politics to see whether any present convincing cases to explain a changing conceptualisation of the Arctic. While Russian approaches to conceptualising the Arctic rely on diversionary politics and using the Arctic as an external from a domestic side, they also suggest that Russia's relational position on how it sees itself in the world – a revanchist power seeking to disrupt the current world order – matters when constructing space. American social constructions that influence its imagining of the Arctic space rely on the vast chaos resulting from the Trump administration as well as attempts to contain Russia in the broader way that the US sees itself attempting to regain hegemony on the world stage. These two approaches interestingly differ in an important way: temporality. Because America's political system shifts drastically every four or eight years, America's construction of space in the Arctic is not as stable as the case of Russia, where stability is more often the case in both the domestic political context as well as Russia's drive for more influence relative to other states. This temporality dimension also plays a role in how Russia and the US see environmental change in the Arctic. While discourse shifted very quickly between the Trump and Biden administrations, Russia's social construction has remained relatively ambivalent towards drastic environmental shifts. In this research, I take the position of critical geopolitical scholars who look beyond purely geography to explain political change. Geography matters, they claim, insofar as it forces actors to reimagine and reconceptualise a changing geographic space to fit the way they see the world.[1]

I aim to show that of the three dimensions, Russia and the United States' changing imagining of the Arctic may be due to a combination of domestic politics and evolving historical context/changing world order, and that a changing natural environment acts as a macro driver for states to reimagine the Arctic. My primary contribution to this research is twofold. I aim to provide a more

thorough examination of Russian and American social constructions that have led to this conflict conceptualisation of the Arctic, focusing on domestic politics, and evolving historical context while also suggesting that in an era of climate change, critical geopolitical scholars should also pay attention to temporality when considering how states must reimagine regions like the Arctic, which are undergoing rapid geographic changes.

This research begins by exploring the current literature that surrounds how scholars focus on Russian and American aspirations and motivations in the Arctic, describing three different camps – one focused on geopolitical competition and security, another focusing on economic cooperation and natural resources and another looking at more holistic understandings of aspirations. I then address critical geopolitical scholars and their approach to the Arctic. Next, I discuss my theoretical approach and methods in order to describe, firstly, how the Arctic was conceptualised by both the United States and Russia post 2016. Then, I go through each possible dimension: 1) domestic politics 2) evolving historical context and 3) the environment to determine whether they seem like convincing explanations for Russia and the United States' reimagining of the Arctic.

Literature review

Geopolitical competition and security

Scholars focusing on Russian and American aspirations and motivations in the Arctic look at different explanations of which social constructions and narratives are important when examining how the Arctic is conceptualised, tending to prioritise certain explanations over others. Some scholars look at geopolitical competition and security as the main drivers for behaviour in the North.[2] These drivers can originate from both Russian and American domestic politics as well as Russia's reaction to the changing international order. However, what is striking about scholars who, in general, focus on geopolitical competition as an explanation is that they assume that this driver is prominent and discuss the consequences rather than engaging in reasons how such a driver came to be the primary mover. Heininen (2018) notes that many neorealist observers assume Cold War history to be repetitive and use that basis for their explanations.[3]

Some authors, for example, look specifically at possibilities for strategic competition or cooperation between the United States and Russia in the Arctic.[4] The authors argue that Russia is increasing its military presence decisively, as is the United States, which will inevitably lead to confrontation of some sort between the two powers.[5] The authors focus on what they call 'Russia's Arctic Obsession' – noting that Moscow has been strengthening its military presence in the region and has been restricting foreign warships in the Arctic Ocean since 2018.[6]

Others expand on the argument of militarisation by exploring Russian actions in the Arctic between 2014-2020 and argue that Russia is acting provocatively towards other Arctic states, specifically pointing to a trend towards more sovereignty-oriented and nationalistic language in regard to the Arctic.[7] By looking at different policy documents such as Russia's National Security Strategy and other Arctic policy documents, Cherpako (2020) concludes that Russian policies have developed a new emphasis on sovereignty and territorial integrity but that it has remained cooperative on non-divisive issues.[8] A CSIS report also highlights Russia's nationalistic rhetoric, both externally to other countries as well as the historical Arctic narrative that supports it 'both one of man conquering the forces of nature and the relentless focus to achieve military and industrial progress… as a source of national pride and identity'.[9] The authors do note the importance of Russian economic development as a separate driver of Russian policy, but argue that since the crisis in Ukraine, economic development has slowed – particularly given sanctions and the drop in global energy prices. Related to many of the other scholars that focus on geopolitical competition, Klimenko, Nilsson and Christenson (2019) also note that while Russian behaviour may not point overtly to conflict, it does illustrate increasingly assertive rhetoric and military activity.[10] The Congressional Research Service's Report (2020) supplements Klimenko's argument, dedicating an entire subheading to US, Canadian and Nordic relations with Russia in the Arctic – describing the situation as a renewal of great power competition.[11] In her work on Russian metanarratives, Laruelle (2012) discusses how the Arctic has become an opportunity for Russia to present itself as 'a fortress of under siege, caught in a vice-like grip by the advance of NATO'.[12] While she does note that *some* Russian policymakers appear to be more nationalist-minded than others and overly focus on the Arctic's geopolitical role in foreign policy – which implies there are others that do not – she does not explicitly discuss those dissenting voices, leaving a reader to assume that it is only the nationalist's opinions that matter.

Scholars that focus on American ambitions and motivations for Arctic development and interest tend to frame Western interest in the Arctic as extremely reactive. US administrations have, generally, not treated the Arctic as a national security priority. It is only with increased Russian and Chinese interest in the Arctic that the United States has begun to frame the region in terms of geopolitical competition and security.[13] The region is often framed as a New Cold War.[14] Moreover, scholars bring attention to the inclusion of China as a near-Arctic state and the role that China is already playing and will in the future play in the Arctic.[15]

Economic cooperation and extraction of natural resources

However, geopolitical competition and security are not the only social constructions that scholars focus on. Others highlight economic cooperation and the extraction of natural resources as the primary narratives that drive Russian and American interests and actions.[16] While these scholars take a different approach to what motivates and fuels specifically Russian action, these drivers can still be relatively easily traced back to Russian domestic politics and Russia's reaction to the changing international order. While extraction of natural resources is important for American motivations in the Arctic, is it not nearly as written about compared to Russia. Instead, American motivations for Arctic interest tend to be focused on cooperating with other states. Again, nonetheless, the majority of these scholars do not look at *how* this driver came to be predominant in their analyses. In other words, they do not engage with an analysis of how the world is constituted but take the world as it is and move forward from there.

For example, in her piece exploring why the Arctic is important to Russia, Klimovna Kharlampyeva (2013) looks at a variety of different drivers but settles on economic and energy potential as the most important.[17] Goodman and Sun (2020) similarly look at Sino-Russian cooperation and highlight its importance.[18] In their article, there is no discussion about how Russia sees the Arctic as a zone of conflict, but instead it is assumed that Russia's main goal is to commercialise the Arctic and needs China's financial assistance to do so. In an analysis of Russia's 2013 Arctic Policy, Gogoberide et al. (2017) similarly do not focus on conflict, instead highlighting Russia's main interests as socioeconomic development, science and technology diffusion, environmental security and cooperation.[19] Many scholars that look at American ambitions and aspirations in the Arctic also look at economic cooperation and the extraction of natural resources. Given interest in drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, it is no surprise that much scholarship looks at the economic costs of increased extraction.[20] Conley and Rohloff (2015) also discusses the implication of climate change for communities in the Arctic, particularly as the Arctic becomes more appealing for resource extraction.[21]

In contrast to the other scholars who generally do not look at the conditions under which cooperation could emerge, Atland (2008) looks extensively at Gorbachev's Murmansk Initiative, analysing the policy itself, the extent to which it was materialised, how much it contributed to changing relations in the Arctic and, most importantly, the context in which it was launched. This article explores not only the case of the Murmansk Initiative as one important period in time when the Arctic was conceived of as a zone of cooperation but takes a comprehensive approach in understanding how it happened.[22]

Holistic approach

Other scholars still take a more holistic approach in analysing American and Russian practices and discourses in the Arctic. These scholars acknowledge that there are a variety of different motivations for state behaviour.[23] However, as with the other two approaches, many scholars here assume their analyses of drivers as accurate and do not step back to look at how and under what conditions these drivers came to be prominent. Instead of claiming that there is one motivation for Russian actions, for example, Bochkarev (2010) takes a rounded approach, pointing to five main reasons for why the Arctic is so critical to Russia: 1) the Arctic is an economic engine for Russia, 2) the Arctic is a huge untapped resource base, 3) Russia's geographic proximity to the Arctic makes a focus on the region obvious, 4) the Arctic represents a potential transport corridor for Russian goods and military and 5) border protection. This wide diversity of reasons allows Bochkarev to look more broadly at Russian interests rather than prioritising any one reason. Nonetheless, there is no deep dive into the conditions under which these five drivers take prominence, nor how those conditions came to be.

Following along Bochkarev's holistic approach, Godzimirski and Sergunin (2020) show that there are many differences amongst Russian expert narratives about the Arctic and different motivations driving Russian interests. They point to four reasons for the Arctic being high on Russia's agenda: 1) natural resource extraction, 2) enhancing Russia's foreign policy and security position, 3) the Arctic is seen as a new territory for new opportunities and 4) the opening of the Arctic coincides with the decline of the West.[24] How different experts approached the Arctic was informed by whether they agreed more with a neorealist or liberal-institutionalist vocabulary.[25] While a more neorealist approach looked at the Arctic primarily in geopolitical terms, a liberal-institutionalist approach sees the Arctic as a territory to be developed in concert with other countries. These two different dialogues within Russia are also elaborated on by Staun (2017), who addresses this domestic debate and concludes that while many Western countries seem to think Russia is a revanchist power, it is actually acting like a status-quo power following a long-term strategy.[26]

American scholars also take a holistic view of analysing America and Russian actions in the Arctic. Weitz (2019) for example takes a broad view of the changing conditions of the Arctic – taking into account geopolitical tensions between Russia, the United States and China, as well as economic interests.[27] Similarly, Conley (2015) tries to address a variety of different views including a focus on social security of communities in the Arctic, economic and climate consequences, as well as geopolitical pressures coming from competition.[28] While this array of scholarship does note many of the different narrations that the US and Russia

use in the Arctic, they do not tend to approach the implications for why. This is because these narratives are naturalised in foreign policy discourse.

Critical geopolitical scholars

Critical geopolitical scholars take a different approach to conceptualising aspirations and actions in the Arctic. As a starting point, critical theory aims to think through the implications of particular interpretations, specifically who benefits from those interpretations and how they are constructed. Rather than looking at purely geography as a rationale for state behaviour, these scholars acknowledge that geography is important but that it is the knowledge and re-imagining of that geography by different actors that truly matters.[29] In their classic definition, O Tuathail and Agnew (1992) define critical geopolitics as 'discursive practice by which intellectuals of statecraft "spatialise" international politics in such a way as to represent it as a "world" characterised by particular types of places, peoples and dramas'.[30] From this definition, Knecht and Keil (2013) theorised that spatiality is not fixed, that the social reality of the Arctic is intersubjectively produced, and that therefore geography is not static, but rather its perception changes based on the political situation at the time.[31] In short, how is space imagined politically and how is the world made and unmade through political discourses and practices.

Some critical geopolitical scholars have looked at the Arctic.[32] Take for example, Heininen (2018), who discusses two competing discourses that surround the Arctic in Russia: first, the Arctic as a zone of peace and second, as a race for resources and growing geopolitical competition.[33] Dittmer et al (2011) has also contributed by adding the important idea that what counts as Arctic security or sovereignty depends on different geographic understandings of the Arctic.[34] While not overtly critically geopolitical, Kinossian (2016) provides an interesting nugget to consider – that part of what makes Russian policy on the Arctic so interesting is the succession of different government regimes.[35]

However, while Arctic discourse does provide some hints as to what matters and Dittmer and Kinossian's contributions are notable, what these scholars have not focused on as much is specifically *which analytics dimensions* – whether it be domestic, international, environmental or a combination of the three – are Russia and the United States conceptualising the Arctic as a zone of conflict.

Theory and methods

In order to explain why geographic change is not fatalistic and why the reimagining of the Arctic is important to understand, I turn to critical geopolitics. Unlike the second half of its name, critical geopolitics differs from geopolitics in key and important ways. While geopolitics emphasises how geographical elements

such as location, size, topography, climate, natural resource distribution and the location of the ocean and land influence state power, critical geopolitics asserts that 'space is essentially narrated and thus highly contextual and dependent on social constructions, discourses, and moldable identities'.[36] In short, geographic changes have an effect on power relations, but it is the way that actors reimagine Arctic territory that shapes their foreign policy. The implication from critical geopolitics then is to explain which social constructions, discourses and identities change the way a space is perceived.[37]

Critical geopolitical theory has implications for the study of the Arctic. Knecht and Keil (2013) discuss three of these implications, the first of which is that spatiality is not fixed but it is a major element in making foreign policy decisions.[38] As the Arctic changes due to the melting of the polar ice caps and other unknown geographic changes (as of yet) due to climate change, Arctic states must continually reimagine both their borders to the north as well as their perceptions of areas that were previously not accessible. This constant adjustment means that these perceptions are greatly negotiable and political in the ways they are conceived. The second implication is that because geopolitical narratives are negotiable, subject to change and given ongoing regional transformation in the Arctic, we can expect a reorientation of how the Arctic is perceived in a way that justifies foreign policy goals. Therefore, the overall foreign policy will likely subsume the Arctic into whatever broader foreign policy goal previously existed. The third implication is that different levels of governance will produce space in different ways – states are only one actor in this puzzle. Because this paper focuses on Russia and the United States, other actors that may spatialise the Arctic differently were not included. However, this does not mean that they are not important. Future research could and should consider the role of indigenous peoples, non-governmental organisations and multinational corporations in future works. However, they lie outside the scope of this research.

In this paper, I aim to explain which analytic dimensions play a role in how Russia and the United States conceptualise the Arctic as a zone of conflict. What dimensions matter when space is narrated and what social constructions and narratives change the way in which states are conceptualising the Arctic? To explain this, I posit three potential dimensions that may or may not work in concert with one another. While domestic politics as a dimension aims to think about the social constructions and narratives that exist that change how the Arctic is perceived, the changing world order refocuses the lens on a relational level. In short, how does the way a state sees itself on the world stage – whether acting as a revanchist power against a perceived hegemonic order or attempting to regain hegemony – impact its narratives of space?

Table 1: Analytic Dimensions

	Domestic Politics	Evolving World Order	Environment
Russia	Role of domestic unrest and distraction from domestic problems	Resurgent Russia acting as a revanchist power	Environmental Changes
The United States	The Trump Administration	US attempting to regain hegemony and contain Russia	Environmental Changes

Russia

The first possible dimension is that Russia is conceptualising the Arctic as a zone of conflict because it acts as a distraction from domestic problems and social unrest. In other words, Russia's social construction of the Arctic is dependent on how it must reform itself in response to domestic pressures. Focusing on an external threat helps to invoke patriotism and benefits those currently in power, who want to maintain the status quo. Adopting a diversionary use of force is not a novel concept. DeRouen (2000) addresses this in his study that analyses American presidential use of force as a distraction from social domestic issues.[39] For Russia specifically, analysts and scholars agree and propose that this diversionary use of force explains Russian foreign policy decisions – particularly considering the Russo-Georgian War of 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014.[40] If this analytic dimension holds, then we would expect to see drastic domestic problems in Russia that are causing social unrest, which then provoke the Russian government to adopt a diversionary foreign policy.

The second possible dimension is a changing world order. Weakening American power and influence on the world stage has resulted in Russia seeing an opportunity to regain its past influence and power. A Russian shift in standpoint about the Arctic actually originates from how elites are constructing and reimagining the region. If this holds true, we would expect to see other signs that Russia is behaving like a revanchist power, such as grabbing territory or acting in other ways that go against the international system and law.

Critical geopolitics tells us that solely geographic changes don't matter; to test this assertion, I include one alternative dimension that explores solely environmental considerations. In other words, this dimension posits that the changing environment structure in the Arctic due to climate change is what lies at the heart of Russia's imagining of the Arctic as a zone of conflict. If true, then we would expect vast environmental changes to go alongside a conceptualisation of conflict but not when there is no conceptualisation of conflict. However, I hypothesise that while the environment will likely explain how states (Russia) imagine the Arctic, it will act as a macro driver for states to think about

reimagining the region and will change perceptions. Thus, it is not by default that a changing natural environment will lead to conflict, but rather that it will indicate change.

The United States

For the United States, the first analytic dimension is the nature of domestic politics, particularly the accession of Donald Trump to the American presidency. Because of this drastic shift in political power, the way that the United States spoke about and acted on the Arctic changed drastically. If this is accurate, we will expect to see significant language in American Arctic policy documents from 2016 onward that note geopolitical competition and conflictual language in opposition to earlier documents. The second analytic dimension for the United States is the changing world order/evolving historical context. Similarly to my first case, weakening American power and influence on the world stage has resulted in the United States acting in ways to protect their hegemony and attempting to contain Russia as a strategic competitor. If this were to hold true, we would expect to see other examples of the US containing Russia. The third dimension is the same as the Russian case as well – the changing environment. Because I am taking a critical geopolitical approach, I argue that solely geographic changes do not matter but how elites structure geography does. Thus, when I analyse this dimension, I will do so alongside the Russian case rather than separately using the same logic outlined above.

In order to determine the plausibility of these explanations, I conduct process tracing on two cases: The United States and Russia post 2016 to the present. I have periodised that the Arctic has become a zone of military competition between the US and Russia from 2016 to the present. What makes this period distinct from its prior period is multi-faceted. One reason is the consequences of the annexation of Crimea, which spilled over from solely a Eurasian to a global matter, changing the way in which the US and Russia interacted with one another on the world stage. Moreover, 2016 marked a changing moment for the US as well with the election of Donald Trump as president, ushering in a much different type of American foreign politics that tended to take a more aggressive Arctic strategic stance. In the tradition of critical scholars, I do not aim to create a problem-solving or universalist theory, but rather look more closely at the construction of threats and in doing so, challenge – however minimally – the acceptance of the existing and hegemonic world order, the dominant thought processes within it and the way in which power is constructed.

The United States and Russia have been imagining the Arctic as a zone of potential conflict since 2016. In line with my dimensions, we expect to see a significant shift in rhetoric in policy documents with the election of Donald Trump and other instances of America attempting to contain Russia as well as protect

their hegemony. In the case of Russia, we would expect to see domestic problems in Russia that are causing social unrest along with rhetoric geared towards a domestic audience that encourages a more patriotic and outwardly aggressive tilt towards other Arctic states as a distraction as well as other signs that Russia is behaving like a revanchist power. For example, if Russia is acting in ways that flout international law or expresses deep dissatisfaction with the status quo, this would help to explain this reimagining. These social constructions thus change the way in which the US is conceptualising the Arctic as space. While one of my potential dimensions is the changing environment, in keeping with a critical geopolitical approach, I do not expect solely changing geographies to be the result of this changing conceptualisation. Instead, I see it as a potential macro driver that presupposes change in reimagining a region.

I propose that Russia and the United States socially construct the Arctic as a zone of conflict due to a possible combination of the analytic dimensions of domestic politics and evolving historical context but not environmental change. I hope to add to critical geopolitical approaches by acknowledging that while space is narrated and thus relies on social constructions, global warming and climate change in the Arctic do provoke a realignment of those social constructions. However, rather than being fatalistic and claiming that geographic change would always result in a conceptualisation of conflict – it is contingent on how other factors in politics invoke a more securitised understanding of the Arctic. Thus, I argue that a changing natural environment as a result of climate change acts as a macro driver for states to reimagine change in the Arctic, but that it does not necessarily invoke conflict – but rather simply change.

Empirical analysis

Russian conceptualisation of the Arctic since 2016

While the Arctic was once thought of as a zone of peace, this conceptualisation has changed since 2016, beginning in many cases in 2014. With worsening US-Russia relations, any theatres that were once considered peaceful are becoming more competitive in nature. The Arctic is no exception. Certainly, the annexation of Crimea in 2014 caused many other Arctic states to grow wary about Russian intentions in the High North. This wariness was matched by the first mention in Russia's military doctrine in 2014 that addressed protecting Russian national interests in the Arctic as well as increased defense spending to pay for modernisation costs for the Russian Navy and Northern Fleet.[41] That same year, Russia announced the creation of the Northern Fleet – United Strategic Command – a new strategic command centre solely for the Arctic. In 2015, the Russian military launched an unannounced military exercise in the Arctic involving more than 45,000 Russian troops. Further, there has been a threefold increase

in air incursions alongside the reopening of 50 previously closed Soviet bases. Beyond these air incursions, there has also been a growing nuclearisation of the Arctic, including more nuclear weapons and submarines.[42] While some scholars note that the Arctic has previously been separate from great power competition, this is no longer the case. In April 2015, Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov did not attend an Arctic Security Forces Roundtable meeting after Canadian officials refused to participate in a meeting of the Arctic Council's Task for Action on Black Carbon and Methane as a result of the Crimean annexation. While the Arctic has always been important to Russia, in 2015, Russia also announced the creation of a federal Arctic Commission, reflecting a manifestation of a long-term policy of modernization.[43] Two years later, Russia also released an updated Arctic Naval Strategy that revived the Russian Navy, expressed clear Arctic ambitions and the importance of its Northern Fleet. This document suggested that there were efforts by other states to limit Russian access to maritime resources, weaken Russian control over the Northern Sea Route and that there were threats of territorial claims on maritime and coastal zone.[44] In 2019, China and Russia established the Sino-Russian Arctic Research Center as a place to conduct research in the Arctic on establishing safe routes through the NSR. In 2020, Russia released the 'Basic Principles of Russian Federation State Policy in the Arctic to 2035'.[45] While this document in many cases reflected the previously released *Basic Principles* document in 2008, there are some notable changes. *Basic Principles 2035* introduces the concept of ensuring sovereignty and territorial integrity as a top national interest to the document. In practice, this is likely not a new approach, but it does indicate a continuous interest in painting the region as a zone of potential conflict. What does make it evident that Russia is conceptualising the region as one of conflict is its military posture, highlighted by the reopening of 50 Soviet-era military bases and training of Russian Special Forces for the Arctic.[46]

Russian domestic politics since 2016

Since 2016, Russia's position on the world stage as well as its domestic politics has drastically changed. This is due to a few different reasons, the first of which is current president Vladimir Putin's leadership and his central control of the Russian state. Putin's central control has meant that there is very little opposition to his presidency within the government. There are some opposition politicians such as Alexei Navalny, but they have little to no power in changing policy direction or presenting any real threat to Putin's presidency and control. In 2018, country-wide protests erupted in Russia against proposed pension reform. The Russian Parliament, the Duma, proposed raising the retirement age – a proposition that was not accepted well by the general Russian public. Thousands of

Russians protested throughout the country from July to November 2018. While these protests were ultimately not successful in preventing the passing of the pension reform proposal, they illustrated growing social unrest in Russia, and they are not the only examples. In 2019, 64 people were killed in a shopping mall blaze in Kemerovo, Siberia.[47] This blaze resulted in thousands of Russians protesting throughout the country against cost-cutting measures, corruption and alleged negligence. One-year prior in 2018, twenty students had to be hospitalised after inhaling toxic fumes from a local landfill in Volokolamsk, again resulting in protests. What makes these examples so notable is that they illustrate the growing social unrest between the informal civil society and the authorities, which is growing across Russia.[48] As noted above, the unrest is provoked by a number of different issues including corruption, poor landfill management and waste disposal, and the demolition of private property.

To deal with many of these domestic problems as well as their subsequent social unrest, the Russian government has turned to using nationalist rhetoric and diversionary foreign policy to distract Russians from these problems. This is nothing new. During the Russo-Georgia War in 2008 as well as at the beginning of the Iraq War in 2003, Putin's nationalism earned him increased public support.[49] (Aiken 2014). Similarly, in 2014, the Russian government introduced a disinformation campaign that told citizens that the Ukrainian Euromaidan protests were a result of fascism and violence spurred on by American meddling. In short, the Russian government is attempting to shape power and discourse about the Arctic. This same tactic, Cohen argues, is present for most Russian leaders, who 'use foreign policy as a tool to buttress domestic support and to foster a perception that Russia is surrounded by enemies at a time when its democratic legitimacy is deteriorating'.[50] The rhetoric tends to encourage a more patriotic worldview while also increasing anti-American sentiment as part of a strategy to distract the Russian populace from domestic issues.[51] Gotz (2018) argues that the motivating force behind these tactics is the imperative of regime survival.[52] Focusing on an external threat helps to invoke patriotism and benefits those currently in power, who want to maintain the status quo. Russia has many of the trademarks we expect to see that explain why Russia is imagining the Arctic as a zone of conflict including both growing social unrest as well as rhetoric geared towards a domestic audience that encourages a focus on conflict outside the state. Further, we can state definitively that, at least in some part, domestic politics has some role in shaping how Russia reimagines the Arctic as a zone of conflict.

Russian perception of the world order since 2016

According to many observers at least since 2016, Russia has been engaging in revanchist behaviour such as annexing Crimea and flouting international law as

well as expressing deep dissatisfaction with the status quo.[53] While some scholars point to Russian bitterness over loss of territory and prestige, others observe that the lack of complete international condemnation of the Crimean annexation has led to increased Russian aggressiveness.[54] According to Putin, this aggressiveness and revanchism comes from the historic right of Russia to be viewed as a great power with recognition and a sphere of influence.[55] Russian state officials from Putin to Lavrov have also criticised the post-Cold War arrangements, stating that it is highly dissatisfied with the existing US-led international order. Alongside this rhetoric, Russia is also challenging the status quo in ways that include challenging Ukraine's sovereignty by annexing Crimea in 2014. However, Russia's annexation of Crimea is merely the latest in a string of other behaviour that illustrates dissatisfaction with the current world order. In 2008, Russia went to war with Georgia and now has political power over the de-facto state, South Ossetia, that lies geographically within Georgia. Russia has also interfered in other states including Moldova, by maintaining political control over another de-facto state, Transnistria, and exerted economic pressure on states such as Moldova, Ukraine and Lithuania. Ultimately, what all of these activities illustrate is a deep and abiding dissatisfaction with the post-Cold War settlement, specifically that Russia is considered, in the eyes of some observers, a regional power rather than a global one.[56] The other way that Russia is acting like a revanchist power is by exploiting weaknesses in the current system, such as planting disinformation and engaging in vast campaigns to affect elections in the United States and France. Moreover, Russia is also working in concert with other authoritarian regimes such as Belarus, Iran, Syria, Venezuela and China to build a new coalition of countries to challenge the Western post-Cold War status quo.[57]

While Russia has been playing into a role of a revanchist power, American hegemony and unipolarity has come under pressure in a new way since the election of President Trump and the retreat of the US from various multilateral organisations such as the Human Rights Council and the World Health Organisation. America's retreat from the world stage has not only upended many norms about international organisations, it also impacted alliances like NATO. Weakening American power and influence on the world stage has resulted in Russia seeing an opportunity to regain its past influence and power – all of which is visible in looking at Russian actions. It is clear that the primary movers, at least in some part, behind Russia's reimagining of the Arctic come from the changing international context that Russia finds itself in and the way in which it responds.

The United States conceptualisation of the Arctic since 2016

The Arctic, whether Alaska or the region as a whole, has never been of much interest to American policymakers. Nonetheless, Alaska has been a part of the

territory of the United States since its purchase in 1867 from Imperial Russia and thus, it has been an Arctic Nation. The first Arctic strategy was created during the Clinton Administration in 1994. However, it was not made public and thus its impact was insignificant. The Bush Administration did publish strategies – the National Security Presidential Direction NSPD-66, the Homeland Security Presidential Direction HSPD-25 and the Arctic Region Policy – in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, bringing the question of national security to Alaska. In keeping with many of the themes that continue to concern American policymakers, these documents highlighted environmental degradation, the Arctic Council, climate change and oil and gas resources.[58] While the policies recommended the US sign on to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea – to date, Congress has yet to ratify it. The continued inattention to the Arctic can likely be explained by the political climate of the United States. During the years of the Cold War, the United States was primarily focused on containing the spread of communism and influence of the Soviet Union. Given that the Arctic was not one of the main theatres of conflict compared to Latin and South America, South Asia and Africa, the Arctic did not rate highly enough for any real strategy or approach to emerge. In the wake of 9/11, the United States again switched approaches to engage in the War on Terror, which brought its focus to the Middle East. The time spent both in Iraq and Afghanistan precluded any development of an Arctic policy. During the Obama Administration, the United States did release a series of policies alongside their armed services; however, the focus was again on perceived Russian aggression and Chinese expansion. By mid-2018, Arctic policy began to emerge in no small way thanks to Russia's growing military presence in the Arctic and the release of China's 'Polar Silk Road' plan.[59]

From 2016 onwards, the way that the Arctic was conceptualised in American discourse began to shift.[60] In the 2016 Department of Defense Arctic strategy document, notably the policy argues that there are friction points and takes a whole section to focus on Russia. The defense policy outlines Russian aspirations for the Arctic, suggesting that the Department of Homeland Security needs to improve detection and tracking capabilities to strengthen deterrence in the wake of Russian actions in the United Kingdom, Georgia and Moldova. Two years later, the Navy announced it would reestablish the second fleet – which was the primary Naval fleet used for countering Soviet naval forces in the North Atlantic during the Cold War. When asked why there was a concern for a new force, the then-Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson cited Russia as the primary driver.[61] In 2018, the United States also urged Denmark to finance construction of airports in Greenland instead of China to counter Chinese attempts to build presence and influence.[62] In 2019, the Coast Guard also released its first Arctic Strategic Outlook document since 2013. Notably, the

policy suggested there was a resurgence of nation state competition, making the Arctic a strategically competitive and potentially conflictual.[63] Russia and China were explicitly named as national priorities, particularly in how both states represented challenges to the rules-based order. Later in 2019, then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo gave an aggressive speech to the Arctic Council warning that the Arctic had become a region of global power competition, pointing at Russia and China as two important threats.[64] The Department of Defense came out with another Arctic Strategy in 2019 as well, citing that the security region was increasingly uncertain with problematic strategic trends that could result in degraded security in the region. Similarly to its past document, the DoD cited China and Russia as two important competitors that posed risks to its national interests.

For a number of different reasons, 2020 marked an important year for US policy in the Arctic. Not only did four parts of the US national security community release Arctic policies including the Air Force, the Navy, the Army and the Department of Homeland Security, but the US also invested 12 million USD in Greenland to counter Russian and Chinese influence operations.[65] According to the US State Department, the US sees the Arctic as a new strategic theatre for competition. In all of the policies from the national security community, there were a few notable themes. The first important theme was that due to increased access to the Arctic, more competition amongst states was either ongoing or soon to begin. In short, the Arctic's capacity as a strategic buffer was eroding. Second, while immediate risk for traditional military conflict remains quite low, an overarching threat of competition is rising, and the changing nature of conflict means that there is the potential for hybrid warfare. Third, Russia is the main competition to the United States and as it begins its chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2021, there is a potential that it could leverage its leadership to advance its goals in the region. In sum, as time has passed, the Arctic has become more important to the United States and based on the documents, the Arctic is beginning to be seen as a zone of conflict.

United States domestic politics since 2016

Since the election of Donald Trump to the White House in 2016, much of American domestic politics has been characterised by chaos, aggressive foreign policy stances and anti-Chinese rhetoric. In short, leadership matters in the United States because of the importance of the presidential system. Perhaps the easiest way to show how the Trump administration had a drastic impact on how the United States conceptualised the Arctic comes from looking at Obama-era documentation of the Arctic. In 2013, the Obama Administration released its first Arctic policy – the 2013 *National Strategy for the Arctic Region*.[66] Notably, the

document begins by calling the Arctic region peaceful, stable and free of conflict. There is no policy or framework that addresses geopolitical competition in the Arctic, nor does it focus on Russia or China as threats. Instead, the document discusses responding to climate change. Even during the US chairmanship of the Arctic Council (2015-2017), documents from the Obama era suggest that the US focused on climate change, international cooperation and safeguarding peace.[67] Even after the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the United States still cooperated with Russia in the Arctic under the Obama administration. In 2015, for example, the United States, Russia and other Arctic nations signed an agreement to bar their fishing fleets from the Central Arctic Ocean and also established the Arctic Coast Guard Forum to strengthen multilateral cooperation.[68] Beyond multilateral cooperation, in early 2016, the Obama administration also released three documents focusing on the implementation of a national strategy for the Arctic.[69] Even with increased US and Russia competition in the rest of the world, these documents do little to paint the Arctic as a zone of conflict. Instead, the documents focus on climate change monitoring, conservation of ecosystems, cooperation for Search and Rescue (SAR) and coordinating across and within governments. Based on looking at Arctic policy documents from the Obama administration, it appears that they treated the Arctic as a zone of exception – one where ordinary politics did not interfere in Arctic affairs.

This is in contrast to actions taken during the Trump administration, which focus on painting a picture of the Arctic as an oil and gas reserve and elevated strategic competition with China and Russia in the Arctic.[70] Further, when other security or geopolitical tussles occurred, the Trump administration was very quick to extrapolate to tensions and relationships in the Arctic. In short, leadership and presidential views drastically change how the United States acts and puts forward policy. Looking at specific changes in Arctic policy clearly illustrates this because the Trump and Obama administrations took such drastically different approaches to the Arctic region. Thus, we can state that changes in US presidential leadership – particularly from Obama to Trump – had a drastic impact on shifting the perception and imagining of the Arctic from an American perspective.

The United States perception of the world order since 2016

Similar to how Russia has changed its perception of the Arctic due to its perception of a weakening US-led hegemonic order, the United States has also changed its perception of the world since 2016. However, they exist on the opposite side of the coin to Russia. Weakening American power and influence on the world stage has resulted in the United States acting in ways that were perceived as protecting hegemony and influence and attempting to contain Russia and China as strategic competitors. According to some scholars, the United States is in

a permanent decline as evidenced by the rise of Russia and China who both have autocratic projects that rival the US-led system, the behaviour of developing countries that are seeking non-Western sources of support and the growth of illiberal transnational networks that exert pressure against liberal norms.[71] Other scholars point to how the Trump administration undermined its own hegemony by questioning and weakening US security alliances, the trade order and climate agreements.[72] The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic was a further crisis that challenged US hegemony, not only in terms of response to the pandemic, but also its lack of leadership during the crisis.

In the face of this decline, the United States has begun to act in ways to preserve that hegemony. One instance was discussed earlier in this paper – the case of Greenland. In recent years, China has expressed interest in investing in Arctic states in order to establish itself more fully in the Arctic region as a 'near-Arctic' state. One manner in which China attempted this was to invest in the construction of international airports in Greenland.[73] In 2018, the United States was successful in convincing Denmark to counter Chinese offers for aid, and thus this is a clear example of the United States attempting to preserve its hegemony and influence in the world. In 2020, the United States also invested 12 million USD in Greenland in response to growing concerns about Russian military and Chinese influence buildup in the Arctic. Here again is clear evidence that the US feels the need to rebuff influence in an attempt to maintain cultural influence and hegemony.[74]

Yet another example from within US policy documents that illustrates this weakening of US influence and hegemony is strategic multilayer assessment (SMA) white paper on Russian Strategic Intentions.[75] The White Paper suggests that the US is not equipped to counter Russia's political warfare and that Russia is beating the United States in a race for global influence. Thus, this paper fits into the American mindset that the world order is changing, and that the US must act in ways to protect its hegemony and influence. While Pyatkov suggests that the US must strengthen alliances, Lamoreaux suggests the United States must take steps to strengthen liberalism across Europe to counter Russian and Chinese hybrid warfare.[76] Expanding the scope of American responses to this changing world order to the Arctic region, many of the same issues outlined in this document are present including instances of Russian and Chinese hybrid warfare. In short, this document shows that elites in the United States are conscious of a growing perception on the world stage that American influence is falling and that measures are needed to counter this. Thus, it is clear that a changing perception of the world order has a major impact on how the US conceptualises the Arctic as part of a broader attempt to regain or at least maintain hegemony and influence.

Environmental change – Russia and the United States

Looking at both cases of Russia and the United States, it is clear that since 2016 there have been distinct changes in the Arctic environment. However, I argue that these environmental changes are not responsible for changes in political discourse or construction of geographies. First, the Arctic has been experiencing environmental changes consistently over time since the 1990s as global warming and climate change have had steady and detrimental impacts on the region. Second, in keeping with a critical geopolitical lens, geography itself does not determine changes in how states imagine the space – the way elites interpret that geography does. I propose that it is not that the changing environment does not matter, but instead that it acts like a macro driver for states to rethink their policies and imagining of the Arctic. Here, I want to make a distinction that climate change – the changing environment – should be thought of a newly developing critical geopolitical dimension (i.e., a macro-driver) because the rapid change will mean that states will be forced to constantly reimagine space.

While there is certainly environmental change in the Arctic since 2016, the Arctic has been experiencing environmental changes consistently with the advent of global warming and climate change. In the 1990s, for example. When Gorbachev made his speech calling for a zone of peace in the Arctic in 1987, it came 18 months after the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear plant – which was already changing Arctic geography.[77] This speech acted as a catalyst for environmental action in the Arctic. Perhaps the most influential result was the publication of the State of the Arctic Environment Report (1997) which outlined serious environmental change already underway.[78] The report discussed the increase in persistent organic pollutants (POPs), radioactive contamination, heavy metal contamination and severe local and regional problems associated with the development of oil and gas. This report was the first of many that encouraged action on environmental policy in the Arctic inspiring cooperation amongst different Arctic states.[79] Although the type of environmental change had more to do with pollution rather than the melting of polar ice caps in the 1990s, the nature of this dimension had to do more with environmental change rather than strictly change that related to the one aspect of melting sea ice. Regardless, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s third assessment report published in 2001 brought significant attention to the effects of global warming on Arctic sea and land ice, including discussions about sea level rise and melting permafrost tied to increased carbon and methane emissions.[80] While the IPCC's 3rd Report was published in 2001, change was already happening in the Arctic in the late 1990s.[81] In this case, we can clearly see how the geography was already changing in the 1990s.

Since 2016, there is no question that the Arctic's environment has radically changed. Scientists claim that the Arctic is warming at a rate nearly twice the global average with reductions in Arctic sea ice and permafrost is becoming increasingly visible.[82] With global warming increasing in pace, the Arctic is host to a number of both primary and secondary effects including sea ice reduction, sea level rise, coastal erosion, accelerated warming of the ocean, increased acidity of the ocean, increasing vulnerability of some Arctic marine mammals, changing food supply patterns, amongst many other negative impacts. The National Snow & Ice Data Center has also reported that changes in the Arctic climate could and probably will affect climate in the rest of the world.[83]

Considering how the Arctic environment has changed radically since 2016, it matters to also ask how both Russia and the US are perceiving that environmental change and explore some social constructions related to how both states were seeing the region. For example, during the Trump administration, the United States attempted to remove references about climate change on an Arctic Council policy document because the administration at the time did not want to subscribe to policy options that took climate change into account.[84] In short, the United States under Trump was refusing to mention climate change whatsoever in policy documents.[85] Beyond this single incident, the Trump administration promoted a deregulation policy for fossil fuel producers in Alaska, promoting the business needs of oil and gas producers above addressing environmental change. While this was the norm during the Trump administration, it changed quite drastically when Biden took office in 2021. In an Executive Order passed in January 2021, Biden announced not only a temporary moratorium on oil and gas leasing in Alaska but announced new plans to focus on climate change and framing environmental change as negative in the Arctic.[86] Specifically in the Arctic recently, the Biden administration released reports on national security risks posed by climate change – specifically noting the Arctic as a critical region.[87] While there has been a sizeable shift in how the US perceives environmental change in the Arctic as a potential narrative driving its actions there, discourse surrounding environmental change in the Arctic is largely instrumental and utilised in order to justify domestic or international constructions of space.

In contrast, Russia's perception of environmental change in the Arctic is quite different. In Russia's 2020 Arctic Strategy, perceptions of environmental change in the region focused largely on the potential for economic growth in extractive industries. While there is importance placed on the environment in the policy document, the focus is primarily on development – both military and economic – for the region.[88] Thus, discourse around environmental change in the Arctic for Russia surrounds how climate change is expanding possibilities for mining, energy and other land projects. Despite this more positive take on en-

vironmental change, more than 40% of northern Russian buildings are built on permafrost – which is melting. This will result in buildings crumbling, technical system failures and other construction problems.[89] This contradiction between the positives and negatives of climate change presents an interesting challenge for how Russia will continue to socially construct the Arctic when it faces such internal dissent.

This finding that the environment is not directly determinate of how states imagine space keeps with a critical geopolitical lens. However, that does not mean that the environment doesn't matter at all in changing policies and imaginings of the Arctic. Instead, the changing environment as a result of climate change acts like a macro driver for states to rethink their imagining of the Arctic. In other words, the constant change will mean that states will have to reimagine space at a much faster pace than before, which may result in different orientations of the Arctic. Thus, while space is essentially narrated, changes in the environment do provoke a realignment of those narratives. Critical geopolitics then must consider these exogenous changes as potential points of shifts in discourses and practices. Importantly, that change does not necessitate a shift towards a conceptualisation of conflict. Instead, it is merely a push for states to change their perception of the region. Thus, it represents a key opportunity for states to instead change that imagining of the Arctic to something such as cooperation.

Conclusion

Throughout this research I have made the claim that it matters to ask the question 'which analytic dimensions play a role in how the United States and Russia are conceptualising the Arctic as a zone of conflict?' because it helps us to better understand the behind-the-scenes factors that play a role in decision-making as well as the social constructions that matter. Taking a critical geopolitical lens to imagining of the Arctic is useful because it helps us to focus more clearly on potential explanations for change that go beyond a changing geographic landscape. If we believe that geographic space is created through discourse and practices, then understanding what those are can help to think further about their implications. It is this theoretical lens that allows us to see how important a role domestic politics and the changing international order play in Russia and the United States' conceptualisation of the Arctic. These cases can also explain which social constructions operationalise this conceptualisation of the Arctic as a zone of conflict. In other words, what implications come out of these social constructions? In the Russian case, for example, it appears that domestic politics does not present opportunities for conceptualising the Arctic as a region different from conflict due to the stability of President Putin's leadership and Russia's history of using foreign issues as distractions from domestic problems. This social con-

struction that the Russian state apparatus uses is quite stable. However, there are opportunities in looking at the changing world order for other states or organisations to replace the weakening US hegemonic order such as the European Union. Thus, the American social construction of how it sees itself in relation to other countries (i.e. declining hegemon) has implications for not only Russia and American actions in the Arctic, but other powers. For the United States, the importance of the president and domestic politics illustrates that in conceptualising the Arctic, there are opportunities within the United States political system to encourage specific policy options to the US president. Therefore, one might be able to think more seriously about the nature of temporality in social constructions. For states that have quickly changing political systems like the United States, the way that space is imagined might change quickly, whereas in political systems like Russia that have largely stable ruling regimes, such change may not occur at the same pace. Importantly, however, the changing US-Russia relationship and how both states socially construct themselves in both relation to the other state as well as the international system writ large is evidently important in looking at the Arctic, particularly in connection to the environment. I have argued above that while geography itself is not decisive when thinking about how states imagine space, changes in the environment that come from climate change are worth examining. Given the shift in discourse around environmental change between the Trump and Biden administrations as well as the more nuanced Russian discourse on environmental change – it suggests that clearly environmental changes can act as a driver of changes in discourse. As climate change grows in importance in how states realign themselves on the world stage, critical geopolitics may wish to examine the nature to which climate change plays a role in either changing social constructions, the question of temporality in these imaginings and the political discourse that is used to justify changing constructions and approaches to areas like the Arctic. Future scholars could look more closely with a critical lens or using a sociological approach to securitisation to better understand the emergence, stickiness and evolution of how and why security gets involved in Arctic discourse.

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Central European Journal of International and Security Studies
Vol. 15, No. 4, 2021, pp. 32-47

DOI: 10.51870/CEJISS.A150402
Research article

Explaining the Absence of a Regional Hegemon in the Central African Sub-region

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Abstract
The end of the Cold War saw a shift in power dynamics globally, changing the security dynamics of many regions globally including those in Africa. With the security void left by these great powers in Africa, regional hegemons have played significant roles in promoting regional peace and stability. Regional hegemons have greatly helped to sustain peace and stability in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC), but this has not been the case in the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). This paper seeks reasons why no hegemon (dominant state) exists in the ECCAS region. The study analyses the material resource capacities of regional members and argues that a multiplicity of regional groupings, internal political instability, economic challenges and the neo-colonial hand of France accounts for the absence of a hegemon in the region.

Keywords: *ECCAS, regional hegemon, security, stability*

First published online on 22 December 2021, issue published on 22 December 2021

Introduction

The global decline in interstate conflicts has brought many security analysts to the conclusion that the nature of global conflicts has changed since the Cold War ended.[1,2] The Central African region has in recent times been rocked by a series of clashes between armed groups and military forces. This has particularly been the case in the Congo and the Central African Republic since independence and more recently in Cameroon since 2016. The civil wars in these countries have come to have significant security implications for the sub-region and for other neighbouring countries. Located in a conflict-marred sub-region, Cameroon had for a long time been looked upon as an island of peace. A turn of events in 2016 totally changed this erstwhile legacy with the emergence of the Anglophone war for separation. The Central African Republic has also been marred with episodes of conflict since it gained independence in 1960.

A plethora of conflicts and separatist incidents have rocked many countries in the Central African region and has included countries like Angola, Chad, Congo and the DRC[3]. While other sub-regions like ECOWAS and SADC have experienced regional interventions in conflicts with initiatives led by regional hegemons, the case of ECCAS has been so different with no state in the region having acted as a hegemon to intervene in conflicts. This points to the assertion that no hegemon has emerged in the ECCAS sub-region and this paper seeks to look at why no powerful states exist with the desire to intervene in conflicts in the Central African region.

The collapse of the Cold War order created new internal and external challenges for African states.[4] The debt crisis, inter- and intra-state conflicts, coupled with problems arising from the forces of globalisation and marginalisation, global pandemics like HIV/AIDS and general human insecurity on the continent are among the challenges with which African states have been confronted.[5] The end of the Cold War also saw a change in how the US related to issues on the African continent. This was evident with its reluctance to intervene and help Liberia in 1989 and Rwanda in 1994. This reluctance is also evident in Africa to date where the US mostly sends support to fight its 'wars on terror' and is reluctant to intervene in other conflicts that destabilise the region and continent as a whole, a responsibility it possesses as a global hegemon stabilising the international system irrespective of the historic US-Liberian relations. No real help came from the USA to stop the 1989–96 Liberian crises.[6] American forces were deployed to rescue Americans and other foreigners abandoning Liberia to disintegrate into further crisis.[7] Thus, the limited impact of the USA and Russia in Africa since the end of the Cold War had created a power vacuum within this region so that regional hegemons had to fill and play the pivotal role of restoring peace in their sub-region from the 1990s onwards.[8]

This paper seeks to advance an explanation for the absence of a dominant state (regional hegemon) in the Central African sub-region to promote peace and stability. To arrive at this explanation, section two examines and critiques a key argument in hegemonic stability theory. Using primary and secondary data sources, the paper's third section examines the rationale for the absence of a regional hegemon in the Central African region. Data collected will be from secondary sources and will consist of reviews of books, journal articles and official reports. The final part concludes with the factors responsible for the absence of a regional hegemon in Central Africa

Hegemonic stability theory

Originally articulated by Kindleberger,[9] who applied it to the rise and decline of US influence in international politics, the theory of hegemonic stability has since gained legitimacy in the works of several other prominent scholars like Keohane,[10] Modelski,[11] Krasner,[12] Gilpin[13] and Gadzey.[14] Kindleberger argued that inter-national free trade was a public good and its reliable supply depended on the existence of a hegemonic state. In Kindleberger's words, 'for the world economy to be stabilized, there has to be a stabilizer, one stabilizer.'[15] While his work does not directly mention hegemonic stability, his postulations would lead to the emergence of this theory in political science circles. He claims that the Great Depression only occurred because the hegemon at the time, which to him was the US, failed to make the necessary sacrifices to preserve an open international economic system. This seems contestable since the US wasn't technically a superpower until the Post-World War II era.

Since different states have different economic measures of what satisfies their interests, the hegemon must make arrangements that maintain an open trading order, otherwise states will erect trading barriers and the economic system eventually breaks down.[16] In maintaining the liberal economic order, the hegemon has to assume five responsibilities in periods of economic crisis that comprise of maintaining an open market for distress goods; providing long term lending during recessions; providing a stable system of exchange rates; coordinating macroeconomic policies; and being a lender of last resort.

For Kindleberger, only a hegemon is able to assume these duties at its own cost and this is because no other state has enough absolute power to do so. He however also doubts that a group of states can be able to stabilise the international trading system and suspects that such cooperative arrangements would likely fail.[17]

Being a multifaceted and complex concept, hegemony means different things to different scholars and this paper adopts the realist variant of the theory. For Schmidt, the realist variant of hegemonic stability theory attempts to tie togeth-

er the two components of hegemony which are preponderant power and the exercise of leadership.[18] Lake believes the hegemonic stability theory consists of two, analytically distinct theories: leadership theory and hegemony theory.[19] Hegemonic stability theorists start by postulating the presence of a single dominant state. According to Keohane, the theory of hegemonic stability 'defines hegemony as preponderance of material resources'. He identifies four sets of resources hegemonic powers ought to have control over to be raw materials, sources of capital, control over markets, and competitive advantages in the production of highly valued goods.[20]

Hegemonic stability theory purports that one important function of a hegemon-is the guaranteeing of international order by creating international institutions and norms that facilitate international cooperation. The creation of international regimes is often a function of the presence of a hegemon who is willing to act in a collectively beneficial manner.[21] The presence of a hegemonic regime can ultimately produce stability and security. As such, the hegemonic stability theory assumes that during times of global economic growth and prosperity, a dominant state plays a hegemonic role in the international system. This therefore creates a link between periods of hegemony and stability.[22]

In *War and Change in World Politics*, Gilpin explains that systemic change leads to rise of hegemons in international systems.[23] He assumes that the state is the dominant actor in the international system characterised by anarchy. In an anarchical world with few state actors, states are compelled to maximise their relative power over other states in order to ensure their own security and systemic change is therefore only produced by hegemonic war fought by all of the most powerful states in the world in order to gain dominant control of or maintain the ability to structure the international system. Following a hegemonic war, and the establishment of regimes that structure the power of the international system, the relative power of the hegemon decreases over time as both internal and external factors cause a reduction in the hegemon's economic surpluses. The difficulty to expend resources and maintain the system causes rising non-hegemons to begin questioning its hegemony and this can lead to war with a possible new order emerging.

Hegemonic stability theory, according to Keohane, 'holds that hegemonic structures of power, dominated by a single country, are most conducive to the development of strong international regimes whose rules are relatively precise and well obeyed.'[24] The functioning of a liberal, open economic order is contingent upon the existence of a hegemon who is willing to exercise the necessary leadership to maintain the system. Nye argues that 'economic stability historically has occurred when there has been a sole hegemonic power.....Without a hegemonic power, conflict is the order of the day'.[25] Economic stability is only

possible when there is peace and this is relatively absent all over the sub-region. Wohlforth posits that unipolarity is a stabilising force (he conceives stability to be peacefulness and durability). Three points are used to advance his argument; the United States is a unipolar power; unipolarity is peaceful; unipolarity is durable.[26] For this to change, the power dynamics of the unipolar system would have to change, and no state or alliance of states seems to be in a position to do so. Wohlforth's second point, the assertion that unipolarity is peaceful, is also grounded in the realities of power dynamics. He sees no other major power in a position to be able to challenge the US and win in a war with it. At the same time, unipolarity minimises security competition among the other great powers. Unipolarity is peaceful, then, because it reduces hegemonic rivalry and minimises uncertainty. Monteiro points out that this peacefulness only extends to the absence of conflict between great powers.[27] Cooley, Nexon and Ward,[28] Chan and Kai He,[29] and Karmazin and Hynek[30] speak of the possibilities of a hegemon being revisionist. Tendencies like this challenge the unipolarity and stability claims of Wohlforth.

Monteiro contends that unipolarity tends to pose problems for peace but this argument is yet to be tested in Africa for at no point in time has there been a sole hegemon on the continent.[31] This statement by Nye[32] is of relevance to this paper for it tries to show this reality within the case of the Central African region and the series of conflicts at play in the region where there does not exist economic stability.

The Hegemonic stability itself being a prominent theory in International Relations, discourse has not been immune to criticism. Scholars such as Joseph Nye and Olson have succeeded in making forceful counter-arguments against the *hegemonic stability theory*. Nye points out the erroneous 'prediction of conflict'[33] which the theory implies. He clarifies this argument by expounding the US's surpassing of Great Britain as the largest economy in the world in the 1880s, without any war and instability. But yet again, the United States and Britain had already clashed in wars before and could this not have already been a war between these two powers. Problematising the theory further, I ask if it is necessary for the war to take place only at the specific time as a new hegemon is emerging. I would argue that this does not have to be the case.

Olson[34] on his part argues that while the presence of a single hegemon stabilises the international system and fosters economic growth, a situation is created where the hegemon eventually bears more costs than benefits and this creates a situation whereby the weaker states in the systems benefit more than the hegemon. At this point, when the hegemon starts to question the fact that smaller states enjoy a 'free ride', the tendency might be for these smaller states to want to overthrow the hegemon as its relevance is only needed if they can enjoy the

benefits its hegemony provides. Keohane, a key proponent of the theory, believes that the structure of hegemony provides benefits to most states most of the time and had never considered the aspect of rising cost for the hegemon. The possible exclusionary actions of the hegemon (sanctions regime) raise the need for revisiting the theory as implicit in this is the fact that some states will certainly not benefit from the established order, thereby rebelling against the hegemon.

Snidal[35] argues that 'the range of the theory is limited to very special conditions', and suggests that the decline of a hegemonic power may demonstrate the possibility of a collective power. According to Snidal, the applicability of the theory can be challenged due to limitations and the theory only holds true empirically under special conditions. Tierney[36] argues that hegemonic stability theorists are wrong in assuming that unipolarity leads to a stable order. He argues that it is this contestation of unipolarity that compels the great power and other states to build an international order.

Our issue with the criticism of Snidal lies in the fact that even a collective power rise is being resisted already as with the case of the European Union (EU) where states like Hungary and the United Kingdom (UK) are already questioning the power of the collective over their sovereignty. This has led to the UK withdrawing from the EU. Two differences between a hegemon and the collective cooperation is that costs are expected to be shared collectively with sovereignty not being eroded. The challenge, however, as with the case of regional bodies in Africa, is that most countries rarely meet their own financial contributions, thereby prompting the states making large contributions to still dictate decision-making in these bodies and still act as hegemons.

Conceptualising regional hegemons, Lemke believes them to be local dominant states supervising local relations by establishing and striving to preserve a local status quo.[37] Regional hegemons can be identified by the assumption of a stabilising and leading role, and the acceptance of this role by neighbouring states. Similarly, regional hegemons, or what are sometimes termed 'regional leading powers', have also been conceived as states that are influential and powerful in certain geographic regions or sub-regions.[38] For Ogunnubi & Okeke-Uzodike, regional powers not only possess superior power capabilities and exercise leadership within the region but are also able to convince other states (both within the region and beyond) to accept their leadership.[39]

Flemes distinguishes regional hegemons by using four vital components which are a claim to leadership, power resources, employment of foreign policy instruments and acceptance of leadership. Accepting the role of regional leadership implies that the state in question has taken upon itself the responsibility of entrenching peace and stability and crafting policies for economic initiatives.[40]

Power is a precondition for hegemony. Nye[41] claims the sources of hegemonic power include (i) technological leadership, (ii) supremacy in military and economy, (iii) soft power and (iv) control of the connection points of international communication lines. Strange identifies four factors she claims in international political economy**:** the nation which has those elements more than the others is the most powerful; a state must sustain the capability to influence the other states via threats, defense, denial or escalation of violence; it must enjoy control of goods and service production systems; it should hold the authority of determination and management possibilities in finance and credit institutions**;** and it must also retain the most effective instruments to influence the knowledge and informatics either technically or religiously through acquiring, production and communication.[42]

While major superpowers have for a long time possessed these factors to dominate globally, there is a growing trend for regional hegemony as well, and understanding of how these capabilities are distributed among ECCAS states will enable a clear understanding of why no hegemon exists in the region.

Overview of the Central African region

Central Africa is a region in Africa which is composed of different countries depending on the source of information. The geographical layout of the region differs from its memberships in diverse regional economic bodies as some geographically located Central African countries choose to belong to economic groupings outside the region. In a bid to clear up this ambiguity, the region will be looked at with respect to the regional body that exists in the region (ECCAS). Based on ECCAS membership, the Central African region comprises of the following countries: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Being from regions where all countries had been former colonies, the states have often had to grapple with issues of nation building in a multinational context. Below is an overview of Central African states' country profiles.

From the resource capabilities of these states, it becomes clear that some of these countries like Angola actually experience political stability and economic growth, and despite having the military capabilities as well to project hegemony these states do not do so. While the theory of Hegemonic Stability and existing literature shows the reasons for and benefits of hegemony, this region seems to have no state willing to act as a hegemon for reasons discussed below.

Reasons for absence of a hegemon in ECCAS

The absence of a regional hegemon in the Central African sub-region can be attributed to a plethora of factors.

Figure 1: Map of Africa highlighting Central African States

a. *Multiplicity of Overlapping Regional Groupings*

Although there exist a regional economic community, it is often the case that some Member States act in disregard to ECCAS agreements. In 2017, Cameroon ratified the Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU alone in disregard of agreements to negotiate with the EU within the framework of a regional grouping.[43] Individual state decisions like this undermine the integration efforts in the region and clearly show lack of state commitment to foster regional growth and trade protections for other Member States. States that stand to benefit most from collective regional development should have interests in being hegemons as this works for their good generally. An emergent China has an interest in being the hegemon because in so doing, it has smooth trading relations in the entire region and this translates into improved welfare domestically. Ensuring that regional security and trade issues are tackled effectively will ensure stability and the smooth function of the economies of Member States.

While other regional blocs in the continent are signing Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) as a bloc, Cameroon went ahead to sign on an individual basis and remains the only country in the region thus far to have signed. The multiplicity of membership in regional organisations among some Member States

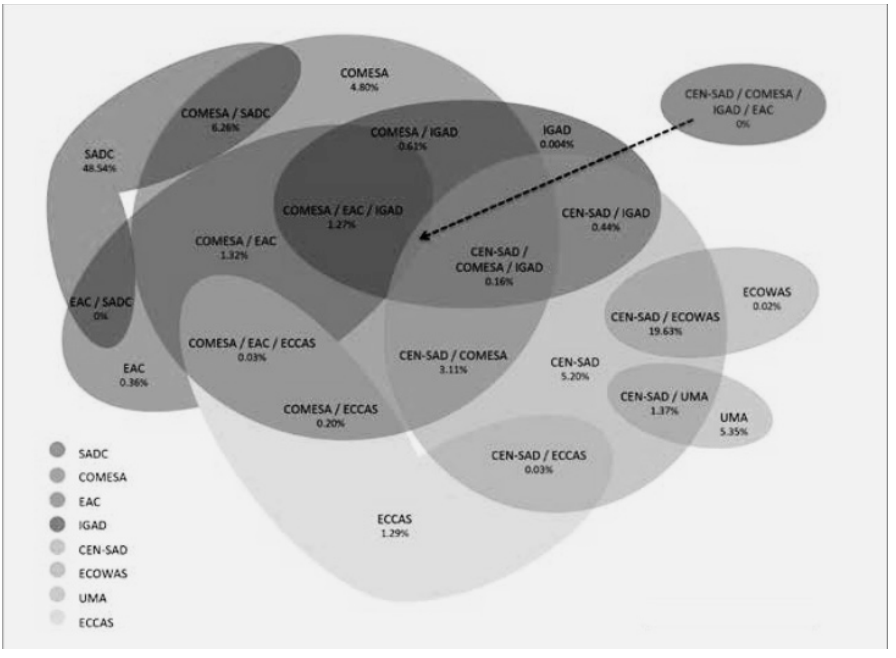
Table 1: Material resources of Central African States (To indicate power ranking of the countries and material preponderance)

Material Resources	Angola	Burundi	Cameroon	CAR	Chad	Congo	DRC	E. Guinea	Gabon	Rwanda	STP1
Military Military expenditure (US$ million) 2018 Reg. ranking2	2508 1	67 8	405 2	28 9	216 6	273 3	267 4	NA –	240 5	119.5 7	NA –
Total armed forces (000) 2019	107	NA	14.5	7.1	30.5	10	134	NA	5	NA	NA
Reg. ranking	2	–	4	6	3	5	1	–	7	–	–
Energy Oil production (million barrels/day) 2018 est.	1.6	0	0.069	0	0.13	0.34	0.017	0.17	0.19	0	0
Reg. ranking	1	-	6	-	5	2	7	4	3	-	-
Natural gas production (billion cm)	3.1	0	0.9	0	0	1.38	0	6.1	0	0	0
Reg. ranking	2	-	4	-	-	3	-	1	5	-	-
Economy GDP (US$ billion) 2018	105.7	3	38.5	2.3	11.3	11.2	47.2	13.3	17	9.5	0.42
Reg. ranking	1	9	3	10	7	6	2	5	4	8	11
Global Competitiveness Index Rank 2018	137	136	121	NA	140	NA	135	NA	NA	108	NA
Reg. ranking	5	4	2	–	6	–	3	–	–	1	–
Demographics Population (million) 2018	30.8	11.1	25.2	4.6	14.4	5.2	84	1.3	2.1	12.3	0.21
Reg. ranking	2	6	3	8	4	7	1	10	9	5	11
Land area (thousand sq. km)	1,246,700	27,834	475,442	622,984	1,284,000	342,000	2,344,858	28,051	267,668	26,338	964
Reg. ranking	3	9	5	4	2	6	1	8	7	10	11
Overall ranking	17 = 1	NA	29 = 3	NA	33 = 4	NA	19 = 2	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: author's compilation.

in the region makes it difficult for leadership to be committed towards acting as hegemon in one particular region. There exist an array of overlapping memberships among Member States in the region in different regional organisations. 'Cameroon's signing of the agreement constitutes a great threat to regional integration', says economist Dr Ariel Ngnitedem, and Mbom notes that 'It might destroy regional integration especially if the EU fails to reach a regional agreement with the CEMAC[44] countries.' [45,46]

Figure 2: Map of regional communities in Africa with overlapping memberships.



Countries like Angola and the DRC are members of both ECCAS and SADC; the DRC is also a member of COMESA.[47] Rwanda and Burundi are both members of ECCAS, COMESA and the EAC.[48] Chad is a member of ECCAS and CEN – SAD.[49] Even within the ECCAS community, there still exists another sub-regional community – CEMAC[50]. This union is composed of six Central African states – Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. This multiplicity of group membership has made political commitment to the region less significant among leadership in Member States.[51] With CEMAC having a common currency among its members, its members have economies which are rarely in sync with those of other ECCAS members and they make their decisions without consulting other Member States in the region. As the most stable power in the region, with the most resource capabilities,[52] Ango-

la's dual membership in ECCAS and SADC means it cannot devote its scarce resources effectively to ECCAS which as a regional grouping has virtually the same objectives as SADC. The inability of ECCAS to succeed as a regional body shows the lack as well of leadership to push the region forward. Every regional body has states willing to push the integration forward. South Africa performs this role effectively in SADC and Nigeria in ECOWAS, the weaknesses of ECCAS as the least effective regional body on the continent can be attributed to its lack of a regional hegemon to foster its growth.

b. *Internal political instability in the sub-region*

All ECCAS Member States are either plagued with instability, repressive regimes or both. With the end of colonialism, most successive governments in this region have only sought to maintain themselves in power. This has led to a series of conflicts all over the region. Presently, Cameroon, the Central African Republic and the DRC are plagued with civil wars. A majority of countries in the region are faced with sit-tight leaders[53] who manipulate constitutions to stay in power.[54,55] These internal problems make it difficult for these countries to be able to divert huge resources in exerting influence abroad as they need to run repressive machineries within their countries. Fighting internal conflicts on multiple fronts is so resource draining and does not afford states the time to even concentrate on external issues within the region. Some countries in the region claim their reluctance to project power is due to the respect of non-intervention principles. While the foreign policy directions of some states in this region (like Cameroon)[56] reflects that of non-intervention in the affairs of other states, this can also be attributed to the fact that repressive regimes invest much of their militaries and limited resources to oppress their citizens. The civil war in Angola ended in 2002, and as of now Angola has the most material resources to act as a hegemon; a role it has also proven reluctant to carry out.

c. *The neo-colonial hand*

Neo-colonialism has been in existence since the independence of most African states as it serves to reduce resource capabilities and restrict the political will of leadership. One salient scholar who attempts captures this phenomenon is Nkrumah:

> Once a territory has become nominally independent it is no longer possible, as it was in the last century, to reverse the process. Existing colonies may linger on, but no new colonies will be created. In place of colonialism as the main instrument of imperialism we have today neo-colonialism. . . . The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings

> of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.[57]

Within the ECCAS region, this link is strong among the six Member States that make up CEMAC.[58] Using the CFA franc, the currency is pegged to the euro and the monetary policies are decided by France. In a relationship like this, most of these countries are not sovereign and as such cannot actually exercise hegemonic tendencies in the region. The CFA franc was initially pegged to the French franc and later to the euro, with the reserves of countries using this currency kept in Paris. The fiscal policies of these states are not even their making.[59] Other powerful states in the region like Angola will find it difficult attempting to exercise hegemony in the region as this will imply their likelihood of intervening in the affairs of Francophone countries. Such interventions will in essence threaten French interests in the region and in itself could cause conflicts.

These Francophone states are in effect handicapped as their foreign policy trajectories are not theirs to make, with most of their leaders being put and maintained in power by France. The actual power dominating the area is France and it would appear that French influence and interests prevent the emergence of a regional hegemon in the area with France effectively being the hegemon over the Central African region. France incessantly intervenes in these states and has for long been a mastermind of regime change in order to ensure it runs the affairs of its former colonies and the region.[60]

The most stable country in the region is Angola.[61] However, it is a member of both ECCAS and SADC, and a lack of resources means political commitments will hardly be effective to both organisations. The personal interests of Nigeria in ECOWAS and South Africa in SADC to intervene in regional conflicts is fairly absent in ECCAS as evident with the series of on-going conflicts with no state willing to intervene. While this lack of interests, internal economic instability and economic challenges all play a role in restricting the capabilities of states in the region to intervene, the neo-colonial influence in the region is the main reason for the absence of a local regional power with willingness to intervene in conflicts. French hegemony is still strong in the region and local states attempting to intervene could be seen as a desire to alter power dynamics. Theories of hegemonic stability do not account for neo-colonial interference among independent nations in the Central African sub region. While regions like Southern Africa have hegemons, the interference of France in Central Africa can also clearly explain the lack of a hegemon in the sub region.

Hegemonic stability theory requires for a state to possess the capability to enforce the system, the will to do so and a commitment to a system which is perceived as mutually beneficial to the major states. Regionalism in Africa is

defined by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and not by member countries. The decisions of states like Angola, Burundi, the DRC and Rwanda to join integration schemes in other parts of the continent show that these states are redefining the rules they want to be subjected to and do not believe the existing rules in ECCAS are mutually beneficial. The presence of other integration schemes inside the ECCAS community further highlights this lack of the belief in mutually beneficial rules within ECCAS. While states like Angola possess the capabilities to serve as regional hegemons within the region, they have not demonstrated the will to do so and it would rather be a member of SADC where South Africa is clearly the Hegemon. Behaviour like this would suggest that maybe states in this region just do not want to intervene and play hegemonic roles as they come with costs of possible instabilities with external countries like France.

Conclusion

Co-operation among states in the region has also overshadowed the ability for a hegemon to emerge as regional organisations like ECCAS and the Economic and Monetary Community of Central African states work to provide the services of a hegemon. Alan James also makes a purposive proposal, which identifies an international system comprising co-operating states, rather than a global hegemon establishing and enforcing rules and regulations. As James puts it: 'Co-operative activity, in short, does not necessarily imply that the co-operating actors somehow fade into the background; in practice it does not have this effect and it is hard to see how it could possibly do so.'[62] This quotation therefore elucidates effectively, the interpretation that states will act on the necessity to co-operate with other states, but this by no means implies that the sovereignty of the individual states is compromised and a hegemon is established. Within the framework regional organisations, cooperative activity can also serve as a source of stability and this has been seen in the Southern African region for a long time, with recent instability threats being met by the deployment of a regional force.

Regional hegemons play significant roles in peace and stability within the African continent. The African Union and the UN Economic Community for Africa have also underscored the relevance of hegemons in promoting regional cohesion and trade integration among the Regional Economic Communities.[63] Salient examples of countries like Nigeria in ECOWAS and South Africa in SADC have been instrumental in performing these roles. The study sought to find out the reasons for why there is no regional hegemon in Central Africa and after building up on and analysing the material resources of the ECCAS Member States, I concluded that the absence of a hegemon was as a result of multiplicity of regional organisations in Central Africa, domestic political environment, eco-

nomic challenges and the neo-colonial hand. While the study argues for these reasons, it is also important to note that the main player in the region is France and its activities and interests would conflict with that of a regional hegemon (should one emerge now) for there is no explaining power politics in Francophone Africa without mentioning France.

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Central European Journal of International and Security Studies
Vol. 15, No. 4, 2021, pp. 48-80

DOI: 10.51870/CEJISS.A150403
Research article

Examining the Role of Trust and Ideological Disparities in India-EU Negotiations: The Case of the Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA)

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Abstract
Negotiations between India and the EU for a Broad-Based Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) have proven to be a complex and protracted affair. Despite both parties realising the importance of a trade agreement, neither of them intend to provide any concessions to the other party. Moreover, both parties, even after adopting different bargaining techniques, have been unable to come to an agreement. It is for this reason that scholarly interest in the study of the BTIA negotiations has grown dramatically over the last decade. Despite the interest, extant reviews have focused predominantly on the ex post economic benefits of the agreement. Rarely has the role of trust between the EU and India been analysed by the scholars. The primary aim of this article is to conceptualise the role of trust between the EU and India and summarise the bargaining strategies used previously by the parties. On the point of trust, the authors would argue that the signals provided by the leaders of India and the EU have helped in creating trust, which would in turn assist in the negotiations

of the BTIA. The authors demonstrate that the presence of mere calculus-based trust led to a breakdown of the BTIA negotiations. Thereafter, attempts have been made at elite, organisational and societal levels to move towards an identification-based trust. The authors conclude that although the process of transitioning from calculus-based trust to identification-based trust is slow and costly, the benefits of the latter would not only result in the possible culmination of the BTIA, but also result in the creation of a long-term strategic partnership.

Keywords: *negotiations, trust, BTIA, EU, India, bargaining*

First published online on 22 December 2021, issue published on 22 December 2021

Introduction

India and the EU have been keen on developing a trade partnership for years. The aim of the parties is to create a free-trade area between them allowing for liberalisation of goods and services.[1] To realise this, the parties aimed at having a comprehensive agreement covering aspects of trade and investment. For this reason, in 2005, the parties set up a High Level Trade Group (HLTG) to provide recommendations and analyse the viability of an agreement.[2] Pursuant to the recommendations of the HLTG, negotiations on the agreement commenced in the year 2006. Both India and the EU thought the parties could combine the negotiations pertaining to trade and investment by aiming for a Broad-Based Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA). They also recognised the importance of the early conclusion of the BTIA and expressed a commitment to achieving a balanced outcome. This did not happen; primarily, issues pertaining to liberalisation of goods and services, dispute resolution and investment clauses and the nature of the agreement affected the negotiations.[3] Additionally, changing domestic and international circumstances affected the BTIA negotiations.[4] Eventually, the negotiations came to a standstill during the *Enrica Lexie* case, where two Italian marines were alleged to have committed murder under the Indian Penal Code. This case resulted in the cancellation of the annual India-EU Summits, and subsequently impacted the BTIA negotiations.[5] After the brief hiatus, the summits resumed in 2016 but talks on the BTIA were slow.

In 2019, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi (PM Modi) had a landslide second-term victory and, subsequently, the President of the European Commission (EC) Ursula Von der Leyen too recorded a historic win as the first female President of the EC. Prime Minister Modi was quick to congratulate the newly elected President of the EC, and the gesture was reciprocated when he was invited to Brussels for the India-EU Summit.[6] Initially, the summit was supposed to take place on 13 March 2020; however, owing to the COVID-19 pan-

demic, the meeting was mutually postponed to July 2020.[7] Eventually, the 15th India-EU Summit took place on 15 July 2020 through videoconferencing where India was represented by PM Modi and the EU was represented by Ursula Von der Leyen and Mr. Charles Michel, President of the European Council.[8] During the summit, the parties decided to reinforce foreign policy, increase partnership, promote multilateralism and enhance shared values. Since the COVID-19 pandemic was a major concern, the agenda during the summit concentrated on issues concerning the pandemic. Nonetheless, PM Modi was able to clarify his government's position on India's Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 (CAA), which provided fast-track citizenship to immigrants of certain communities fleeing persecution to the exclusion of others.[9] The CAA had caught the ire of the European Parliamentarians as they made a motion for resolution against the Act.[10] After the brief discussions on the CAA during the summit, Mr. Charles Michel noted that India and the EU would continue to exchange best practices in their efforts towards safeguarding human rights.[11]

The 15th India-EU Summit helped in deepening the political and socio-economic dimension of the India-EU relationship. Importantly, the invitation by Ms. Ursula Von der Leyen for a summit signalled to Indian leaders that the EU realises the central role India plays in Asia's development. The said invitation can be interpreted as a signal by the EU that it is ready to partner with India. Additionally, several meetings before the summit show that the parties were keen on creating a bond between themselves.[12] These signals are important as they show an intent to build a strategic partnership and a deeper bond, eventually impacting the BTIA negotiations. The impact of these signals was evident after a year during the 16th India-EU Summit, which was held in a hybrid format on 8 May 2021.[13] Although issues concerning the pandemic held the highest priority, representatives from both parties agreed to resume talks on the BTIA. Significantly, the representatives agreed to set up an EU-India Senior Officials' Dialogue to strengthen cooperation on trade issues, specifically related to the WTO.

Signals from State leaders help in reaching a specific kind of trust, which assists the State leaders in the process of bonding.[14] As Friedman notes, trust plays an important role in any negotiation; however, different stages of trust are visible as the negotiation proceeds, or as the relationship develops.[15] The authors build upon the significant scholarly contributions on the role of trust in international negotiations in the context of the BTIA to not only identify the reason for the breakdown of negotiations in the past, but also analyse how the parties have recently attempted to nurture a strategic partnership, which may eventually facilitate the agreement.

Through this paper, it is argued that during the start of the BTIA negotiations, the parties had a specific type of trust, i.e., calculus-based trust (CBT) wherein

the parties evaluate the benefits and costs of trusting the other party.[16] However, this type of trust is based on specific reciprocity and therefore is quite fragile. Due to the volatile political situation between the parties, the CBT approach did not work, eventually resulting in the breakdown of the negotiations. The authors argue that the parties must, therefore, aim for identification-based trust (IBT) wherein one party comes to believe that the other's value and interests are aligned with their own. The authors use Lewicki and Bunker's stage models of trust to posit that trust changes as the relationship develops.[17]

The subsequent section provides an overview of the negotiations that have taken place between the parties. The authors then analyse the strategies of bargaining used by the parties during the BTIA negotiations. During the start of the negotiations, parties had common interests and were keen on producing mutual benefits for each other. However, divergence of views resulted in parties providing low concessions, hampering the negotiation process. The section discusses the issues involved in the negotiations and the stance of the parties on each of them. The authors argue that the parties must provide certain concessions and use integrative bargaining (value-creating) strategies for long-term partnership creation. For creating a durable relationship, trust is a prerequisite to negotiations.[18] The fourth section specifically deals with the role of trust in the BTIA negotiations. The section proceeds to analyse the three levels of trust, i.e., elite, organisational and societal, when conceptualising how trust and distrust impact negotiations. Further, the section also analyses whether there was any kind of trust between the parties at the start of the negotiations and whether lack of a specific kind of trust impacted the BTIA negotiations. The authors then argue that the parties in their recent meetings have signalled an intent to nurture the partnership by creating a bond. It is this bond that may eventually help the parties enter into an agreement. Further, PM Modi's clarifications on the CAA, and the EU representative's reciprocity, also create a bond that eventually may have an impact on the negotiation of the agreement. Lastly, the authors show that there is a causal link between economic transactions and social exchanges. In section five, the authors provide concluding remarks, and identify the limitations of this research.

EU- India trade relations and BTIA negotiations: A conspectus

In 1991, India opened its markets with the ushering in of new economic policies, which relaxed import duties and allowed foreign investments in most sectors. Although largely obscure on the global front as a political power due to its non-alignment policy, India suddenly became a powerhouse in Asia.[19] This resulted in the EU and India signing the 1994 Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development, which largely outlined the area of future cooperation

between the parties. Furthermore, India has largely benefitted from the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP), which made it easier for India to export its products to the EU Member States. Over the years, there has been an increase in the GSP eligibility and subsequent usage by India, which has positively impacted the exports to the EU. Simultaneously, India's partnerships with the Member States, especially on trade, have also been quite positive. For instance, total trade between India and France increased from 6.23% in 2011 to 24.79% in 2017. Similarly, the Netherlands was the fifth largest investor for 2020-21 with estimated FDI inflows of USD 2.8 billion, with a total two-way trade standing at approx. USD 13 billion.

For both the EU and India increase in trade was important. This can be witnessed when trade and investment was given utmost priority in the early 2000s during the High Level technical summits. The political dialogue between India and the EU, during the first India-EU Summit in Lisbon, shows the importance of creating a strategic partnership with an emphasis on trade between the states. Consequently, these summits became a yearly affair with certain declarations being signed every year. In the year 2004, the EU established the Strategic Partnership with India, reflecting the commitments of sharing its goals and values with Asian countries. Pursuant to this, an HLTG was formed in 2005 to provide recommendations for trade and investment agreement between the parties. The recommendations of the HLTG were accepted, resulting in the launch of the BTIA negotiations. A few years later, the Lisbon Treaty came into force and placed trade policy under exclusive competence of the EU.[20]. However, trade agreements negotiated by the EU that included provisions outside its exclusive competences were to be concluded as 'mixed'. Such 'mixed' agreements must be ratified by all EU Member States before the EP can give a formal consent.[21] The question arose whether a comprehensive trade and investment agreement would come under exclusive competence of the EU or have shared competences. The EU was unsure whether the BTIA would be accounted as a mixed agreement, implying that ratification of all Member States would have been required.[22] Although the issue regarding mixed agreement still looms large[23], the parties continued negotiations on the BTIA. Apart from the procedural uncertainty, as mentioned earlier, the *Enrica Lexie* case caused uproar in both the EU and India, causing the parties to cut off the India-EU Summits until the foreseeable future.[24]

Thereafter, in 2014, the PM-Modi led BJP government, which secured a majority in the House, was keen on resuming the BTIA negotiations. Eventually, after a hiatus of three years, the parties began negotiating on the BTIA during the 13th India-EU Summit in 2016. The 14th India-EU Summit did help in rekindling initiatives such as 'Make in India', 'Digital India', etc.[25] With a resounding second

term win for PM Modi in 2019, the timing appeared ripe to aim for the elusive BTIA. This was witnessed through India and the EU's efforts before the 15th India-EU Summit, where the EU High representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borell conducted a videoconference with the Indian Minister of External Affairs Subramanyam Jaishankar on developing the bilateral relationship, specifically trade, investment and security cooperation.[26] Whilst the 15th and 16th India-EU Summits mainly concentrated on the action plans and future strategies to combat COVID-19, both PM Modi and President Charles Michel reiterated the need to strengthen the economic ties.[27]

Dynamics of bargaining techniques: A reorientation of strategy

Extant literature on the BTIA negotiations points towards the economic benefits parties might have through the BTIA.[28] The CUTS India study predicted that an EU-India FTA would increase FDI flows from the EU by 27% and the FDI stocks by 18%.[29] Meanwhile, the ECORYS study shows that there would be an estimated increase of real wages of workers by 1.7% in the short run, which would stand at 1.6% in the long run.[30] A recent study by the Confederation of Indian Industry shows that there would be a massive boost in employment if the agreement goes through.[31] They show that negotiations could be easier if the trade part of it is separated from the investment part of the agreement, a proposal that has been recently provided by the EU to India.[32] In this section, we primarily use the analysis of Khullar, a Former Indian Ambassador to the EU, who analyses the BTIA negotiations.[33] We also rely on Jain and Sachdeva's paper examining the strategic partnership that India and the EU aspire to create.[34]

Levels of negotiations

The BTIA negotiations have always involved some combination of common interest and conflicting views. Negotiating on conflicting issues is the central subject of the analysis undertaken in this chapter. Negotiation is where explicit proposals are put forward, ostensibly, for the purpose of reaching an agreement on an exchange or on the realisation of a common interest where conflicting interests are present.[35] Normally, the parties have mixed motives, which would be a combination of different interests. Mixed motives would imply that, on certain issues, the parties can gain from cooperation, whereas on others it would be beneficial for a party to unilaterally defect as the gains to be earned are much higher.[36] This is where understanding the States' motives on issues helps in seeing whether there is any potential to reach an agreement. Of course, bargaining theory will not give a clear solution as to where an agreement can be reached. Considering that parties' preferences change over time depending on the circumstances, it becomes difficult to predict with certainty whether convergence

is always possible even when some concession is given. Therefore, treaty negotiations follow certain steps, beginning with negotiators of both sides identifying areas of converging interests.

A broad opening proposal, including the negotiators' recommendations, is then placed before the leaders. Once the leaders agree with the broad landscape, the negotiators proceed with formulating the issues and aim for convergence. The negotiators must also consider the preferences of different stakeholders domestically. This is where balancing interests becomes extremely crucial. Putnam says that the negotiators play a two-level game where, during the international negotiations of an agreement, parallel domestic negotiations take place.[37] It is a balancing act where the international agreements between States must, inevitably, consider the domestic agreement between the State and domestic stakeholders.

The BTIA's chief negotiators have faced this dilemma throughout this process. The whole process of finding mutual concessions with the aim of reaching a convergence somewhere within the bargaining space is called concession-convergence bargaining.[38] During this process, simultaneous negotiations are done at the international (level 1) and domestic (level 2) levels. To understand level 1 negotiations, it is important to see where the parties have reached at level 2.[39] Larsén states that a win-set is where all possible negotiating outcomes are acceptable to the domestic constituents (EU Member States) for them to eventually ratify the agreement.[40] Therefore, Larsén argues, 'In order to reach an international agreement, the EU and the Indian win-sets need to overlap, and the contours of the win-sets are affected by the preferences and positions of the domestic constituents.'

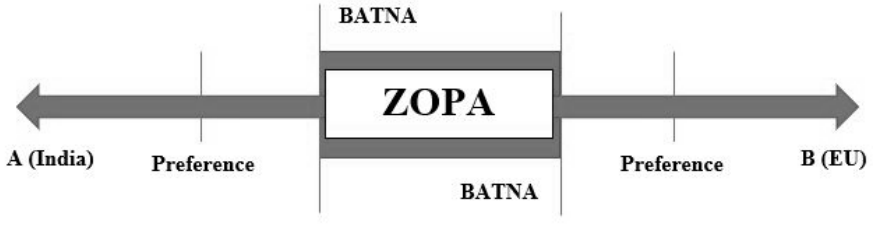
Meanwhile, Jain and Sachdeva have examined the issues of divergence between the parties and PM Modi's engagement with Europe since his 2014 victory.[41] Their analysis does not particularly deal with the BTIA; however, they claim that PM Modi's aim to prioritise a strategic partnership with the EU would have a significant impact on furthering economic ties with the EU.[42] Srivastava notes that the FTA negotiations seem to be in deadlock because of the EU's need for further liberalisation of legal and accountancy services in India, unwarranted changes in goods and services tax, insurance, land acquisition, civil society monitoring of FTA, environment and child labour concerns.[43] Meanwhile, India wants greater access to services like telecom and IT, free movement of skilled professions, data security, etc. There is a big gap between India and the EU's win-sets and, therefore, without making concessions, convergence is not possible.

Determining the strategy

To determine whether convergence is possible, it is necessary to determine the impact of the negotiations. Looking at examples of certain divergent issues and

areas where win-sets have been identified, we could identify techniques that can be used by the parties. At the outset, we assume that there is a hypothetical bargaining line, as can be seen in Figure 1 below. On this bargaining line, Point A is the position of India, which is outside of the range of acceptable agreement (India's extreme stance on the BTIA), whereas Point B is the position of the EU, which is also outside the range of acceptable agreement (EU's extreme stance on the BTIA). India (Point A) prefers agreements towards the left end of the horizontal line, where it has substantial positive value from the agreement. Likewise, the EU (Point B) prefers agreements towards the right end of the horizontal line. Considering that no convergence is possible, preferences must change. Therefore, India moves slightly towards the right (India's preference), correspondingly, the EU moves slightly towards the left (EU's preference). However, even after making such concessions, neither side concedes, which may result in a stalemate.

Figure 1: Bargaining Line (With BATNA)



In most negotiations, each party takes initial positions, termed as offers or counter-offers.[44] These are subject to change when concessions are made to reach a compromise. Considering there is no overlapping, the parties must come up with the 'Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement' (BATNA). BATNA is the 'no agreement alternative' where the parties assume that their individual gains are maximised if they reject the negotiated agreement.[45] Subramanian rightly asks, 'If your current negotiation reaches an impasse, what's your best outside option?'[46] Therefore, the presence of BATNA becomes essential in the negotiation process. Fisher and Ury note that there is always an alternative available, which will assist the parties to be flexible enough to permit exploration of an imaginative solution.[47] According to Odell and Tingley, parties that have already determined the scope of their BATNA will provide a 'Zone of Possible Agreement' (ZOPA), which will help the party with the BATNA to analyse the worst deal it will accept.[48]

As seen in Figure 1, ZOPA represents the overlap between the party's reservation prices. A reservation price is the party's breakeven point or the worst acceptable outcome for each issue.[49] India and the EU must identify the point beyond

which an agreement would no longer be beneficial for the parties. Hopmann states that, 'In order to determine this point, the party must first ask itself what is the value associated with a nonagreement, or in other words, what will happen if the negotiations break off and no agreement is reached.'[50] Therefore, parties may be able to reach a settlement anywhere between the parties' BATNAs, as seen in Figure 1.

In the context of the BTIA negotiations, the HLTG laid out a broad opening proposal which included recommendations for the leaders. This could be described as an agenda-setting phase. The agenda at this stage is generic, with the parties endeavouring to create a partnership at an international level. General discussions are conducted on specific focal issues including IP, FDI, tariff and non-tariff barrier. Thus, the agenda is set for future negotiations. Hampson and Hart described these general discussions as the pre-negotiation phase wherein the first step is the identification of the problem, the second is the search for options, the third is the commitment to negotiate and the last is the agreement to negotiate.[51] As exchange of information took place between the parties, the negotiations transitioned from the pre-negotiation phase to the negotiation phase. This is where substantial bargaining is done on focal issues.[52] The main issues in the BTIA were the discussions on regional integration, IP, trade and human rights.

During the early stages of negotiations, India and the EU could be seen to have applied an integrative strategy, which employs problem solving behaviours.[53] Therefore, the goal of this type of negotiations is to accomplish a mutually beneficial agreement maximising settlement efficiency. One example of this is the issue of generic drugs and IPR protection in India. The pharmaceutical industry in the EU was apprehensive about the lack of IPR protection granted in India and, therefore, lobbied extensively in the EU. Meanwhile, India refused to commit to any IPR laws affecting the production of generic medicines at affordable prices.[54] After several objections raised by the NGOs, the EP eventually caved and came to India's rescue on this issue.[55]. Larsén while analysing this issue from Putnam's two-level game perspective states that, 'There was a gap between the India and the EU negotiators. However, the pressure from the EP led the EU negotiators to revise their position, thus expanding the EU win-set to the extent that it overlapped with that of India.'[56] Simultaneously, India was able to solve the sticky issue of wine exports by providing a strategy of minimum export price above which the EU could export wines.[57] If the parties attach different priorities to different issues, a joint gain is possible.

That said, integrative bargaining depends upon the behaviour of both parties and the factoring-in of trust.[58] If we factor in trust, the integrative bargaining stages would resemble this:

To facilitate integrative negotiations, State leaders must often make calculations about the future trustworthiness of others in relation to focal points. This helps the party provide more concessions during the negotiation process, primarily due to the expectation of that party that no harm may be done in contexts where betrayal is always a possibility.[59] However, as Luhmann rightly points out, the uncertainty attending all trusting behaviour means that our expectations of another person's (party's) trustworthiness, however confident, can end in disappointment.[60] Until there is no transformation of identities and interests between the two actors, the calculative element of trust remains. This is volatile as any adverse information gained by the other party may risk the process of trust building entirely.[61] This was indeed the case during the negotiations between 2010 and 2013. Unfortunately, during these years, the Government of India was riddled with corruption allegations, with several high-profile scams coming to the fore.[62] The-then Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh was also alleged to have been a part of the corruption scandals, which hampered India's global image.[63] Inevitably, this indicated to the EU that India lacked the ability to create a safe space for EU companies. Simultaneously, the policy paralysis in India and the impact of the Euro crisis stagnated the negotiations.[64] Furthermore, the Italian Marines case also impacted the BTIA negotiations. In 2013, the EU Parliament's report mentioned that public discontent with India was a factor leading to the deadlock.[65]

Eventual breakdown - issues relating to political clauses

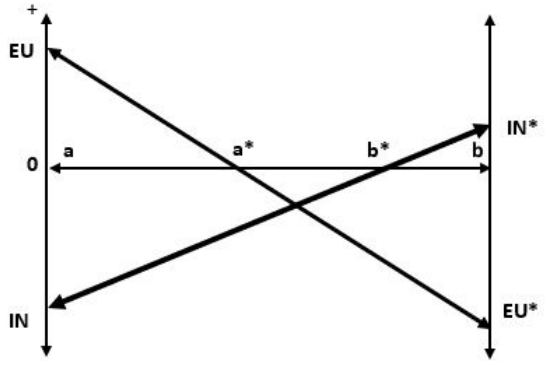
Apart from the situational factors, between 2009 and 2012, the stance taken by both the parties during the negotiations resulted in divergence rather than value creation. The extant literature provides some analysis of issues plaguing the negotiations. However, it does very little to provide solutions to resolve these issues. Khullar says that parties have had their disagreements on certain key areas since the start of the negotiations, viz. agriculture, automobiles, wines and spirits, drugs and pharmaceuticals, services, human rights and IPR.[66] His analysis shows that if concessions were provided on certain issues from both sides, the parties would have been able to enter an agreement or at least potentially arrive at one.

Unfortunately, on certain fundamental issues, parties used distributive bargaining, where they adopted a position (opening offer) and persuaded the other party to accept the same. In this case, the goal of one party is in basic conflict with the goal of the other and, therefore, the party would be interested in securing favourable terms without concern for the other party's outcome.[67] Considering this, the EU and India would behave rigidly and not provide any concessions whatsoever, resulting in no mutually acceptable agreement. Take, for instance, the issue of human rights and sustainable development clauses (political clauses)

in the BTIA. India has consistently opposed the inclusion of political clauses in trade and investment treaties on two grounds. First, that political clauses must not be within the purview of a trade agreement; instead, such issues should be discussed in other forums. Second, if the EU has legally binding political clauses in the BTIA, it reduces India's competitive advantage and would unnecessarily involve a foreign party in India's domestic affairs.[68] *Per contra*, the EP is of the opinion that inclusion of political clauses is a must in the BTIA.[69] To that end, in 2009 the EP passed a resolution stating that an ambitious and legally binding sustainable development clause must form part of the BTIA.[70] Not compromising on issues such as this resulted in no overlap of win-set and consequently affected the negotiations. Even after the EU negotiators understood the situation and were willing to accept the non-inclusion of political clauses in the agreement, the EP adopted a new resolution in 2011 mandating the inclusion of legally binding clauses on human rights, social and environmental standards in the BTIA.[71]

As can be seen from Figure 2, pursuing distributive bargaining may increase the likelihood of a stalemate.

Figure 2: Hopmann's Absence of Bargaining Space Model



- Horizontal Axis = Issue Dimension
- Vertical Axis = Gains (+) and Losses (-) Relative to Non-agreement (0)
- EU-EU* = EU's Preference Curve, IN-IN* = India's Preference Curve
- a = EU's preferred outcome, b = India's preferred outcome, a* = EU's minimum acceptable outcome, b* = India's minimum acceptable outcome

In Figure 2 above, we have a single issue such as the inclusion of political clauses in the BTIA. The horizontal axis represents the issue dimension where an agreement can be reached on any point along the horizontal line. The vertical axis represents the gains that can be achieved above the mid-point (+) and the loss

that can be incurred below the mid-point (-). At the mid-point (0), the parties are indifferent as the value of an agreement is zero for both. The preference curve of the EU is EU-EU*, whereas the preference curve of India is IN-IN*. In this case, if we assume that the EU's preferred outcome (a) is the inclusion of political clauses and India's preferred outcome (b) is non-inclusion of political clauses in the BTIA, we see that no convergence is possible. Now assuming that the minimum preferred outcome for the EU (a*) is the compulsory inclusion of environment and labour standards in the BTIA, excluding human rights clauses whereas India's minimum acceptable outcome (b*) is to merely include a democracy clause, by behaving rigidly, the parties fail to achieve an integrative solution.[72]

Techniques - integrative, distributive and alternative

In almost all negotiations integrative and distributive bargaining techniques are used simultaneously.[73] In cases where distributive bargaining techniques are used, the party aiming to increase its payoff may run the risk of a stalemate that will prevent both the parties from realising a mutually beneficial agreement. Distributive bargaining techniques often involve using hardball, intimidation tactics and other aggressive behaviour.[74] This does not necessarily imply that distributive bargaining techniques cannot not be utilised during negotiations. At times, these tactics may result in an agreement with smaller countries as there is an inevitable cost involved with prolonged stalemates. Therefore, these tactics work well when there is an asymmetry between the negotiating parties. Both India and the EU have been seen to use these tactics, often involving threat of walking away, in their negotiations with other countries.[75] That said, it would not be advisable for parties to employ distributive tactics when the parties are relatively symmetrical in economic ties. Sharland believes that the distributive approach will rarely lead to trust building and creation of a long-term strategic partnership.[76] If there are certain focal issues where the parties refuse to budge from their positions, in that case certain concessions could be provided on other issues, which would imply some sort of reciprocity from the other party. Prado and Martinelli argue that compromise can be an alternative to integrative negotiations.[77]

The BTIA negotiations have involved going back and forth between creating value and claiming it, depending on the situation. We use the terms 'integrative' and 'distributive' in the sense of value-creation and value-claiming actions by the parties.[78] Apart from the BTIA, if building a long-term strategic partnership is the goal, it is important for the parties to create some focus on interests rather than positions. As of now, there is extreme confidentiality in the negotiations of the BTIA. For this reason, it is difficult to analyse particularly which strategies were undertaken by the parties on certain issues. Pursuant to Khullar's paper, it could be seen that parties were able to formulate a broad outline agreement

and were able to find solutions on certain important issues by using integrative bargaining techniques.[79] Table 1 below shows the techniques used by the parties and the results of these techniques.

Table 1: Bargaining techniques used in the negotiations

Sr. No.	Issues	India	EU	Solutions/ Problems
1	Agriculture	Possible Compromise	Possible Compromise	Solutions- Adopting tariff quotas, Minimum price requirements
2	Automobiles	Divergent (Distributive bargaining)	Possible Compromise	Problems- Level 2 negotiations in India; Strong domestic lobby
3	Wines and Spirits	Compromise	Divergent (Distributive bargaining)	Problem- Setting on minimal export price above which EU could export
4	Drugs	Integrative	Integrative	Solution- Supplying bulk drugs rather than generics to EU
5	Services	Distributive (No compromise)	Distributive (No compromise)	Problems- Liberalisation of services; Movement of people
6	IPR	Integrative	Distributive	Problems- Generic Drugs; Geographical Indicators
7	Political Clauses	Distributive	Distributive	Problems- Human Rights clauses in FTA; Level 2 negotiations on the side of the EU

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Khullar[80], Jain and Sachdeva[81], Larsén[82] and Confederation of Indian Industry[83] research

Table 1 shows that through integrative bargaining parties were able to get solutions. However, work remains to be done on several issues. Some of these issues also have serious level 2 negotiations that must take place. Another issue for which the parties could use integrative bargaining techniques is the ISDS Clause in the BTIA. Investment has been a thorny issue since the start of the negotiations, particularly ISDS clauses in the agreement. Both the EU and India, in their recently concluded agreements with Vietnam and Brazil respectively, have preferred to adopt a similar ISDS mechanism creating a scheme of state-to-state arbitration and abandoning the investor-state arbitration mechanism.[84]

If the parties have divergent views on multiple issues, Osgood's idea of Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension Reduction (GRIT) where negotiators make a series of small, unilateral concessions to their opponents to establish trust helps.[85] Essentially, GRIT allows for small concessions and hopes that the

other party reciprocates in a positive manner, leading to a 'spiral of trust'.[86] Komorita notes that GRIT strategy works best after a long period of firmness where both parties have reached a stalemate.[87]

It is also important that the parties identify the BATNA. The parties must know the reservation points, which is the breakeven point or the worst acceptable outcome for each issue. Knowing the reservation points helps in setting limits that preclude the parties from settling for less than what they could have achieved. Quantifying the BATNA helps in determining the resistance points for each issue. Fisher and Ury note, 'Generating a BATNA requires three distinct operations: (1) inventing a list of actions the party might conceivably take if no agreement is reached; (2) improving some of the more promising ideas and converting them into practical alternatives; and (3) selecting, tentatively, the one alternative that seems best.'[88]

The parties must understand that the major deliverable is the BTIA and collaborate on specific divergent issues therein, if they feel a strategic partnership must be really formulated. Prime Minister Modi must signal to the EU that the agreement is imperative. If there is no reciprocity from the EU, India must be willing to walk away from the negotiations, especially if it has a strong BATNA. Meanwhile, the EU must, in the words of Herman van Rompuy, acknowledge that, 'we [EU] have strategic partners, now we need a strategy'.[89]

In summary, India and the EU must face several hurdles before an agreement can be reached. The divergence on focal issues shows that the parties must provide some concessions. In order to rejuvenate the relationship, it is important that both parties approach this through a problem-solving perspective. Additionally, for a strategic partnership, it is imperative that the parties have a primary objective of increasing trade and investment. This must be coupled with parties understanding the mutuality of interests and benefits. This is possible only if there is a creation of trust between them. A specific type of trust would not only help in creating a bond but also assist parties in achieving integrative solutions.

Trust as a route to influence

India and the EU have faced a dilemma throughout the negotiation process. Both have been rather wary of using integrative bargaining. Trust could potentially resolve this dilemma.[90] In this chapter, the authors analyse the role of trust in the negotiations of the BTIA.

Trust in international relations: Levels of analysis

Considering several agents are involved across different layers, it becomes difficult to identify the role trust plays, if any. Since States are not active agents hav-

ing the cognitive capability to trust, it is imperative to understand the behaviour of the actors in the State. In general, three levels can be identified for the study of trust in the EU-India BTIA negotiations. The impact the agents have differs considerably. This is the classic 'levels of analysis' problem in international politics as noted through seminal arguments of Singer and Spanier. Spanier mentions three levels of analysis to create a framework for international politics. First, a *systemic* level referring to the international system as a whole; the second being *nation-state* and its internal characteristics; lastly, the *decision-making* level which includes decisions by people who occupy official positions in the State.[91] Similarly, Singer notes the two causal levels of analysis, viz. the State and the global systemic.[92] The question in relation to trust is whether the trusting/mistrusting behaviour of individuals can be relevant for describing the behaviour of a State. Sinkkonen, using the case study of United States-Egypt relationship, argues that trust can be analysed through three levels - elite, organisational, societal.[93] The elite level comprises of interpersonal relations between leaders. These relations between leaders after continuous interactions increase interpersonal trust, which can bring forth predictability, credibility and good intentions, leading to reciprocity.[94] Wheeler describes this as a 'relationship between two individuals (leaders) through a process of interaction, have come positively to value the continuation of the relationship, and where each does not expect the other to act in ways that damage the relationship'.[95] Although the empirical analysis of this level becomes difficult, as noted by Weinhardt, due to the lack of quantifiable nature of trust, the proxies to identify, or at the very least estimate, trust/mistrust could be official statements given by the leaders during diplomatic meetings, summits, interviews.[96] As mentioned in the previous chapters, PM Modi's signalling and President Ursula Von der Leyen's reciprocity are examples of cooperation, which, according to Rathbun, indicates a creation of trust.[97] Meanwhile, mistrust could be identified through statements indicating malevolence, self-interest and noncooperative motives during negotiations. The second level that Sinkkonen notes is the *organizational level*, where trust is demonstrated in institutionalised relations between States.[98] Individuals and bureaucrats that represent an institution in the States assume roles of 'institutional agents', act as a collective, and, therefore, having an objective assessment of statements made by individual officials is necessary.[99] The inferences through these statements, understandably, must be examined and understood as a collective rather than a personal attribute. For instance, statements made by the Minister of External Affairs, S. Jaishankar could be used for a methodological study. Lastly, Sinkkonen points out that the societal level is where trust is manifested 'as discursively reproduced collective beliefs that individuals as members of the society hold . . . about another state, its leaders, its people, its culture and values, or

some combination thereof'.[100] Oftentimes, the creation of collective beliefs happens through 'trust entrepreneurs'; the ones that are responsible for disseminating information regarding the other State as well as its leaders and population.[101] There are several gatekeepers or entrepreneurs that forge collective beliefs. If we go via a top-down approach, the institutional agents in the organisational level become the trust entrepreneurs. However, occasionally NGOs, media channels or influential individuals could disseminate information which can impact the other levels.[102] Therefore, be it top-down/bottom-up processes, it is necessary to study trust and the impact trusting behaviour at different levels could have on the negotiation processes at the international level. For this reason, statements issued by PM Modi and President Ursula Von der Leyen would constitute indicators of elite-level trust. On the other hand, statements made by officials such as S. Jaishankar and Charles Michel would be indicative of organisational trust. Meanwhile, statements collated from civil society and the media would entail elements of societal trust.

From calculation to bonding

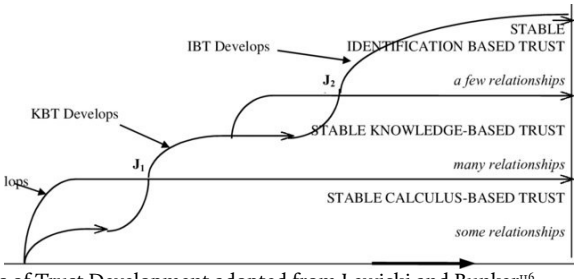
Trust is the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions and behaviour of another.[103] Thus, two fundamentals are essential in the analysis of trust, namely interdependence and risk.[104] One party (trustor) develops an expectation that they will not be harmed based on the risk calculation they had undertaken of the other party (trustee). This approach, therefore, would be based on acquiring more information by the trustor of the trustworthiness of the trustee, to reduce the risk of losing. Lewicki and Bunker argue that since calculation lies at the heart of this idea, it can be termed as calculus-Based trust (CBT).[105] In the international arena, the CBT approach to trust would be undertaken by States when they update their information about the trustworthiness of other States through the behavioural signals sent to each other.[106]

Rathbun argues that if a trustor using the CBT approach is prepared to risk the costs of defection to secure the potential gains of cooperation, the other party would cooperate, resulting in building a 'reciprocity circle'.[107] This is how CBT would be built after the initial gamble pays off. However, the CBT approach cannot be used to create a long-term strategic partnership, primarily because it is based on specific, and not diffused, reciprocity. Specific reciprocity is a condition in which two parties give each other equivalent treatment in respect of one issue.[108] Rathbun believes that such a functional relationship can only be sustained when benefits of cooperation are seen regularly.[109] At the beginning of negotiations, parties must ensure that trust-building progresses. This is especially important if the parties aim to build a strategic partnership. Intuitively, a minimal level of trust would be essential for any negotiation.[110] This minimal

level of trust would be based on calculations and, therefore, would be a CBT approach. Eventually, however, CBT must transform into 'knowledge-based trust' (KBT), which is based on predictable behaviour of the other party. The trustor often assumes that the party would keep their promises. Therefore, even if the negotiations are highly competitive, since the other party is predictable, KBT will not be affected.[111] Osgood's GRIT system mentioned earlier is an example of KBT.[112] Even though GRIT does not establish trust, since giving concessions is a predictable behaviour, it helps in creation of trust.

Nonetheless, Lewicki and Bunker believe that transformation of identities and interests are essential, if parties are to value the same goals.[113] This would eventually create a 'we-feeling' that would come after positive identification of interests.[114] They term this type of trust as 'identification-based trust' (IBT) where there is full internalisation of the other party's interests and desires. They note that, 'The other party (trustor) can be fully confident that his interests would be fully defended and protected, without surveillance and monitoring by the actor'[115]

Figure 3: Stages of trust development



Source: The stages of Trust Development adopted from Lewicki and Bunker[116]

Figure 3 posits Lewicki and Bunker's stage model of trust which shows that the relationship develops across three stages. The first, CBT, is seen in early-stage relationships. As the relationship grows, KBT is reached where trust is based on accumulated knowledge over repeated interactions. Lastly, where the interests of both the parties are aligned, IBT is reached.[117] This progression takes time as the relationship between the parties matures. As Korsgaard and others mention, 'Stage models of trust imply dynamic relationships such that the impact of certain predictors and processes of trust change over time . . . as trust progresses through stages, it is more resilient to violations. That is, factors that might undermine trust are less impactful over time.'[118] Therefore, it is noticeable in the figure that only a few relationships reach the stage of IBT.

We argue that leaders of India and the EU must follow this process for successful creation of a partnership and, hopefully, negotiations of the BTIA.

CBT approach in the BTIA negotiations

Creation of trust is extremely important for a mutually beneficial agreement. Given that parties normally do not have perfect information in negotiations, CBT becomes dependent on the actor's willingness to take risks. Therefore, if the parties have a CBT approach to trust, and the trustee had to reciprocate trust by neglecting the rational-utility maximising approach, the trustee would not do so. The aim of India and the EU before the start of the negotiations was to create a strategic partnership. Trade was thought to be the cornerstone of this strategic partnership. The European Council acknowledged this by categorically stating that, '[EU] take concrete steps to secure ambitious free trade agreements, secure greater market access for European businesses and deepen regulatory cooperation with major trade partners.'[119] To make sure that the partners pursue the European objectives and interests, it was imperative that trustworthiness was shown from both sides. To reach a stage where there is collective identity transformation, the parties must aim for IBT, where there would be a process of suspension, implying that even if parties behave opportunistically, the process of identity transformation would help in maintaining a relationship.[120]

India and the EU never reached the state of IBT and, therefore, no process of suspension occurred. The trust between the parties was merely CBT. Of course, the creation of any relationship, at the outset, would begin from rationalist foundations.[121] As Lewicki and Bunker note, there is an evolution from CBT to KBT to IBT.[122] The parties aimed towards creation of IBT; however, changes in circumstances, divergence of opinions and changes in leadership have all affected the process of evolution. To see why the parties were unable to transform their trusting relationships, it is necessary to analyse the trustworthiness of the parties, as a party would in the CBT approach.

The first step taken by a party in analysing the trustworthiness of the other party is looking at the past behaviour. Correspondingly, if the party has had positive experience in negotiating with the other party, there would be an increase in trustworthiness. However, this information can never provide certainty that the other party may behave in the same way in the future. India and the EU had never negotiated an agreement like the BTIA and, therefore, there was a lack of familiarity. The idea behind prior familiarity is that there is a reputation built between the parties that the transactions between them would be respected.[123] This does not necessarily mean that the parties move from CBT to IBT, but it does facilitate the process. Additionally, prior familiarity results in the reduction of alliance-specific investments, specifically search costs for analysing the *bona fides* and the monitoring cost that the parties would have to incur to curb opportunism.[124]

Kong, Dirks and Ferrin put forth three factors as being the bedrock on understanding the other party's trustworthiness: perceived integrity, ability and benevolence.[125] According to them, 'Integrity refers to the perception that the party will adhere to sound moral values, such as being honest and fair, and can be depended upon to act consistently with those values. Ability refers to the perception that the party is trustworthy in terms of having a certain skill set or ability relevant to the performance. Benevolence refers to the perception that the target cares about the well-being of the trustor.'[126] Considering that the leaders speak and act in the name of the States they represent, the signals that they send are on behalf of a collective. Wheeler terms this as 'the collective dimension of state behaviour'.[127] Following suit, the negotiating teams of the parties also carry out the analysis of trustworthiness of the parties.

For instance, initially both parties were keen on completing the BTIA negotiations by mid-2011. Through the HLTG, the chief negotiators had provided their final recommendations on certain issues that were to be discussed. Unfortunately, there was a divergence of perceptions of what the process of negotiation was, what the parties were going to achieve and what the ambitions were.[128] For this reason, it was imperative that strategic dialogue resulted in some significant policy measure before the negotiations. However, that did not come about, with both parties having strategic dialogues without having any type of ground level policy measures showing normative convergence.[129]

Following unnecessary delays, the Indian media were quick to prompt that India should not go along with the agreement if the EU had reservations.[130] This shows that the perception of the civil society in India changed during the negotiations. In turn, this goes to the root of the aspect of benevolence where the parties feel that trusting the opposite party would harm them in the future. For the creation of trust, it is also important that the parties respect each other during the negotiation process.[131] Lack of respect and goodwill for the party may not only impede the trust building process but could rupture it entirely. For instance, after the Italian Marines issue, PM Modi's visit to Brussels did not fructify due to the-then High Representative of the EU Fredrica Mogherini's reluctance to confirm dates of visit.[132]

The way forward - relationship restoration

According to Lewicki and Bunker, in CBT, progress occurs akin to slowly climbing a ladder and even a single inconsistent event may 'chute' the individual back several steps, or even to square one.[133] Therefore, negative events may lead to trust dissolution where there is a relationship recalibration, whereunder parties interact in a less trusting manner, or it may lead to relationship rupture, where the relationship ends. However, even if events reduce trust, relationship resto-

ration is always possible, where trust is re-established and continues as before. This may happen through positive events helping in revising the trustworthiness of the other party in a way that stops the waning of trust.[134]

Signalling by PM Modi

Since the 15th India-EU Summit, the parties have shown keen interest in continuing the BTIA negotiations. This could be taken as a possibility of relationship restoration. Certain positive events have led the parties to reach this stage after the deadlock. The creation of jobs and opportunities was extremely important to PM Modi's political agenda.[135] For this reason, a change in foreign policy was witnessed once he was elected. He realised that job creation was possible if there was an investment from the West, and, therefore, mutually beneficial cooperation between people and businesses on both sides was important. Prime Minister Modi signalled to the EU that projects like 'Make in India' and 'Digital India' required the assistance of the EU to be successful.[136] At the 14th India-EU Summit, PM Modi opined that India and the EU were indispensable partners for the future.[137] In the same year, the-then EC President noted that it was 'high time' that an FTA between India and the EU was made.

Trust restoration takes time and effort from both parties, especially their leaders. Until that time, leaders can give specific signals of their intent to enter strategic partnership. When these signals are interpreted unambiguously by the other party, the process of creation of trust is facilitated.[138] Through continued signalling from the EU and Indian leaders, the parties' intentions are clearly visible. Wheeler notes that for those parties who hold a 'friendly image' of the other party, the sender's signal may be interpreted as confirming a belief that the sender can be trusted.[139] For instance, Germany's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hieko Maas's call for countries to join the Alliance for Multilateralism was taken up by India to safeguard multilateralism.[140]

The relevance of Kashmir and CAA

In 2019, PM Modi's government abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution of India and passed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, which stripped the special status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated the state in two union territories.[141] It was alleged that the state of Jammu and Kashmir was under a complete communications lockdown, including internet shutdown.[142] The EP was keen on debating the Kashmir issue with the-then EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, stating that it was of utmost importance to 'restore the rights and freedoms of the population of Kashmir'[143] It was imperative that PM Modi signal to the world leaders that no human rights violations were occurring in Kashmir. Although the Ministry of External Affairs

did not take any active steps in this regard, the Women's Economic and Social Think Tank, funded by the International Institute for Non-Aligned Studies, invited certain members of the EP to India. The members were then taken to the newly formed union territories of Jammu and Kashmir in their personal capacity and not as representatives of the EP. These members then provided a positive response about the state of the people of Kashmir.[144]

Interestingly, a few months later, PM Modi's government was again in the line of fire when it passed the CAA (Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019), which intended to provide fast-track citizenship for persecuted minority groups who had entered India on or before 31 January 2014 from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The government identified six minority groups for this purpose but did not include Muslim minorities, which were persecuted in the aforesaid states.[145] The EP decided, out of its own volition, to put forward a resolution for voting on 28 January 2020. According to the EP, the CAA is discriminatory in nature as it specifically excludes Muslims and thereby violates the ethos of the Constitution of India, which mentions India as a secular state. The EP went further to state that the CAA undermines India's commitments to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).[146] The vote was delayed until PM Modi's visit to Brussels, where he was planning on addressing the EP regarding the CAA.[147] On this resolution, Helena Dalli, the Vice-President of the EC, mentioned that the EU shares a 'rich, frank and open' relationship with India. She went further by stating that the CAA was India's internal matter and would be decided by the Supreme Court of India.[148] Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, PM Modi's visit to Brussels was cancelled. However, during the 15th India-EU Summit, PM Modi was able to clarify his position on the CAA. This clarification was enough to convince the EP representatives. As Mr. Charles Michel noted, 'Regarding the citizenship law (discussions), you know that in the European Parliament this was an important topic. And we raised this issue in our talks. I would like to say that we trust Indian institutions. We understand the supreme court will have a role to play to assess this legislation. We took a decision with India to continue a dialogue on human rights in order to exchange best practices and have the best understanding on how to tackle this issue for India and the EU'[149]

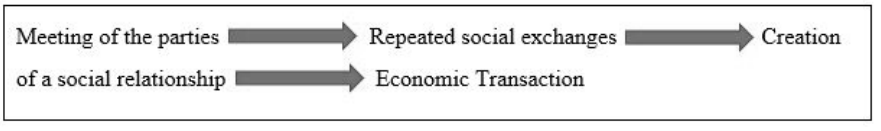
In our opinion, PM Modi's clarification on the CAA and members of the EP vouching on the Kashmir issue were both important for the future partnership of India and the EU mainly for the reason of exchange, which requires interdependence of parties. Thus, this kind of reciprocity can be either positive or negative in nature; depending on the orientation (positive/ negative), there will be return (positive/ negative).[150] From the point of view of signalling, PM Modi's move of clarifying his CAA position and Kashmir showed the EU representatives

that he was keen to institute transparency. The information provided by PM Modi helps the EP clarify its stance on India's domestic issues. This, in turn, benefits PM Modi as he would receive a form of trust from the EP, which would eventually result in further matching of goodwill and helpfulness towards the EU.[151] The concept would come under the bracket of creating a social exchange relationship that comprises actions contingent on the rewarding reactions of others, which over time provide for mutually rewarding transactions and relationships.

Although the BTIA between the EU and India should be considered as a reciprocal exchange, if we assume that the *ex post* violation of the negotiated agreement results in a legal or contractual sanction, then the subtle difference between reciprocal exchange and negotiated rules would be the 'explicitness' of the *quid pro quo* propensities. For instance, a negotiated agreement, such as the BTIA, may involve sanctions for violation of the clauses of the agreement, necessarily implying that the violation might induce legal penalties. However, in a reciprocal exchange, even though there is a *quid pro quo* propensity, a negative treatment would break the other party's trust but would not incur a legal penalty. Thus, a negotiated rule, as several trust scholars have pointed, would be part of an economic transaction.[152] Pursuant to this, Organ and Konovsky distinguished between 'social exchange and economic exchange relationships'. For them, 'social exchange' is more than simply a set of rules for transacting benefits. A social exchange relationship, therefore, would create a series of interdependent exchanges or can be viewed as an interpersonal attachment that results from a series of independent transactions.[153] Thus, there are two situations: one whereby the exchange causes the relationship and one whereby the relationship causes the exchange. The former would imply a causal link where repeated social exchanges result in formation of economic exchanges; the latter would imply the reverse link.[154] Several trust scholars have tried to solve this ambiguous situation by providing guidelines.[155] However, the authors will not delve into the resolution as that lies beyond the scope of this paper.

In view of the aforesaid analysis, a causal link appears between growth of social relationships between the parties and the economic transaction. Therefore, assuming that PM Modi's clarification would maintain, if not grow, the social relationship between the parties as a collective, the same might have a beneficial effect on the BTIA negotiations.

Figure 4: Causal link (relationship)



Therefore, the social exchange relationship, as can be seen in figure 4, shows a building of economic transaction. However, if PM Modi's clarification had been unable to convince the EP representatives, resulting in the EP passing a resolution, the consequences, though not penal in nature, would have inevitably affected the trust of the parties. Consequently, this distrust would trickle down to the economic transaction, i.e., the negotiation of the BTIA. Therefore, the authors believe that creating a social relationship has both risks and rewards. For one thing, a positive social relationship has a possibility of culminating into an economic transaction, thereby facilitating an economic relationship, which is based on the strong psychological foundation of greater trust and the consequent ability to take risks. However, a negative relationship due to a series of negative social exchanges has the possibility of creating distrust and perhaps a permanent damage to the relationship in general.

To summarise, creation of trust takes time and effort from both the parties. Though Lewicki and Bunker argue about the progression of trust from one stage to the other[156], there is no method provided as to when the parties move from one stage to the next. The evidence of growth can be seen from the correlation between trust and the length of the relationship. That said, formulating a strategy at the beginning is important. Even if the BTIA is negotiated, trust is important for its successful implementation. Therefore, the parties must move beyond CBT and aim to have IBT. Prime Minister Modi's signalling has evidently worked in transforming EU's opinion about India. In the 15th India-EU Summit, Mr. Charles Michel noted, 'Today's meeting clearly showed that both the EU and India want a stronger strategic relationship for the future. India can count on the European Union. And we count on India to be a key partner.'

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to identify the issues involved in the negotiations of the BTIA. It sought to provide a different dimension to the understanding of the EU-India BTIA negotiations. The authors attempted to argue that parties must use integrative bargaining techniques to resolve certain underlying issues. A way forward would be to have a concession-convergence bargaining. For making concessions, the parties must have a BATNA, and understand the need for entering into an agreement.[157] It is true that on certain issues both the parties have used integrative strategies. However, a lack of trust has impacted the negotiations drastically. Given that the parties have had divergent views on several issues, techniques such as GRIT could be used, at the very least, to establish some amount of trust. Providing minimum concessions might be beneficial, especially when the negotiators feel stagnated. Essentially, the parties must understand that if a long-term partnership is to be created, trust will play an important role

in the BTIA. The analysis shows that there was a specific type of trust (CBT) that the parties had during the start of the negotiations. Unfortunately, events such as, *inter alia*, the Italian Marines case resulted in the parties viewing each other with suspicion, eventually resulting in a deadlock on the BTIA. The paper shows that since parties had only CBT, it was fragile and prone to a breakdown. Nevertheless, restoration is always a possibility with trust. Keeping this in mind, the signals that a leader sends across are extremely important. At the elite level, PM Modi and President Ursula Von der Leyen have signalled and reciprocated, resulting in the hopes of creating a stronger bond. Agents representing different State departments in the EU and India have also been on the same page as their leaders, bolstering at the organisational level and thereby assisting in the creation a partnership. At the societal level, creation of trust becomes difficult. However, as noted in Babalova and Goddeeris, perception of the EU has shifted in the media and the civil society after the 14th India-EU Summit.[158] This change is drastic, especially when the study of Ling and Goddeeris, before PM Modi's election, showed that the 'EU had a massive image problem in India'.[159] Whether the agents, NGOs, and media act as 'trust entrepreneurs' or not, it is necessary to maintain dissemination of information. Considering that the link between the elite, organisational and societal levels is not unidirectional, it is always possible that the relationship of trust between two States can be built 'bottom-up'[160]

Through the elite level interactions, the States must strive to create an IBT. Both parties should move from having economic transactions at the core towards striving for repeated social exchanges. This, in turn, would create an environment for the BTIA negotiations to be completed swiftly. In some ways, the COVID-19 pandemic has allowed the EU and India, both major producers of vaccines, to become closer partners.[161] It is true that progression from the level of CBT to IBT is time consuming and costly; however, the benefits of creating this relationship, especially if both parties intend to become long term partners, are manifold.

Finally, it is also necessary to mention that this analysis has certain limitations. At the outset, it is worth noting that it is difficult to identify the win-sets of each party, especially when domestic constituents play a huge role. Thus, creation of trust at Level 1 may not be enough to solve Level 2 issues. Additionally, quantifying trust in international politics is a daunting task and, therefore, overreliance on statements of leaders is always a risk. However, indirect indicators such as statements by the leaders and their corresponding behaviour do, at times, show intention to cooperate. For future research, authors can carry out congruence analysis to show contextualisation of the BTIA negotiation process against the actors' divergent levels of trust. This would help in understanding the negotiation behaviour of the parties and whether the parties have reached

a specific trust stage.[162] Certainly, this requires analysis of all the official statements coupled with qualitative interviews. Unfortunately, the lack of available data makes it difficult to show when the levels of trust have been crossed. Since most negotiations take place behind a veil, with little information disclosure, the best indicators are either positive or negative statements of the other party. Another issue which future researchers could delve into is the complexity of relationship in different issue areas. For instance, as noted by Ruzicka and Keating, two states may have a higher level of trust in their strategic partnership, but far less in their economic relations.[163] Although social interactions showcasing development of partnership can impact economic transactions, the extent to which the same changes the level of trust is difficult to map out. Finally, the level of analysis problem represents the greatest methodological challenge; perhaps trust accentuates this problem, especially in light of trust scholars' difficulty in defining general markers of trust coupled with the lack of available data.

The discussion of the concept of trust through its application in the case of BTIA negotiations between the EU and India provide interesting insights into the nature of trust. Broader questions regarding analysing trust empirically do arise; however, a combination of verbal and behavioural evidence does show how parties function. In the end, trust research is a leap in the dark, as Forsberg rightly notes, 'Trust researchers often study texts and statement, but the language itself is fallible. Paradoxically, the language of trust is perhaps most needed in situations where there might be an intention to build trust but where there is also simultaneously, plenty of uncertainty concerning whether trust actually exists.'[164]

Acknowledgments

The authors thank Shardool Kulkarni and Shivangi Gangwar for their helpful comments throughout the writing process. We are also grateful to the editors and reviewers for their comments on the draft version of this paper.

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MURPHY, Thomas K. *Czechoslovakia Behind the Curtain: Life, Work and Culture in the Communist Era*. McFarland, 2018. ISBN 9781476631776.

DOI: 10.51870/CEJISS.R150401

Czechoslovakia Behind the Curtain: Life, Work and Culture in the Communist Era

Reviewed by Tomáš Kratina

The publication by the American author Thomas K. Murphy, entitled *Czechoslovakia Behind the Curtain: Life, Work and Culture in the Communist Era*, focuses on the modern period of Czech history between 1948 and the first half of the 1990s. From a global point of view, it was a significant historical epoch characterised mainly by a globally polarised world with a significant threat of nuclear conflict between the divided *East* and *West,* or the rivalry of Eastern bloc powers represented by a hegemon in the form of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics with its communist ideology and, on the other hand, the Western world led by the United States, presenting itself as a democratic and free society. The two *world*s were separated by the so-called *Iron Curtain*, which also passed through the territory of then Czechoslovakia, meaning an imaginary and de facto border.

T.K. Murphy grew up in the United States, in Washington D.C., during the second half of the Cold War. He is interested in the world of politics and politicians and has managed to work for important institutions such as the US House of Representatives and the office of a US Senator. After defending his doctoral studies (Ph.D.), he taught history and culture at the University of Prešov between 1997 and 1999. He now lives and writes alternately in Italy and Belgium.

The author's book is constructed as a professional historical publication, mapping Czechoslovak history both in terms of time contexts that causally followed each other and according to fundamental political-socio-cultural phe-

nomena. The book is divided into ten chapters dealing with key topics, it also contains an introduction, conclusion, notes and bibliographic citations. From a general point of view, the individual chapters deal with education, entertainment and culture, everyday life behind the *Iron Curtain*, communist ideology and the Communist Party, religion and the events of the Prague Spring, and subsequent normalisation. In the preface, Murphy presents the methodology by which he obtained the relevant data and information used to process the book. He finds fundamental starting points both in the richly quoted literature and in the oral testimony and narration of the direct participants of the people of that time. Above all, these testimonies give the publication a revival and dynamism and help the reader, through personal experiences, to better empathise with the time being described. The cover of the book has the corresponding appearence, is interesting and at first glance corresponds to its contents. The annotation has a telling character and fulfills its briefly informative purpose, on the basis of which a potential reader of the publication can form a basic idea of what the book is about.

For the potential Czech or Slovak reader, the book offers a very interesting view of the events of that time from the outside, i.e. from the opposite side of the *Iron Curtain*. It is obvious the author's intention is not to distort the information provided and not to side with the East or the West. It also examines related historical and political topics, especially the Cold War, the Warsaw Pact, Marxism-Leninism and others. The author presents a very interesting view of the issue of communism and Western democracy through a black-and-white view of the world from the perspective of the West. According to the then (especially American) doctrine the USA and its Western allies were the good ones (us) and the Soviets and their allies (they) the bad ones. The US masterfully used this phenomenon to convince its own population in several campaigns, especially during the Vietnam War (Vietnam was and is a socialist republic with a communist ideology).

The reviewer, without any intention to challenge the author's careful work, would point out some shortcomings that may have been mentioned in the book or are not listed correctly enough. For example, the author makes this claim: 'Czechoslovakia no longer existed in 1997, having broken in half during the Velvet Revolution of 1993.' This information is wrong, as while Czechoslovakia was indeed divided into two countries on 1st January 1993, the Velvet Revolution took place in 1989 and it was not a direct cause of the dissolution.

There is a lack of closer explanation of some typical contemporary concepts or names that we encounter minimally in modern times, such as the 'vekslák' (very difficult to translate, but it was a type of street vendor, often with a criminal history, who illegally sold the Tuzex currency *bony* to consumers with unfa-

vourable exchange rates) or 'socialismus s lidskou tváří' (socialism with a human face – it should have been socialism, or communist rule but with a lesser level of repression and more freedom for the population). A deeper explanation of such concepts can lead to misunderstandings, especially among foreign readers. Finally, the chapter 'Comedy and the Regime' mentions only the performance of the popular comedian pair Lasica and Satinský, which is a pity because there were a number of comedy and popular pairs: let's just mention Šimek and Grossmann, Šimek and Sobota, Bohdalová and Dvořák, or the self-performing (today we would use the modern term 'stand-up comedian') Vladimír Menšík, singer Ivan Mládek and many others.

On the contrary, the author goes into great detail on all the other topics, which he analyses in an engaging and understandable way and in sufficient depth. The reviewer deliberately states the word on the grounds that a scientifically in-depth analysis of all international and national circumstances would not be suitable for this type of publication and would unnecessarily lead the reader to another sphere. The events before and after August 1968, i.e. the entry of the Warsaw Pact troops and the subsequent occupation, are particularly well described, and Murphy correctly uses the term *Prague spring* here. For the vast majority of Czechoslovaks, this period was and is a national tragedy comparable to the entry of German Third Reich troops in March 1939. In addition, all was exacerbated by a sense of betrayal to suppress the counter-revolution here. Normalisation, i.e. a return to the pre-August regime in the 1970s and 1980s, is also clearly described and explained, including the participation of key politicians such as Dubček, Biľak, Husák, Jakeš, Štrougal and others. The author's submission reveals the grayness, apathy and resignation that locals felt during normalisation. The author also deals with smaller, rather social phenomena that were so typical of the communist era in Czechoslovakia. These include under-counter sales, the purchase of foreign goods in Tuzex and payment in a currency called vouchers, a penchant for lodging, bribery, lack of goods and scarce goods, a centrally planned economy, a pioneer organisation and much more. At the same time, T.K. Murphy is aware that the described issue did not strictly concern only Czechoslovakia, but also other states of the Eastern Bloc and partly, in connection with the local events, he also mentions Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia and East Germany.

Conclusion

The whole book can be warmly recommended as a professional, clear, unbiased and impartial source of information related to Czechoslovakia during the reign of the totalitarian communist regime (1948-1989). Foreign but also Czech-Slovak readers will be addressed by a dynamically written publication, which is not

not just a dry collection of historical data and contexts of an encyclopedically structured type. Readers will be able to understand the basic functioning of the then communist regime, its society and population. Aspects of everyday life and the desires of ordinary people, who sometimes did not even have enough basic consumer goods, are very well explained. Václav Klaus sr. (a prominent Czech post-November politician, ex-president of the Czech Republic, professor of economics and active participant in contemporary public and political life [reviewer's note]) in his book *30 Years of the Road to Freedom. But also back* (2019) states his opinion, which may correspond to the message of Murphy's book, that thanks to the experienced totalitarianism, Czechoslovaks value the acquired freedoms, democracy, free market, enough goods and other aspects which were a matter of course for Western society.

DEGTEREV, Denis, KURYLEV, Konstantin (eds.). *Foreign Policies of the CIS States: A Comprehensive Reference*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2019. ISBN 978-1-62637-785-1.

DOI: 10.51870/CEJISS.R150402

Foreign Policies of the CIS States

Reviewed by Jan Měřička

The end of the 20th century is marked by the USSR's dissolution. Nevertheless, the USSR was partially replaced by the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) which was officially established by the signatures of the heads of Byelorussia, Russia and Ukraine in Belavezha Forest in Belorussia in 1991. Many other former USSR countries joined the CIS later and created the space integrated by many other organisations. The most important of them, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), is the second most integrated organisation in the world (after the EU). Another, known as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), was established on the foundation of the Tashkent Treaty in 1992 and it presents other fields of integration focusing on collective defence and security cooperation. The CIS integration presents a general framework for other international organisations and common treaties in the post-Soviet space.

The majority of this book's authors come from the CIS Network University (one of the academic projects of the CIS states). The author collective, led by D. Degterev and K. Kurylev, describes the integration process in the post-Soviet space after the collapse of the USSR in the first part of the book. The authors describe the successful integration process which started among the majority of the post-Soviet countries in the beginning of the 1990s. Several integration projects are summarised at the beginning of the book. They focus on many fields like economic cooperation, trade cooperation, defence and security cooperation, cultural and educational cooperation, or transportation and industrial cooperation. Some CIS states shift several integration steps by using the Soviet unification platform from previous era. Hence, some of them could have quickly switched some ordinary integration steps and directly created the union. The

decision-making process as well as the CIS governing bodies are well described at the beginning of the book, too.

The authors dedicated the rest of the book's chapters to every single CIS country. Every chapter describes one of the CIS members and is divided into four parts. The first one focuses on the default country's geopolitical and historical conditions and the country's foreign policy potential. The second one consists of a description of the country's foreign policy framework and policymaking bodies. The third part consists of the general foreign policy priorities and the approach (including relations with the main foreign partners and its international organisation's membership). The last part focuses on the economic and foreign economic policy of the examined country. The authors do not focus only on the internal CIS relations, they also research the relations of the CIS members with the external great powers like the USA or China. The foreign policymaking process is described in detail for the case of every CIS member. The emphasis is put on the economic and security context of their foreign policy. These relations and a wider foreign policy context of every CIS member together present the general CIS foreign policy framework.

It is necessary to note that some CIS integrating processes and their resulting organisations like the EAEU and the CSTO have created a counterbalance of the EU and NATO in the northern hemisphere. This counterbalance includes the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which is mentioned in the book as well. Some regional problems are mentioned in the book despite the fact that it mostly focuses on the successful integration. However, these complications like the terrorism threat or fear of the international enforcement of competitive actors like NATO led by the USA obviously enforce the common actions and deeper integration. For instance, such cases of the common actions in the field of security and defence cooperation have led to the creation of the Collective Rapid Reaction Force and the Collective Rapid Deployment Force with integrated headquarters in Bishkek in Tajikistan.

The book in general very clearly presents the integration process of the post-Soviet countries in the larger historical, economic and security contexts. The successful integration is described in chronological order of the developed process of the creation of the foreign policies of the CIS members. The end of the book consists of many appendixes including lists of key international agreements and the treaties between the described countries and their partners. Finally, it presents a large summary of the foreign policies and integration process of the CIS states at the end of 20th century and beginning of the 21st century. This book does not use any specific theory of international relations hence this summary could present an independent and valuable source of information for other researchers and scientists.

List of reviewers in 2021

We want to thank all the external reviewers who evaluated manuscripts in 2021. (Please note that the following list includes all the experts who sent their evaluations to CEJISS in 2021 regardless of when a reviewed manuscript was received and whether a given manuscript has or has not been published. We are particularly grateful to those who were willing to review more manuscripts.)

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Viktoria Akchurina, University of Trento
Thomas Ambrosio, North Dakota State University
Edward Ashbee, Copenhagen Business School
Douglas Atkinson, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg
Hamidreza Azizi, German Institute for International and Security Affairs
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János Besenyő, University of Óbuda
Oldřich Bureš, Metropolitan University Prague
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Robert Csehi, Technical University of Munich
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