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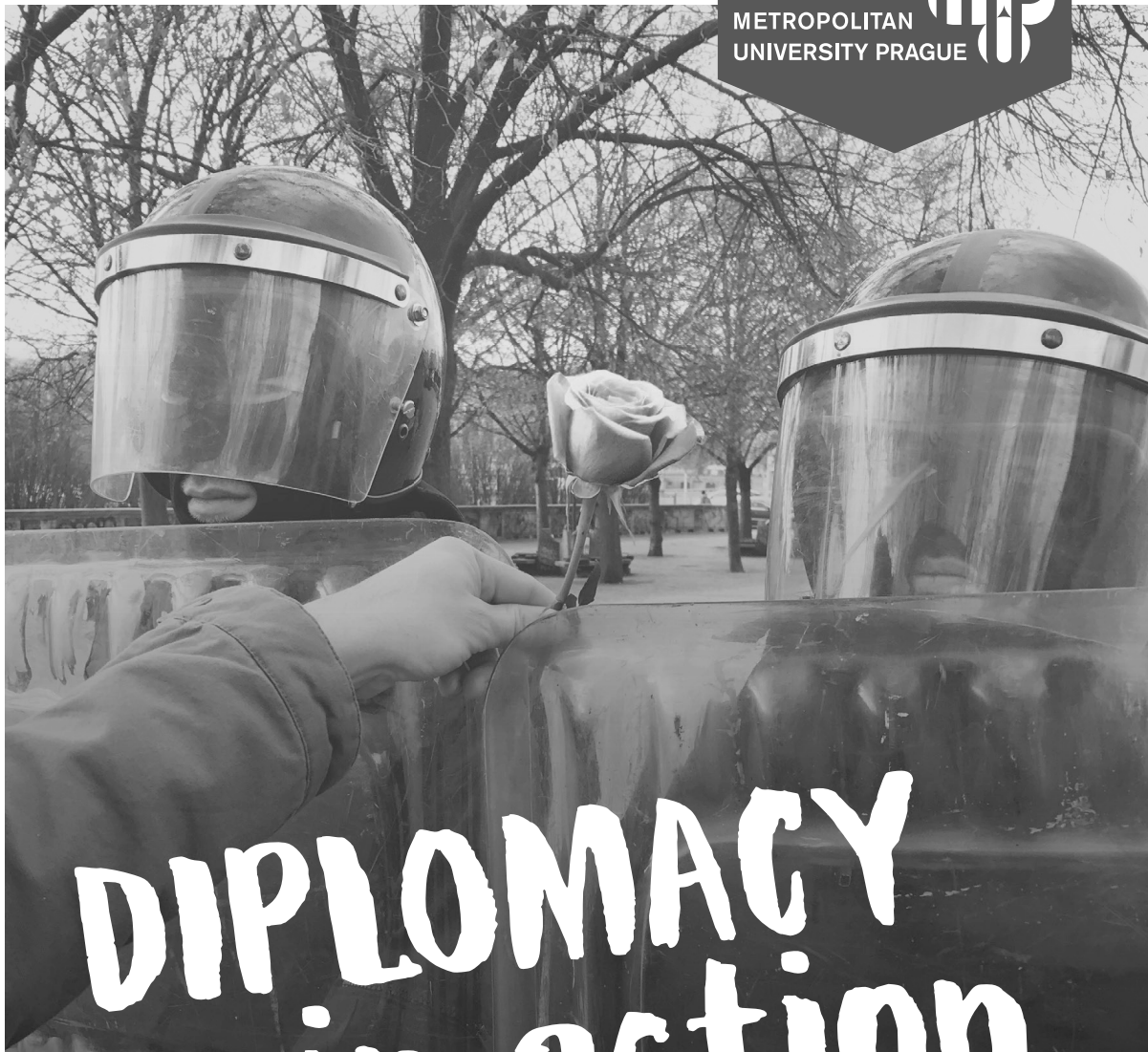
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Understanding the Yemen Tragedy through Iranian Behaviour

Mitchell Belfer

The ebbing war against Daesh may preoccupy European security thinking, but it is the triple tragedy unfolding in Yemen — the humanitarian tragedy, the socio-economic tragedy and the geopolitical tragedy — that contains the potential to unwind what is left of the Middle Eastern order. Located along the strategic south-western corner of the Arabian Peninsula, where the Strait of Mandeb straddles the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, and heading northward towards the Nejaz, Yemen is cursed by its geography—the most entrepreneurial regional and international actors view it as a stepping stone to projecting influence over Saudi Arabia; its vast oil wealth and Islam's holiest shrines at Mecca and Medina. Control Yemen, so the argument goes, and then reach out for control over one of the world's richest oil reserves and the crown jewels of the Islamic civilisation.

The Ayatollah's Iran is the most recent, in a long line, to enter Yemen's political fray. This has led to spiralling crises: terrorism, famine, cholera and open warfare. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and a coalition of allies stand to prevent Iran's main militia — the Houthi — from a complete takeover of the country while a patchwork of tribal unions and miniature fiefdoms, terrorist groups and militias, have sprung up and turned the country into a jigsaw puzzle. Then, on 04 December 2017, former Yemeni President, Ali Abdullah Saleh, was murdered by Houthi rebels. He had changed sides, publicly denounced Iran and the Houthi, pledged to work with the coalition and paid for it with his life. Yemen went from bad to worse.

Through the projection of power and fear, the Houthis have absorbed a handful of tribes that had once supported Saleh and have

consolidated their territorial holdings, including a string of harbours such as Hodeida, with the help of Tehran. Ballistic missile attacks against Saudi Arabia are becoming the new norm and there is no let up in sight. But the war against the Houthi is not the only dynamic at play—South Yemen separatism is back and is threatening to cut-away the last thread of stability...Aden.

In late April 2017, Governor of the Aden Governorate, Aidarus al-Zoubaidi, was sacked by Yemen's UN recognised President, Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi. Standing accused of disloyalty because of his open support for the Southern independence movement, al-Zoubaidi quickly moved away from national politics to concentrate on supporting the so-called Southern Transitional Council (STC), which was formed in May 2017. Hadi has declared the council illegitimate. Since May 2017, a tenuous double stalemate ensued: in the Houthi-Government/Coalition conflict and in the North-South conflict.

But on 28 January 2018 the latter conflict came back to life as STC separatists seized control of the Yemen government headquarters in Aden and spread out over large parts of the southern port city, including military bases. They stopped short of advancing on the presidential palace after clashing with pro-government forces and briefly surrounding the building while Prime Minister Ahmed bin Daghr and his ministers were inside. The UAE had supported these forces against the Houthi and now their arms were being misdirected against Yemen's national government and Saudi Arabian backed military units, causing unnecessary tensions within the coalition.

Thankfully, these were limited. Shuttle diplomacy between Saudi Arabia and the UAE may have done the trick and both have since called on Yemen's military and southern secessionists to focus their energies on fighting Houthi rebels and end the standoff in Aden. The UAE went further and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Anwar Gargash, underlined the UAE's supports for the Saudi-led Arab Coalition in light of the Aden clashes that resulted in 15 dead. He added that there shall be no solace to those who seek incitement. It was crisis averted.

Since that incident, direct attacks by the Iran-backed militia have increased in tempo, efficiency and devastation. With Tehran supplying an endless amount of ever-sophisticated ballistic missiles, and the international community busy with an assortment of other, more proximate crises (re: Russia-UK tension, Turkish adventurism and Iranian in Syria) Saudi Arabia — in coordination with its Arab Gulf allies — sits

on 24-hour-a-day missile watch. Yemen is rapidly becoming the staging ground for Iran to harass and, ultimately, infiltrate Saudi Arabia. The proxy war is being eclipsed by interstate engagement and it is a matter of time before Iran attempts to invade Saudi Arabia via Yemen.

How the Yemen conflict will end is not a matter of guesswork but a matter of engagement. If the international community turns a blind eye to the crimes being committed by the Houthi militia and does not adequately reinforce the legitimate government of Hadi and the coalition fighting to preserve it then the country will continue on its downward spiral of war and the erosion of the national fabric. This is a Pandora's Box that needs to be sealed before the perfect storm of tribalism, sectarianism, secessionism and raw geopolitics force the country to turn a corner it cannot turn back from.

*Editor's
Analysis*



This article is a revised version of *Cosa sta accadendo davvero in Yemen e i crimini commessi dalle milizie Houthi* available at: <http://formiche.net/2018/02/yemen-crimini-milizie-houthi/>.

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On the Possible Foreign Policy of the Post-Putin Russia

The Case of Alexei Navalny's Viewpoints on Foreign Affairs

Artem Patalakh

The study delves into the foreign policy plans of Alexei Navalny, the Russian politician who is currently commonly regarded as the most prominent opposition leader and the sole plausible alternative to Vladimir Putin. Drawing on his interviews, public speeches, media publications and electoral manifestos, the author analyses his foreign policy views alongside three topics, that is, Russia's policies towards disputed lands and states in the post-Soviet area (Crimea, Donbas, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria), the country's foreign policy orientation and priorities (especially regarding relations with the West) and assessment of the Putin regime's foreign policy. Following this, the author speculates on the likely foundations of Russia's foreign policy under Navalny's possible presidency and their implications for the West.

Keywords: Alexei Navalny, Crimea, Donbas war, Russian foreign policy, Russian opposition, Syrian civil war.

In recent years, among all Russian opposition politicians, Alexei Navalny, the leader of the Progress Party and the head of Anti-Corruption Foundation, has tended to be internationally considered as the most

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influential and the only one who is potentially capable of defeating Vladimir Putin. Due to his notorious anti-corruption investigations aimed at Russia's leading officials and politicians,¹ well-organised countrywide protests in March and June 2017² as well as relatively successful 2013 Moscow mayoral and ongoing presidential campaigns, Navalny's personality, views and tactics have received sizeable scholarly attention³ and coverage in the leading international media.⁴ Thrice included in Foreign Policy's Top 100 Global Thinkers list⁵ and twice mentioned in Time's annual roundups of the world's most influential people in the Internet,⁶ nowadays Navalny frequently enjoys such pretentious descriptions as "Russia's last opposition hero,"⁷ "Putin's main political opponent,"⁸ "the man who would beat Putin,"⁹ "the leader of the opposition of Russia"¹⁰ and "most prominent opposition figure"¹¹ who "has breathed new life into the opposition movement"¹² and "caused a stir in Russian politics."¹³ Of no less importance is that international politicians also to some extent seem to recognise Navalny's status as one of Russia's key opinion leaders and fighters against Putin's regime: to illustrate, his anti-corruption investigations have been highly appreciated¹⁴ by Guy Verhofstadt, former Prime Minister of Belgium and current Member of the European Parliament and leader of the European ALDE Party. Besides, some analysts point to the fact that the list of Russians, on whom the US imposed sanctions for the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, by and large coincided with the list proposed by Navalny in his article in The New York Times one day earlier,¹⁵ hinting that the Obama administration may have taken account of his suggestions.¹⁶

Despite his notability and a heightened interest in his personality, Navalny's political views, nevertheless, remain a rather debatable matter in Russian politics. Most of the above-cited international magazines depict Navalny as a democratic, liberal politician determined to put an end to Putin's authoritarianism, democratise the country and integrate it in the world community.¹⁷ Indeed, already now one may reasonably assume that should Navalny one day come to power, some of his policies will be extraordinary for contemporary Russia. For example, few would doubt that Navalny's Russia will witness an unparalleled anti-corruption campaign, taking cognizance of his acknowledgedly tough stance on corruption. Likewise, his readiness to legalise same-sex marriages¹⁸ can also be regarded as exceptional for someone who intends to run for presidency in a country where conservatism is presently on the rise¹⁹ and where there seems to be little

consensus on gay rights protection even among liberals.²⁰ At the same time, Navalny himself prefers calling himself “just a normal candidate from normal people, who proposes a reasonable and logical program,” attempting to distance himself from being labelled as “liberal,” arguing that a strict association with liberalism would potentially allow him to count on solely about 3-4 percent of the votes while he wants to win the presidential elections.²¹ Incidentally, a great number of the country’s conspicuous liberal public figures tend to question Navalny’s commitment to democracy and liberalism, raising concerns about his arguably authoritarian leadership style, nationalistic views, willingness to attract jingoists²² etc.

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Factoring in the great discrepancies regarding Navalny’s political ideas in general, it appears interesting to analyse his foreign policy beliefs in particular, all the more so because the existent academic research on his political views, first, mainly deals with his domestic rather than foreign policy ideas and second, is primarily dedicated to his 2013 mayoral campaign, failing to account for the changes that have occurred in both his views²³ and Russian politics ever since. Furthermore, notwithstanding that his chances to win the presidential elections in March 2018 may seem minor given his still modest rating²⁴ and the fact that the Kremlin is placing numerous obstructions to his campaign,²⁵ now that he has clearly declared his presidential ambitions and therefore, may succeed Putin as the one in charge with the country’s external affairs, his foreign policy program is of particularly great topicality. The analysis rests on Navalny’s numerous speeches, interviews, articles and electoral manifestos appeared in the period 2014-17 and is clustered around three themes on which he chiefly concentrates, namely Russian policies toward disputed lands and states in the post-Soviet space (Crimea, Donbas, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria), the country’s general foreign policy orientation (in particular, as far as Russia-West relations are concerned) and assessment of Putin’s foreign policy.

Navalny’s Foreign Policy Views

Secessionist territories

Perhaps the primary thing that will be remembered about the Putin/Medvedev regime’s foreign policy is the two military conflicts that Russia has waged in the former Soviet republics, namely the 2008 Russo-Georgian war and particularly the 2014 Russo-Ukrainian war. Alexei

Navalny's stand on them is peculiar in two ways. Firstly, he tends to pointedly stress their relative unimportance compared to Russia's domestic affairs. Even in 2014-15, when foreign policy issues (especially Crimea and Donbas) were significantly dominating the country's public discourse, Navalny's focus was primarily on internal problems: in October 2014, for example, he posited that "the issue of illegal immigration is 100 times more important than any Ukraine," believing that "[i]t's not in the interests of Russians to seize neighbouring republics, it's in their interests to fight corruption, alcoholism and so on—to solve internal problems."²⁶ Secondly, Navalny usually does not seem to want to canvass foreign policy in general and Ukraine in particular, frequently eschewing answering foreign affairs related questions as clearly and knowledgeably as he normally does whenever asked on other topics (e.g. Russian ruling elite, elections, corruption, etc.), preferring giving vague replies and trying to drive the conversation towards internal issues instead. In this vein, in October 2014, Navalny's response to the question whether he was considering Crimea as belonging to Russia or Ukraine was "Crimea belongs to the people who live in Crimea."²⁷ When in April 2017, *Spiegel's* journalist raised the point of Navalny's general avoidance of answering questions on foreign policy and Ukraine by giving replies of the kind "[m]y foreign policy consists of finally building roads and the payment of higher wages," Navalny gave a reply which explicitly implied he was treating foreign affairs as a low salience issue:

I am not avoiding it [foreign policy]. But I believe, and in this sense I am different from Putin, that Russia should not isolate itself. Everything that happens in our country is justified through Syria or Ukraine. But when one's own citizens only make 300 euros, one can't have much clout in foreign policy. Let's start with colonizing our own country. When I visit my brother in jail, I drive through the most densely populated part of European Russia—and I don't see anybody, kilometer after kilometer. That would be a great opportunity to apply our energies.²⁸

Albeit the cases of Crimea, Donbas, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria are seemingly identical in that these territories' break-aways were possible only thanks to Russian military and financial assistance and are not recognised by the international community, Navalny treats each of them differently. As for Crimea, he holds a "realist"

standpoint, arguing that “despite the fact that Crimea was seized with egregious violations of all international regulations, the reality is that Crimea is now part of Russia.”²⁹ Expressing refusal to return Crimea back to Ukraine immediately—once he said the peninsula is not “some sort of sausage sandwich to be passed back and forth”³⁰—and considering the status referendum held on the peninsula in March 2014 as falsified, Navalny has been a continual proponent of a new, “fair” referendum that would be conducted according to democratic standards with the presence of international observers and hence, would potentially satisfy all the currently opposing sides, from Crimean Tatars to the EU.³¹ Yet, he does not seem optimistic about the peninsula’s future, saying that try as he might, neither the international community nor Ukraine are likely to recognise the referendum, so Crimea will most probably remain one of many unresolved territorial disputes in the world,³² suffering from a lack of investments and economic development.³³ Incidentally, Navalny’s idea of a fair referendum in Crimea is common among Russia’s democratic opposition: a similar view has been expressed by the former leader of the PARNAS party Boris Nemtsov, murdered in February 2015, and the leader of the “Yabloko” party Emilia Slabunova.³⁴ Analogously to PARNAS and Yabloko during their 2016 parliamentary elections campaign,³⁵ Navalny currently decided not to open presidential campaign offices on the Crimean peninsula.³⁶

As to Donbas, Navalny advocates implementing the Minsk Accords, i.e., granting amnesty to local separatists and discontinuing provision of material support to them, withdrawing the remaining Russian troops (that, in his opinion, are still remaining in East Ukraine) and restoring control of the state border to the government of Ukraine.³⁷ Yet, on this point, he seems to lack a strategic vision of what to do next and how the situation will evolve after; moreover, once elected president, he apparently wants to completely liberate himself as soon as possible from solving Donbas’ issues, putting them thoroughly on the Ukrainian government. To illustrate, consistently referring to the needed policies towards Ukraine as “easy,” meaning that the sole thing Russia needs to do is to implement the Minsk Accords, he, however, failed to give a compelling reply to the question how to deal with Ukraine that is not observing the Minsk Accords either, simply saying “I will implement the Russian part of the Minsk Accords, I will transfer the border control.”³⁸ Likewise, when faced the question of how to

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stop Ukrainian nationalists who are likely to pose danger to Donbas' citizens once the region is back in Ukraine, Navalny answered—quite jauntily—that “for this purpose, there are blue helmets, there are European troops, units of various kinds, and mankind has a rather great experience in the application of such measures.”³⁹ Finally, whenever asked about the ways to normalise Russo-Ukrainian relations, Navalny gives rather philosophical responses nearly absent of concrete political steps, arguing that Putin's policies have created such a hostile state in the person of Ukraine that there can hardly be any universal decision to tackle the problem, that “it is only time that will mainly heal the wound” and, provided that Russia performs the Minsk Accords and no other conflicts flare up, “perhaps, in a couple of generations, we [Russians] will completely normalise our relations with Ukraine.”⁴⁰ So far, incidentally, Navalny's ideas on Ukraine appear to have faced opposition both from most of the Russian pro-Kremlin media and a great deal of the Ukrainian mainstream ones with the former portraying him as closely affiliated with Ukraine⁴¹ while the latter arguing that his possible presidency would imply little, if any, change in Moscow's approach to Kiev.⁴²

According to Navalny, comparing Crimea and Donbas to Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria is hardly accurate: while the latter three territories have been de facto independent since the break-up of the Soviet Union and the 2008 Russo-Georgian war was, in his opinion, initiated by Georgia,⁴³ Ukrainian secessionist regions came to existence in consequence of Putin's policies. Again, he does not appear to have a clear-cut program on what to do with Abkhazia and South Ossetia: while he favours halting sponsoring them and is reluctant to return them back to Georgia, recently he admitted he is “not ready” to answer the question whether Russia should keep its military bases there.⁴⁴ It remains, nonetheless, unclear how it may be possible—with no military and economic support—to retain the independence of the territories which, as Gerrits and Bader put it, are “dependent on Moscow to an extent that is rarely observed between states that recognise each other's independence,” taking into account that “[t]he economic and intergovernmental linkages between Russia and the two regions are not just extraordinarily deep, but they directly undermine the autonomy of the regions.”⁴⁵

Common in his treatment of all those secessionist territories is that he mostly considers them not from identity-related or geopolitical, but from a purely economic perspective,⁴⁶ as territories on the

maintenance of which Russian taxpayers' money are being spent. In this vein, he supported the statement that Crimea is de-facto Russian on the grounds that pensions and salaries on the peninsula are paid from the Russian budget.⁴⁷ When facing the question of how he will interact with Abkhazia and South Ossetia once elected president, the first thing he said was that the money Russian taxpayers are currently paying to those territories amounts to 200,000 roubles (about 2,900 Euro) monthly per a local citizen, the practice which he wants to stop.⁴⁸ Analogously, his resoluteness to do away with the Donbas war also primarily relates to economic issues: his main arguments in favour of the implementation of the Minsk Accords are that, given Russia's own underdeveloped social system and abject poverty, first, the country cannot afford spending money on the war itself, the payment of salaries and pensions to locals and the sustenance of Ukrainian refugees and second, Russia needs international economic sanctions to be lifted.⁴⁹ Remarkably, for Navalny, the economic angle of the war in Donbas significantly surpasses ethical and legal considerations. Exemplary of this point is that during his debates with Igor Strelkov, a Russian army veteran who played a crucial role in the occupation of Crimea and organisation of the militant groups of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic in April-August 2014, Navalny evaded from calling him a war criminal, saying the it is not him, but the court that should decide it.⁵⁰ Instead, his main accusation of Strelkov was not that the war initiated by Strelkov has resulted in over 10,000 deaths thus far, but rather that the war is costly, is "destroying Russia's economy" and "deprives Russian citizens . . . of their money, last money."⁵¹

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Foreign Policy Orientation and Russia-West Relations

Unlike Putin, whose rhetoric tends to stress Russia's distinctiveness both from the West and the East, Navalny does not seem to focus on this issue at all, sometimes, similarly to Putin, considering the country as being in "a unique position between Europe and Asia"⁵² and sometimes regarding Russia to be a part of the Western world.⁵³ In general, in his speeches and manifestos, Navalny tends to abstain from specially highlighting the West in general or Europe in particular, simply listing them among several key players with which he is willing to build friendly relations.⁵⁴ On a more careful reading of his manifestos, however, it becomes evident he still somewhat favours Western states among other actors, arguing that "Russia's strategic interests in the

contemporary world in many respects coincide with the interests of developed Western countries . . . It is them with whom Russia will develop equal partnership and alliances.”⁵⁵ At the same time, for Navalny, Russia’s position in the world and the country’s relations with the West appear to be a pragmatic/rational rather than ideological/identity-related matter. While clearly rejecting Putin’s “third way” and “Eurasianism” ideologies⁵⁶ and refraining from depicting the West as the main hindrance to the development of Russian economy,⁵⁷ as often does Russian official propaganda, Navalny nevertheless seems to accentuate an economic, trade and political rather than ideological alliance with the West, overtly stating that he will build his policy towards all international actors, including Western countries, through the prism of “whether Russia benefits from this and . . . whether the Russian Federation’s citizens make more money on this.”⁵⁸ In a similar manner, he considers Russia’s accession to WTO as right in that the country’s most economic sectors capitalise on it.⁵⁹ According to Navalny, Russia and the West have common strategic interests, among which he lists freedom of trade, battle against international terrorism and reduction of international tensions.⁶⁰ Notably, the Progress Party’s electoral manifesto states that under its rule, “Russia will abandon supporting the regimes which rest on lie, violence and suppression of democracy” and “Russia will support post-Soviet states’ movement towards democracy and civil freedoms, avoiding gross political or military interferences in the affairs of the neighbouring states,”⁶¹ which may be interpreted as a sort of readiness to promote democracy and human rights abroad, but solely in a “passive” form which does not require any material expenses.

Remarkably, Navalny tends to understand international politics chiefly in *realpolitik* terms, as states’ constant struggle for their national interests. Almost identically to Putin’s statements, Navalny’s manifestos tend to underline that under his presidency, the country’s foreign policy would be *independent*⁶² and its cooperation with the EU—*equal*.⁶³ Pointing to the fact that the unity of the Western world, as commonly perceived from Russia, is in many respects exaggerated and in fact, EU member states compete with one another with each nation placing its own interests before those of the EU, Navalny believes that Western powers are generally interested in Russia playing the role of “hinterlands of resources” and hence, try to impede its technological advancement.⁶⁴ Given this, it is no wonder that unlike the world’s most liberals, Navalny does not see any problem in cooperating with Donald

Trump or European far-right parties should they once come to power in their countries.⁶⁵ Again, this point seems to reflect his general belief in the priority of objective national interests over ideological considerations: supposing that a country's foreign policy is in many aspects inertial and guided by economic interests independent of ideology, he did not believe in December 2016 that Russia's relations with the US would change significantly under Trump.⁶⁶ Yet, noteworthy is that Navalny tends to comment on Russia-West relations rather vaguely, negligently, which seems to indicate that he lacks a clear program on this issue. Consider, for example, the answer that he gave at a meeting with his supporters:

When I become President, what relations am I planning to build with the United States? Usual, normal ones. Well, Trump will come here, we'll shake each other's hands. Everyone wants one simple thing—that is earning money. And I want Russia in its relations with the USA to earn money as well, I want us [Russia and the US] to cooperate in the oil-and-gas sphere, in outer space and everywhere else.⁶⁷

As for Russia's policy in the post-Soviet area, the Progress Party's manifesto mentions it only after Russia-West relations, which indicates that Navalny hardly deems Russia's so-called "near abroad" as a pillar of the country's foreign policy—as distinct from Russia's current Foreign Policy Concept which states that "[t]he foreign policy priorities of the Russian Federation include developing bilateral and multilateral cooperation with member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and further strengthening integration structures within the CIS involving Russia."⁶⁸ However, pointing to the "close cultural and language ties" that the post-Soviet states have "for historical reasons," Navalny does not reject the Eurasian integration completely, suggesting that it be continued, but only "to the extent that it will contribute to the mutual benefit"⁶⁹ of its participants rather than to the detriment of economic interests for geopolitical purposes. In general, Navalny appears to conceive of the post-Soviet space in terms of *internal* (security, economic) rather than *foreign* affairs: in this vein, guided by the desire to be able to control an inflow of migrants to Russia, he actively proposes to introduce a visa regime not only with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, but even with Kyrgyzstan and Armenia, Russia's fellows in the Eurasian Economic Union.⁷⁰

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Attitude to Putin's Foreign Policy

Navalny's stance on Putin's approach to foreign affairs is highly critical and one can distinguish three major lines of his criticism. The first—and the main one—relates to Putin's foreign policy being arguably injurious to Russia's developmental needs. In this respect, Navalny's primary argument is that Putin spends too much on the country's external affairs whereas Russian economy is in serious need of investments. This "excessive expenditure" argument pertains both to direct war expenses on the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria⁷¹ and provision of material aid to other states: regarding the latter, Navalny recently criticised Putin for the fact that since 2005, the Russian government has cancelled debts owed by Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq, Cuba, North Korea, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Venezuela.⁷² Notably, Navalny tends to specially highlight the fact that it is the money of *Russian* taxpayers that the government spends *abroad* in lieu of allocating them for *domestic* economy, many spheres of which remain backward. To exemplify, at one meeting with his constituencies, criticising Putin's decision to spend 100 billion roubles on the gasification of Kyrgyzstan, while 40% of the territory of Russia itself is allegedly not gasified, Navalny said that his "foreign policy credo" as President would be that he would stop writing debts off.⁷³ In his own words, when campaigning in Russian provincial towns, he usually formulates his argument in the following fashion:

OK great, so Putin is promising to rebuild Palmyra, but why don't you look at the roads in your city? What do you think the priority should be? Fixing the roads in Voronezh or Stavropol or rebuilding Palmyra? The Americans are loaded. Let them fix Palmyra, and we should concentrate on our own problems.⁷⁴

Furthermore, Navalny considers Putin's foreign policy to be harming the country's society and exacerbating security concerns. Along this line, he criticises Putin's policies in the post-Soviet space for they have arguably led to an "uncontrolled inflow of labour migrants" which "negatively affects both the unqualified labour market and the general state of society that is not able to integrate the migrants at the same rate as the increase in their number."⁷⁵ Supportive of the general idea of Russia's participation in the Syrian civil war, Navalny still conceives of Putin's policies in Syria as incapable of accounting for the interests of Russian Muslims. In his own words, "[i]t is absurd that we [Russians] are intervening on the side of the Shiites in a war between Sun-

nis and Shiites even though almost all Russian Muslims are Sunnis”:⁷⁶ as a result, “people from the North Caucasus go to Syria in droves to fight along their Sunni brothers against Shi’a.”⁷⁷ In Navalny’s opinion, in place of endeavouring “to save Assad, who represents a military junta,”⁷⁸ “Russia should join the international coalition against Islamic State.”⁷⁹

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Another point in Navalny’s criticism is that Putin arguably fails to use available foreign resources to the advantage of Russia’s socioeconomic advancement. One of such resources is the global Russian diaspora whose skills and competences, according to Navalny, could be potentially utilised for the furtherance of Russia’s image abroad as well as the country’s domestic development, but such is not being done arguably because Russians residing abroad perceive their historical homeland as hostile to them.⁸⁰ Another resource of this sort is the experience and expertise of the world’s developed states which, in Navalny’s opinion, Russia fails to use for its own domestic reforms because Putin’s international policies have ruined Russia’s relations with those states.⁸¹

Finally, one more line of criticism refers to the fact that Putin’s policies have arguably weakened the country’s international position. In this respect, Navalny states that, similarly to domestic politics, in his foreign affairs Putin tends to disregard the established rules and his own promises. One instance of this point is the Minsk Accords which Putin has signed, but never respected,⁸² another—the Crimean referendum that, according to Navalny, was falsified and thus hardly represented the true opinion of Crimean people, which he considers among the reasons why the international community has not recognised it.⁸³ In addition, Navalny accuses Putin of transforming Ukraine, Russia’s neighbour and Europe’s largest state, from Russia’s brotherly nation and important partner into a state hostile to Russia.⁸⁴ Besides, Navalny regards corruption and poverty, peculiar to Putin’s regime, to conduce to Russia not being respected internationally, believing that “in the modern world, a country is respected if its citizens live freely and in affluence.”⁸⁵

The above-mentioned discussion, however, should not give an impression that Navalny criticises Putin’s *all* foreign policy moves. Rather, he relates to him only those with which he disagrees. Illustrative of this point is, for instance, Russia’s accession to WTO, which Navalny welcomes, deeming it as advantageous to multiple sectors of the country’s economy, however, he does not explicitly link it to Putin.⁸⁶

Discussion

Now that the review of Navalny's standpoints on key foreign policy issues has been done, it is possible to speculate on his likely foreign policy foundations, drawing relevant parallels and implications. The first noteworthy point is that as far as his foreign policy is concerned, Putin is generally notorious for prioritising geopolitical competition over Russia's economic development: as Blank notes, "its roots are not in economics but in geopolitics and... Putin's program is fundamentally geopolitical in its thrust, not economic."⁸⁷ Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the official discourse of the Putin regime accentuates international issues more than domestic ones, for it is foreign affairs that are used for national identity construction.⁸⁸ By contrast, Navalny clearly treats foreign policy as a side issue, as a derivative of domestic policies, viewing it in the first place as a source that may contribute to the country's modernisation. Given Navalny's "Russia first" standpoint and his tough stance on migration, the far-left criticism that equates him with Trump⁸⁹ does not appear very far away from reality, though Navalny himself may not be completely agree with such a parallel. Importantly, the fact that he attaches little importance to foreign policy is, in a sense, one of the *pillars* of Navalny's presidential campaign: to exemplify, in a recent interview, he said, "[I]n my electoral campaign, I distinguish an important task, that is, to divert the focus of political discussion toward domestic policies."⁹⁰

As a consequence of this, as was shown above, Navalny does not appear to have as clear and detailed a program on foreign policy as the one he has, for instance, on corruption. He tends to be ambiguous and evasive whenever encountering questions on foreign affairs—in stark contrast with his detailed knowledge on domestic issues. It would even not be an overstatement to argue that Navalny somewhat does not appear to be interested in and familiar with foreign policy topics: to illustrate, in one interview, he called the problems of Donbas and Crimea "not related to each other";⁹¹ another time, when listing the countries whose debts Putin has written off,⁹² Navalny made no difference between *dictatorships* amicable to the Putin regime (e.g. Syria, Venezuela) and simply *developing countries* (e.g. Iraq, Afghanistan), though this difference seems to be of crucial significance in this case. In view of that, it does not appear surprising that Navalny's foreign policy views contain a number of contradictions, the origin of which Laruelle foresaw

as early as in 2013, linking them to Navalny's desire to combine hardly reconcilable liberalism and nationalism.⁹³ To name a few, he wants to participate in the Syrian war as a part of the international coalition while spending no money on the country's restoration; he is willing to continue the Eurasian integration as long as it is beneficial for Russia simultaneously championing the idea to impose a visa regime with Central Asian states and finally, he intends to establish friendly relations with the West without giving Crimea back to Ukraine.

Notably, it is hardly fair to regard Navalny as fully "liberal" when it comes to foreign policy issues - although, to borrow the terms of IR theory, he may be justly deemed as "neoliberal" in the sense that he directly prioritises *absolute* gains (Russia's economic development) over *relative* gains (geopolitical competition).⁹⁴ Nevertheless, the fact that he considers Russia's internal development to be the highest priority signifies not only that he would give up sponsoring the world's dictatorships—the other side of the coin are his suggestion significantly toughening laws on migration and his immediate rejection to provide developmental aid to poor states, both of which have little to do with liberal values. What is more, as against Putin, Navalny appears to attribute great importance to the respect of international norms, yet this respect seems to be important not for him *per se*, due to *moral* principles, but simply for *practical* reasons, because adherence to rules and norms eventually produces a country's reputation of a predictable and responsible actor in the international system, which is eventually conducive to its stable economic development. In light of this fact, it is small wonder that his criticism of Putin's policies in Syria and Ukraine focuses on the high cost of the wars rather than ethical concerns. To understand how such mindset could eventually translate into a real foreign policy, let it suffice to say that it bears a close resemblance with the current official Serbian discourse about the foreign policy of the country's dictator Slobodan Milošević in the 1990s. As one study notes,

[t]he predominant political narrative in post-Milosevic Serbia rejected Milosevic's wartime strategies as wrong and destructive; not because they caused great suffering and mass casualties in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, but because they economically, politically, and diplomatically devastated Serbia and denied it aspirations to regional domination. In other words, Milosevic was not wrong to fight the wars; he was wrong to lose them.⁹⁵

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For the West, Navalny's pragmatism on foreign policy on the one hand means that he would reject Putin's blatant anti-Westernism and thus, Russia would finally heed the world community's opinion on human rights, annulling the recently adopted domestic laws that violate European standards (e.g. the so-called Dima Yakovlev law, the gay propaganda law, the law on the priority of the national Constitution over the resolutions of the European Court of Human Rights, etc.). Otherwise stated, under Navalny, foreign leaders would likely find it easier to influence the Russian government's decisions by raising their concerns—which is nearly impossible under Putin who traditionally views conceding as expressing a weakness, which he fears arguably due to narcissism and bullyism, intrinsic in his personal psychology.⁹⁶ Yet, similarly to contemporary Serbia, Navalny's Russia would likely experience significant problems related to European identity construction while—at first glance smoothly and successfully—drifting westward and complying—often unwillingly and reluctantly—with international demands and norms.⁹⁷ For post-Soviet states, the fact that Navalny would treat Eurasian integration simply from the viewpoint of economic profitability and not geopolitics means that Russia would finally stop trying to politicise the integration process and forcibly push other states into the Eurasian Economic Union, like Putin did with Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.⁹⁸ All in all, Navalny would probably bring Russia closer to Europe and the West, but he would hardly turn the country's foreign policy by 180 degrees, as far as seeking integration into NATO and the EU. In fact, the conclusion made by Katz as early as in 2012 in his article entitled "What Would a Democratic Russian Foreign Policy Look Like?" seemingly holds for Russia's possible foreign policy under Navalny's presidency:

[A] democratic Russia will more or less work together with America and other Western governments more than the Putin/Medvedev leadership does now, but differences among them on various issues will continue [...] [M]any of the current differences between the Western democracies, on the one hand, and the Putin/Medvedev administration, on the other, are likely to remain after a democratic transformation in Russia [...] Any Western expectations that a democratic Russia is likely to lead to a more pliable Russian foreign policy that will follow the US and/or European Union lead are likely to be disappointed.⁹⁹

A question that arises is whether Navalny's views on foreign affairs may substantially change should he come to power. Indeed, research shows that after winning elections, candidates often embark on policies that are at odds with their electoral promises—either because they realise the impossibility of implementing their plans once they have taken office, or because they blatantly lied when campaigning, populistically trying to gain votes.¹⁰⁰ Neither of these, nonetheless, seems to fully correspond to Navalny's case. The former is unlikely, given that much in his plans (e.g. his intentions regarding Crimea) reflects a clear attempt to balance between liberals' and conservatives' foreign policy expectations and nothing in his program appears wittingly unrealisable (e.g. he does not promise to accede to the EU in five years or the like). Moreover, his foreign policy plans will be most probably welcomed both by Western leaders, tired of Putin's intractability. With regard to the latter, indeed, on the one hand, Navalny's program rests on "safe" ideas, ones that are both critical of the incumbent government and likely to gain popular support. In this category fall not only corruption and embezzlement, but even his call to redirect the government's attention from geopolitical toward domestic issues, for it corresponds to Russians' growing fatigue of the primacy of international issues in the government's policies and their dominance in the official discourse.¹⁰¹ At the same time, there is little doubt that Navalny believes in most statements he makes, given that his current arguments—primary focus on corruption, the "Russia first" stance, the call to introduce visas with Central Asia, etc.—by and large coincide with what he used to say and do before he got presidential ambitions. Moreover, regarding him to be a blatant populist appears inaccurate also because some of his ideas are not only diverse from, but somewhat opposite to predominant public attitudes. The examples of such include not only his above-mentioned support of gay rights, but also his position on Crimea the annexation of which, as recent polls show, is overwhelmingly favoured by Russians.¹⁰²

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Notes

- 1 The two most famous ones have targeted the family of Russia's prosecutor general Yuri Y. Chaika and, more recently, the country's Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. See '«Чайка». Фильм фонда борьбы с коррупцией,' (2015), 01 December, available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXYQbgvzxdM>> (accessed 13 August 2017); 'Он вам не Димон,' (2017), 02 March, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=qrwk7_GF9g> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 2 Neil MacFarquhar and Ivan Nechepurenko (2017), 'Aleksei Navalny, Russian Opposition Leader, Receives 15-Day Sentence,' *The New York Times*, 27 March, available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/27/world/europe/aleksei-navalny-russia-prison-sentence.html>> (accessed 13 August 2017); Andrew Roth and David Filipov (2017), 'Tens of Thousands Rally across Russia in Protests against Corruption,' *The Washington Post*, 12 June, available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/thousands-rally-across-russia-as-anti-corruption-activist-navalny-defies-moscow/2017/06/12/c1ba69c6-4ec6-11e7-b74e-od2785d3083d_story.html> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 3 See e.g. Marlene Laruelle (2014), 'Alexei Navalny and Challenges in Reconciling "Nationalism" and "Liberalism",' *Post-Soviet Affairs* 30(4), pp. 276-297; Natalia Moen-Larsen (2014), '"Normal Nationalism": Alexei Navalny, LiveJournal and "the Other",' *East European Politics* 30(4), pp. 548-567; Renira R. Gambarato and Sergey A. Medvedev (2015), 'Grassroots Political Campaign in Russia: Alexey Navalny and Transmedia Strategies for Democratic Development,' in Vikas Kumar and Jakob Svensson (eds.) *Promoting Social Change and Democracy Through Information Technology*, Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference, pp. 165-192; Regina Smyth and Irina V. Soboleva (2016), 'Navalny's Gamesters: Protest, Opposition Innovation, and Authoritarian Stability in Russia,' *Russian Politics* 1(4), pp. 347-371.
- 4 See e.g. Oliver Carroll (2017), 'Russia's Last Opposition Hero,' *Foreign Policy*, 07 February, available at: <<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/07/russias-last-opposition-hero/>> (accessed 13 August 2017); MacFarquhar and Nechepurenko (2017); Shaun Walker (2017a), 'Anti-Putin Protesters Plan Next Move as Jailed Opponent Considers Election Bid,' *The Guardian*, 01 April, available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/01/anti-putin-protesters-plan-next-move-as-jailed-opponent-considers-election-bid>> (accessed 13 August 2017); Damien Sharkov (2017), 'Russian Court Bans Putin-Critic Alexei Navalny from Standing for President,' *Newsweek*, 03 May, available at: <<http://www.newsweek.com/russia-bans-putin-critic-navalny-election-president-593687>> (accessed 13 August 2017); Roth and Filipov (2017); Caroline Mortimer (2017), 'Russian Opposition Leader Alexei Navalny Barred from Standing Against Vladimir Putin in Election,' *Independent*, 23 June, available at: <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russian-presidential-election-2018-aleksei-navalny-opposition-leader-formally-barred-putin-a7805141.html>> (accessed 13 August 2017); Marc Bennetts (2017), 'The Man Who Would Beat Putin,' *Politico*, 01 August, available at: <<http://www.politico.eu/article/aleksei-navalny-the-man-who-would-beat-vladimir-putin-russia-election/>> (accessed 13 August 2017).

- 5 Foreign Policy (2011), 'The FP Top 100 Global Thinkers,' 28 November, available at: <<http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/11/28/the-fp-top-100-global-thinkers-3/>> (accessed 19 August 2017); Foreign Policy (2012), 'The FP Top 100 Global Thinkers,' 26 November, available at: <<http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/11/26/the-fp-top-100-global-thinkers/>> (accessed 19 August 2017); Foreign Policy (2013), 'The Leading Global Thinkers of 2013,' available at: <<http://2013-global-thinkers.foreignpolicy.com/>> (accessed 19 August 2017).
- 6 Time (2015), 'The 30 Most Influential People on the Internet,' 05 March, available at: <<http://time.com/3732203/the-30-most-influential-people-on-the-internet/>> (accessed 19 August 2017); Time (2017), 'The 25 Most Influential People on the Internet,' 26 June, available at: <<http://time.com/4815217/most-influential-people-internet/>> (accessed 19 August 2017).
- 7 Carroll (2017).
- 8 Angela Dewan (2017), 'Merkel Pushes Putin on Chechnya Gay Detention Reports,' CNN, 02 May, available at: <<http://edition.cnn.com/2017/05/02/europe/putin-merkel-russia-germany-meeting/index.html>> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 9 Bennetts (2017).
- 10 Mortimer (2017).
- 11 Roth and Filipov (2017).
- 12 MacFarquhar and Nechepurenko (2017).
- 13 Sharkov (2017).
- 14 Aspecte Diplomatice (2013), 'Guy Verhofstadt meets with leading anti-corruption campaigner Alexey Navalny in Moscow,' 25 May, available at: <http://aspectediplomatice.ro/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5774:guy-verhofstadt-meets-with-leading-anti-corruption-campaigner-alexey-navalny-in-moscow&catid=28:current-users&Itemid=61> (accessed 19 August 2017).
- 15 Alexey A. Navalny (2014), 'How to Punish Putin,' *The New York Times*, 19 March, available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/20/opinion/how-to-punish-putin.html>> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 16 See e.g. Andrei Zakharov (2014), 'Обама прочитал список Навального,' *Fontanka*, 20 March, available at: <<http://www.fontanka.ru/2014/03/20/194/>> (accessed 13 August 2017); Paul R. Gregory (2014), 'New Sanctions No Joke: Putin Risks Regime For Ukraine Invasion,' *Forbes*, 20 March, available at: <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/paulroderickgregory/2014/03/20/new-sanctions-no-joke/#22812483115c>> (accessed 13 August 2017); Atmosfera (2014), 'Обама ввел санкции против "ближнего круга" Путина по рекомендации Навального,' 21 March, available at: <http://www.asfera.info/news/politics/2014/03/21/obama_vvel_sanktsii_protiv_blizhnego_kruga_putina_po_re_87002.html> (accessed 13 August 2017). Other analysts, however, deem the similarity between Obama's and Navalny's lists as a mere coincidence, see e.g. Joshua Keating, (2014), 'Navalny's Names,' *Slate*, 21 March, available at: <http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_world_/2014/03/21/america_s_new_russia_sanctions_look_a_lot_like_what_alexei Navalny_the_country.html> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 17 Ironically, the Kremlin propaganda also attributes to Navalny pro-Westernness and liberalism, but with a negative connotation, portraying

- him as a Western spy that receives international funding and opposes Russian traditional values. See e.g. NTV (2017), 'ЧП. Расследование: Гражданин Навальный,' 27 January, available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5liiJKVuxA>> (accessed 14 August 2017); Ren-TV (2017), 'За чей счет банкет: На РЕН ТВ состоялась премьера фильма "Либералам — черным налом — 2",' 05 June, available at: <<http://ren.tv/novosti/2017-06-05/za-chey-schet-banket-na-ren-tv-sostoyalas-premera-filma-liberalam-chernym-nalom-2>> (accessed 17 August 2017).
- 18 'Navalny on Same-Sex Marriages,' (2017), 04 March, available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiEnXVYOvAA>> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 19 Daria Litvinova (2015), 'Poll Shows Russian Attitudes to Gay People Are Worse Than Decade Ago,' *The Moscow Times*, 10 July, available at: <<https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/poll-shows-russian-attitudes-to-gay-people-are-worse-than-decade-ago-48066>> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 20 Artem Patalakh (2017a), 'Promotion of LGBTI Rights Overseas: An Overview of EU and US Experiences,' *Janus.net, E-Journal of International Relations* 8(2), forthcoming.
- 21 Echo of Moscow (2017), 'Полный Альбац,' 07 August, available at: <<http://echo.msk.ru/programs/albac/2032360-echo/>> (accessed 14 August 2017).
- 22 See e.g. Радио Свобода (2017), 'Верна ли цель Алексея Навального?,' 26 June, available at: <<https://www.svoboda.org/a/28579456.html>> (accessed 14 August 2017); Andrey Movchan (2016), 'Как Навальный изменит страну, которая не хочет меняться?,' *Obozrevatel*, 14 December, available at: <<https://www.obozrevatel.com/blogs/26403-kak-navalnyiy-izmenit-stranu-kotoraya-ne-hochet-menyatsya.htm>> (accessed 14 August 2017); Oleg Kashin (2017), 'Will Russia's Only Opposition Leader Become the Next Putin?,' *The New York Times*, 03 July, available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/03/opinion/russia-putin-aleksei-navalny.html>> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 23 Indeed, much in his views appears to have altered since that period: to exemplify, whereas in 2007-2013 his nationalistic ideas were somewhat well-pronounced and even received scholarly attention—see Laruelle (2014) and Moen-Larsen (2014)—nowadays, as a number of analysts stress, he has largely, though not totally, abandoned his nationalism and turned more liberal, see e.g. Kevin Rothrock (2017), 'How Alexey Navalny Abandoned Russian Nationalism,' *Global Voices*, 25 April, available at: <<https://globalvoices.org/2017/04/25/how-alexey-navalny-abandoned-russian-nationalism/>> (accessed 13 August 2017); Walker (2017a).
- 24 On 11 April 2017, only 2% of Russians were ready to "certainly vote" and another 7% - to "possibly vote" for Navalny, see Levada Center (2017a), 'Акции протеста 26 марта и Навальный,' 6 April, available at: <<http://www.levada.ru/2017/04/06/aktsii-protesta-26-marta-i-navalnyj/>> (accessed 21 August 2017).
- 25 See Sharkov (2017); Mortimer (2017); Bennetts (2017); The Guardian (2017), 'Kremlin Critic Alexei Navalny Jailed for Third Time This Year,' 2 October, available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/02/russian-opposition-leader-aleksei-navalny-returns-to-jail>> (accessed 07 November 2017).
- 26 A great deal of prominent international actors and human rights organisations, however, criticised that decision as politically motivated. See, for instance, EU External Action (2017), 'Decision of the Russian Central

- Election Commission to bar Alexei Navalny from running in the 2018 Presidential election,' 26 December, available at: <https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/37894/decision-russian-central-election-commission-bar-alexei-navalny-running-2018-presidential_en> (accessed 25 January 2015); Freedom House (2018), 'Freedom in the World 2018: Russia,' available at: <<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/russia>> (accessed 25 January 2018); Human Rights Watch (2018), 'Russia: Dark Year for Freedom,' 18 January, available at: <<https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/01/18/russia-dark-year-freedom>> (accessed 25 January 2018).
- 27 Anna Dolgov (2014), 'Navalny Wouldn't Return Crimea, Considers Immigration Bigger Issue Than Ukraine,' *The Moscow Times*, 16 October, available at: <<https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/navalny-wouldnt-return-crimea-considers-immigration-bigger-issue-than-ukraine-40477>> (accessed 14 August 2017).
- 28 Dolgov (2014).
- 29 Spiegel Online (2017), 'The Kremlin Blocks Every Alternative to Putin,' 21 April, available at: <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/interview-with-alexei-navalny-about-protests-and-putin-a-1143752.html>> (accessed 13 August 2017).
- 30 Dolgov (2014).
- 31 *Ibid.*
- 32 Dolgov (2014); Dozhd (2017), 'Алексей Навальный — Ксении Собчак: "Путин и Собянин испугались? — Да"', 09 June, available at: <https://tvrain.ru/teleshov/sobchak_zhivem/navalniy-436786/> (accessed 14 August 2017); Radio Svoboda (2016), 'Алексей Навальный: президентская заявка,' 20 December, available at: <<https://www.svoboda.org/a/28186648.html>> (accessed 14 August 2017); Echo of Moscow (2017), 'Особое мнение,' 14 July, available at: <<http://echo.msk.ru/programs/personalno/2017794-echo/>> (accessed 14 August 2017).
- 33 Such a reply implies that Navalny has no doubt that Crimeans would endorse an accession to Russia, which may appear presumptuous, but in reality, it corresponds to what independent reports, surveys and studies show, see e.g. Konstantin Kosaretsky (2015), 'The Annexation of Crimea to Russia. Opinion Poll,' *Global Research*, 12 February, available at: <<http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-annexation-of-crimea-to-russia-opinion-poll/5430781>> (accessed 20 August 2017); Shaun Walker (2016), 'No Regrets over Ukraine Split, but Crimeans Want More Love from Russia,' *The Guardian*, 19 January, available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/19/crimeans-still-tigerish-over-split-with-ukraine>> (accessed 20 August 2017).
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 Gordon (2014), 'Немцов: Если бы я был президентом России, Крым бы остался украинским,' 20 September, available at: <<http://gordonua.com/news/crimea/nemcov-esli-by-ya-byl-prezidentom-rossii-krym-by-ostalsya-ukrainskim-42110.html>> (accessed 17 August 2017); Andrei Zhvilbris (2017), 'Эмилия Слабунова: наша позиция по Крыму не изменилась,' *BFM.ru*, 29 February, available at: <<https://www.bfm.ru/news/316764>> (accessed 17 August 2017). At the same time, other Russian opposition leaders contest this viewpoint: to illustrate, PARNAS' current leader Mikhail Kasyanov have elsewhere stated he would give Crimea

- back to Ukraine, see e.g. Liza Dubrovskaya (2016), 'Касьянов пообещал в Страсбурге вернуть Крым Украине,' *MK.ru*, 28 January, available at: <<http://www.mk.ru/politics/2016/01/28/kasyanov-pooobeshhal-v-strasburge-vernut-krym-ukraine.html>> (accessed 17 August 2017).
- 36 Ivan Putilov (2016), 'Российская оппозиция: Крым не наш, но выборы дороже,' *Krym.Realii*, 13 September, available at: <<https://ru.krymr.com/a/27984368.html>> (accessed 17 August 2017).
- 37 David Akselrod (2017), '«Он вам не Димон» по-крымски: несостоявшийся протест,' *Krym.Realii*, 26 March, available at: <<https://ru.krymr.com/a/28391746.html>> (accessed 17 August 2017).
- 38 See e.g. Radio Svoboda (2016); Dozhd (2017); Navalny LIVE (2017), 'Дебаты Live. Навальный vs. Стрелков,' 20 July, available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjbQdbJUibc>> (accessed 14 August 2017).
- 39 Dozhd (2017).
- 40 *Ibid.*
- 41 Radio Svoboda (2016).
- 42 See e.g. Politonline (2017), 'Навальный выдвинется в президенты Украины?' 15 May, available at: <<http://www.politonline.ru/interpretation/22890358.html>> (accessed 07 November 2017); Roman Golovanov (2017), 'Украина ставит на Навального,' *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 23 May, available at: <<https://www.kp.ru/daily/26678/3705509/>> (accessed: 07 November 2017); Ilya Ukhov (2017), 'Майданный пациент: готов ли Навальный перенимать опыт украинских националистов,' *Life*, 9 June, available at: <https://life.ru/t/%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B0/1015079/maidannyi_patsient_ghotov_li_navalnyi_pierienimat_opyt_ukrainskikh_natsionalistov> (accessed: 07 November 2017).
- 43 See e.g. Ayder Muzhdabaev (2015), 'Чем отличается крымнашист Навальный от крымнашиста Путина,' *Novoye Vremya*, 15 January, available at: <<http://nv.ua/opinion/muzhdabaev/chem-otlichaetsya-krymnashist-navalnyy-ot-krymnashista-putina-29618.html>> (accessed: 07 November 2017); Oleg Cheslavskii (2017), 'Навальный Украине Крым возвращать не собирается,' *FaceNews*, 31 March, available at: <<https://www.facenews.ua/columns/2017/313214/>> (accessed 07 November 2017).
- 44 Radio Svoboda (2016); Dozhd (2017).
- 45 Radio Svoboda (2016); 'Навальный о независимости Грузии. Об Абхазии и Южной Осетии - Ижевск 24.03.17 г.,' available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3t8If85xUQw>> (accessed 14 August 2017).
- 46 Andre W. M. Gerrits and Max Bader (2016), 'Russian patronage over Abkhazia and South Ossetia: implications for conflict resolution,' *East European Politics* 32(3), p. 309.
- 47 Interestingly, on this point, his general perspective has basically remained unaltered since the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, when he was suggesting Russia recognise the independence of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transnistria to let Georgia and Moldova gradually submit to their territorial losses and focus on their own economic development instead. See Alexei Navalny (2008), 'Дайте Грузии шанс!,' *LiveJournal*, 12 August, available at: <<http://navalny.livejournal.com/277835.html>> (accessed 17 August 2017).
- 48 *Ibid.*
- 49 'Навальный о независимости Грузии. Об Абхазии и Южной Осетии - Ижевск 24.03.17 г.'
- 50 See e.g. Dozhd (2017); Navalny LIVE (2017).

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Political Economy of Ungoverned Space and Crude Oil Security Challenges in Nigeria's Niger Delta

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After the discovery of crude oil at Oloibiri in 1956, the government of Nigeria shifted concentration from agriculture. As crude oil production expanded with colossal effects on the environment in the Niger Delta, it created an ungoverned space which militants exploited to direct their aggression at the multinational oil companies and the Nigerian state. Among other issues, this article investigates the interface between disenchanted ethnic inhabitants of the Niger Delta and the government of Nigeria, and how it enabled the emergence of the volatile ungoverned space in the region. The article relies on the documentary research method and qualitative descriptive techniques. Using the neo-Marxist theory of the post-colonial state, the article establishes that the challenges with crude oil security governance in the Niger Delta reflect the contending vested interests of the dominant political classes. The study argues that the manifest characters arising from the discourse of ungoverned space and crude oil security challenges in the Niger Delta relates to the survival question of ethnic inhabitants in the region. It further asserts that the exploitation of crude oil deplored the sources of livelihood of the Niger Delta people to the privileging of both powerful state and non-state entrepreneurs within and outside Nigeria. The study suggests a people-oriented and directed pragmatic approach to end the crisis in the Niger Delta.



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Introduction

Nigeria is Africa's largest and most populous country, and with the largest deposit of natural gas reserves in the continent, it is one of the biggest crude oil exporters. The Niger Delta region is Nigeria's major resource revenue base. It is located in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria along the Gulf of Guinea. The Niger Delta is the third largest and the tenth most important wetland in the world, with an estimated capacity of about 36 billion barrels of crude oil, making Nigeria one of the countries with the highest crude oil reserves in Africa.¹ Since the discovery of crude oil in Oloibiri in the early period of 1956 and the commencement of exploitation in 1958, the Niger Delta has remained one of the most contentious regions on the global map since the 1960s – the cause of it has been the deplorable nature of human living conditions of the people of the region as a result of the exploitation of crude oil by the multinational oil companies licenced by the Federal Government of Nigeria, as well as the perceived feelings of the much wealth taken out of the region in the form of crude oil and gas revenues with little invested back into the region in terms of environmental oversight and structural and human capital developments.²

The perception of marginalisation by the Niger Delta people suffering in the midst of plenty of revenues generated from the wealth taken out of their region motivated resentment against the Nigeria government from 1966 onward, making Nigeria one of the countries experiencing resource-based conflicts, with the Niger Delta becoming one of the volatile ungoverned spaces in the world.³ Resources conflicts are not only peculiar to Nigeria. Almost all countries in Africa and beyond in their chequered history have had and still suffer devastating experiences of resource-related conflicts. The conflicts driven by resources have infested countries like Liberia, Libya, Angola, Sierra Leone, Chad, Ivory Coast, Equatorial Guinea, Congo Democratic Republic, Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, Tunisia, and Somalia. Beyond the shores of Africa, countries like Colombia, Peru, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Chile in Latin America; Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran among others in the Arab world have had similar experiences.⁴

Resource conflicts have occurred in different magnitudes, especially in contemporary times. The struggles and conflicts over resource control in many circumstances shift in the nature and pattern of claims and counterclaims, depending on the circumstances that motivate them. In terms of crude oil, as the case is with Nigeria, given that it is a rare and profitable resource, the recurrence and seriousness of conflicts over resource control are usually incremental. Where this type of conflict prevails, it results in the government being unable to establish control over its geographical boundaries or deliberately permitting the prevalence of such manifestation. The ungoverned nature of the territories in a state has been attributed to state weakness or state fragility.⁵

However, even the so-called strong states also suffer the challenges of ungoverned space. In ungoverned spaces, non-state actors are fillers of state authorities, establishing their writ as alternative power centres, supplanting the functionality of the state. The spaces termed 'ungoverned' usually come under the control of warlords, tribal leaders and criminal gangs with established physical presence in control of carved territory within existing state boundaries and having the capacity to challenge the legitimacy, authority and sovereignty of the country.⁶ There are several factors that lead to the emergence of ungoverned spaces in a country, among which include a combination of poverty among the people, weak institutional response to the demands of the people and gross level of corruption of the political system, especially among the political classes in control of power. These identified factors reflect the manifest character of the Nigerian government.⁷ The Niger Delta people believed that with the discovery and exploitation of crude oil in the region their conditions would improve, as has been seen in countries such as Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Norway, Indonesia, Qatar, Kuwait, and the State of Texas and Alaska in the United States among other places around the world. Instead, the impacts have been devastating on their environment and livelihood, making crude oil a curse and not a blessing.⁸

The consequences of the crude oil exploration and exploitation have been protests, riots and militancy in the Niger Delta directed at both the multinational oil companies and the state. The Nigerian government, in order to ensure crude oil security governance so that the multinational oil companies, representatives of the metropolitan states and their indigenous and international collaborators privilege and benefit from the surpluses of crude oil exportation, used instruments

of coercion to dispel agitations in the Niger Delta.⁹ Nigeria's government actions in the region led to increased Niger Delta militancy that further contributed to the fluidity and fragility of crude oil security governance and the vulnerability of the multinational oil companies to the unpredictable violence of the Niger Delta militants operating in the Nigerian waterways and the Gulf of Guinea. In this manner, Nigeria's government lost control over its most important crude oil hub when it should have prioritised stability in order to attract foreign investments to expand the revenue base.¹⁰

This article addresses two key concerns which are: why Nigeria's Niger Delta became an "ungoverned space" that presented human and physical security challenges to Nigeria, and how the Nigerian government has responded to these challenges over the past twenty years. From this context, the article is divided into seven sections. The first section introduces the complex dynamics of Nigeria's Niger Delta. The second section is concerned with the methodological orientation based on documentary and descriptive methods developed for the writing. The third section conceptualises ungoverned space and security. The fourth and fifth sections discuss the political ecology of Nigeria that bred the atmosphere for the emergence of ungoverned space in the Niger Delta, as well as how ungoverned space became structured to become a serious crude oil security challenge in the region. In the last section, the study concludes that the exportation of crude oil revenue without reinvesting back into the region account for the local resentment that poses a security threat to the Nigerian state, the inhabitants and the oil companies operating in the region for years with little or no environmental oversight.¹¹

Methodology

This study adopted the documentary research method to gather data for the purpose of studying the political economy of ungoverned space and crude oil security challenges in the Niger Delta. The documentary research method is a research type that depends on the careful and systematic study and analysis of written texts, visual and pictorial sources, whether they are in the private or public domain.¹² The documents to be used in the research can be primary (experienced individual eyewitness accounts of particular events or the pattern of behaviour) or secondary (documents produced by people who have received or read eyewitness accounts of events or pattern of be-

haviour) or both.¹³ The documentary research method permits the reconstruction of the implicit knowledge underlying everyday practice to give orientation to habitual actions independent of individual intentions and motives.¹⁴

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In documentary research, sources of data may include a combination of government publications, pronouncements and proceedings, census publications, official statistics, institutional memoranda and reports, personal diaries and other related sources.¹⁵ The sources of data gathering for this study are from official reports and government documents, published by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Rights Watch (HRW) and National Bureau of Statistics. Other sources include the documents from non-governmental organisations, reputable journals, articles from the national dailies and papers from conferences among others.

Analysis of the documented evidence was based on the qualitative method of analysis, which is descriptive, interactive, interpretive and historical in nature and approach.¹⁶ The use of descriptive analysis was based on the fact that it is effective in the discovery of both latent and manifest contents of the data, which is used to understand patterns or regularities of behaviour in the subject of investigation. The study is corroborated with statistical data presented to illuminate the discourse of ungoverned space and crude oil security challenges in the Niger Delta.

Ungoverned Space and Security

The concept of ungoverned space is a discourse surrounding issues of global security challenges. As an emerging and contested area of discourse, ungoverned space resonates constant global debates among scholars, policy-makers, analysts, researchers, publicists, diplomats and commentators. Ungoverned space is a conceptual construct that defines “a general condition of weak to non-existent state authority in a defined geographic area.”¹⁷ Jennifer Keister asserted that ungoverned spaces are “areas of limited or anomalous government control inside, otherwise functional states.”¹⁸ For Andrew Taylor, they are “anarchic zones outside formal state control that constituted a security threat.”¹⁹ It also describes areas linked to terrorist activities, creating safe havens and multiple security challenges. Put differently, in an ungoverned space, there is no “effective state sovereignty and control.”²⁰

Ungoverned space is associated with both physical and non-physical spaces where there is the semi-presence or the absence of control of the government of a state. The physical spaces that are considered to be ungoverned constitute hinterlands that are beyond the reach of the state to exercise sovereignty and control, while the non-physical spaces considered to be ungoverned are those within a state where the government is not able or willing to exercise authority or control.²¹ The concept of ungoverned space has variously been referred to as “ungoverned areas,”²² “ungoverned territories”²³ and “exploitable areas.”²⁴ The various conceptions of ungoverned space characterize the physical ungoverned space rather than non-physical ungoverned space, sometimes viewed as alternatives to state authorities.²⁵

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However, Robert Lamb stated that “both physical ungoverned space and non-physical ungoverned space”²⁶ is manifest and latent in both weak and strong countries, and where there are areas that are “under-governed, misgoverned, contested, and exploitable,”²⁷ the atmosphere is created for the emergence of ungoverned spaces. In an ungoverned space, a “shadow state or territory” comes into being with warlords, gangs, local armed groups or militants influencing and taking over the control of territorial affairs,²⁸ usually from within the territorial space of the state. According to Robert Lamb as cited in Andrew Taylor:

All ungoverned areas have the potential to become comprehensive safe havens, but not all do; those ungoverned areas that do become safe havens, many are exploited not by transnational illicit actors, but by groups whose activities and interests remain strictly local.²⁹

From the state-centric perspective, Clionadh Raleigh and Caitriona Dowd argued that obnoxious threatening activities exist in ungoverned spaces, because the presence of the state is entirely absent or that there is the lack of any effective governance,³⁰ which create a vacuum of power that becomes exploitable by non-state actors. The possibility of ungoverned space existing is framed around factors such as state size, population distribution and resource wealth. To Jeffrey Julum and Daniel Evans, a combination of factors including population growth, urbanisation, globalisation, increasing the wealth of non-state actors and technological advancement are central to the emergence of ungoverned spaces.³¹ Notwithstanding, Ken Menkhaus added the “cosmetic and ineffective presence of the state in its frontier zones

or the presence of large urban slums not effectively controlled by the government” as reasons for ungoverned space.³² Jennifer Keister pointed to the inability to exercise control over territorial boundaries, but also importantly, the cost-benefit analysis as determining the factor of exercising state’s control.³³

The attitudinal contents of the state described above bring to question the sovereignty of the state over its territorial boundaries. The presence of ungoverned space is a consequence of semi-presence or absence of security governance. Security governance traditionally is associated with the state utilizing its resources to ensure its sovereignty and control of the territories within its geographical boundaries. In this context, security governance is about national security, which is about policing people using coercive apparatus to restrain and make them behave in conformity with the norms established by the state.³⁴

However, security goes beyond the state-centric approach to include a people-centric approach. The people-centric approach adds to the state-centric approach by defining security to mean human security.³⁵ Human security connotes political, economic, social, environmental and cultural rights and choices of the people, protected from any form of threat in the state.³⁶ When there is a perceived threat or deprivation, there is the tendency for resentment directed at the state or displacement of aggression directed at other people, since they cannot direct their aggression toward the state.³⁷

Ungoverned space as a conceptual construct has been criticized as being value-laden and inadequate to properly situate the discourse of security challenges and spaces controlled by non-state actors in the state. The reason advanced is the questioning of the existence of ungoverned space. The theoretical construct dramatically demonstrates the nature and character of the state and its capability or fragility to respond to emergencies created by the circumstances of the ungoverned spaces, and how activities in those spaces undermine the functionality of the state. The Niger Delta is an ungoverned space exploited by strictly local illicit groups whose activities are marred by crude oil bunkery, pipeline vandalism, piracy, kidnapping and a series of agitations and militancy against the government of Nigeria for the appropriation and expropriation of crude oil resources and revenues with little to show for development of the region.

Post-Colonial State Theory in the Context of the Niger Delta

In interrogating the dynamics of the political economy of ungoverned space and crude oil security challenges in Nigeria's Niger Delta, this study adopted the neo-Marxist theory of the post-colonial state. This choice is motivated by the fact that the study of the manifest character of ungoverned spaces posing security challenges in the Niger Delta and elsewhere has largely been contingent on the perspectives of pluralism,³⁸ modernisation,³⁹ competitive control⁴⁰ and state failure, weakness or collapse.⁴¹ Despite the efforts to situate the challenges of ungoverned space in developing countries, particularly Africa, it is worthy to note that the crises associated with ungoverned space in Africa are not as a result of multi-diversity or the crisis of modernisation, neither is it because of competitive control necessitated by urbanisation nor the failed, weak or collapsed state. Theoretically and empirically, these perspectives have relegated the process of the state formation and the role it played in the post-colonial Africa.

The post-colonial state theory is utilised based on the legitimacy that it has the capacity of examining and comprehending the manifest characters of social structures in Nigeria's post-colonial state. The theory of the post-colonial state was initiated by Hamza Alavi⁴² and was popularised by other third world scholars, such as Claude Ake, Eme Ekekwé, John Saul and Okechukwu Ibeanu among others.⁴³ In the post-colonial state thesis, Alavi questioned fundamentally the tenets of the classical theory of the state in the context of post-colonial societies, while reacting to Western or the liberal perspective on the concept and purpose of the state.⁴⁴ From the Marxist context, the state is seen as a product of contradictions and irreconcilable class relations.⁴⁵

Class relations, according to Ifesinachi and Anichie, are "power relations"⁴⁶ which manifest in a character where, according to Lenin, "...group of people differ from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social relation of production."⁴⁷ From this social relation of production, the state emerges to sets in class contradictions.⁴⁸ To buttress the class contradiction in state formation, Engels conceived that:

The state is a product of society at a certain stage of development and the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable opposites which it is powerless to exercise

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and the state arises where, when, and to the extent that class contradictions objectively cannot be reconciled.⁴⁹

Nicos Poulantzas conceived the state as “not a class construct, but rather the state of the society divided into classes, and aims precisely at the political disorganisation of the dominated classes.”⁵⁰ This point to the fact that the state represents the interests of the most powerful, economically dominant class,⁵¹ with an organised executive as a committee for managing the common interests of the whole bourgeois class.⁵² Hamza Alavi pushed further the Marxist perspective of the state to reflect the certain specificity of the state in post-colonial societies. His assertions are:

...premised on the historical specificity of post-colonial societies, a specificity which arises from structural changes brought about by the colonial experience and alignments of classes and by the superstructures of political and administrative institutions which were established in that context, and secondly from radical realignments of class forces which have been brought about in the post-colonial situation.⁵³

Reflecting on the specificity of the nature and character of the state in post-colonial societies, Alavi describes the state as “an eternal, imperialist creation whose task was to accomplish specific functions essentially among other things, the economic exploitation of the people in the post-colonial state formation.”⁵⁴ The metropolitan bourgeoisie assigns the tasks to be executed in the colonies without replicating in them the superstructure of the metropolitan country itself, but to develop apparatuses through which they can exercise dominion over the indigenous social classes in the colonies.⁵⁵ Central to the post-colonial state formation was the creation of the conditions that will ensure the accumulation of capital by the metropolitan bourgeoisie in alliance with the dominant class through the exploitation of the indigenous economy. This character of the state in post-colonial societies led Claude Ake to assert that the “modern African state is a creature of the capitalist mode of production and as such is a specific modality of class domination.”⁵⁶

From the foregoing context, Ibeanu argued that the foothold of colonialism sustained in the post-colonial state was such that anti-colonial struggles in Africa altered little or nothing at all in the arbitrariness of the predecessor of the post-colonial state.⁵⁷ In the post-colonial state of Nigeria, the change was only in the personnel of the colonial state;

the structures remained unchanged. The political class in independence Africa united their interests with the metropolitan bourgeoisie for the exploitation of the indigenous social classes. The prevalence of this character in post-colonial states in Africa can be attributed to a number of factors, which included the inheritance of an overdeveloped state with weak economic base and lacking in the capacity to respond to the needs of the “subordinate indigenous social classes.”⁵⁸

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In Nigeria, to maintain a sort of patron-client relationship as a means of clinching to the control of state power, constant efforts are made to ensure the protection of interests of the multinational oil companies operating in the Niger Delta against the interests of the subordinated indigenous social classes. The protection of such interests yields a multilayer of positive results, which include presenting the government in power as a faithful client needed to be rewarded internationally, and the support that comes in various dimensions with latent and manifest contents sustains the trend of power relations, even when the government does not respond to the interests of the inhabitants. The protection, which the government of Nigeria grant the multinational oil companies, comes despite the destruction of the environment and impact on human health caused by oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta.⁵⁹

This manifest behaviour relates to the character of the post-colonial state, which Ake⁶⁰ attributed to the limited autonomy of statehood in post-colonial societies, particularly in Africa. The limitation placed on the autonomy of the state created limited space for social classes, resulting in class struggles between the dominant classes, both at the national and sub-national levels in Nigeria. The state as a central power force has remained a fiercely competitive phenomenon to control among dominant classes in Nigeria. In this context, according to Ake, the state is atomised such that “the institutional mechanisms of class domination are constituted”⁶¹ to the point that the state as “a committee for managing the affairs of the whole bourgeoisie becomes as an objective force standing alongside society.”⁶² The atomisation of the state makes it difficult to resolve the contradictions and crises that come with power struggles. For dominant classes to sustain a foothold onto power, they collaborate with the multinational oil companies in a manner that the state in Nigeria is incapable of mediating the cyclical conflicts triggered by crude oil dependency and ungoverned space in the Niger Delta.

This explains the continuous use of repression, persuasion, negotiation and pacification as strategies to mitigate crude oil security challenges in the Niger Delta, which have not produced any meaningful results. Ekekwe asserted that in the post-colonial state, a positive relationship between capital and the state exists, because of the dominant role foreign capital plays in government and governance.⁶³ The owners of international capital determine the process of economic production and reproduction, as well as the direction of the society.⁶⁴ Those who implement their interests are indigenous to the post-colonial state. While doing so, they also appropriate surpluses from the crude oil revenue to starve indigenous social classes of the accrual surpluses from the crude oil exploitation from the Niger Delta.

The political character demonstrated by the government expanded the atmosphere for the development and consolidation of ungoverned space in the Niger Delta. In response to the challenges posed to the government of Nigeria, the Yar'adua/Jonathan administration adopted the presidential amnesty programme for the militants in the Niger Delta in 2009. Many have argued that in the actual sense, the presidential amnesty programme was not intended to address the political, economic, social and environmental problems arising from the militancy. It was rather merely palliative to keep the militants at bay in order to enable unhindered access to more crude oil and gas resources. It was also to promote the interest of the foreign capital that wants increases in the daily production of crude oil, as well as to ensure the security and safety of foreign oil workers. Though the amnesty benefited some militants who responded by putting down their arms, it did not eliminate the atmosphere for the emergence of exploitable space in the Niger Delta. The reason was because the government failed to develop a framework for addressing the enormity of human security challenges in the Niger Delta.

Political Ecology of Nigeria and Pathology of Ungoverned Space in the Niger Delta

Nigeria is highly diverse and polarised along ethnic, religious and political identities. The social complexities of Nigeria are both manifest and latent at the national and sub-national levels, with great deleterious effects on the internal cohesion and development of the country. The complex nature of the country is necessitated by social, economic and political dynamics playing out among social forces competing for

a share of the national cake. Nigeria is one of the biggest crude oil exporters in Africa and has the largest deposit of natural gas reserves in the continent. It is also a “country where people suffer in the midst of plenty” given the enormity of natural and human resources it is endowed with. The consequence of this situation presents Nigeria as one of the “bottom billion” countries in the world.

As a Nigeria’s crude oil resource base, the Niger Delta, covering about 70000 sq km,⁶⁵ consists officially of nine states, which include the Ondo, Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Imo, Rivers, Abia, Akwa-Ibom and Cross-River states inhabited by about 26.7 million populations.⁶⁶ The Niger Delta is highly diverse in terms of social and cultural complexities, consisting of ethnic minority groups who share the same fate in Nigeria. Ethnic minorities in the region include, among others, the Ijaw, Itsekiri, Isoko, Ibibio, Ogoni, Urhobo, Membe, Ejangam, Ikwerre, and Edo peoples. These ethnic minorities consider themselves as the most marginalised people in Nigeria since the end of the civil war in 1970. Though the contribution of the region to the sustenance of the Nigerian economy has been considerable, ethnic inhabitants of the oil-rich region have received far less than expected in terms of the indices of structural and human developments.

Historically, the quest for crude oil exploration and exploitation in Nigeria could be traced to as far back as 1908. In the 1930s, the Niger Delta witnessed the laying of exploration pipelines, excavation and rig-drilling facilities by the multinational oil companies, among which included Royal Dutch Shell, Total, Italy’s Agip, and Exxon Mobil and Chevron from the United States.⁶⁷ In January 1956, crude oil was discovered for the first time in commercial quantity at Oloibiri in the then old Rivers (now Bayelsa) state. The exploration and production of crude oil actually began with 1.68 million barrels in 1965, rising to 558.9 million barrels in 1971.⁶⁸

Since then crude oil exploitation has expanded to steadily cover both onshore and offshore oilfields in the region. The exploitation and shipments of crude oil by the multinational oil companies have been massive in the region.⁶⁹ The contribution of the crude oil sector gradually superseded other sectors of the economy, bringing about increased export earnings of Nigeria and conferring great wealth for those in control of state power, and denying greatly the rights to survival to the ethnic groups in the Niger Delta.⁷⁰ Ethnic communities where crude oil is extracted have experienced defoliation, environmental devastations and ecological deg-

radation,⁷¹ as a result of the activities of multinational oil companies. As much as multinational oil companies generated a lot of revenue for Nigeria through lease, it also led to oil spillage, gas flaring and other related ecological damage, which has been colossal and monumental. Aquatic and land resources have been destroyed, causing unprecedented levels of unemployment, poverty, hunger and starvation in the region.⁷²

The impacts of gas flaring alone include the corrosion and destruction of rooftops of houses owing to acidic rainfall. It has also caused the spread of diseases in the region.⁷³ The activities of multinational oil companies underdeveloped and pauperized the ethnic inhabitants in the region. This is despite the fact that the region contributes to 40 percent of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Products (GDP) and over 70 percent of government revenue to Nigeria.⁷⁴ The prevailing social, economic and environmental challenges in the Niger Delta led to local discontent among ethnic groups towards the government of Nigeria. Local discontent was more prevalent among the youth⁷⁵ who have received moral support from the ethnic elites to agitate and engage in militancy to starve the Nigerian state of the required legitimacy. The militancy and the demand for political autonomy and resource control in the Niger Delta was exacerbated by military overstay in power, thereby changing the political and economic landscape of social relations of production in the Niger Delta.

Anatomy of Ungoverned Space and the Crude Oil Security Challenges in the Niger Delta

The protest in the Niger Delta against imperial and colonial domination started with King Jaja of Opobo. Notwithstanding, the restiveness in the Niger Delta gained momentum in the post-colonial era rendering the Niger Delta an ungoverned space and posing serious security threats to crude oil security governance in the region. The fierce agitation for autonomy and resource control in the Niger Delta started with the Ijaw group formation called the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF). The group was led by Major Adaka Boro and had its camp at Tarloy Creek in 1966. In March 1966, Boro proclaimed an Independent Niger Delta Peoples' Republic, which led to a 12 days liberation movement against the government of Nigeria.⁷⁶

The feeling of neglect and underdevelopment, deprivation and exploitation of the region by the government of Nigeria and its local and international collaborators was attributed to be the cause of the agita-

tion.⁷⁷ The civil rebellion led to pipeline vandalism and the detonation of pipeline installations. Adaka Boro and his followers Samuel Timipre Owonaru and Nottingham Dick were arrested, tried and found guilty of committing treason against the Nigerian state.⁷⁸ They were sentenced to death, but were later pardoned by the military government of General Yakubu Gowon through some sort of an amnesty. Boro was employed by the government and several of his demands were actualised.⁷⁹

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The government instituted the Land Use Act of 1978, dispossessing the people of the rights to ownership of their traditional lands and arrogating all land rights and ownership to the government of Nigeria due to the agitations for political autonomy and resource control coming from the Niger Delta people. The scramble for crude oil revenue among other issues, accounted for the several coups and counter-coups in Nigeria.⁸⁰ Of the several coup d'états, three heads of states were assassinated, six coups were successfully staged and several other coups were aborted.⁸¹ Under the military, several crude oil fields were distributed to friends and cronies of the regimes. The majority of the military and political classes that benefited from such titles were from the Northern Nigeria. The elites control over 70 percent of the crude oil wells in the Niger Delta.⁸² The Northern-controlled government further promulgated the Oil Pipeline Acts of 1990, the Petroleum Acts of 1991, the Lands (Title Vesting) Act of 1993 and the National Inland Water Ways Authority Act of 1996 in order to sustain its foothold on the Niger Delta crude oil resources.⁸³

The action of the government created the feeling of marginalisation among the various ethnic minorities and generated resentments against the Nigerian state in the Niger Delta.⁸⁴ They demonstrated their grievances through pipeline bombing, vandalism, kidnapping, bunkering as well as through the direct confrontation of the military regimes. The situation clearly demonstrated that the Niger Delta had become an ungoverned space exploited due to the absence of effective security governance by the Nigerian state in the region.⁸⁵

In 1992, Ken Saro-Wiwa and his kinsmen used the non-violent approach to lead the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MO-SOP) to engage with the government of Nigeria over the human security challenges in the Niger Delta. Three years later, he and his kinsmen were killed by the late General Sani Abacha. The killing of Saro-Wiwa intensified ethnic consciousness and led to the Aleibiri Demonstration

(AD) in 1997 and the Kaiama Declaration (KD) in 1998. Since then the Ogoni people have continued to protest the presence of multinational oil companies and the carting away of rent from the crude oil exploitation in the region.

CE/ISS In 1999, on the orders of the President Olusegun Obasanjo administration (1999-2007), the military led a widespread killing of ethnic inhabitants in Odi. This motivated the resurgence of militant groups who recruited as many as possible, especially the youth with camps in the several ungoverned spaces in the region.⁸⁶ Some of the prominent militant groups are the Asari-Dokubo-led the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF) formed in 2004, the Tom Ateke-led Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) formed in 2005, and the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV) among others.⁸⁷

The various restive groups in the Niger Delta occupied areas, to say the least, that are ungoverned within the territorial boundaries of Nigeria. Some of the camps which the militants established informal governance included the Olugbobiri, Okiegbene/Ebirigbene (Ikebiri 1 & 2), Azuzuama, Gbekenegbene, Ezetu, Agge, Kurutiye, Forupa and Okubie and Korokorosei camps in Southern Ijaw; the Robert Creek and Cawthorne Channel in Nembe, as well as the Ken's Camp in Odi, all in Bayelsa State. There are Camp 5, Okerenkoko and Opuraza camps located in Warri South as well as the Egbema, Ubefem and Berger Camps in Warri, Delta State, and there are also the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteers Forces in Akuku-Tori, the Niger Delta Vigilante in Okirika, Icelanders/Outlaw in Borokiri, Port Harcourt, Okirika and the Yeghe camps in Bori, Ogoni in Rivers State.⁸⁸

These camps are located in difficult terrain rendering it difficult for the military to effectively bring the area back under the control of the government and to effectively prevent piracy and militancy in the region. To ensure security governance in the oil fields in the Niger Delta, the state increased its security budget and reinforced military presence to mitigate the activities of militant groups in the region. The people's concern which was given less or no attention by the government provided the avenue for the recruitments of new members who believed that joining militant groups pays more than getting involved in other ventures. This also informs the reason for the support and donations militant groups receives from the local communities in the region.

Niger Delta Ungoverned Space and Dialectics of Nigeria Political Economy

The Nigerian political economy is enmeshed in a contradiction caused by the Niger Delta militancy. The non-responsiveness of the government to the needs of the region informed the ungoverned space of the region in Nigeria.⁸⁹ As a response to stabilise the waves of violence, the government of Nigeria established the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDC) in 1961, Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) in 1992 and the Niger Delta Ministry (NDM) in 2008, and have taken several measures such as the Federal Government Amnesty Programme (FGAP) in 2009 among others.⁹⁰ The people of the Niger Delta sees these institutional frameworks as palliative to pacify them from challenging the presence of the multinational oil companies in order to enable the oil companies to produce more crude oil, which is a major source of Nigeria's foreign earnings.⁹¹

The return to democracy in 1999 rekindled the hope of the people. Unfortunately, the condition of the people did not improve remarkably. Rather, it worsened under the President Olusegun Obasanjo administration, due to his pro-military strategy in the Niger Delta. The era marked a major period of fierce agitations and militancy with numerous consequences on the government, multinational oil companies and the militants.⁹² Between 1999 and 2004, the Niger Delta militancy led to the killing of more than one thousand people.⁹³ During this period, many national and foreign oil workers were kidnapped. Crude oil pipelines were vandalised, and theft and bunkering became business as usual. The agitations by the communities and the activities of militants in the ungoverned space of the Niger Delta undermined the revenue from crude oil exploitation of Nigeria.

In the Ogoni land, the people revolted violently to prevent crude oil exploration and exploitation. Other communities in the region also followed the trend, and by extension, supported the militants.⁹⁴ The implications of militancy have been unspeakable in the region, particularly in terms of the quantum of crude oil production deferred, as well as the losses incurred. In 1999, over 300,000 barrels of crude oil production per day was deferred. It continued to fluctuate and reached its peak in 2006 when over 600,000 crude oil production per day were also deferred.⁹⁵ Also in 2006 and 2007, the government of Nigeria lost 17.1 billion and 18.8 billion US dollars' worth of crude oil barrels, and between January and September 2008, Nigeria lost 20.7 billion US dollars' worth of crude

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oil, due to militancy in the Niger Delta ungoverned space. In the same vein, the quantity of oil loss to oil bunkering and the amount in 2006 stood at just under 2 billion (1,978,191,600) US dollars, while NNPC shut down production in 2008 and between January and February 2009, it incurred losses of about 399,794,633 and 71,482,363 in barrels respectively.

The use of the military to mitigate militancy was never a solution to the security threats in the region. The solution to the threats is found to be in the adoption of pragmatic approach. In 2007, when the late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua was elected, the first policy he implemented was to establish the Ministry of Niger Delta, and in 2008, he created an amnesty programme for the militant groups in the region.⁹⁶ The militant groups that surrendered benefitted from the programme. Some of the militant groups that benefitted were the Solomon Ndigbara alias Osama Bin Laden, Henry Okah (the supposed leader of MEND), Victor Ben Ebika-Bowe, alias General Boy Loaf, Soboma George of outlaw cult group, Kile Selky Tomghedi (Young Shall Grow), Ateke Tom of NDV, Matimisebi Othello and the Gwama boys of Ilaje, Biibe Ajube, the second in command to Tompolo, Fara Dagogo of NDPVF, Eric Paul (Oguboss), Pastor Reuben, and General African, and Government Ekpemupolo (aka Tompolo or GOC) a key militant of MEND with their respective groups.⁹⁷ The implementation of the amnesty programme by the government was not without using the military to stabilise the region as a way of asserting state sovereignty and to mobilise militant groups from weakening and eroding the legitimacy of the state.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, many of the people in the region are of the view that the amnesty programme was marred by corruption.⁹⁹

The government of Nigeria under President Goodluck Jonathan contracted the security governance of the crude oil to the repentant militants in the region. The efforts of the government were seen as only towards disarming and disengaging the militants and to enable uninterrupted exploitation of crude oil by the multinational oil companies in the Niger Delta.¹⁰⁰ During the period, crude oil production and export capacity of Nigeria increased steadily with positive multipliers on the management of the Nigerian economy. The defeat of President Goodluck Jonathan in the 2015 presidential election by the former military Head of State, General Mohammadu Buhari, angered the people, particularly the youth in the Niger Delta. It led to the resurgence of militancy in the region.

In February 2016, the Niger Delta Avengers announced their presence by carrying out coordinated attacks on the strategic crude oil and gas installations in the region. Other militant groups that also announced their presence included the Isoko Liberation Movement (ILM), Red Egbesu Water Lions (REWL), Suicide Squad (SS), Egbesu Mightier Confraternity (EMC), Joint Niger Delta Liberation Force (JNDLF) and the Ultimate Warriors of Niger Delta (UWND). Although the militant groups differ in complexity, they all make claims to the emancipation of the people of the Niger Delta. The reason for the struggles is motivated by government irresponsibility regarding the challenges of the Niger Delta people.

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The resurgence of militancy in the Niger Delta has had devastating effects on the crude oil production capacity of Nigeria. It has led to the depletion of revenue generated from the rent of crude oil production. The activities of the Niger Delta Avengers has led to Nigeria losing over 800,000 barrels per day since February 2016. Nigeria's crude oil production has depleted to 1.4 million barrels per day, which is the lowest in 22 years.¹⁰¹ In response to the challenges created by the resurgence of insecurity in the Niger Delta, the government of Nigeria resorted to the use of instruments of violence, instead of creating the environment for reaching consensus based on collective bargaining that will present a win-win situation for both the government and the people of the Niger Delta, whose environment has been exploited by multinational oil companies, with much wealth taken out of the region in the form of crude oil and gas revenues.¹⁰² Notwithstanding, there is still a great opportunity for the government to utilize to return the region to stability.

Conclusion

The imperative of understanding why the Niger Delta became an “un-governed space,” posing human and physical security threats to the Nigerian government and how the government of Nigeria responded to the threats posed to crude oil security governance in the region, constituted the crux of this article. The Niger Delta question has remained topical on the global political economy landscape because of the position of the region to the Nigerian economy. The human and physical security threat to crude oil security governance in the Niger Delta and the Nigerian state is a consequence of governance failure on the part of the government of Nigeria to reinvest enough of the

surpluses of crude oil rent into the region to prevent local discontent. The nature and character of the post-colonial state in Nigeria promoted the patron-client relationship between the government and foreign companies, which allowed the multinational oil companies to operate without environmental oversight, and further fuelled local resentment in the Niger Delta to demand autonomy and resource control.

In order to prevent local discontent from the people of the Niger Delta, the government of Nigeria resorted to using coercive apparatus of the state to enable the multinational oil companies owned by the countries in the metropolis operate without effective control. The essence was to maintain and sustain the relationship with the metropolis, even when such relationship is at best unequal in terms of benefits. The reason for attributing to the patron-client relationship is to generate unflinching support of the metropolis for their continuous hold onto power. The political class continues to employ coercive instruments, which renders the region ungovernable. The ungovernability of the region was a result of the government failing to exercise effective control in the crude oil-rich region, which must not be through the use of coercion, and it is indeed what explain how the Niger Delta became an ungoverned space.

However, the inability of Nigerian state to prevent resentment using repression swung to conciliation that led to the adoption of some measures which for the people of the Niger Delta was only palliative in nature. The consequence of the failure of the government of Nigeria to address headlong the root cause of the return of agitations and resentments in the Niger Delta since 2015 starve the state of the required revenue generated from crude oil extraction and expropriation in the region. To mitigate the human and physical security challenges arising from the failure to mediate the cyclical conflicts triggered by crude oil dependency and ungoverned space in the Niger Delta, the government must make efforts to engage the local population and ensure that they directly benefit economically from the crude oil extraction, while also holding the multinational oil companies operating in the region accountable for the deploation of their environment. These prospects require strong and stable democratic institutions and institutional governance that is committed toward minimising corruption in Nigeria. To bring the aforementioned to reality, though it will take time, the government of Nigeria must have the political will and demonstrate serious commitment toward resolving the challenges arising from

the ungoverned space and crude oil security governance in the Niger Delta.



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Geopolitics of Secession

Post-Soviet De Facto States and Russian Geopolitical Strategy

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While the bipolar Cold War system in Europe was characterized by a stability of borders, the end of the Cold War brought into the former Soviet bloc a wave of more or less successful attempts of secession. In our article we point out that unrecognized entities in the proximity of Russia are not genuine attempts to establish full-fledged members of the international community but rather a deliberate reaction to a changing geopolitical situation in Europe. We argue that Russia's approach towards Eurasian unrecognized entities is not based on the denial of sovereignty first approach, but rather on utilitarian and selective application of normative theories of secession. The Kosovo precedence based on the application of priority of self-determination over the territorial integrity is a welcome pretext for justifying Russian geopolitical strategy vis-a-vis Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine. The paper deals with the presented justifications of the secession (both primary rights and derivative rights theories) of the post-Soviet unrecognized entities as well as their effectiveness and dependence on Russian support. We conclude that none of the analyzed unrecognized entities fits into a new set of normative criteria applied in the case of Kosovo and that they are only geopolitical outposts of the Russian foreign strategy of maintaining controlled instability.

Keywords: De facto states, Russian foreign policy, GUAM, secession, geopolitics, normative theory of secession.

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Europe's transformation from the modern to the post-modern system¹ has been uneven. The dissolution of multiethnic states of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union resulted in the creation of several unrecognized entities. While those existing in the former Yugoslavia were eliminated by force (in some cases with the tacit consent of the international community), secessionist entities in the post-Soviet republics managed to survive (with the exception of Chechnya). The only entity in the post-communist region to receive a wider external legitimacy is, however, paradoxically post-Yugoslav, Kosovo, which affected Moscow's geopolitical strategy in its "Near Abroad."

The transformation of Western Europe was since the end of the Second World War rooted and directly following the process of European integration, while a similar transformation inside the post-Soviet sphere of influence was in this sense opposite. The end of the bipolar world system led to reconfiguration of the geopolitical map of Europe on which Russia lost its hegemonic position over Central Europe, the Balkans, the Baltic states and part of Eastern Europe. A growing interaction between Euro-Atlantic institutions and the former Soviet republics caused continuously increasing tensions between Moscow and Brussels, and the Kremlin never gave up its ambitions of establishing its exclusive sphere of influence. This sphere in Europe comprises the so-called remaining others – states on the periphery of the European Union with a significant Russian minority. This perceived sphere of influence thus incorporates the GUAM countries – Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova – that to a certain degree oppose Russian attempts to influence their domestic affairs. As mentioned by George Friedman, "the situation on the European periphery, particularly in Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia and Azerbaijan: [...] defies the European narrative of the new Europe."² For Moscow an offer of NATO membership to Ukraine and Georgia was a crossing of Russia's "red line."³

Moscow's strategy is based on the strengthening of political, economic, and security ties with the states in its "Near Abroad" no matter whether these states are internationally recognized or are in the group of unrecognized "geopolitical anomalies." The growing dissatisfaction of Russia with its role in the 21st century international system outgrew verbal displays and manifested itself in the 2008 invasion to Georgia and 2014-15 aggression in Ukraine causing a deep regional crisis on the EU periphery.

Nevertheless, the territorial conflicts in Moldova, Azerbaijan, and Georgia have their roots in the era of the break-up of the Soviet Union

and are directly connected to the processes of state- and nation-building in the newly independent republics. Frozen conflicts⁴ that occurred between central governments in Chisinau, Tbilisi, and Baku and geographically concentrated ethnic minorities in Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorno-Karabakh from the late 1980s and early 1990s originated in the attempt of the central governments to establish exclusive policies there – such as a language policy.⁵

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As noted by Von Steinsdorff and Fruhstorfer, “[t]he four state-like entities on the territory of the former Soviet Union that emerged about twenty years ago have successfully defended their precarious independence until today.”⁶ All of them were born out of violent secessionist conflicts against their parent states soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as all of these entities enjoyed some kind of territorial rights or perceived themselves as being territorially distinct.⁷ Transnistria declared independence from Moldova in 1990, South Ossetia and Abkhazia from Georgia in 1991 and 1992 respectively, and Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan in 1991. “Only Chechnya acting as independent entity between 1991-94 and 1996-99 and Gagauzia between 1991-94 lost their quasi-independent status after years of violent conflicts.”⁸

Armed conflicts between Georgia and later Ukraine on the one side and Putin’s Russia on the other hold a wider geopolitical context that manifests the long-term Moscow’s dissatisfaction with developments inside the European space – mainly with the issue of the EU and NATO enlargement into the former Soviet sphere of influence. This strategy of the Western powers, applied since the end of the Cold War, basically aim “[...] to incorporate as many of these states into NATO and the EU as possible.”⁹ Part of the conflict is also a narrative of the broken-promise of NATO non-enlargement.¹⁰

This conflict also displays a larger change in the global geopolitical setting. While the European Union acts as what Jan Zielonka describes as a neomedieval Empire,¹¹ enlarging on the principles of voluntary accession and economic incentives, Moscow is still trapped in traditional imperial logic with the application of coercive regionalism and use of military might in support of separatist regions on the European periphery. The recognition of Georgian *de facto* states of Abkhazia and South Ossetia following a five-day war with Tbilisi is, in this context, an unprecedented step. The political conflict with Ukraine even escalated into guarantees for independent Crimea – based on a remedial theory of secession with a focus on the issue of threat of genocide –

and following annexation of the territory. Consequent fighting led to the proclamation of independence of Lugansk and Donetsk People's Republics with direct economic, military, and political (short of international recognition) support from Russia on which these entities are fully dependent. This development dramatically changed a geopolitical context of the European periphery while geopolitical aspirations of these new entities still remain hazed. Also different to the most of the other recent cases of secession like Scotland, South Sudan or Bougainville, these *de facto* states do not seek a negotiated settlement of their status.

The following article deals with the misuse of the normative theory of secession in the context of the emergence of *de facto* states in the post-Soviet space. The article analyzes the claims based on different theories of secession and tests their justification in the context of Russian influence in its "Near Abroad." The first part deals with conceptualization, methodology, and theoretical frameworks used in the analysis and with the issue of the Kosovo precedent. The second part tests claims of different unrecognized entities that have emerged on the territory of the former Soviet Union since the late 1980s.

Terminology

As Von Steinsdorff and Fruhstorfer¹² pointed out, the emergence of *de facto* states is a global phenomenon. Furthermore, although there is an increasing number of recently published studies dealing with the internal and external legitimacy of the unrecognized entities,¹³ their position in an international system¹⁴ and internal dynamics¹⁵ or comparison of their political systems,¹⁶ terminological confusion in academia still persists. There is no consensus on the terminology concerning such entities and we can identify numerous definitions for entities lacking international recognition. Authors label these entities as *de facto* states,¹⁷ self-proclaimed states, unrecognized states,¹⁸ pseudo-states,¹⁹ outcast countries, pariah-states,²⁰ insurgent states,²¹ *de facto* regimes,²² para-states, almost-states,²³ proto-states, nascent-states,²⁴ separatist states, self-proclaimed states,²⁵ *de facto* quasi-states,²⁶ or quasi-states,²⁷ unrecognized quasi-states,²⁸ contested states,²⁹ and post-secessionist unrecognized states.³⁰

While King's definition closely follows a definition by S. Pegg – the term unrecognized state includes Eurasian entities aiming at international recognition and sovereign statehood – he adds other character-

istics of such entities: “[...] instances in which local armed forces, often with substantial assistance from outside powers, effectively defeated the armies of recognized governments in open warfare.”³¹ As pointed out by S. Pegg and P. Kolstø,³² this factor effectively leaves Chechnya out of the group. A different approach is applied by Kingston and Spears who conceptualized the term “state-within-state” as including a much broader spectrum of the *de facto* independent regions which are out of the control of the central government and challenge the central government’s internal legitimacy. All these entities defined by Kingston and Spears lack international recognition, are virtually independent on the central government of the parent state, but may differ in internal characteristics and ambitions to seek recognition by the international community as full-fledged sovereign states.

Additionally, A. Tsutsiyev proposed a taxonomy of unrecognized entities in order to stress a diversity of their external legitimacy by proposing three terms – *de facto* states (Nagorno Karabakh), self-proclaimed republics (TMR), and partially recognized states (Abkhazia, South Ossetia).³³ McConnell,³⁴ Berg and Kuusk,³⁵ or Pegg and Kolstø³⁶ point out the fact that unrecognized entities tend to be labelled “as illegal, pathological and clandestine and with regard to what they fail to achieve [sovereign territorial statehood].”³⁷ For this reason we propose the use of the term *de facto* state throughout the work as the term is the least normative and subjective. The term points at the factors distinguishing the entity from both, non-state actors (they attempt to achieve statehood and provide state-like functions) and states (they lack *de iure* recognition).

Conceptual framework, hypothesis, case selection, design and methodology

As Balmaceda points out, “during the last few years, scholars have paid growing attention to the political dynamics of unrecognized states.”³⁸ Much less attention, however, has been paid to the justification of the political, economic, military, or diplomatic external support of the *de facto* states from the side of the Russian Federation.

Political elites of the *de facto* states usually base their legitimization strategies for international recognition firstly on moral grounds: alleged oppression or mistreatment suffered from the central governments of parent states (justified in terms of remedial right in the theory of secession), democratization (derived from associative theory of

secession), external right to self-determination (ascriptivist theory of secession), and secondly on empirical grounds proving their ability to successfully implement the state-building project.

The article herein uses a discursive analysis to research the argumentation of Moscow and the secessionist entities in the post-Soviet space justifying support and establishment of the new, internationally unrecognized and illegitimate entities in the region. The text aims to find whether the approach of the Russian Federation towards the conflicts in the “Near Abroad” is one-sided propagation of the normative theories of secession and support for the right of self-determination over the principle of territorial integrity, or whether it is just a selective utilization of secessionist movements for the geopolitical goals of Russia in its perceived sphere of influence – the strategy of using the precedent of Kosovo’s recognition for the establishment of geopolitical outposts leading to the creation of the shatter-belt on Russian borders as a way to propagate its influence and geopolitical goals.

To reach our goal we will first analyse the statements made by leaders of the Russian Federation and the secessionist entities justifying recognition of the respective entities. We will pay special attention to the use of the arguments based on the normative theories of secession. Secondly, we will look at the effectiveness of the entities themselves as a secondary³⁹ criterion for granting statehood. Our work thus consists of the description of geopolitical importance of the secessionist entities, study of the speeches dealing with the justification of the claims for recognition, description of independence referenda where held, and the study of the internal effectiveness of the secessionist entities. Here we apply both classical theories of secession (ascriptivist – national self-determination; associative – freedom of choice; remedial; or internal effectiveness) and the new theory of secession as presented by M. Sterio⁴⁰ presenting four basic criteria present in successful secession – oppression; weakness of the mother state *vis-a-vis* the secessionist entity; international involvement (administration); and superpower’s rule.

Kosovo – precedent or pretext?

For authors like Economides, “Kosovo has been a staging post in an ongoing transformation of the international system since the end of the Cold War.”⁴¹ However, the academic discussion over Kosovo as a precedent for the post-World War II fragmentation of the political map is far from finished.⁴² For example, S. Economides points out that

“Kosovo’s independence has now become a *cause celebre* of the use of the principle of self-determination in state-creation.”⁴³ The threat of fragmentation of the political map due to the precedent set by the acknowledgment of the non-consensual independence proclamation by the Pristina leaders was heavily criticised from the side of the Russian Federation as a violation of the principle of sovereignty of Serbia.⁴⁴

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Despite the fact that the post-1945 world has witnessed other cases of application of external self-determination, the secession of Kosovo remains the most controversial case of the application of a self-determination principle as part of the international community without UN consent that promoted the principles of the remedial theory of secession over the principle of territorial integrity. Similar to the case of the former East Pakistan, a significant part of the international community reacted to the oppression of the secessionist entity from the central government by providing external legitimacy⁴⁵ thus breaking regulative rules concerning external sovereignty. It might be argued that the case of Kosovo did not have immediate seismic impact on the rules of international recognition (as defined by Fabry⁴⁶) or the global political structure and supported the relevance of the super-power rule, as defined by Sterio,⁴⁷ leading to the fact that “[r]ecent developments in international law may also lend credence to the idea that the right to remedial secession has crystallized as a norm.”⁴⁸

Putting the questions of legitimacy and legality of the humanitarian intervention and of consequent proclamation of independence aside, the secession of Kosovo holds importance for the dynamics of the ethno-political (or frozen) conflicts on the territory of GUAM states. D. Scheffer points out that “Kosovo and East Timor were examples where early notions of R2P were used to justify international military intervention to protect civilian populations at risk.”⁴⁹

Moscow’s reaction to the proclamation of the independence of Kosovo was primarily based on the support for the principle of unchanging borders as ratified in the Helsinki Final Act. The 1975 Helsinki Final Act expressed the principle that “frontiers can [only] be changed, in accordance with international law, by peaceful means and by agreement.”⁵⁰ A Russian reaction to the Western acceptance of the Kosovo independence contained a warning that the Western approach will hold geopolitical consequences.^{51 52}

This warning was materialized in the Russian “Near Abroad” where, in accordance with the super-power rule, the world was created where sovereignty is not considered sacrosanct and the principle of the Hel-

sinki Final Act is not respected. This world is characterized by the conditional sovereignty doctrine applied to lesser states and the geopolitical interests of the Kremlin.⁵³

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Despite the fact that the Kosovo case brought up the question of the relationship between the principles of self-determination and territorial integrity,⁵⁴ it did not provide an answer to the key questions – which groups are entitled to external self-determination and is this right applicable only to situations of decolonization or illegal occupation?⁵⁵ E. Berg asked himself the questions: “Will the Kosovo campaign for independence set a precedent for other breakaway regions? Will it change the notions of self-determination and sovereignty in other secessionist conflicts?”⁵⁶

The question was also not solved by M. Ahtisaari’s Kosovo plan, or by the ICJ’s advisory opinion dealing with the legality of the independence of Kosovo. Ahtisaari avoided “mentioning ‘independence’ in his plan, but he also made no mention of the ‘territorial integrity of Serbia,’”⁵⁷ and the ICJ asserted “that Kosovo’s declaration of independence was not illegal.”⁵⁸ Furthermore, “the Court also gave no endorsement to attempts to apply external self-determination outside the colonial context or to the theory of ‘remedial secession.’”⁵⁹ In practice, the international community followed the path of the “earned sovereignty” – shared sovereignty followed by institution building, and consequently the determination of the final status⁶⁰ that was not followed by Russia in its supported secessionist conflicts.

The approach of the international society to the Kosovo case is, for the purpose of this paper, mainly important due to its relation with the consequent strategy of the Russian Federation that utilized the principles of primary rights and derivative theories of secession. An ad hoc approach on the part of the international community towards the Kosovo case leaves open a space for subjective interpretation of the context in which it is justifiable to act unilaterally on ethical or humanitarian grounds. As asked by S. Economides, “[w]hy intervene in Kosovo and remain inactive in Chechnya?”⁶¹

Despite the fact that Moscow does not explicitly cite theories of secession in its support for the secessionist entities, it justifies its decision of recognition on the ground of the right of external self-determination, or democratic decision in the context of oppression and genocide. The Kosovo parallel has been utilized by President Dmitry Medvedev in his justification of recognition of Abkhazia and South Os-

setia⁶² and by Vladimir Putin as well: "If the West could redraw boundaries against the wishes of Russia and its ally Serbia, then Russia could redraw boundaries in South Ossetia and Abkhazia."⁶³ J. Oeter likens Russia's reaction to Kosovo's bad precedent ("It is extremely unfortunate as a precedent because there was no justified claim of remedial secession") to revenge-style repetition by recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia.⁶⁴ In spite of Russia's vocal criticism of the West's approach towards Kosovo, it does not forestall the Kremlin to maintain diplomatic representation in Pristina.

An implicit application of both normative theories of secession goes beyond the framework of current international practice (not, however, international law) that gives the right for external self-determination only to the colonized nations and groups facing grave injustice. For example, the application of these theories in the case of the Crimea or the Donbas region is used as a first resort and not last resort to prevent perceived attempts of genocide against the ethnic Russian minority – as commented by M. Sussex, it is "an adaptionalist approach to international human rights norms."⁶⁵

The partial recognition of Kosovo, however, did not change the overall approach towards the recognition of the secessionist entities that remained unfavourable. As Christakis points out, "[s]eparatist movements across the world should not misread the ICJ's advisory opinion [...] if international law does not, in principle, prohibit secession, then this does not mean that international law is neutral, or that it puts the state and the separatist movement on an equal footing. International law dislikes, disfavours, secession and erects many barriers against secession."⁶⁶ This approach reappeared in the context of the Abkhazian bid for sovereign statehood. The International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia arrived at the conclusion that "Abkhazia was not allowed to secede from Georgia under International Law, because the right to self-determination does not entail a right to secession."⁶⁷ What is also interesting was the approach of the states located on the EU's periphery dealing with their own secessionist entities towards the Kosovo issue.⁶⁸ The most important lesson learned is that although nothing such as a post-Kosovo procedure for normative theories of secession has been established, the entire Russian backed breakaway regions draw a parallel with Kosovo's supervised independence⁶⁹ along the line of Sterio's super-power rule and a new set of normative criteria.

Geopolitical importance of the secessionist entities

Russia's approach *vis-a-vis* secessionist entities in the post-Soviet space must be understood from the geopolitical point of view since, as noted by Fałkowski and Lang: "Russia perceives foreign policy (both its own, and that of other states, especially those from the former USSR) in the category of the 19th century geopolitical rivalry over spheres of influence"⁷⁰ and binary quality of statehood.⁷¹ Moscow's approach to unrecognized entities is not driven by a normative approach to international relations but rather determined by balance of power which is not a Russian invention, as noted by S. Markedonov referring to Kosovo.⁷²

As indicated by Bencic and Hodor, "[...] the role of the conflict from Transdnistria was to constitute a weapon to influence the policy of the Republic of Moldova; it turned into an instrument of Russia to manage the geostrategic balance in the region, to influence the foreign policy of Ukraine, Georgia, Romania and to stop the eastward expansion of the European Union and NATO."⁷³

Despite the fact that the Western powers insisted that Kosovo was a unique case of *sui generis*,⁷⁴ Berg noted that the Kosovo recognition might be "a major shift in that direction if not translated into geopolitical considerations of great powers to achieve a new and more favourable power balance in the Balkans."⁷⁵ A similar assessment of the situation was presented by M. Sterio who points out that the reason for granting Kosovo the international recognition lies in the possibility of balancing Serbian influence on the Balkans.⁷⁶ The dichotomy between the Serbian territorial integrity and Kosovar bid for external self-determination was also understood in this geopolitical perspective by Moscow. Putin himself drew a parallel between Kosovo, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2006 when he declared that "[a]ny proposed solutions should be universal in nature. If someone takes the view that Kosovo should be granted state independence, then why should we withhold the same from Abkhazia or South Ossetia?"⁷⁷

The Kremlin pressed on adherence to the principle of territorial integrity of Serbia as opposed to the frozen conflicts in the "Near Abroad." This reflected the geopolitical interest of Russia as Serbia is the only country facing secession in the former Eastern Bloc that did not pursue membership in NATO. "It was only after the colored revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine that Russia reconsidered this 'balance' policy and began to support the unrecognized states more consistently."⁷⁸

Geopolitical interests were also crucial for the acceleration of Moscow's call for external self-determination in Ukraine. The Russian Federation in an attempt to force the Kiev government to steer back into the pro-Russian course militarily guaranteed the Crimean irredentist attempt and *de facto* independence of South-Eastern Ukraine. As pointed out by G. Friedman,⁷⁹ the attempt to create a buffer-zone on the Russian border is the geographic shift of the centre of the conflict from Cold War Germany to the current EU periphery. Another manifestation of the geopolitical interests of Moscow in the post-Soviet unrecognized states might be presented in recent developments in South Ossetia. As pointed out by The Guardian,⁸⁰ Russian troops moved the South Ossetian border one-and-half kilometre further into Georgian territory to control part of the British Petroleum operated pipeline running to the port in Supsa. In 2014-15, Russia also signed new security agreements with both unrecognized entities located in Georgia⁸¹ and its overall presence in both entities steadily grows.⁸² Furthermore, Moscow (respectively Yerevan in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh) enjoys large support in the *de facto* states which is based in its support for the entities and the break-away regions to a large extent support unification with their parent states (with an exception of Abkhazian support for independence).⁸³

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Russian international behaviour further supports the view that the Russian Federation does not support remedial theory of secession as the universal norm in international relations⁸⁴ but that it utilizes it selectively in cases where it can support its geopolitical goals. Moscow *de facto* manages a strategy of conditional sovereignty against smaller states that do not accept the Russian sphere of influence. Additionally, Russia abides by the so-called Medvedev doctrine – Russia has the right to protect the lives and dignity of ethnic Russians wherever they are located and that Russia identifies certain regions as of a special value and interests for itself.⁸⁵

Legitimacy of the unrecognized states in the “Near Abroad”

The issue of legitimization of the Eurasian secessionist entities was analyzed by D. Lynch who dealt with the cases of South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Transnistria, and Nagorno-Karabakh. He identified four arguments that are used by the political elites to justify their demands for international recognition:

- 1) alleged internal effectiveness,
- 2) territorial and governmental legitimacy,

- 3) historical tradition of statehood,
- 4) right of self-determination.⁸⁶

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Moreover, N. Caspersen analyzed unrecognized states' adherence to the democratic style of government as part of their legitimising strategy for gaining international recognition.⁸⁷ Similarly E. Berg points out that "the seceding group must also adhere to democratic rights and values in order to claim legitimate authority."⁸⁸ D. Geldenhuys adverts to the importance of internal legitimacy. "In the case of secessionist entities, questions are often asked about the inhabitants' actual support for unilaterally breaking away from original states."⁸⁹ Therefore, a strategy of Russia's backed secessionist regions for gaining recognition is based on portraying themselves as democratic islands within authoritative and repressive parent states. But most of them also claim to be entitled to the right to external self-determination and to be oppressed by parent states.

We will now move to the analysis of cases of secession inside the post-Soviet region. First we will analyse verbal proclamations made to promote cases of different secessionist entities.

Abkhazia

In its proclamation from 7 March 2008, the Abkhazian Parliament made a proclamation⁹⁰ of independence based on the following reasoning: Abkhazia has its distinct history of statehood and it was successfully holding a *de facto* statehood for the past fifteen years; Abkhazia holds a right of self-determination as based on the principle of anti-colonialism and oppression from Georgia from the Soviet era; the state of Abkhazia is effective and holds democratic legitimacy as supported by the 1999 referendum; recognition of Abkhazia would only follow reality on the ground and bring larger stability to the Caucasus region.

Ajaria

Claims of Ajaria were based on historical claims and right for self determination based on religious rights (not ethnicity). Ajarians are ethnic Georgian, but are Muslim unlike majority Georgians.⁹¹

Chechnya

Chechnya also followed its reasoning on the basis of the right for self-determination and historical claims of distinct statehood and tradition.⁹²

Crimea

Crimean bid for independence was first based on the reasoning that was the same for the other two entities in Eastern Ukraine (Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republic). First, there is the claim of the protection of Russian speaking minority against alleged planned genocide. Second, it was pointed out that Russians in Eastern Ukraine have their right for self-determination. The Crimean Parliament, furthermore, stressed the importance of the referendum that took place on 11 March 2014.⁹³

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Donetsk People's Republic

DPR presented, besides the above mentioned claims, an argument based on the democratic legitimacy and self-determination through the referendum that took place on 11 May 2014. Furthermore, the DPR also argued its historical ties to the state of Donetsk-Krivoy Rog.⁹⁴

Gagauzia

The Gagauz Republic was proclaimed in August 1990, earlier than Transnistria; however, an autonomy agreement between the central government and break-away region was agreed in 1994. Gagauz claims were based on the principles of ethnic and language difference, closeness of Moldova to Romania, and a referendum that took place on 11 February 1992.⁹⁵

Lugansk People's Republic

LPR held similar claims to those of the DPR or Crimea with its own referendum taking place on 11 May 2014.

Nagorno-Karabakh

A declaration of proclamation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic from 2 September 1991⁹⁶ points to the following justifications for its secession: Uncertain future of the USSR; self-determination under both international and Soviet law; autonomous status inside the USSR; discrimination of the Armenian population and the use of violence; referendum (that took place on 10 December 1991).

South Ossetia

Justification for South Ossetian independence was most clearly presented by the former Russian president D. Medvedev.⁹⁷ Claims are the

following: Georgia violated international law; it attempted to annihilate the population of South Ossetia – history of genocide; Georgia was an aggressor following the precedent of the 1991 civil war; South Ossetian population has the right of self-determination.

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Transnistria

Justification of the bid for the recognition of the Transnistria was based on the effectiveness of the entity and ability to provide basic freedoms for its population, inner democratic setting, and the application of the Montevideo Convention criteria for statehood.⁹⁸ The entity is, unlike most of the others, heterogeneous and not distinct from its neighbours.⁹⁹

Table 1 shows justifications as well as international recognition of the post-Soviet *de facto* states and secessionist entities.

Many cases in the post-Soviet region often operate with the term genocide to justify their secession. As E. Finkel points out, new states emerging in the post-Soviet region try to utilize the idea of genocide to bolster their national legitimacy – they “search [...] lost genocides.”¹⁰⁰ Armenians termed 1988 pogroms in Sumgait from the side of Azerbaijanis as genocide. Azerbaijanis did the same after killing in the town of Khojali in 1992. Abkhaz and Ossetians accused Georgians of genocide and Georgians did the same against Abkhazia. The genocide card was yet again re-introduced in the current conflict in Ukraine, not only in the cases of justification of secessions but also in the description of concrete events – e.g. “the genocide of Odessa.”

Another argument often brought up is the issue of democratic legitimacy based on referendum. The EC/EU/US attempt to establish a common approach towards dissolution of Yugoslavia influenced unrecognized states’ recognition strategies. In the late 1990s their elites came to the conclusion that they could earn recognition by creating internationally acceptable entities and the rhetoric, if not always the practice, of democracy.¹⁰¹ In other words, the goal was to fit in the new normative framework of international relations. In most cases their alleged adherence to democratic values has been demonstrated in referenda on independence or constitution despite the fact that these procedures barely meet standards of free and fair elections, e.g. elections are conducted without the presence of independent electoral observers.

In Table 2, we present outcomes of different referenda held in the post-Soviet secessionist entities.

Table 1 – Justification and recognition

Name	Duration	Recognition (2015)	Justification
Abkhazia	1992-	Nauru, Nicaragua, Russia, Venezuela	Historical, self-determination, oppression, democracy, stability
Ajaria	-	None	Religion
Chechnya	1991-1999	Afghanistan	Historical, self-determination
Crimea	2014	Annexed by Russia	Genocide, self-determination, democracy
Donetsk People's Republic	2014-	None	Historical, self-determination, genocide, democracy
Gagauzia	-	None	Ethnicity, democracy
Lugansk People's Republic	2014-	None	Genocide, self-determination, democracy
Nagorno-Karabakh	1991-	None	Self-determination, oppression, democracy
South Ossetia	1991-	Nauru, Nicaragua, Russia, Venezuela	Genocide, self-determination
Transnistria	1990-	None	Effectiveness, democracy, oppression, freedoms

Abkhazian referendum was a referendum on new constitution. Gagauzia also held a referendum on full independence on 1 December 1991 with 90 percent pro-independence but this referendum was held only by ethnic Gagauz despite the fact that they compose only 75-80 percent of the population of their claimed territory (Baar 2002, 239). In Transnistria, the second referendum's results were based on responses to the first of the two questions – support of current course of Transnistrian politics.

As evident, a referendum is an important factor in a bid for international recognition as it corresponds with the principle of internal legitimacy.¹⁰² However, the outcomes of the referenda must be seen in the context of often problematic environment and the outcomes might not always respect the reality of the voting as noted in the referenda in Ukraine.

Table 2 – Referenda

Name	Date	Turnout	For/Against/Invalid
Abkhazia	3. 10. 1999	87,6%	97,7%/2,3%
Adjara	N/A	N/A	N/A
Chechnya	N/A	N/A	N/A
Crimea	16. 3. 2014	83,1%	96,77%/2,51%/0,72%
Donetsk People's Republic	11. 5. 2014	74,87%	89,07%/10,19%/0,74%
Gagauzia	11. 2. 1992	85,1%	95,4%/4,6%
Lugansk People's Republic	11. 5. 2014	75%	96,2%/2,8%/1%
Nagorno-Karabakh	10. 12. 1991	82,17%	99,89%/0,11%
South Ossetia	19. 1. 1992/ 12. 11. 2006	97%/95,2%	99,75%/0,25%/ 99,88%/0,12%
Transnistria	1. 12. 1991 / 17. 11. 2006	78%/78,6%	97,7%/2,3%/ 97,2%/1,9%/0,9%

Finally, common justification of the statehood is its inner effectiveness and the ability to promote democratic principles of rule. To test this assumption we will look at the economic situation, political structure, and security environment of the six currently existing *de facto* states in the post-Soviet space – Abkhazia, DPR, LPR, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Transnistria.

Abkhazia

Despite the fact that post-2008 Abkhazia saw a major growth in its GDP this does not mean that the country's *de facto* status following the Russian invasion led per se to major economic improvement. As noted by Inal Ardzinba, the growth was caused by a large influx of Russian money into the Abkhazian economy. Furthermore, the institutions of Abkhazia are underdeveloped and the economic indicators are rather poor overall. Abkhazian economic development is hazed by legal uncertainty.¹⁰³ Abkhazians, as well as South Ossetians, understand the importance of Russia for their economy (and similarly for their security)¹⁰⁴ and this limits their choices of future development. The strong connection of the Abkhazian economy to Russia is not only visible in the form of direct investment and financial support but also in its dominant economic sectors – tourism and agriculture. As pointed out in the late 2013/early 2014, closing of borders between Russia and Abkhazia for the duration of the Sochi winter Olympics caused major troubles to the Abkhazians as they were unable to export most of their agricultural products to the Russian market on time and additional losses were caused by the inability of the visitors of Sochi (lying near the Abkhazian border) to visit the entity.¹⁰⁵ This is caused not only by the large political influence of Russia in the country but also by geographic location and geopolitical position of the entity that lacks other options of receiving revenue.

Looking at the political structure of Abkhazia, we can observe that the Abkhazian political system is a presidential republic. Notwithstanding other criteria for a presidential candidate, it is crucial to note that the candidate must be of Abkhazian ethnicity (Abkhazia is sometimes called an ethnocracy¹⁰⁶). The power of the legislative body is largely constrained by the prime position of the presidential office in the system. Elections in Abkhazia are, despite close ties of all candidates to Moscow,¹⁰⁷ quite competitive.¹⁰⁸ Freedom House ranks Abkhazia as partly free – criticising discrimination of ethnic Georgians, inability of the institutions to implement their policies, lack of some basic liberties, or weak rule of law, while pointing at the positive trend of growing importance of opposition in the system.¹⁰⁹

Last but not least, the provision of security in Abkhazia is dependent on the military of the Russian Federation.¹¹⁰ Despite the fact that Abkhazia was able to retain its semi-autonomous status even before the 2008 conflict, it cannot be perceived as independent in its provision

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of security. Extensive dependence on Russian support in the security realm has been confirmed “in September 2009 by the signing of a treaty of military cooperation, which granted Russia access to military facilities and bases in Abkhazia (including the airbase at Gudauta and naval facilities at Ochamchire) for a period of 49 years. Under the treaty, Russian troops will retain the right of unrestricted mobility throughout Abkhazia and will remain immune from Abkhazian criminal law as well as exempt from taxation[...] In May 2009, Moscow and Sukhumi signed a border protection agreement through which the Abkhaz side agreed to have 800 Russian troops exclusively guard its border.”¹¹¹

Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republic

As these two entities (*proto de facto states*¹¹²) share similar characteristics, they will be examined together. In the context of the hybrid conflict taking place in Eastern Ukraine, the economic activity of the region is halted not only due to fighting but also due to the massive emigration. Large areas are affected by water or gas shortages and two-thirds of the population that remained in the region do not receive steady wages. As the economic decline is likely to continue until the conflict is resolved, these two entities will remain economically dependent on direct Russian support.¹¹³

Regarding the political system, the elites presenting themselves as the representatives of the “republics” were originally mostly Russian citizens. Despite the fact that some most obvious cases of the Russian control of the leadership of the entities were obliterated,¹¹⁴ it remains undeniable that the political leadership of both DPR and LPR are directly connected to Russia.

Security is also directly connected to Russia, not only are Russian forces directly present in the region and members of the Russian military are in some of the leading positions of the DPR's and LPR's militias, armed forces of the two republics are also materially dependent on the Russian support – as claimed, for example by Motyl.¹¹⁵ Up to date both entities' claims to sovereign or *de facto* statehood remain imaginary as they are rather war zones or a federation of field commanders as labelled by Markedonov.¹¹⁶ Both regions have no clear distinct identity based on geography, demography or culture¹¹⁷ and neither is recognized by even the Russian Federation.

Nagorno-Karabakh

Nagorno-Karabakh as an isolated enclave surrounded by hostile Azerbaijan with limited access to Armenia via formally Azerbaijani provinces controlled by Armenian or Nagorno-Karabakh forces is economically dependent on the support of Armenian Diaspora.¹¹⁸ The position of Armenia as the main backer of the Nagorno-Karabakh independence is due to its isolation from the side of Azerbaijan and Turkey, however, it is almost fully dependent on the support from the Russian Federation. Despite the attempts to start viable domestic economic activity, Nagorno-Karabakh's economic situation is currently dependent on foreign aid and investment.

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According to Freedom House, Nagorno-Karabakh is a partly free entity (scoring, however, better than its parent state Azerbaijan) – with a similar score to other countries and unrecognized entities in the region. Despite the fact that Nagorno-Karabakh holds regular elections, the opposition is often marginalized. All major parties are pro-government. Civil liberties are limited and the judiciary is not independent.¹¹⁹ Although Nagorno-Karabakh used to be the most free and democratic of all the post-Soviet *de facto* states, the last development had led it towards a more authoritarian rule.¹²⁰

Regarding security, Nagorno-Karabakh holds its own security forces which are able to a certain degree to provide defence and internal security for the entity.¹²¹ On the other hand, these security forces remain dependent on Armenia.¹²² In situations of a renewal of clashes with Azerbaijan, Russia usually plays a role of mediator and as a major supporter of the Armenian regime it ensures the survival of the entity, while ensuring the stability in the region as it holds major stakes in economic relations with Azerbaijan.¹²³

South Ossetia

The 2008 Russian incursion brought South Ossetians economic hardships connected to the isolation of their entity from Georgia as a natural economic partner. The South Ossetian government is unable to provide basic functions and the aim of its economic policy follows the political goal of uniting with North Ossetia inside the Russian Federation.¹²⁴

In the Freedom House analysis, South Ossetia scores as not free. The opposition is non-existent and the political elite is strongly coherent and without exceptions strongly pro-Russian. The government is

controlled by the Russian Federation. Personal and civil liberties are suppressed and the judiciary is controlled by the government.¹²⁵ As noted by Cooley and Mitchell, "Russia controls South Ossetia's leadership and all strategically sensitive appointments in its cabinet and security services."¹²⁶ The control of Moscow is evident from the change of election results after the Kremlin's supported candidate lost the presidential elections and the election did not recognize the results as to allow the Russian-backed candidate to win.¹²⁷

The provision of security of the entity is also fully in the hands of the Russian Federation. Similar to the economic situation, the security of South Ossetia is fully dependent on Russian support,¹²⁸ which has permanently stationed troops not only in South Ossetia but also in Abkhazia.

Transnistria

The economy of Transnistria is a combination of the monopoly of the Sheriff company¹²⁹ and support from the Russian Federation. Given the geographical nature of the entity and its isolation from Moldova and Ukraine it is unable to sustain itself. The government is directly supportive of and connected to the activities of Sheriff and Sheriff is thus the most important actor in the Transnistrian economy. The Transnistrian economy survives due to the combination of income from expatriates and its exports, and Russian support in the form of gas subsidies and humanitarian aid.¹³⁰

As for the democratic principles, Freedom House ranks Transnistria as not free. The political system is flawed not only by the absence of viable opposition but also by the presence of Russian forces in the country. The system is corrupt and connected to organized crime and smuggling groups. Civil and personal freedoms are limited and the judiciary is not independent.¹³¹

Security provision is maintained by the Russian 14th Army that is stationed on the territory of the entity. These approximately 1,500 Russian soldiers have ensured security and independence of Transnistria from Moldova since the break-out of the entity in the early 1990s, although "during the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999, Russia promised again to withdraw troops from Transdnistria, but has not done so to this day."¹³² Domestic security forces are, however, able to operate inside the entity.

As evident from the analysis, all of the post-Soviet *de facto* states base their claims on similar argumentation combining claims of op-

pression with the utilization of the self-determination principle and adherence to democratic principles. The second argumentation line follows the claims of the *de facto* control of the land and alleged effectiveness of the entities. As evident from our analysis, part of the first set of claims might hold some relevance but is utilized inconsistently. Claims by Abkhazia and South Ossetia regarding Georgian oppression in the early 1990s might hold their inner consistency; similarly, the claims of Nagorno-Karabakh are to a certain degree relevant. On the contrary, similarly justifiable claims of Chechnya fell on deaf ears due to Russia's geopolitical interests and concerns among Western countries. The self-determination principle is once again accepted on a selective basis as the Russian elites clearly utilize the principle as a geopolitical tool. The democratic principle adherence is, however, clearly only an argument manufactured in order to obtain the sympathy of the international community. Despite the fact that all the currently existing *de facto* entities held independence referenda, their validity and legitimacy as well as results might be contested (especially in the case of the referenda held in war-torn Eastern Ukraine or occupied Crimea). The inner setting of the entities in relation to the utilization of the democratic principles is problematic. All the entities have issues with adherence to the protection of basic rights, independence of judiciary, and the role of opposition in the system. This issue is further complicated by the possible association with the Russian Federation in the cases of Abkhazia and the South Ossetia, although authors such as K. Matsuzato opposed "the influential view that the unrecognized states are puppets of Russia or Armenia."¹³³

Internal effectiveness of the entities is also only a facade. The economic situation of all the entities is dire and all of the entities are dependent on the support of the Russian Federation. Their *de facto* independence and security is provided and guaranteed by the Russian troops even though some of the entities are able to maintain their own quasi-military or quasi-police forces – As expressed by G. Ó Tuathail, "South Ossetia and Abkhazia are much more directly Russian client statelets with no significant international legitimacy beyond their relationship with the Russian Federation."¹³⁴

Table 3 presents our findings.

J. Castellino argues that none of Eurasia's unrecognized entities – Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, or Abkhazia can be classified as people entitled to self-determination¹³⁵ and the same is

Table 3 – Justification of existence of the post-Soviet *de facto* states

Name	Referendum	Democracy	Oppression	Economic viability	Security provision
Abkhazia	Yes	Partially	Yes	Partially	No
DPR	Yes	No	Partially	No	No
LPR	Yes	No	Partially	No	No
Nagorno-Karabakh	Yes	Partially	Yes	Partially	Partially
South Ossetia	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Transnistria	Yes	No	No	No	Partially

true of all of Russia’s backed secessionist entities. Moreover scholars generally agree that none of them have a right to unilaterally secede from the parent state according to international law.

Conclusion

Russia’s continuing support for Eurasian breakaway regions within the territory of Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine is closely linked to its geopolitical motives and security strategy, particularly associated to an effort to prevent further NATO and EU enlargement, and Russia’s fear of encirclement. As noted by Ó Tuathail: “It took little suspicion on the part of Russian national security officials to view the US desire for former Soviet republics (such as the Baltic states, Ukraine, and Georgia) to be part of NATO as an effort to encircle their country with flexible frontline American bases.”¹³⁶ All the above mentioned cases (including Kosovo) did not lead to the establishment of a normative set of criteria nor practical procedure justifying the application of normative theories of secession in practice.

For Russia, Kosovo’s precedent serves as a welcome pretext (revenge-style repetition in Oeter’s words) justifying its geopolitical goals while not following the process of “earned sovereignty” that was applied to the Kosovo case by the international community and so its attempts are perceived as insincere. All of Russia’s backed secessionist regions base their claims to independent statehood on normative theories of secession, although in some cases it is unclear what the

secessionists" ultimate goals are. It is important to stress that requirements for unilateral secession were not met in any of Russia's backed separatist territories due to illegality of origin and disharmony with a new set of normative criteria applied towards dissolution of Yugoslavia or secession of Kosovo. Furthermore, Russia's approach is perceived as insincere due to its use of double standards over secessionist movements, when it wants Kosovo to be a precedent only within the territory of the former USSR (excluding Russia).

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In the case of the *de facto* states in the post-Soviet space, King's definition of unrecognized states that is based on the role of the outside actor, armed conflict and defeat of the central government might be applied. *De facto* states in the "Near Abroad" are directly supported by the Russian Federation, their existence is based on the attempts of Russia to achieve its geopolitical goals and the changing level of support from Moscow is directly connected to the international situation as perceived by the Russian political elites. Permanent presence of the Russian armed forces on the territory of the post-Soviet *de facto* states is part of the strategy aiming at prevention of the enlargement of NATO through establishing the set of geopolitical outposts within the judicial boundaries of the reform-minded neighbours. These geopolitical outposts enable Russia to coerce parent states to comply with Moscow's security interests by maintaining controlled instability.

Moscow thus uses the normative approach to international relations on a selective basis and the occasional placement of this principle over the principle of the territorial integrity only aims at the justification and legitimization of Russian policy choices. While the unilateral secession of Kosovo and the Kosovo Advisory Opinion may be also read in the context of Responsibility to Protect theory,¹³⁷ selective application of the normative theories of secession and unilateral creation of parallels to the Kosovo case in post-Soviet space do not lead to collective recognition. Obviously none of these entities fit into normative framework outlined by the EC in the early 1990s not only due to their illegality of origin, but also due to the fact that successful secessions continue to be rare exceptions, because all major powers remain stuck to the sovereignty-first approach, giving preference to territorial integrity over a normative approach. On the contrary, all the unrecognized entities in Russia's geographic proximity face collective non-recognition and remain trapped in the binary geopolitical division of the world, which is keeping with its strategy of controlled

instability. Despite the efforts and desires of the population of the unrecognized entities in the post-Soviet space, the entities still remain geopolitical outposts of the Russian foreign policy and a victim to their geopolitical position on the world map. This also influences the possible solutions of the secessionist conflicts. Unlike cases of areas such as Somaliland or Palestine (where a negotiated secession might solve the problem), in these cases the Russian Federation plays a determining role in the outcome.



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Fatality Sensitivity

Factors Shaping British, Polish and Australian Public Opinion on the 2003 Iraq War

Piotr Lis

This paper investigates fatality sensitivity of public opinion in coalition countries that participate in war efforts but are not a leading force. The analysis is based on opinion polls measuring public attitudes towards the involvement in the Iraq war of three countries: the United Kingdom, Poland and Australia. Overall, the data does not provide clear evidence of sensitivity to soldier deaths, which were relatively infrequent, but the war opposition appears to increase in response to terrorism in Iraq. News of success has a power to reduce war opposition, while scandals are costly in terms of public support.

Key words: Iraq war, wartime public opinion, fatality sensitivity, war coalition members.

Introduction

This article analyses the attitudes of public opinion in three coalition countries, the United Kingdom, Poland and Australia, towards their involvement in the Iraq war and how it responded to war-related events such as soldier and civilian deaths. Although the dynamics shaping war-time opinion in countries that play only a supporting role in a conflict are likely to be different from those typical for a coalition leader, they have not received much attention in existing literature. This



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is in spite of the fact that a decision to commit armed forces to war is among the most vital decisions any government can take. Military operations require public support because it is the citizenry who pays the price of war with their lives, health and taxes. Thus, knowledge of factors influencing public opinion is central to providing and sustaining support for government actions. It gives policy makers indications into what is permissible and intolerable from a political point of view. Consequently, a study of public opinion regarding armed conflict is important from both academic and political perspectives.

Piotr Lis

The war in Iraq, which began on 20 March 2003, occupied news services and national agendas of many countries for several years, and to this day polarises opinions. The invasion led by the United States was justified by the claims of Iraq's alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the perceived threat of Saddam Hussein's regime to America and her allies. The swift invasion rid the world of a gory dictatorship, however it was soon followed by a bloody insurgency which within seven years claimed the lives of over 100,000 civilians¹ and 4,700 coalition soldiers.² The Multi-National Force, henceforth MNF, which became responsible for military operations in the country after the initial invasion, included troops from nearly 40 countries and at its peak comprised 176,000 personnel.³ However, only four countries participated directly in the major combat phase, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Poland, and as such were active in Iraq from March 2003.⁴ While war-time attitudes of American public opinion have received significant attention from researchers,⁵ little is known about determinants of war-related opinion in coalition countries, i.e. those that are not a core force behind military operations but contribute troops to support a combat mission initiated and led by another country. To fill in the existing research gap, the focus of this article is on the British, Polish and Australian public opinion towards the countries' participation in the Iraq war. These three coalition forces, although only a fraction of the numbers deployed by the United States, were among the largest sent by the MNF members.⁶ Their role was further emphasized by granting them command of two multinational divisions: South-East to Great Britain and Central-South to Poland.

This study hypothesizes that the patterns governing such opinion differ from those typical for coalition leaders. The possible reasons behind dissimilar reactions to events in the theatre of war stem from the very different degree of political and military involvement. These

countries only support the ongoing operations and therefore their responsibility and risks are lesser than those of a coalition leader. Their withdrawal from combat is unlikely to have a pivotal impact on the war outcome and the consequences of such a move would be mostly limited to strained relationships with the coalition leader, i.e. the United States in the case of the Iraq war. Regardless of the supporting forces' performance, international condemnation in the event of failure is likely to concentrate mostly on the coalition leader. This way, even if the Iraq war was lost, the blame would be placed largely on the United States, not other MNF members. Being in such a "comfortable" situation, governments and citizenry of the supporting states may see a larger divergence between their national interests and the war operations. Not being a superpower, smaller countries are unlikely to feel and act like a "world's policeman" and their interest in global politics may be of a narrower scope than that of the United States. For instance, Poland and Australia did not have traditions of large combat missions aimed at conquering remote regions or regime changes. Furthermore, the two countries were not exposed to international terrorism as much as the United States and Great Britain,⁷ therefore their gains from toppling a terrorism-supporting regime should be relatively smaller. The need for research into the public opinion of war supporting states is further aggravated by the fact that previous studies characterize conflicts by the patterns of accumulation of U.S. soldier deaths.⁸ Because of a smaller size and a different nature of deployment, the number of deaths is likely to grow differently among the coalition troops. For instance, the death toll among American soldiers amounted to 2.5 percent of the country's maximum deployment in the post-invasion period. The corresponding number for the United Kingdom and Poland was approximately 1 percent, and it was negligible for Australia.⁹ This difference is an outcome of the fact that soldiers from the countries in question were likely to participate in less dangerous operations, and Australian troops were kept from life threatening actions.¹⁰

This divergence of objectives, degree of involvement as well as relatively lower cost in terms of soldier deaths are likely to focus public opinion in coalition states on other signals of war progress. In addition to responding to losses of national troops, which represent a direct cost of war to a nation but occur at low frequency for the coalition members, it is hypothesised that the public is sensitive to instability and the severity of terrorism in Iraq. The latter is considered as a measure of

war progress, where more violence signals failing efforts. Such reasoning is in line with the cost-benefit decision making framework, where the public is supposed to consider both sides of the equation before forming their opinion. Thus, the study's efforts are concentrated on determining the degree to which public opinion in coalition countries responds to own soldier deaths as well as instability in Iraq measured by the number of terrorist attacks and resulting deaths.

*Fatality
Sensitivity*

This study employs the error correction model (ECM) to analyse how the war opinion is influenced by combat deaths and the magnitude of terrorism in Iraq. This method offers two considerable advantages. First, it tackles the problems of non-stationarity which plague opinion and fatality series. Second, it has a long memory and a shock in one period is allowed to affect time series throughout subsequent periods. It is expected that an increased fatality rate in one period raises war opposition. Although in subsequent periods the death toll may be much lower, the public may be influenced by the memory of earlier events and unwilling to scale down their opposition to the level suggested by the smaller death rate in the most recent time interval. In other words, an effect of a jump in fatality series on war opinion is likely to take more than one period to die out.

The empirical analysis returns results consistent with the expectations. However, the significant positive impact of soldier deaths on war opposition can be confirmed only for the United Kingdom. The lack of similar effects in Poland and Australia might be attributed to a relatively small number of soldier fatalities leaving the opinion dominated by other factors, including terrorism in Iraq. The public in all three countries appear to be sensitive to the information on the number of people killed in terrorist attacks. The Poles, who were highly antagonistic to the war at its onset, significantly reduced their opposition after the invasion ended in May 2003. This could have been helped by the fact that the country did not incur any human losses during the first two months of the war and the benefit of defeating the brutal dictatorship seemed to have been achieved at a small cost. The British public responded in a similar manner after the capture of Saddam Hussein, which must have been perceived as a war success. The opposition in both countries sharply increased after the release of the torture pictures from Abu Ghraib. Here, however, part of the effect may have come from the Madrid bombings, which happened within the same polling period. Surprisingly, there appear to be no significant

effects of the London bombings of 7 July 2005 on the British war opposition.

The results of this article may be interpreted as a policy-relevant guidance for governments considering involvement in a multinational war coalition. In particular, it identifies the channels that affect the war-related views of the citizenry, and therefore should become a focus of policy makers' attention. For example, it confirms that scandals such as torture in Abu Ghraib prison are very costly in terms of public attitude and their effect is difficult to reverse. It also shows that the public is responsive to deaths of Iraqis suffered from terrorism. Hence, maintaining war support requires an effective stability-promoting and counter-terrorist strategy as a part of the war effort. This implication is important also for the coalition leader, the United States, in whose interest it is to maintain positive war attitudes among the public across the coalition in order to keep allies committed to a military intervention.

The reminder of this article is organized as follows. The next section offers literature review. The ensuing two sections present data sources and properties, which are then followed by the discussion of the estimation method and results. The final two sections offer discussion and concluding remarks.

Literature review

Existing literature pays the most attention to reactions of the American public to the use of the armed forces. A pioneering study on the topic uses the "log of cumulative soldier deaths" (the natural logarithm of the total number of casualties that have occurred at the time of a survey) to analyze public attitudes to the Korean and Vietnam wars.¹¹ Its main finding, that the war support drops in proportion to the "log of cumulative fatalities," leads to the conclusion that the American public are sensitive to relatively small losses in early stages of war, but only to large losses in later stages. This is contested by other researchers who emphasize the importance of accounting for war weariness (a duration-based opposition).¹² Including controls for conflict duration leads to a conclusion that the level of marginal fatalities has better explanatory power than cumulative fatalities when marginal fatalities are increasing; when they are decreasing, the log of cumulative fatalities performs better.

Numerous studies seek an explanation to changes in war support in factors other than casualties. For example, public support for con-

flict has been linked to the principal policy objectives, which posit that the public may be less sensitive to fatalities in certain types of military interventions.¹³ The “elite cue theory” on the other hand suggests that support for conflict is shaped by a degree of consensus or divergence in elites’ opinions regarding the war and when political leaders share their support for the conflict, the public tends to support it too.¹⁴ A lack of consensus brings a polarisation effect which is demonstrated by a split in the public opinion. The influences of the principal policy objectives and elite cues are assumed to be complemented by the nature of media coverage of a conflict. There is also evidence indicating that Americans are more likely to support military actions if they are a part of a multilateral operation.¹⁵

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The drop in the American public support for the Iraq war appeared faster than during the wars in Vietnam and Korea, which could be explained by the public perception of the stakes in Iraq being less important than during the former conflicts.¹⁶ Another early study of the public opinion towards the Iraq war considers the influence of American fatalities on the presidential rating. The impact of soldier deaths on presidential approval is shown to vary between the stages of the war, nonetheless, expectations of success of the mission are argued to have a much stronger impact on president’s popularity than war casualties.¹⁷ These conclusions should be taken with caution for a number of reasons. First, the study covers only the first 20 months of the war, thus the observed patterns may be misrepresentative for its whole duration. Second, since news services tend to report the cumulative death counts from the beginning of the war, it is unreasonable to expect the public to form their opinion for respective phases separately. Third, using presidential ratings is problematic as they are influenced by numerous factors and it is difficult to extract a pure war component.¹⁸ Nonetheless, a comprehensive study of fatality sensitivity across a sample of conflicts reinforces the conclusion that American public is “defeat phobic, not casualty phobic.”¹⁹

All the research cited above focuses on U.S. public opinion and there have been very few studies that link war casualties to the war support or opposition in the three coalition countries in question. The available literature discusses British public opinion and concentrates mostly on the Falklands war of 1982. What all these studies have in common is that they look at the popularity of the governing party, not the public support for war. Moreover, they tend to model the war period

with indicator variables, and hence do not account for the intensity of the conflict and its human costs.²⁰ In a recent attempt, attitudes of the British public towards the involvement in Libya in 2011 have been analyzed and compared with attitudes in other countries as well as those towards the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Nonetheless, the purely descriptive approach of that study does not permit drawing generalizable conclusions on potential determinants of the war-time opinion.²¹

This article is closest to the work of Mueller and Gartner and Segura²² as it identifies the human cost of war as a chief determinant of public opinion. However, it uses a more efficient estimation method which deals with problems typical for opinion poll and fatality series. It also allows the public to react to deaths incurred by citizens of the invaded country.

Data

The data are drawn from several sources. The information on the opposition to the Iraq war was collected from three pollsters, YouGov, CBOS and Roy Morgan for the United Kingdom, Poland and Australia, respectively.²³ The choice of the opposition scores as a dependent variable is motivated by governments being chiefly concerned with avoiding political sanctions for their military endeavors, and less with maintaining war support.²⁴ The British were asked the following question: “Do you think the United States and Britain are/were right or wrong to take military action against Iraq?”, forty times between 18 March 2003 and 7 June 2007 (see Panel 1 of Figure 1). Approximately 2,000 respondents took part in the survey, which was conducted with varying frequency. In 2003 and 2004, when the Iraq war dominated public debate, YouGov carried out 22 and 11 polls, respectively. In 2005 the number fell to three polls, and in 2006 and 2007 there were only two surveys each year. Until May 2004 the majority of respondents saw the military action against Iraq as the “right” thing. As the invasion began, 53 percent were in favor of the use of military force and 39 percent were against it. The support for the invasion reached its maximum of 66 percent on 10 April 2003; the same survey showed the lowest opposition of 29 percent. The poll conducted after the release of pictures of torture of Iraqi prisoners in April 2004 showed that, for the first time, the majority did not support the war. The fraction of those who perceived the conflict as wrong reached 60 percent in April 2007, at the same time the “right” answer was given by 26 percent.

Poland was the only country of the three where the opponents of sending troops to Iraq were always in the majority. CBOS conducted 31 surveys in which a typical sample of around 1,000 adults were asked “Do you support the participation of Polish soldiers in the mission in Iraq?”²⁵ The initial opposition of 73 percent fell to 45 percent in May 2003 (see Panel 2 of Figure 1). This was also the time when the support for sending troops to Iraq reached its peak of 45 percent. As sectarian violence engulfed Iraq, the Poles grew less comfortable with the country’s involvement in the military operations. The opposition bounced back to 70 percent in the second quarter of 2004 and exceeded 80 percent in 2007.

The Australian public was asked about their opinion on the involvement in the Iraq war less frequently. The most consistent survey was conducted by Roy Morgan between 19 March 2003 and 20 April 2006, typically on a sample of over 500 respondents. The question “Now thinking about Iraq — In your opinion should Australia have a military presence in Iraq?” was put forward ten times (see Panel 3 of Figure 1). The Australian opinion remained split fairly in the middle over the polling period, with differences between *yes* and *no* oscillating between 2 percent and 5 percent. The situation changed in 2006, when the opposition of 59 percent exceeded the number of supporters by 24 percentage points. Unfortunately, there are no polls available that could reflect the effects of revelations suggesting that the Australian government had sent troops to Iraq under the condition that its wheat trade with the country was protected.²⁶ Notably, neither the Polish nor the Australian polls showed the “rally-around-the-flag” effect.²⁷

Data for the explanatory variables are taken chiefly from two sources: iCasualties.org and the MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base.²⁸ The latter draws from open sources and provides information on acts of terrorism defined as violence for political purposes by sub-national actors, designed to induce fear and anxiety in order to influence behavior of an audience beyond that of immediate victims. MIPT recorded 9,656 terrorist incidents (of which 593 were classified as international) that took place in Iraq between 20 March 2003 and 31 December 2007, and caused 26,147 fatalities. This number represents mostly civilian deaths as the database concentrates on non-combatant targets; only 0.6 percent of incidents recorded involved military targets. The incidence of terrorism in Iraq seems to be particularly large when compared to the overall number of 10,237 international terrorist attacks

recorded globally within 40 years to 2007. The number of fatalities is used as an explanatory variable because, although it shows the same effects as the number of attacks, it provides better goodness of fit of the model. This suggests that public does not react only to the number of attacks, but is also sensitive to their severity.

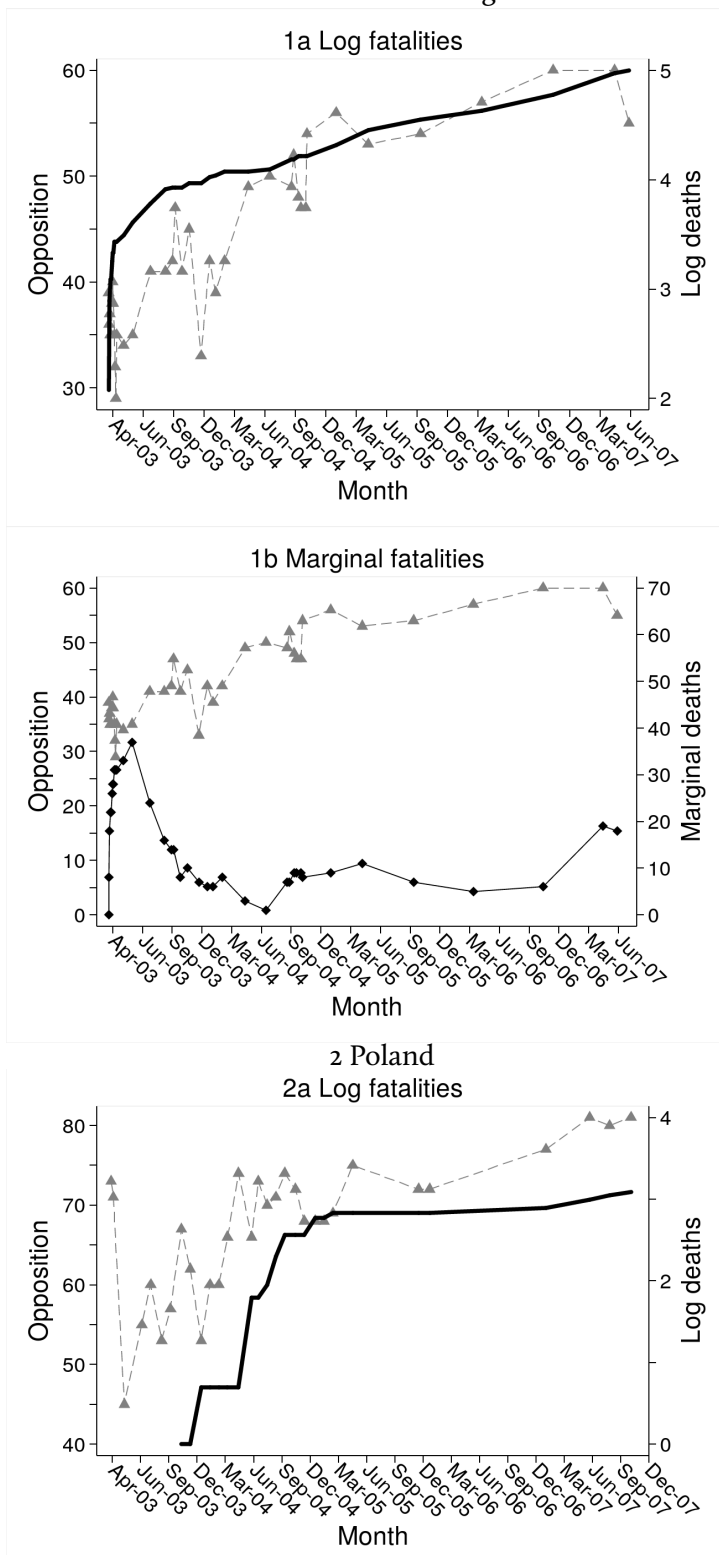
iCasualties.org, also known as the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, is an independent online service containing information on soldier fatalities in the Iraq and Afghan wars. The website provides such details as the date of an incident, victim's country of origin, rank, age, name and location of military unit, and a cause and place of death. This information is gathered from news reports and press releases issued by the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Central Command, the MNF, and the British Ministry of Defence. As of 31 August 2010, the database listed 4,734 fatalities in Iraq with a vast majority of 4,416 incurred by the United States. The United Kingdom, Poland and Australia lost 179, 23 and 2 servicemen, respectively. The death toll in 2003 amounted to 580 troops, including 53 British and 2 Polish combatants. During the four following years, MNF lost around 900 soldiers each year, followed by a decline to 322 and 150 fatalities in 2008 and 2009, respectively. The period from 2004 to 2007 brought on average 30 fatalities a year among the British troops and 5 among the Polish. Australia incurred two casualties in non-hostile accidents, one in 2005 and another one in 2006.

Graphical analysis

Figures 1 and 2 provide a graphical comparison of war opposition in the three countries with soldier deaths and fatalities in terrorist attacks that took place in Iraq. The plots on the left-hand side present log of cumulative fatalities, while those on the right-hand side show marginal deaths, which are calculated as a number of fatalities within 120 days preceding a poll date. For instance, the observation on 1 May 2005 is a number of fatalities that occurred between that day and 1 January 2005.²⁹ Since Australia lost only one serviceman during the sample period, Panel 3 of Figure 1 shows Australian opposition scores with a vertical line marking the date of this event.

The swift invasion in the first weeks of the conflict was largely regarded as a success, which seems the most likely explanation behind the drop in opposition numbers in the three coalition countries. Thereafter, as Iraq immersed in sectarian violence and the insurgency

Figure 1 - Opposition to the Iraq war and soldier deaths
in United Kingdom



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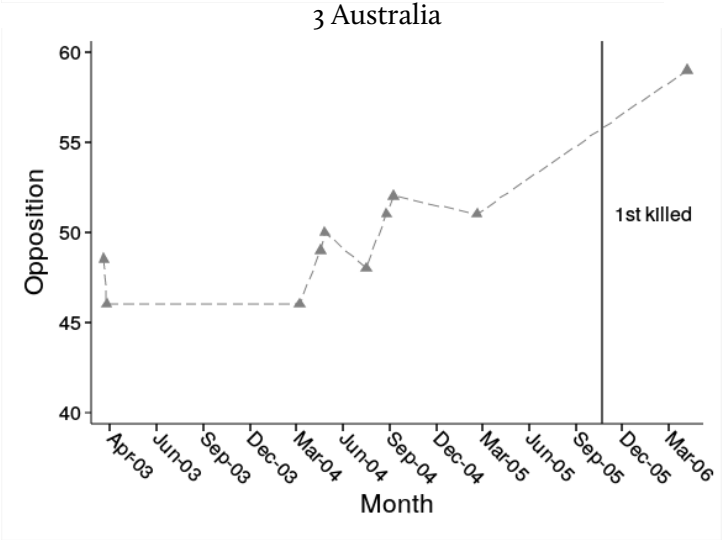
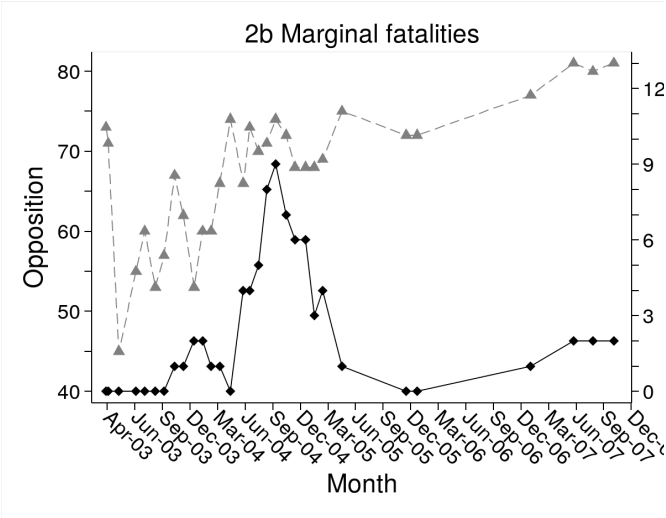
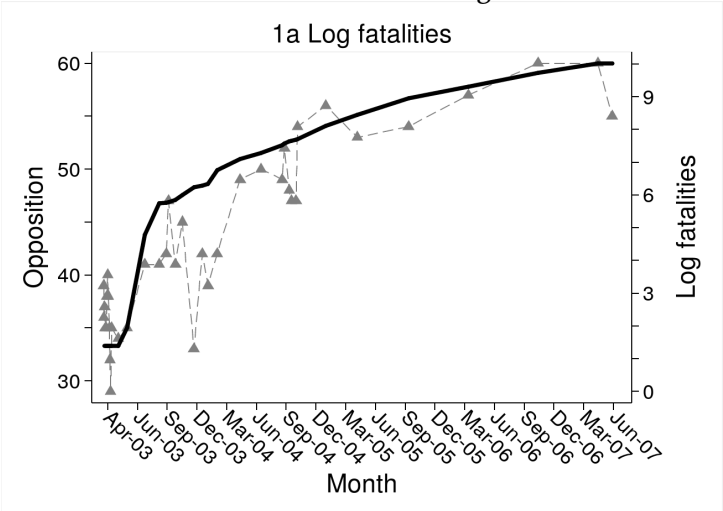
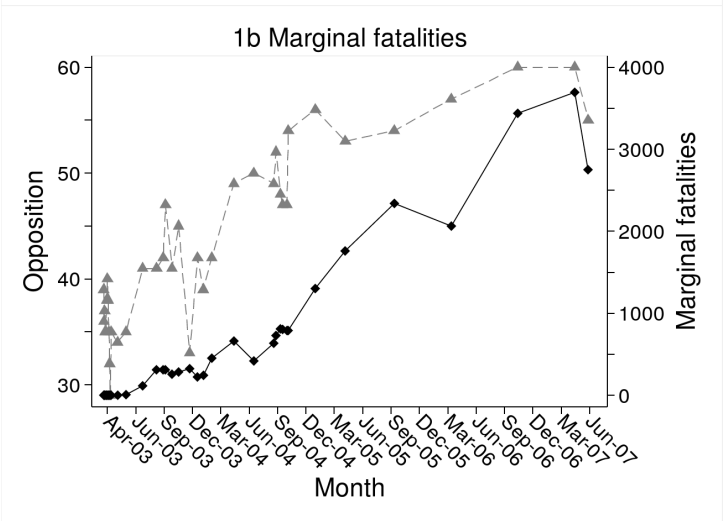


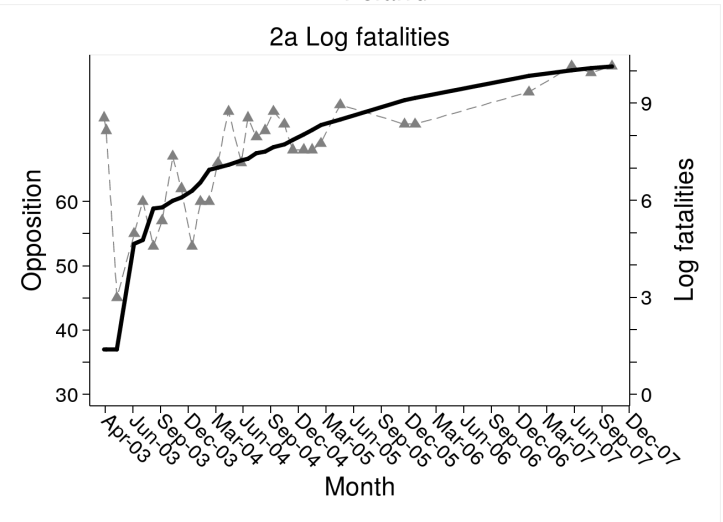
Figure 2 - Opposition to the Iraq war and terrorism fatalities
1 United Kingdom



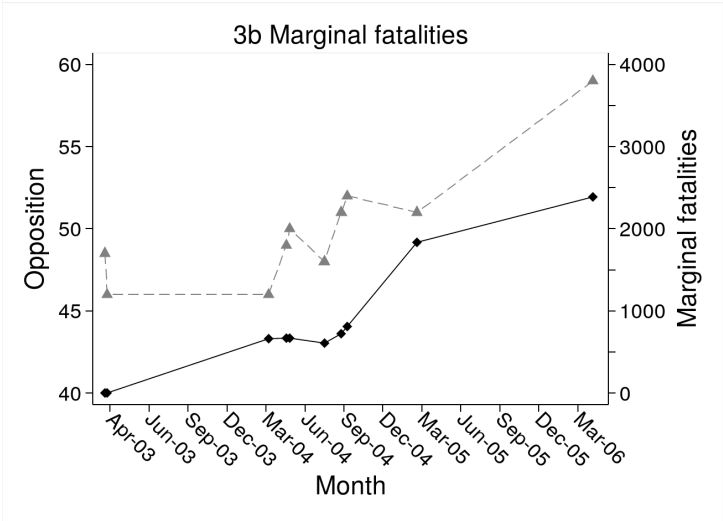
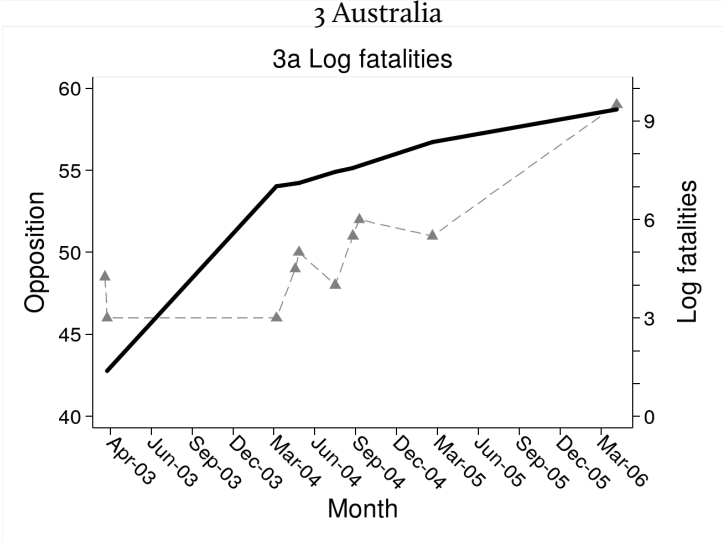
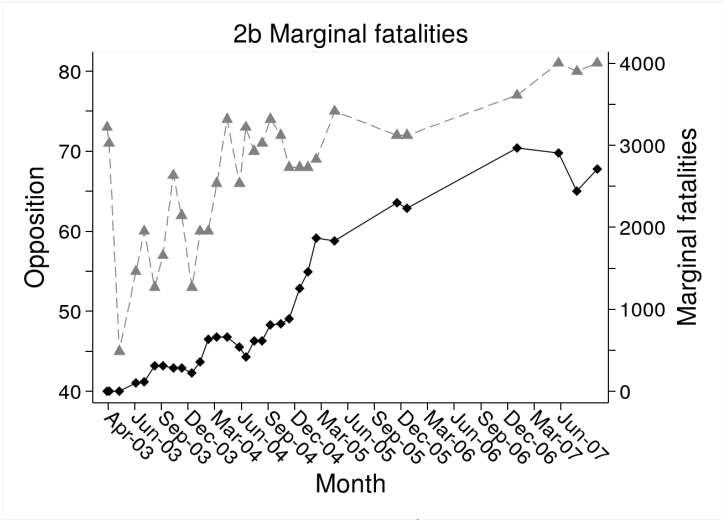
Fatality
Sensitivity



2 Poland



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gained strength, the public enthusiasm for the war diminished, which is reflected in the rising share of those who opposed the military operations. The insurgency was associated with an increase in fatalities incurred by the United Kingdom and Poland, depicted as the log of cumulative soldier deaths and marginal fatalities in Figure 1. Nonetheless, the British death toll swelled during the invasion period, which left Poland's forces unharmed. Great Britain suffered the highest losses and the fastest accumulation of fatalities among the three countries. The Poles started paying with their lives later in 2003, and incurred the highest losses in 2004 and 2005. Australia did not have any fatal incident until 2005.

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Judging by Figure 1, British opinion seems to show signs of the “rally-around-the-flag” effect. Although the casualties rose rapidly during the first weeks of the invasion, the opposition to the war appears relatively small (Panel 1). The lack of human losses on the Polish and Australian sides prevents us from drawing a similar conclusion for these countries. The plots of the log of cumulative fatalities suggest that it may have a potential to explain changes in the war-related public opinion. This is particularly true for the periods of a steady rise in opposition after summer 2004. However, the possible relationship between the log of cumulative fatalities and war opposition is less clear in the earlier periods, when the opinion is more volatile and accumulation of soldier deaths more rapid. The marginal fatalities, depicted on the right-hand side of Figure 1, may explain declines in opposition better than the log of cumulative casualties. This is due to the fact that, unlike cumulative values, marginal casualties are not monotonic and can fluctuate with opinion.³⁰ The relationship between the war opinion and marginal casualties seems to be weaker in the later months, when fatalities stay relatively low and opposition gradually increases. Because of very few data points available, it is impossible to draw permitted conclusions from the graphical analysis of the Australian series. The most noticeable point in Panel 3 is an increase in the war opposition following the first death among ADF soldiers. Nonetheless, it is hard to attribute that change to this fatal event as it was a non-hostile accident. It is likely that some other factors, beyond the scope of this article, contributed to changes in Australian opinion.

The three coalition countries suffered only a fraction of deaths incurred by the United States, whose public opinion constitutes the focus of most studies. Therefore, another measure of violence and in-

stability in Iraq is introduced – a number of people killed in terrorist attacks. This variable is used to test the hypothesis that public in the coalition countries is sensitive to occurrence and intensity of terrorism in Iraq.³¹ Since soldier deaths are relatively rare, frequent and gory terrorist attacks are likely to occupy news services more often and as such may affect public opinion to a greater extent. Figure 2 demonstrates the log of cumulative and marginal deaths from terrorist attacks in Iraq. As before, the log of cumulative fatalities seems to reflect the overall direction of changes in public opinion fairly well. However, due to its monotonic nature, the variable fails to explain drops in the opposition, such as the one in the United Kingdom in the last quarter of 2003. Marginal fatalities (for 120 days preceding a poll date) also appear to reflect the rise in opposition, but additionally they seem to mirror downward changes. For instance, the decline in the war unpopularity in Britain in 2007 is mirrored by a drop in marginal fatalities. Even changes in Australia's public opinion seem to somehow follow marginal deaths in terrorist attacks.

The graphical analysis does not provide an answer to whether the log of cumulative fatalities or marginal deaths is a better predictor of public opinion, or whether they should be used in conjunction.³² The problem with logged cumulative fatalities is that they continuously increase in time. Although more capable of capturing shocks and temporary changes in the intensity of the conflict, marginal fatalities may underperform in capturing long time patterns of the war. It is also likely that some exogenous events, for instance the terrorist atrocities in Madrid, the release of pictures of torture on Iraqi prisoners in 2004, or an election calendar, could exert a significant impact on public attitudes towards the war. The following section provides a more formal empirical set up for analyzing the effects of the above variables on war-related opinion in coalition countries.

Empirical approach

Many of the previous studies on casualty sensitivity seem to ignore the fact that public support as well as casualty series are most likely to be nonstationary.³³ A failure to account for nonstationarity may lead to spurious regressions, i.e. misleading standard errors may result in a model that shows a relationship that does not exist.³⁴ A remedy to this problem is an error correction model (ECM), which is based on a notion that a true relationship will be preserved by first differencing,

whereas a spurious one will not survive the process.³⁵ The model's dynamic nature captures short-term shifts and long-term trends of public opinion in response to changes in explanatory variables, provided that variables cointegrate. This study employs a single-equation ECM which appears to be commonly used in studies of public opinion.³⁶ The model relates current changes in the war opposition to the contemporaneous changes in the magnitude of violence, the extent to which the series were outside of their equilibrium relationship in the previous period, and exogenous events. It may be written as follows:

$$\Delta OPPOSITION_t = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 OPPOSITION_{t-1} + \beta_2 \Delta FATAL_t + \beta_3 FATAL_{t-1} + \beta_4 EVENTS_t + \varepsilon_t$$

where *FATAL* is either the number of fatalities among nation's soldiers or killed in terrorist attacks. *EVENTS* includes the end of the invasion of Iraq (1 May 2003), the capture of Saddam Hussein (13 December 2003), the terrorist attack in Madrid (11 March 2004), and the revelation of widespread prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib prison (April 2004).³⁷ α_0 and ε_t are a constant and an error term, respectively.

An advantage of using ECM is the ability to capture the series' permanent memory, i.e. allowing the public opinion to be permanently affected by the shocks in explanatory variables. This characteristic is particularly valuable as the impact of violence occurring in period *t* on public opinion may be dispersed across several following periods. One can imagine a situation in which an increased fatality rate at period *t* causes the war opposition to soar. Although the fatalities may be considerably lower in following periods, the public might be affected by the memory of the earlier death toll and unwilling to scale down their opposition. Panels 1b and 2b of Figure 1, where large declines in marginal deaths are not followed by immediate downward adjustments of opposition, suggest that such a scenario is plausible and a surge in fatalities may have a long lasting effect on the opposition series. Before the regressions could be run, appropriate tests were undertaken to confirm that the time series included in each regression are indeed cointegrated.³⁸ The following section presents the study's empirical results.

Results

Following the insights from the data section, it cannot be ruled out that both the log of cumulative fatalities and marginal fatalities have explanatory power for the changes in the war opposition. The ensuing discussion begins with the results based on the former measure, which appears to give a better overall fit than marginal fatalities.³⁹

Table 1 presents estimation results where *FATAL* is measured as a log of cumulative fatalities of a specific type and the dependent variable, *OPPOSITION*, is measured on the 0–100 point metric scale. The National fatalities variable contains deaths incurred by either British or Polish troops. Model diagnostics displayed in the bottom of Table 1 indicate that all models but one offer reasonable fit to the data. Model 4 suffers from heteroscedasticity (Breusch-Pagan $\chi^2 = 7.97$), which could be attributed to the lack of explanatory power of the cumulative Polish fatalities. Regression coefficients behave as anticipated. The error-correction parameter ($Opposition_{t-1}$) in models 1 through 3 suggests that shocks to British opposition inflicted by fatalities in Iraq are gradually corrected and dissipate over time. However, the interpretation of this coefficient is problematic due to uneven spacing of the poll data.

Assuming that the estimates of the error correction parameter are correct and interpretable, a conventional analysis would indicate that shocks in model 3 are corrected at a rate of 98 percent, which means that only 2 percent of an effect remains after one period and 0.04 percent after two periods. Thus, although the public does not forget past fatalities when forming opinion, their effect dies out relatively fast. In four models, mostly on Poland's side of Table 1, the error correction parameter is less than -1, suggesting a possibility of the hypersensitive nature of public opinion to fatalities. Model 5 explains the highest proportion of variability in the Polish series and appears to provide the best fit. It suggests that shocks to long-run equilibrium between the opposition and fatalities in terrorist attacks are corrected at a rate of 104 percent. Thus, the Polish public "overreacts" to the news of fatalities by 4 percent within the first period. This is then corrected over ensuing periods, with a 0.16 percent correction after two periods, a negligible overcorrection after three periods, and eventually reaching the long-run equilibrium state. As models 2 and 5 indicate, the public in both countries responds to terrorism intensity in Iraq, however, the Poles seem to be more sensitive to incoming information. This could be caused by the fact that never before had Poland contributed

Table 1 - ECM estimates based on logged cumulative fatalities

	United Kingdom			Poland		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Opposition _{<i>t-1</i>}	-0.89** (0.16)	-0.67** (0.14)	-0.98** (0.16)	-0.94** (0.19)	-1.04** (0.13)	-0.87** (0.15)
$\Delta \ln$ National fatalities _{<i>t</i>}	15.94** (5.28)		9.68 (5.00)	-2.88 (5.10)		-6.73 (3.35)
\ln National fatalities _{<i>t-1</i>}	9.56** (3.08)		1.94 (3.79)	2.46 (1.93)		-2.3 (1.60)
$\Delta \ln$ Terrorism _{<i>t</i>}		1.27* (0.64)	1.39* (0.68)		2.12 (1.34)	3.19* (1.54)
\ln Terrorism _{<i>t-1</i>}		0.98* (0.43)	1.87** (0.73)		3.47** (0.59)	3.51** (0.71)
End of invasion	0.18 (1.96)	0.34 (2.15)		-13.16* (6.18)	-25.98** (4.77)	-24.95** (4.94)
Capture of Saddam	-3.51 (2.01)	-3.43 (2.18)	-6.01** (2.11)	-0.07 (4.02)	-5.68* (2.71)	
Torture / March 11	8.52** (2.31)	7.86** (2.42)	8.96** (2.12)	9.28* (4.40)	9.19** (2.78)	8.68** (2.91)
Constant	-0.78 (7.80)	22.66** (4.54)	24.45* (11.61)	67.12** (14.97)	69.32** (9.93)	56.55** (11.64)
<i>Model diagnostics</i>						
Adjusted R^2	0.41	0.35	0.50	0.48	0.75	0.74
Ljung-Box Q Test	3.23	4.63	4.84	4.63	1.91	5.59
Breusch-Pagan χ^2	0.06	2.39	1.70	7.97†	1.16	0.71
ARCH χ^2 (1)	0.03	1.66	0.45	0.49	0.09	0.80
Skewness/Kurtosis χ^2	1.14	0.53	0.62	2.68	0.73	0.27

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. N = 39 for the UK and 31 for Poland. * $p \leq .05$,

** $p \leq .01$. One-tailed tests. † significant heteroscedasticity.

to a military mission abroad on such a scale, and the public could be paying more attention to this novelty, seeing news of victims as more sensational than people in war-experienced Britain. Similarly, Poles' long-run hypersensitivity to the number of terrorism victims may be influenced by the fact that Poland has no experience of international

terrorism and going to Iraq was perceived by many as an invitation for Islamic extremists to launch attacks in the country that considers itself terrorism-free. According to polls conducted between June 2003 and October 2007, on average 75 percent of respondents deemed that due to its involvement in Iraq, Poland would become a target of such attacks. In October 2004, when 82 percent of Poles feared terrorist attacks, the British public seemed a little bit less concerned. “Only” 56 percent felt less safe as a result of the war.⁴⁰ Thriving terrorism in Iraq seemed likely to contribute to those fears and consequently increase the war opposition.

British war opposition

Model 1 implies that increases in cumulative British soldier deaths have a significant contemporaneous effect on the public, with a 1 percent increase in fatalities being followed by a 0.16 percent rise in war opposition ($\beta_2 = 15.94$). A positive lagged coefficient confirms that an increase in fatalities in current period will have an effect on opposition over subsequent periods too. A long-run multiplier of 10.74, shown in Table 2, informs us that the total short- and long-run effect of a 1 percent increase in fatalities gives a boost of 0.1 percent to war opposition. Although these values may seem small at first, they translate into substantial fatality sensitivity. For example, a change from 10 to 20 fatalities is associated with a 10 percent increase in war opposition.

Model 2 tests whether deaths from terrorist attacks could have an impact on the war opposition in the United Kingdom. The estimates give an affirmative answer to that question and show that increases in terrorism contribute to a rise in war opposition. Finally, model 3 considers both measures of violence simultaneously. It strongly confirms

Table 2 - Long-run multipliers for the log model

	United Kingdom	Poland
National fatalities	10.74** (2.02)	-
Terrorism	1.46** (0.43)	3.34** (0.95)

Note: Standard errors computed using Bewley (1983) transformation in parentheses.

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$. One-tailed tests.

the significance of the short- and long-run impact of terrorist violence on the war-related opinion in the United Kingdom. The impact of British fatalities is reduced to a short-run effect that is significant only at a 10 percent confidence level.

*Fatality
Sensitivity*

Polish war opposition

Models 4 and 5 offer a sequential introduction of the two violence variables and their impact on the Polish war opposition. One cannot make an inference about the effects of fatalities among Polish soldiers, as the coefficients never reach significant levels. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the Polish opinion is insensitive to losses among its troops. The model might not pick up any effects because deaths among Polish soldiers are relatively few (23 over a five year period). The regressions return a positive effect on opposition caused by changes in the series depicting cumulative fatalities in terrorist incidents. The total effect given by the long-run multiplier in Table 2 suggests that 1 percent increase in terrorism leads to a boost in war opposition by approximately 0.03 percent. Model 6, which includes both terrorism and Polish soldier fatalities, confirms the influence of terrorism.

Effect of selected events

Table 1 also provides estimates of changes in war opposition induced by selected events. The end of the Iraq invasion in early May 2003 coincided with a significant reduction in opposition in Poland. The rapid defeat of the Iraqi regime was perceived as a major success and the country did not lose any of its troops during that phase, which seems to explain the 26 percent drop in the opposition numbers. Similarly, the capture of Saddam Hussein in December 2003, another success of the military operations, reduced the British opposition by approximately 5 percent, and had a less evident impact in Poland. All models in Table 1 confirm significance of the "Torture/March 11" variable, which encompasses effects of the terrorist attack in Madrid in March 2004 and the release of the Abu Ghraib torture pictures. The temporal proximity of those two events and frequency with which polls were being conducted prevent from distinguishing between their individual effects. The growth in opposition could be attributed to one or both of the following effects. First, the evidence of soldiers' misconduct may have increased the dislike of the war among those members of the public who believed that the war was about improv-

Table 3 - ECM estimates based on marginal fatalities

	United Kingdom		Poland		Australia
	1	2	3	4	5
Opposition _t 1	-0.59** (0.14)	-0.82** (0.16)	-0.86** (0.18)	-1.12** (0.16)	-0.96* (0.29)
Δ Mrg National fatalities _t	-0.03 (0.16)		-0.41 (0.77)		
Mrg National fatalities _{t-1}	-0.10 (0.09)		-0.39 (0.48)		
Δ Mrg Terrorism _t		0.004* (0.002)		-0.002 (0.004)	0.01 (0.01)
Mrg Terrorism _{t-1}		0.003* (0.001)		0.005** (0.001)	0.007** (0.01)
End of invasion	3.60 (1.96)	4.07* (1.57)	-11.84 (6.41)	-16.46** (5.39)	
Capture of Saddam	-3.35 (2.48)	-2.11 (1.97)	1.20 (3.84)	0.20 (3.11)	
Torture / March 11	8.80** (2.62)	8.15** (2.34)	13.69** (4.21)	11.22** (3.41)	
Constant	23.00** (5.89)	29.15** (5.94)	60.87** (14.07)	79.75** (12.65)	43.56* (13.88)
<i>Model diagnostics</i>					
Adjusted R ²	0.27	0.39	0.41	0.60	0.80
Ljung-Box Q Test	3.21	2.68	2.32	3.91	2.99
Breusch-Pagan χ^2	0.47	0.04	10.68 [†]	4.96 [†]	0.14
ARCH χ^2 (1)	1.56	0.76	0.93	0.27	0.01
Skewness/ Kurtosis χ^2	1.04	0.82	3.29	0.25	0.90

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. N = 39 for the UK, 31 for Poland and 10 for Australia.

*p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .01. † denotes present heteroskedasticity

ing Iraqi lives and freeing them from brutal dictatorship. Second, the March 11 bombings, which were perceived to be a result of Spain's involvement in Iraq, may have increased the fears among the British and Polish public of being punished for the countries' war participation with similar attacks. Thus, one cannot rule out that the March 11

attack boosted opposition by increasing the number of those demanding withdrawal from Iraq.

Marginal fatalities

Table 3 presents estimates based on marginal fatalities representing the number of deaths of a given type that occurred within 120 days prior to a poll date. Models 2, 4 and 5 bear out the sizeable impact of the intensity of terrorism in Iraq on British, Polish and Australian opinion. Nonetheless, the estimates fail to confirm any effects caused by soldier fatalities. This suggests that only cumulative fatalities matter, because the media typically reports deaths as totals since the beginning of the war.⁴¹ Hence, the public may not be aware how many troops were killed within a 120-day window. Similarly, respondents are unlikely to know precisely how many people died in terrorist incidents, but frequent and severe attacks are likely to influence wartime opinion through regular and nearly everyday appearance in news reports. Over the analyzed polling period, Iraq was a stage to an average of six terrorist incidents a day, which claimed 15 lives. They were bound to make a more frequent news appearance than deaths of soldiers, which happened at an average rate of one in 10 and 75 days for the British and Polish forces, respectively. In addition, since MIPT records are based on open sources, such as international news services, the database should somewhat reflect the media content reaching the public. Thus, the intensity of terrorism could be a signal of war progress, which dominates other cost measures when soldier fatalities are relatively rare.

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The analysis of the Australian war opposition is hindered by the small number of data points – the most frequent and consistent poll was conducted only ten times.⁴² This data limitation, coupled with the lack of combat deaths among the Australian troops, restricts the scope of investigation as well as its reliability. Nonetheless, the estimation coefficients shown in model 5 of Table 3 indicate a positive relationship between the Australian war opposition and terrorism.⁴³ These estimates add to the evidence of a significant long-run impact of terrorism intensity on opinion in the coalition countries.

Discussion

The above results offer a number of implications. First, in the absence of frequent soldier fatalities, which constitute the most obvious cost of armed conflict to a nation, the public is likely to respond to perceived

success of a mission measured by the ability or inability to bring peace and stability to a troubled nation. Since the Iraq war was framed as a part of the war on terror, swelling numbers of terrorist incidents and fatalities may serve as an indicator that the coalition efforts are failing. In addition, some members of the public may have been convinced that attacks are a direct result of the MNF presence in Iraq and therefore their support or ambivalence to the war was turned into opposition. Furthermore, mounting terrorist casualties may be interpreted as a signal that the cost of achieving war objectives is too high in terms of Iraqi lives. All this leads to a conclusion that the public in coalition countries is sensitive not only to fatalities of their own troops but also to the deaths of Iraqis.

Second, the public seems to be forming opinion in a consistent and rational way, which requires a cost-benefit analysis of the likely war outcome.⁴⁴ Although the public might have too little information to make complex cost-benefit calculations, it is possible that such an analysis is not based on precise knowledge of costs and combat situation, but rather on public's perception of these. Relatively low losses associated with the invasion and its high perceived success caused the opposition to deteriorate. This drop may have been helped by people's desire to be seen as supporting "our troops," and favorable media accounts. This could have been helped by the fact that nearly two out of three news reports showed coalition troops being welcomed by Iraqi people.⁴⁵ At the same time they avoided showing graphic images of death and destruction, helping the public to overlook the costs. The gap between perceived expected costs and benefits was further tipped in favor of the latter by politicians' attempts to portray the war as a move to preempt future aggression and terrorist attacks against the West. Nonetheless, perceived benefits were soon readjusted in response to the evaporation of the main reason for the war, WMD. Consequently, the campaign became more of a humanitarian venture and less of an endeavour to defend coalition countries' interests. When the costs started mounting and the vision of success became diluted by escalating insurgency, public opposition started rising. This tendency may have been reinforced by episodes of soldier misconduct, for instance in Abu Ghraib, which on one hand contributed to the cost side of the equation by compromising the Western values and increasing the risk of retaliatory attacks, and on the other may have made the public question the gains of freedom and democracy that Iraqis

were expected to enjoy. Overall, the benefit side has been depreciating throughout the entire military campaign because the citizenry of the supporting states have observed a growing divergence between the war and their national interests. Hence, sluggish progress and swelling casualties may have led the public to the conclusion that the “lesser extent” of democracy in Iraq would have been an acceptable price for avoiding additional bloodshed.

*Fatality
Sensitivity*

Third, the citizenry in the coalition countries could feel less limited in joining war opposition than their American counterparts because of a wider range of alternatives. A withdrawal of a coalition member would not necessarily mean that the war was lost or that Iraq would immerse in even greater violence. Most likely, the United States would keep the situation under control. If not, a failure could still be largely blamed on the United States. A penalty for the “defector” would be limited mostly to strained relations with America and uncertainty of future defense alliances, which at the time may have been difficult to assess, and consequently seem as a low price to pay for bringing troops home. A withdrawal of the coalition leader would be associated with very different and much graver consequences, including the destabilization of Iraq and a loss of the superpower’s credibility. Additionally, America’s premature exit from Iraq would energize Islamist militants, who would see it as a victory. This highlights the distinction between choices facing the public in the United States and in other MNF countries.

Finally, the results appear to support the “Iraq syndrome”⁴⁶ whereby controversies surrounding the campaign and its high death toll have made the public more suspicious and less supportive of similar ventures. This was reflected in rapidly escalating war opposition across the MNF countries. The main contributor to the public mistrust was the failure to find WMD. However, scandals of soldier misconduct, such as Abu Ghraib, also must have played a role. The three coalition countries had their share of damaging allegations as well. Public trust in Britain was dented by accusations against Prime Minister Tony Blair of deliberately misleading the public on the evidence of Iraq’s possession of WMD. The Australian public was outraged with the news that the reason for which the country joined the war was to protect its lucrative wheat trade. The Polish government was trapped in allegations of housing secret CIA prisons, where suspected terrorists had been tortured. Thus, the war and associated events have been likely to make the

public question not only whether they can trust the United States, but also whether they can believe their own governments. Consequently, this will make convincing the citizenry to deploy troops abroad more difficult and hinder involvement in future military interventions. This may have been already observed in the attitudes towards the conflicts in Libya and Syria.

Summary

This study uses opinion polls from the United Kingdom, Poland and Australia to analyze fatality sensitivity of war-related public opinion in coalition countries, i.e. those that participate in military efforts but are not a leading force. The analysis based on the error correction model does not provide conclusive evidence on sensitivity to soldier deaths, which can be confirmed to some extent only for the British series. However, there is evidence that the public in the three coalition countries is sensitive to deaths in terrorist attacks in Iraq, which highlights the urgency of devising war strategies that tackle this form of violence in a more efficient way. Intensity of terrorism may be considered as a measure of success of the war efforts as well as a contributor to the war costs. Therefore, public responsiveness here implies that the opinion is formed through a cost-benefit analysis. The expected benefits were never high as the war participation was a policy choice, and not a necessity to defend homelands. The distant enemy that did not appear blatantly dangerous meant that the public placed smaller value on the stakes in Iraq. This may have translated into higher sensitivity to human losses evoked by the unexpectedly long and costly conflict. The very different nature of political and military involvement of the coalition countries was linked to their responsibility and risks being lesser than those of the coalition leader. Thus, their pullout from the combat mission would have been unlikely to impair the overall war outcome and as such gave those countries more flexibility in forming their opinions and exit strategies. A lower cost of a potential withdrawal could have made it easier to join war opposition.

The study confirms the validity of using the logarithm of cumulative fatalities as an explanatory variable in wartime opinion models. This is because the opposition exhibited an upward tendency, which is captured rather well by the monotonic nature of cumulative fatalities. The reversal of the increase in opposition was almost impossible because

the reasons for the intervention had been proven nonexistent and the coalition soon became implicated in numerous errors and scandals.

The error correction specification shows that the public does not base their opinion only on the most recent changes in the fatality series, but is likely to take into account developments in earlier periods too. The possibility that the public employs a long-term perspective when forming opinion has implications for policymakers. First, together with the cost-benefit analysis it confirms the public's rational approach to the war. Second, governments should avoid taking offhand and populist decisions under pressure of a moment and rather wait for the opposition to re-equilibrate. Third, they should make an effort to keep a number of war-related lapses and backslidings at minimum because, as the example of Abu Ghraib shows, they are costly in terms of support ratings. However, once an oversight happens, policymakers should try to convince the public that it was a one-off accident, for example through an appropriate investigation into causes, improved checks, guidelines, etc. A failure to do so is likely to deepen the damage in the war support because the adverse effect would die out more slowly than if the public was convinced that a future risk of such events was small. Fourth, long public memory may have led to the development of the Iraq syndrome, which is likely to hinder future military interventions, as public will be more suspicious of evidence and arguments presented by policymakers in support for committing a country to war.

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Notes

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The West, Globalisation and Pussy Riot

Portrayals of Russia and Eurasia's Enemies in the Work of Aleksandr G. Dugin

Vladimír Naxera

Geopolitics in post-Soviet Russia has become not only a respected scientific field, but also a tool of practical policy and to a certain degree a new ideology, which in the 1990s helped to fill the normative vacuum that arose due to the collapse of communism. Aleksandr G. Dugin holds an exclusive position among modern Russian geopoliticians. He is the author of a wide range of geopolitical publications and is a publicly influential intellectual who has long been a figure among the elite of Russian politics. At the centre of Dugin's work stands the notion of a bipolar structure of the world, which is divided into competing blocs of "Atlantic" and "Eurasian" power, which contradict one another in a civilizational sense. In Dugin's perspective, Russia as the core of Eurasian space must stand up to the efforts of the Atlantic blocs, headed by the USA, which (through globalization and international conspiracy) is attempting to rule the entire world by forcing its culture upon it. This paper will focus not only on this conflictive relationship, but also on the general portrayal of Russia's civilizational enemies in Dugin's work. An independent section of the paper is devoted to the Pussy Riot "scandal" in 2012, which Dugin describes in great detail as proof of an international conspiracy aiming to humiliate Russia.

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After the collapse of the Soviet Union and in reaction to the transformation of the international environment, a wide array of theoretical approaches began to develop in Russia that attempted to comment on the role that Russia should play in this new power configuration. The collapse of communism as a grand ideology and truth that the state regime stood upon and protected itself with created an ideological vacuum in Russia. Russian politics and society after the fall of the Soviet Union (and actually just shortly before it) found itself in a state lacking a unifying concept or some sort of state or national idea or ideology that would hold society together. Naturally, this situation provided space for representatives of various streams – not only politicians, but publically influential intellectuals, scientists, etc. These were often individuals who largely built their status on Soviet times in order to provide interpretations of what Russia is and what it should be. These interpretations ranged from the glorification of the Soviet epoch, placed in contrast with the problems of post-Soviet Russia,¹ to the idea of Orthodoxy as a pillar of new Russian state ideology.² During this debate, which took place in the political, academic, and public spheres, geopolitics quickly began to take hold, marking a renaissance in this field in post-Soviet Russia.³ Thus, geopolitics became a kind of linking block between various ideological streams of thought and theoretical principles held by individuals with often highly differing ideas. Over the course of the previous quarter-century, Russian politicians, academics, and publicly influential intellectuals have touted geopolitics and its principles on a daily basis. This hitherto unseen trend can mainly be seen in geopolitical notions that stem conceptually from Neo-Eurasianism, which is a certain reincarnation of the classic Eurasianism of the period between the world wars, but has now been modified for the needs of the present. The geopolitical argumentation that follows the logic of Neo-Eurasianism has been used by a whole score of influential political leaders in various phases of post-communist development – Russian President Vladimir V. Putin,⁴ Chairman of the Communist Party Gennady A. Zyuganov,⁵ or “liberal democrat” Vladimir V. Zhirinovskiy. This not only dealt with specific politicians – after the first half of the 1990s, when Yevgeny Primakov was the minister of foreign affairs, state politics gradually reoriented toward neo-Eurasianism.⁶

The most significant author in the field of geopolitics and Neo-Eurasianism, however, is now Aleksandr G. Dugin – a man who is on one hand an occultist and megalomaniacal eccentric, convinced of his own intellectual exceptionality, and on the other a relatively acknowledged scholar, an advisor to a score of political representatives, and an original author of a wide range of geopolitical publications on the level of both theoretical academic discussion and practical political recommendations. These recommendations often take on the form of expanding the borders of the Russian Federation (mainly to certain regions of Eurasia). Primarily due to this fact, Dugin is commonly considered to be a prominent representative of contemporary Russian imperialistic thought,⁷ an integral demand of which is the expansion of Russian territory and the creation/renewal of the Russian Empire. In Dugin's concept, Russia is to a certain degree the protector of all civilization, as it is the actor to whom the West's (or more specifically Atlantic forces') proverbial gauntlet has been thrown, thus entering into conflict with the West to preserve traditional values and traditional cultures around the world⁸ that are endangered by an artificially orchestrated process of globalization.

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The aim of this text is not to describe in full detail all the aspects of Dugin's complicated and syncretic intellectual development or his extensive (and often unrecognised) work that surely contains many concepts worth considering. In light of the limitations of this study, this is also not the ambition of the text presented below. His work is the subject of interest of a wide range of scholars and has been widely published in the international context, including in the Czech Republic. This article, however, focuses on one selected aspect of Dugin's work. Its goal, based on a brief outline of Dugin's geopolitical concepts, is to determine the elements Dugin considers to be existentially hostile to Russia or, more precisely, Eurasia, and to point out the ways in which these elements manifest themselves in the contemporary world. After a brief introduction summarizing Dugin's work, we will focus primarily on outlining the geopolitical structure of Dugin's vision of the world, what position Russia holds in the world, and the hostile powers that should be confronted. More general geopolitical deliberations will be illustrated using specific examples, including the case of Pussy Riot, which Dugin discusses to a great extent and actually sees as a global conspiracy controlled by the USA with the aim of weakening and subduing Russia.

Dugin's work and intellectual development – from the extreme right to geopolitics, Neo-Eurasianism, and the “fourth theory”

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Aleksandr G. Dugin was born on 7 January 1962 in Moscow. In 1979, he began his studies at the Moscow Aviation Institute, from which he did not graduate – the reason (in his opinion) was his “ideological non-conformism” and “Anti-Soviet activity.” He later finished his studies elsewhere. In the 1980s, Dugin began forming contacts with extreme right groups in Russia (with the blessing of the KGB) and Western Europe. His development in the 1980s was significantly affected by anti-Communist attitudes, his study of philosophy, and his ideological inspiration drawn from German conservative thought, classical German geopolitics, and also Nazism.⁹ He later took up classical interwar Eurasianism,¹⁰ which partially built on earlier streams of Russian geopolitical thought,¹¹ and added to it elements taken from the various streams and approaches above. This mainly included connections to the classical geopolitical narrative, from which he primarily draws his idea of the clash between the “continental” and “oceanic” world (also tellurocracy and thalassocracy – see below), an issue that we will return to, as it forms the backbone of Dugin's geopolitical work. His intellectual development has been complicated and often erratic throughout the 1980s and 1990s and into the present – he still commonly reformulates his opinions, an issue we will also deal with later in this article.

In 1993, Dugin began to work as an ideologist and one of the leaders of the anti-liberal and anti-American National Bolshevik Party (together with anarchist poet Eduard V. Limonov). He left the party due to ideological differences and also for competition for leadership and personal issues. In 1998, he began to work in a number of academic positions and also as an advisor to various political representatives. After 2001, he began gradually to build the International Eurasian Movement (established in 2003), that he called “radical traditionalism.”¹² From 2008 to 2014, he worked as a professor at the Lomonosov Moscow State University.

Directly after leaving the radical opposition National Bolshevik Party, Dugin, the non-conformist, became an advisor to the highest political representatives in the country and a relatively acknowledged academic who lectured on his geopolitical vision at the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia. After Putin's rise to power as President of the Russian Federation, Dugin fully es-

tablished highly loyal relations to Russia's contemporary political representation. His sympathies toward Putin can be illustrated in a quote he made several years ago: "Adversaries to Putin and the course he has taken no longer exist, but if they do, they are psychologically ill individuals and should be subjected to supervision. Putin is all, Putin is absolute, Putin is essential."¹³

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Pussy Riot*

According to a number of observers, Dugin's contemporary influence has significantly fallen – for example, Paweł Rojek explains this as primarily due to Putin's deviation from imperial ideology¹⁴ in terms of Russia's future course while inclining more toward insularism. This insularism is represented, for example, by Vladislav Y. Surkov and his concept of sovereign democracy.¹⁵ Today, Surkov functions to a strong degree as one of the primary *polit-technologists* (political engineers) of the Russian regime and is blamed by Dugin for all the various failures of Russia and even Dugin's own, e.g. his ejection from Moscow University in 2014.¹⁶ His certain loss of position and influence was accompanied by an even harsher critique of Putin, whom he began to accuse of making various concessions to hostile Atlanticism.¹⁷ In addition to influence on and cooperation with political representatives, we should also mention Dugin's public or social influence. He situates himself in the role of a publically influential intellectual and is accepted by a large portion of the Russian population. Even more than with his books (which are often poorly coherent to the "average" reader), he reaches out to the public via articles and commentary in the press and magazines, on his website, or via his presence at various debates. He also produces many video commentaries available on YouTube and other channels. These videos, some of which serve as sources of information for this paper, often have a very high number of views.

Dugin's most widely known work is without a doubt his *Foundations of Geopolitics*,¹⁸ which was first published in 1997. The book was created during Dugin's work at the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, where he began to lecture on geopolitics in 1992. The publication likely arose from these lectures, and was to a certain degree written under the influence of military leaders – due to this fact, many scholars assume that these military representatives had inspired Dugin, not vice versa.¹⁹ His work is very extensive. In addition to shorter-length papers, interviews, and commentary on just about everything happening in Russia and the world, he has published a wide array of monographs primarily under his own publishing house

that oscillate between geopolitics, philosophy, occultism, and mysticism. Despite this peculiar combination, we cannot claim that Dugin's work is unsophisticated or that it lacks many original concepts. The connecting link in his work is the refusal of Western civilization and culture, the portrayal of the West as the enemy, and the construction of Dugin's own ideological justification for the exceptionality of Eurasia. In addition to the aforementioned *Foundations of Geopolitics*, we should also make mention of one of Dugin's newest books – *The Fourth Political Theory*. This fourth theory, which Dugin constructs using numerous references to the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, is meant to replace the failed ideology of the modern era – liberalism, communism, and fascism. Its foundation primarily involves the refusal of postmodernism, post-industrial society, and the political practice of liberalism and globalization,²⁰ which Dugin often cites as negative phenomena, an issue which we will return to later in the article.

General standpoints of Aleksandr G. Dugin's geopolitical vision

Aleksandr Dugin's geopolitical concept, in accordance with many other geopoliticians, who also construct binary geopolitical arrangements of the world (e.g. Halford J. Mackinder or Nicholas J. Spykeman), propagates a conflict scheme between two fundamentally antagonistic blocs. Dugin, however, attributes a differing connotation to this confrontation and, in his new concept, claims it should be a "final apocalyptic conflict" between strictly hierarchically organized Eurasian continental powers (which he identifies in the geographical context using Mackinder's "Heartland"²¹ topology) and the liberally-democratic capitalist Atlantic oceanic powers, which have surrounded this Eurasian Heartland.²² In this context, Dugin also applies the terms "thalassocracy" and "tellurocracy,"²³ which were coined by Carl Schmitt (although as ideas reach back much further²⁴) and were linked by Dugin to Eurasian concepts.

The aim of his geopolitical theory (just as with many other similarly thinking authors) was to restore the status of superpower to Russia and its allies. The idea of neo-Eurasianism itself, however, was meant to foster the creation of a solid allied bloc and to protect Russia from the West.²⁵ This tellurocratic alliance should act as opposition against the thalassocratic powers led by the United States. Iran, Germany, and Japan will primarily stand at Russia's side, while Dugin places the Unit-

ed Kingdom, Turkey, and China among the followers of Atlanticism.²⁶ Dugin, however, has since amended this division and now sees China and Turkey as significant Eurasian allies of Russia, who (just as Russia) must protect their culture and traditions from the pressure of globalization. Dugin goes on to view Turkey as the ideal actor to help Russia integrate Central Asian space into a newly constructed Eurasian empire.²⁷ On a global level of the international system, this confrontation of thalassocratic and tellurocratic blocs can be seen in the form of confrontation between the Russian Federation and the USA. In keeping with his concept, Dugin perceives these two entities as existentially antagonistic representatives of two incompatible forms of civilizational organization. This stems from the differing characters of these oceanic and continental powers – while Russia as a land-based power has an identity based primarily on conservatism, collectivism, sacrifice, and expressing preference to idealism over materialism,²⁸ “American” Atlanticism stems primarily from individualism, liberalism, postmodern values, and materialistic consumption as markedly negative phenomena.²⁹

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The global historic mission of neo-Eurasianism is generally constructed by Dugin as an attractive alternative to the present process of globalization, the fundamental aspects of which are institutionalized by the USA.³⁰ Due to globalization, present-day Russia lacks an equal position in terms of the West,³¹ a phenomenon that has long been central to Dugin’s interests. This messianistic aspect in Dugin’s work is identical to the Orthodox chiliastic concept of the Third Rome.³² He is therefore technically not contemplating the restoration of Russia’s superpower status (be it that of Imperial Russia or Soviet Russia) *sensu stricto*, but is referring to a new process of the genesis of an imperial entity *ab ovo*. We have already mentioned that in terms of contemporary Russia, Dugin is a typical proponent of imperialistic thought. In this context, he calls for the application of a supranational model in which the “national” exceptionalist concept of Russia will refer to a broader “Eurasian” ethnic substrate.³³ In doing so, Dugin thus conceptualizes his worldview in the geopolitical context of the extension of territory,³⁴ the genesis of an empire,³⁵ and the confrontation of topologically defined entities. It is fundamentally significant that Dugin refuses ethno-nationalism and xenophobia, which happens to apply to the majority of Neo-Eurasian schools of thought.³⁶ Thus, in his words, Eurasia represents a racial synthesis of “white” Indo-European Slavs

and “yellow” Turkic peoples – in this sense, Dugin follows the concepts of a number of authors endorsing classic interwar Eurasianism.³⁷

An essential aspect of Dugin’s thought is the return to “real and authentic” faith – to Russian Orthodoxy³⁸ or in some cases to Shiite Islam. On the contrary, Sunni Islam is presented (at least in Dugin’s older texts) as a pro-Atlantic and subversive element, a reason Dugin selected Iran as the power that stands at Russia’s side in its “historical-cosmic” mission. He later re-evaluated some of his attitudes on this matter and not only sees Turkey and other dominantly Sunni states now as key Eurasian allies of Russia,³⁹ he is also apologetic toward Russia’s cooperation with the Syrian regime – according to Dugin, the conflict in Syria, which is the result of the Atlantic powers attempting to gain global supremacy, has the potential to grow into a global conflict and a Third World War.⁴⁰

Specific aspects of Dugin’s geopolitical theory – the West and its orchestrated globalization as the enemies of the Eurasian world and its allies

As we have stated above, a basic pillar of Dugin’s geopolitical theory is the antagonistic tension between the Atlantic and Eurasian world. The term Atlanticism from a historical and geographical perspective very clearly represents the Western civilizational hemisphere, primarily the USA and its allies. The cultural context of Atlanticism is mainly formulated by media empires while the market system defines its sociological framework.⁴¹ The oligarchically organized proponents of Atlanticism are perceived by Dugin as obsessive expansionists who are striving to non-critically apply this defined model to other geopolitical segments (via orchestrated globalization and conspiracy against other states and primarily against Russia – these states, however, must preserve their culture and the uniqueness of their values⁴²). The goal of these efforts is to achieve a worldwide hegemony and create a unipolar world.⁴³ A means for reconfiguring the international power composition (in favour of Atlanticism) is the continual effort to weaken the relevance of state sovereignty, religious systems, cultural and economic traditions, any manifestations of “social justice” and all forms of spiritual, intellectual, and material diversity.⁴⁴ All of this is destroyed via liberalism and postmodernism, which are spread by globalization and are hostile to all that is traditional.⁴⁵

Therefore, Eurasianism in a generalized form represents the opposition to the Western civilizational sector, to NATO, and to the pres-

sure of globalization. (Neo-)Eurasianists (i.e. according to Dugin the advocates of a “multipolar” organisational concept) promote the development of alternative national, ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic forms of organization⁴⁶ – again with the observation that accepting “Western” forms of organisation in “non-Western” societies (i.e. primarily in Russian/Eurasian societies) would be highly undesirable. Dugin constructs Eurasian identity as voluntaristic and therefore is not stably determined by only geographical and topological contexts.⁴⁷

Multipolar⁴⁸ spatial differentiation of the global power arena proposed by Dugin is divided into four zones – the Euro-African zone, the Asian-Pacific zone, the Anglo-American zone, and the Eurasian continental zone. Each of these zones is then divided up into smaller areas.⁴⁹ This type of geopolitical organization (rather paradoxically in light of the context of the whole concept) is also meant to minimize the threat of global conflict, large-scale wars, and extreme forms of confrontation. In such a world, Russia would naturally hold a constructive position that would de facto correspond to the character of multivector diplomacy⁵⁰ – Dugin generally approves of the concept of multipolarity, which is integrated into the strategic documents of the Russian Federation.⁵¹ The multipolar Eurasian model is an alternative to the unipolar globalized world led by thalassocratic powers led by the USA.⁵² In Dugin’s interpretation, globalization is understood as a one-dimensional and one-vector phenomenon that has a tendency to move toward the universalization of the Western view of the world. He claims that from an Atlanticist point of view, the world may be divided into several zones: firstly, the “Atlantic world” with its centre in America (Europe and the Pacific region form its periphery); secondly, Eurasia, and primarily Russia, in this context is even more peripheral, and does not represent an autonomous or in any way significant pole – Dugin refers to this space as a “black hole”; thirdly, Dugin dubs the final region as the Third World, which is made up of Latin America, Africa, and to a large degree Asia. This part of the world is not free and only serves this centre as a region for constant exploitation and occupation. The world from this point of view is thus a unipolar system with its centre located on the western coast of the Atlantic. This centre strives to subordinate the remaining regions of the world via the process of globalization.⁵³

In Dugin’s eyes, however, there is an alternative to this orchestrated globalization process. The Eurasian concept not only protects the an-

ti-Atlantic value system, but cultural diversity itself.⁵⁴ For Russia, the construction of a unique identity of a Eurasian power is a necessity, as without it the country would not be able to fulfil its historical mission – the protection of the world’s cultural diversity. Without this identity, Russia would also not possess the capacity to defeat its Atlantic enemy.

Allies are imperative to Russia – in the Eurasian zone, there will be a number of powers with which Russia will create communication axes, giving rise to “Eurasian dialogue”⁵⁵ – this dialogue will then be the foundation for integrating this space.⁵⁶ Primarily, this deals with Iran. According to Dugin, the alliance between Moscow and Tehran is fundamental. The linked economic, military, and political potential of Russia and Iran will facilitate the integration of space, which in turn will lead to its greater autonomy from the “globalization centre.”⁵⁷ Other important allies include states that according to Dugin must protect their culture from the pressure of globalization – e.g. India, Pakistan, or Turkey. As was mentioned above, Dugin claims that Turkey is a crucial Russian ally that will help the country integrate with Central Asia.⁵⁸ In the Asia-Pacific region, Japan will become a primary ally as it breaks away from the “Atlantic” world, thus weakening the thalassocratic bloc and helping to balance China’s influence and its demographic and economic infiltration into the Siberian zones of Russia’s Heartland. In more recent texts, however, Dugin now places China among Russia’s allies and includes it as one of the states that will take part in Eurasian dialogue and will resist the unipolar global world under the rule of the USA.⁵⁹

The Caucasus, which Dugin focuses on heavily in his writings, form an important part of Eurasia. He claims that an alliance between Moscow and Yerevan (together with the Moscow-Tehran axis) is a necessary prerequisite for subsequent Eurasian integration.⁶⁰ Contrary to Armenia, Azerbaijan remains de facto “neutral.” Georgia, however, should be seen as the largest problem in the region. The builders of a new Georgian state have wholly ignored the disapproval of its various individual regions – primarily South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Adjara – and by doing so have given rise to a strong potential for conflict. Georgia has no allies in the region, and thanks to this it has a tendency to form alliances with the USA and NATO, the goal of which is to balance the influence of the Russian Federation. Thus, Dugin sees Georgia as the greatest regional threat that could subsequently sabotage the idea of Eurasian

integration. In light of this conviction, Dugin had no qualms with the most recent Russian invasion into Georgia. He demonstrated this theatrically in one of his television appearances by repeatedly shouting “Tanks to Tbilisi” and emotional claims that a third worldwide conflict was about to break out.^{61, 62} In one of his other television appearances, he legitimized the Russian invasion of Georgia by saying it was not an attempt to occupy the country, but an effort to protect the individuals who were dying in various areas of Georgia.⁶³ The primary reason for the Russia-Georgia conflict according to Dugin was that Abkhazia and South Ossetia are traditionally tellurocratic regions that are naturally pro-Russian and also refuse Georgia’s Atlantic orientation.⁶⁴

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This tellurocratic alliance between the Eurasian continent and Japan must then be accompanied by the most important ally – Europe. Without Europe’s support, Dugin claims there is no chance for the Atlantic world to succeed. Deepening the process of European integration is important to Dugin’s interpretation, as it would result in freeing the continent from the binds of United States. In “a relatively short amount of time,” Dugin predicts an outbreak of economic and consequently political conflict between the two sides of the Atlantic and a definitive split in Euro-Atlantic geopolitical unity.⁶⁵ In this context, Dugin speaks of a “Greater Europe,” an integrated power pole that has emancipated itself from the United States.⁶⁶ As concerns Europe, Dugin sees Germany as an unambiguous power with which Russia must cooperate. The next such ally is France. Dugin elaborates on the alliance that in his view already exists between Moscow, Berlin, and Paris, as these three states created an “anti-American coalition” that opposed the American invasion to Iraq in 2003.⁶⁷ This invasion was supported by Great Britain, which according to Dugin has the strongest tendency of all the European nations toward Atlanticism and is the most loyal of America’s allies. Thus, the recent referendum, in which the United Kingdom decided to leave the European Union, does not pose any sort of problem. The British simply “showed their true colours.”

After mentioning the alliance between Russia and Germany, we should also make note of Dugin’s view of the space that lies between the two countries. On the axis between Moscow and Berlin, a decision will be made on the fate of the buffer states that were created after WWI as a barrier dividing the two countries. In Dugin’s (and others’) conceptualization of Central (and Eastern) Europe, there is no such room for such states. A large number of intellectual and political repre-

sentatives, led by Putin, agree with Dugin on this matter. Putin himself declared in an interview that Central and Eastern Europe were always ruled by Russia and Germany,⁶⁸ which is the only natural state of power that can prevail in this region.

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The countries of Central Europe in Dugin's concept do not have to be connected to the Eurasian bloc,⁶⁹ but at the same time may not remain independent and self-sufficient. Thus, they are left with no other option but to make a decision and subsequently solve this elementary geopolitical dilemma, i.e. whether to link with Eurasia/Russia or with Germany. The countries of Central Europe and the Baltics have already manifested their Western orientation by connecting to the zone of European integration. According to Dugin, this does not complicate the Russian situation, as Europe is in his vision a strong Russian ally. An important requirement for Dugin is to prevent the creation of a sphere in Central and Eastern Europe that would divide Germany and Russia and could potentially succumb to American influence – from Dugin's perspective, the Eurasian bloc cannot share a land border with the Atlantic world. As Russia is not able to gain control of all of Europe, it must take all steps in order to share a border in the West with the bloc led by Germany, which will be a strong ally to Eurasia in the fight against Atlanticism.⁷⁰ From this stems Dugin's critique of various Central European countries that supported the United States and Great Britain in the campaign against Iraq, while Germany and France were in opposition.⁷¹ If the impacts of Atlanticism can be overcome in Central and Eastern Europe and these states lean toward cooperation with Germany, Dugin does not consider this situation to be problematic. A number of other states (primarily Ukraine and Belarus) have also found themselves outside the border of this bloc of states tied to Germany. These states will not have the opportunity to choose and will thus be left with one logical option – connecting with Russia. This is one aspect that will allow Russia to build a strong Eurasian entity.⁷² In addition, Dugin sees the essence and identity of Ukraine and Belarus as unarguably Eurasian.⁷³ In this context, Dugin perceives the present conflict in Ukraine as a conflict that will decide on the success of uniting Eurasia and thus will also decide on the fate of Russia (and of the free world, which is capable of defending itself against globalization tendencies) as well.⁷⁴

In conclusion to this section, it is necessary to place Dugin's teachings at least briefly into the context of various Russian approaches to

international relations and the place of Russia in the world. We may claim that Dugin's geopolitical visions, although they have a number of followers, also have a number of competing projects and visions, the authors of which come from various ideological streams of thought. We find authors that see Russia as a specific place that is different from the West, which is Russia's enemy, but their thought is more insularistic than imperialist – an example is the aforementioned Vladislav Surkov or world-renowned author (and also significant political thinker) Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. His political thought, which although at first glance may have some periods corresponding to Dugin's ideas, stems from wholly different roots and is highly insularist.⁷⁵ Another competing stream of thought is Russian Atlanticism,⁷⁶ which had a number of followers primarily in the 1990s and sees Russia at least as an ally of the West if not a direct part of it. In this it sets apart Dugin's neo-Eurasian ideas from the insularist stream. A number of liberal visions also counter Dugin's ideas – an excellent example is Dmitri Trenin and his publication *The End of Eurasia*,⁷⁷ which is a liberal response to Dugin's conservative project.⁷⁸ Trenin assumes that the times when Moscow was the centre of a great empire are now ending. The era in which Russia could subjugate the formations of neighbouring states has ended, and thanks to the impact of globalization and Western politics a Eurasia conceived in such a way does not exist and Russia should thus withdraw from this region. Russia should not attempt to renew its empire⁷⁹ but should also not inherently make an enemy out of the West. The majority of liberal approaches in Russian thought concerning international relations, whether this is Atlanticism or the idea of a "liberal empire," stem from Westernist ideology.⁸⁰

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The case of Pussy Riot as proof of a global conspiracy against Russia?

After presenting general images of the hostile elements portrayed in Dugin's work, we will now focus on one specific example which points to the way in which Dugin works with images of the enemy. One specific event of 2012 – the performance of the group Pussy Riot in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour – will be used as an example. This event not only shows the connection between the state and the Orthodox Church in the era of Vladimir Putin's presidency and Kirill's patriarchy, it reveals the reproduction of discourse that legitimizes⁸¹ this relationship and is important in the context of Dugin's political

stream of thought. The incident (just as any other important event) did not escape Dugin's attention, and thus we can discuss the ways in which Dugin perceived the event in terms of the global conspiracy against Russia.

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This relatively brief incident was planned as a reaction to the political engagement of Patriarch Kirill, who called on Orthodox believers to support Putin in the presidential elections. During the event, a "punk prayer"⁸² was performed, beginning with the lyrics translating roughly to *Virgin Mary, Mother of God, banish Putin*, however the translations and interpretations of the individual words of the song differ greatly.⁸³ Patriarch Kirill commented on the incident in the sense that such an action should not be underestimated and seen as an innocent joke – on the contrary, it was an action that should be strongly punished, a tone taken by a score of other pro-regime representatives. President Putin proclaimed the women should be punished in light of the Russian state's obligation to protect the feelings of believers.⁸⁴ This is quite startling in regard to the constitutionally declared secular character of the Russian Federation.⁸⁵

Now let us have a look at how Dugin commented on the incident, the ways in which he legitimized the link between Church and state, and mainly the ways in which he interpreted the act as a security threat on the part of Russia's enemies aimed at undermining the very foundations of the Russian state. This should be put in the frame of Dugin's relationship to both actors, i.e. the Church and the state. His relationship toward political representatives was analysed above; however, his links to the Church are also important. In the past, the Church commonly criticized Dugin, and often rather harshly. For instance, criticism was focused on the fact that Dugin allegedly preferred Islam and various forms of occultism and his own interpretations of "true Orthodoxy" which undermined the authority of the Church. The Church formulated these stances in various documents. In regard to emphasizing the symphony of power (see above) and after Kirill was selected for the position of patriarch, the Church's official criticism toward Dugin weakened (although criticism from believers and experts on Orthodox dogma did not necessarily cease). Although Dugin's vision was different from canonical Orthodoxy, Dugin and Patriarch Kirill agree in many areas, for instance in many foreign-policy issues and their aversion to the West, liberalism, globalization,⁸⁶ etc. Dugin and church representatives also cooperate together on a whole array of projects.

Dugin labelled the Pussy Riot incident as an act of war meant to destabilize Russia, undermine its moral and psychological power, and force state sovereignty to submit to international powers. The goal of this act was to discredit Kirill's persona and also all the personas of the sacred institute of the Moscow Patriarchy. Dugin perceives the event as an unprecedented attack on the Russian-Byzantine ideal of the symphony of power, which Dugin defines as an elementary expression of the continuity of Russian history, a statement that Patriarch Kirill also agrees with. Putin's position is thus a logical expression of this symphony of power. According to Dugin, the symphony of power is a factor that outlasts history, connects the individual Russian empire and imperia since the foundation of the state to the present and helps to create a bond between society, the Church, and the state. In the case of the event in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, Dugin claims it was not only an attack on the Russian Orthodox Church and its representatives or an attack on the Russian authoritative regime and its institutions or Putin's figure as such – the attack carried out by the female singers went much deeper. According to Dugin, Pussy Riot's goal was to damage the very foundations of Russian civilization⁸⁷ and the spiritual principles of Russian society, thus harming Russia in the clash with globalization led by the West. In regard to the efforts to harm the principle of the symphony of power as one of the pillars of Russian civilization, specific goals that the singers chose were selected – i.e. Patriarch Kirill and Vladimir Putin, who symbolize this symphony.

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The whole incident is seen as a symptom of a return to the era of “Weimar Russia” – the era of Russia's instability and its social, economic, and power collapse in the first half of the 1990s.⁸⁸ Dugin places the case of Pussy Riot into the context of confrontation between “the spiritual tradition of Russia with thousands of years of tradition” and “the degenerate West,” which has relativized and destroyed its own cultural and religious tradition primarily via liberalism and postmodernism. This also corresponds to Dugin's geopolitical vision of the world discussed in the previous chapters of this paper. We might add here that, after Kirill was elected to the office of Patriarch in 2008, Dugin stated that he expected Kirill to protect Orthodox values by fighting against the liberalism and postmodernism⁸⁹ promoted by the degenerate West.⁹⁰

Thus, the case of Pussy Riot from Dugin's perspective should be approached in a highly responsible manner, as it is an attack on “Ortho-

dox eternity” and a manifestation of “Western infiltration,” i.e. individuals that hate Russia and wish to conquer, humiliate, and destroy it.⁹¹ The only method of defence in such a case is loyalty to President Putin, who represents the sacred Russian idea of Russia as the Third Rome.⁹² The incident in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour is a manifestation of global blackmail and proof of the ongoing duel with the West in which Russia must not lose. A part of this information war led by the West is an effort to portray Russia as undemocratic, corrupt, and simply bad. The West has destroyed its own traditions and religions and is now trying to apply the same in the rest of the world. In this respect, Dugin considers the Western threat of postmodernism to be very serious. It is a part of the West’s and liberalism’s fight against the regimes whose political, spiritual, or religious systems do not correspond to Western ideas of democracy or directly defy them. In this duel, Pussy Riot are a tool of the West – if this group hadn’t existed, someone else would have played their role in the services of the West.⁹³

If Russia were to lose in this clash with the West, the last remains of morality, spirituality, and order would disappear. Traditional values will be replaced by the destructive illusions of liberals and post-modernists. This defeat would not only impact Russia – as Russia is the key actor in the fight against the dominance of the Atlanticist powers at work to create a unipolar world via globalization – a Russian defeat would affect all the other countries that are in opposition to Atlanticism. If we summarize Dugin’s perspective, we can claim that the group Pussy Riot in reality represents the “fifth column”⁹⁴ of the West, which is waging a war against Russia using all means possible.⁹⁵ This war is of a culturally and socially genocidal character and the key to identifying the enemy is his engagement in the release of Pussy Riot. In Dugin’s words, these individuals are capable of using any means in the forthcoming conflict.⁹⁶ At the same time, we should mention that the way in which Dugin assessed Pussy Riot’s performance and his placement of emphasis on the necessity to punish them and the connection with the fifth column of Western forces against Russia is in no way exceptional among pro-regime intellectuals⁹⁷

Conclusion

The world in Dugin’s constructed image is a world of irreversible conflict of two differing and clearly antagonistic civilizations – the Eurasian civilization, which is of a land-based character, and the Atlantic

civilization, which is led by the thellurocratic United States. The reason for conflict is the attempt by Atlantic powers to create and forever maintain a unipolar world, i.e. force the rest of the world to submit to its cultural and political model. The primary tool for this subjugation is globalization. As the strongest Eurasian power, Russia has been given the role of confronting this attempt and entering into confrontation with the Atlantic world. Not only is Russia's fate at stake, but also the fate of other countries, which would fail along with Russia in its fated mission and would be left with no other choice but to submit completely to the Atlanticist model – a model hostile to their own values. Liberalism and postmodernism, products of the West, are the destroyers of all traditional values by attempting to infiltrate into non-Western space.

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The West (i.e. the United States) is attempting to humiliate, weaken, and destroy Russia. If Russia does not wish to fail, Dugin says it must be strong both internally and externally. The path to success and the defeat of the unipolar model of the world, which could be replaced by a multipolar structure in which powers maintain their own value systems, is the creation of a Eurasian bloc. In Dugin's concepts, this would mean integrating a large portion of the former USSR and other regions and subsequently surrounding this area with a number of allies, freeing Russia of any land border with the Atlantic powers. These are powers that are striving to prevent this Russian plan, and Dugin sees a number of countries in close proximity to Russia as the subversive agents of Atlanticism, which are helping to destabilize Eurasia – these are countries such as Georgia or other states of Central and Eastern Europe, which in 2003 supported the American plan for the invasion of Iraq. These “agents of Atlanticism” include not only neighbouring states; the “fifth column” of the West can take on other forms as well. This column can also include individuals who support influences in Russia and other Eurasian states that Dugin sees as foreign and hostile to Eurasian space. Thus, this fifth column is not only formed by the members of Pussy Riot, who Dugin claims are attempting to disrupt the very foundation of Russian civilization, but also by liberals and those who fight for human rights in Russia – a group of people who also happen to have supported the sentenced members of Pussy Riot. All such people in Dugin's eyes represent a threat to Russia (and in that case to the preservation of the cultural diversity of the whole world), as they are prepared to betray Russia and take the side of Atlanticism.

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Notes:

- 1 See Andrzej Nowak (2010), *Impérium a ti druzí. Rusko, Polsko a moderní dějiny východní Evropy*, Brno.
- 2 Maria Avanesova and Vladimír Naxera (2016b), 'Ruská pravoslavná církev a její vztahy se státem v době patriarchátu patriarchy Alexije II.,' *Politické vedy* 19(3): 8–30.
- 3 Stefano Guzzini (2003), 'Self-fulfilling geopolitics? Or: the social production of foreign policy expertise in Europe,' *Danish Institute for International Studies Working Paper* 2003(23).
- 4 Kari Roberts (2017), 'Understanding Putin: The politics of identity and geopolitics in Russian foreign policy discourse,' *International Journal* 72(1), pp. 28–55.
- 5 Andrei P. Tsygankov (2016), *Russia's Foreign Policy. Change and Continuity in National Identity*, 4th Ed., Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. 240., or Andrei P. Tsygankov and Pavel A. Tsygankov (2010), 'National ideology and IR theory: Three incarnations of the 'Russian idea'', *European Journal of International Relations* 16(4), pp. 663–686.
- 6 Tsygankov (2016), compare with Jeffrey Mankoff (2012), *Russian foreign policy: The return of great power politics*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, or James W. Warhola and Egemen B. Baczi (2013), 'The Return of President Putin and Russian–Turkish Relations: Where Are They Headed?,' *SAGE Open* July–September 2013, pp. 1–15.
- 7 For more details see Marcel H. Van Herpen (2014), *Putin's wars. The Rise of Russia's New Imperialism*, Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield.
- 8 Paweł Rojek (2015), *Rusko: prokletí impéria. Zrod ruského politického chování*, Brno: CDK, p. 89.
- 9 For greater detail, see e.g. Petr Kalinič and Vladimír Naxera (2011), 'Politická teorie a geopolitika Alexandra G. Dugina,' *Rexter* 9(1), pp. 31–54, or Bill Bowring (2013), *Law, Rights and Ideology in Russia: Landmarks in the Destiny of a Great Power*, New York: Routledge.
- 10 See Emil Voráček (2004), *Eurasijství v ruském politickém myšlení. Osudy jednoho z porevolučních ideových směrů ruské meziválečné generace*, Prague: Set Out.

- 11 See Bílek, Jaroslav (2014), 'Geopolitické koncepce a imperialismus v carském Rusku v 19. století,' *Historica* 5(1), pp. 1–15.
- 12 Thorsten Botz-Bonstain (2008), 'Philosophical conceptions of cultural space in Russia and Japan: comparing Nishida Kitaro and Semën Frank,' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 26, p. 854.
- 13 Alexander G. Dugin (2007), 'Putin - vse, Putin absoljuten, Putin nezamenim,' available at: <<http://www.inosmi.ru/inrussia/20070926/236828.html>> (accessed 10 September 2016).
- 14 Compare Roberts (2017).
- 15 For more on this concept see e.g. Magda Leichtová (2014), *Misunderstanding Russia: Russian Foreign Policy and the West*, Farnham: Asghate.
- 16 Rojek (2015), p. 98.
- 17 Alexander G. Dugin (2015b), *Last War of the World-Island. The Geopolitics of Contemporary Russia*, London: Arktos, pp. 131–133.
- 18 Alexander G. Dugin (1997), *Osnovy geopolitiki*, Moskva: Arktogaeia-tsentr.
- 19 Rojek (2015), p. 102.
- 20 Alexander G. Dugin (2012b), *The Fourth Political Theory*, London: Arktos, p. 21.
- 21 See Halford J. Mackinder (1942), *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, Washington, D.C.: NDU Press.
- 22 Sanjay Kumar Pandey (2007), 'Asia in the Debate on Russian Identity,' *International Studies* 44(4), pp. 317–337, comp. Peter J. S. Duncan (2005), 'Contemporary Russian Identity between East and West,' *The Historical Journal* 48(1), pp. 277–94.
- 23 Dugin (2015b), p. 10.
- 24 The difference between thalassocratic and tellurocratic powers, i.e. sea powers and land-based powers, was discussed in Ancient Greece by Thucydides. Classic examples of the time include Athens, which drew its power from trade and crafts, and Sparta, which lived off agriculture. These geographical and economic differences were reflected in politics and society – Athens gave rise to a democratic system with strong status of the individual including various individual freedoms, while Sparta was a collectivist oligarchy. Rojek (2016), p. 78.
- 25 Michael Emerson (2014), 'Toward a Greater Eurasia: Who, Why, What, and How?,' *Global Journal of Emerging Market Economies* 6(1), pp. 35–68.
- 26 Marlene Laruelle (2007), 'Aleksandr Dugin: A Russian Version of the European Radical Right?' *Kennan Institute Occasional Paper* 294, p. 7.
- 27 Alexander G. Dugin (2014), *Eurasian Mission. An introduction to Neo-Eurasianism*, London: Arktos, p. 50.
- 28 Dugin (2015b), pp. 7–8.
- 29 Dugin (2012b), p. 21.
- 30 Dugin (2015b), p. 10.
- 31 Jozef Švarný (2016), 'Neoeuraziánska geopolitická škola v podaní Alexandra Dugina a jej prejavy v zahraničnej politike Ruskej federácie,' in Jaroslav Ušiak, Dávid Kollár and Michaela Melková (eds.) *Bezpečnostné fórum 2016. Zborník vedeckých prác*, Banská Bystrica: Belianum, p. 231.
- 32 Petr Kupka, Martin Laryš and Josef Smolík (2009), *Krajní pravice ve vybraných zemích střední a východní Evropy: Slovensko, Polsko, Ukrajina, Bělorusko Rusko*, Brno: Mezinárodní politologický ústav, p. 189.
- 33 Laruelle (2007), p. 18.
- 34 'Geopolitically, Russia is something more than the Russian federation in its

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- current administrative borders.' Dugin (2015b), p. 11.
- 35 See Rojek (2015).
- 36 Martin Laryš (2008), 'Komparativní analýza nacionalismu a ideových zdrojů krajně pravicových subjektů v Rusku a na Ukrajině po rozpadu SSSR,' *Central European Political Studies Review* 10(2–3), pp. 255–277.
- 37 See Voráček (2004).
- 38 In regard to Orthodoxy, which will be discussed in the final chapter of the paper, we can mention here that Dugin has long supported the principle of the 'symphony of power', i.e. the alliance between spiritual and worldly power, an arrangement that should impact Russia's internal and external politics. The foundation of the Russian-Byzantine symphony of power lies in mutual cooperation, mutual support, and mutual responsibility without one side interfering in the powers of the other; from a historical perspective, however, it is clear that worldly power, reminiscent of caesaropapism, was always stronger.
- 39 Dugin (2014), p. 50.
- 40 Alexander G. Dugin (2015a), 'Aleksandr Dugin Will the Conflict in Syria Lead to World War III,' available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66eLVb_2Qjo> (accessed 28 December 2016).
- 41 Alexander G. Dugin (2001), 'The Eurasianist Vision. Basic principles of the eurasist doctrinal platform,' available at: <<http://www.evrazia.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=244>> (accessed 10 September 2011).
- 42 Dugin (2014).
- 43 Dugin (2015b), p. 10.
- 44 Laruelle (2007), p. 5.
- 45 Dugin (2012b).
- 46 Rojek (2015), p. 89.
- 47 Dugin (2001).
- 48 Despite this often accented multipolarity, Dugin's vision (in its initial and final system parameters) is strictly bipolar. The practical geopolitical steps via which this transitioning multipolar formation is bypassed are explained below.
- 49 Dugin (2001); Dugin (2014), p. 57.
- 50 Dugin (2014).
- 51 Švarný (2016), p. 232.
- 52 Dugin (2015b), p. 10.
- 53 Dugin (2014), p. 55.
- 54 Rojek (2015), p. 89.
- 55 Dugin (2014)
- 56 Integrating Eurasia is Dugin's natural goal and the reason he welcomes all practical political steps taken in that direction – e.g. completing the 'Eurasian Union' (or more precisely a Eurasian economic union). Dugin (2014), pp. 78–80.
- 57 Alexander G. Dugin (2004), 'The Eurasian Idea,' available at: <<http://evrazia.info/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1884>> (accessed 15 September 2011).
- 58 Dugin (2014), p. 50.
- 59 Dugin (2014).
- 60 Dugin (2014), p. 52.
- 61 Alexander G. Dugin (n.d.), '3rd world war has begun,' available at: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrIVvypEoSo>> (accessed 15 September 2011).

- 62 We should reiterate here that Dugin sees a potential third world conflict in almost all events – as was already mentioned in the text, he refers to this again several years later in the context of Syria.
- 63 Alexander G. Dugin (n.d.), 'Georgia is a failed state,' available at: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSSmiXgZhGE>> (accessed 15 September 2011).
- 64 Dugin (2015b), p. 128.
- 65 Nowak (2010), pp. 101–102.
- 66 Dugin (2014), pp. 91–94.
- 67 Dugin (2015b), pp. 109–111.
- 68 Nowak (2010), p. 89.
- 69 Dugin does not view a number of post-communist states of Central Europe as a part of Eurasia – e.g. the eastern Polish border more or less corresponds to the western border of the Eurasian zone that Dugin proposes to integrate.
- 70 Rojek (2015), p. 90.
- 71 Dugin (2015b), pp. 109–111.
- 72 Nowak (2010), p. 101.
- 73 Dugin (2014), p. 53.
- 74 Švarný (2016), p. 232.
- 75 Rojek (2015), see also Michael Confino (1991), 'Solzhenitsyn, the West, and the New Russian Nationalism,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 26(3–4), pp. 611–636, or Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1990), *Rebuilding Russia*, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- 76 See Rojek (2015), Tsygankov (2016) etc.
- 77 Dmitri Trenin (2001), *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border between Geopolitics and Globalization*, Moscow: Carnegie Moscow Centre.
- 78 Tsygankov and Tsygankov (2010), p. 671, Emerson (2014), p. 40.
- 79 Dmitri Trenin (2011), *Post-Imperium*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- 80 Tsygankov and Tsygankov (2010), p. 671.
- 81 Compare Maria Avanesova and Vladimír Naxera (2016a), 'Proměny vztahů ruské pravoslavné církve a státu v době patriarchy Kirilla,' *Central European Political Studies Review* 18(1), pp. 64–100.
- 82 See Desmond Manderson (2016), 'Making a Point and Making a Noise: A Punk Prayer,' *Law, Culture and the Humanities* 12(1), pp. 17–28.
- 83 Martin C. Putna (2015), *Obrazy z kulturních dějin ruské religiozity*, Prague: Vyšehrad, p. 280.
- 84 Vladimir Putin (2012), 'Intervju RT,' available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EmlOWrb51Yc>> (accessed 19 November 2015).
- 85 After a five month trial in a Moscow court, which included a number of controversies and doubts on the court's independence (which is not surprising considering the authoritative character of the regime), the three female performers were found guilty of 'hooliganism motivated by religious hatred' (the women were also declared to have committed a 'criminal conspiracy aimed at coarsely harming public order') and sentenced to two years imprisonment in a penal colony. According to state prosecutor Alexey Nikiforov, the actions of the perpetrators proved their evident hatred and hostility toward religion and 'offended God'. See Petr Kalinič and Vladimír Naxera (2012), 'Pussy Riot aneb Svéráz ruských marginálů,' *Mezinárodní politika* 2012(10), pp. 31–34, comp. Andy Bennet and Steve Waksman (eds.)

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- (2015), *The SAGE Handbook of Popular Music*, London: SAGE.
- 86 For Kirill's opinions, see e.g. Avaneova and Naxera (2016); for Dugin's opinions on the topic, see above in the text.
- 87 See Mikhail Suslov (2016), *Digital Orthodoxy in the Post-Soviet World: The Russian Orthodox Church and Web 2.0*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- 88 Compare Nowak (2010).
- 89 Julia Taratuta and Pavel Korobov (2009), 'Novyj patriarch prinjal pervoje rešenije,' *Kommersant*, 29 January 2009, p. 6.
- 90 It is also interesting to mention that this is not only the Church's and Dugin's goal, but of a number of other political powers in Russia. A typical example is the Communist Party headed by Gennady Zyuganov, who (somewhat paradoxically) intensely cooperated with the Orthodox Church in various periods of Post-Soviet development, often with reference to the necessity to fight against Western values. Based on this, Zyuganov claimed in one of his books that the goals of communists and orthodox believers were *de facto* identical. One of the goals of this statement was to gain the Church's support during the presidential elections of 1996. See Avanesova and Naxera (2016b).
- 91 Dugin intensifies the image of this threat by, for example, claiming that Nadezhda Tolokonnikova is psychologically ill and has a serious psychiatric issue of perversion.
- 92 For more on this concept, see e.g. Rojek (2016), pp. 41–67.
- 93 Alexander G. Dugin (2012a), 'Aleksandr Dugin: Pussy Riot's Global Blackmail,' available at: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxhxRyeX8tY>> (accessed 19 November 2015).
- 94 See Irving Epstein (ed.) (2015), *The Whol World is Texting. Youth Protest in the Information Age*, Rotterdam, Boston and Taipei: Sense Publishers, p. 132.
- 95 The term 'fifth column' was used for the first time in the 1930s during the Spanish Civil War, when one of Franco's generals replied to a question on which of the four fascist columns marching on Madrid would take the city. He replied that it would be taken by a fifth column created by Franco's sympathizers directly in the city itself. Since then, the term has become fixed in political jargon as a label for a group carrying out activities against its own state and pushing the ideology and interests of the adversary. Ideas on the fifth column have a certain tradition in post-Soviet Russia. Western and pro-West advisors working hand in hand with Boris Yeltsin were even assessed in hindsight by some representatives as the fifth column of the West (the same label is often given to 'Atlantic' Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev), the aim of which is to weaken Russia and subject it to the West. There is also talk of fifth columns in Putin's contemporary Russia. Putin regularly intervenes against such actors, who fall into the category of threat and Western enemies of Russia – this includes deporting Western spiritual leaders in order to ensure 'spiritual security' shortly after Putin's election to the presidency or the fight against non-profit organizations financed by the West in later years. Examples of depictions of fifth columns can be found in the works of popular historian (and also pro-regime historian) Natalia Narochnitskaya. In her texts, she depicts Russia as a country constantly besieged by adversaries, mainly the West, who have wanted for ages to bring Russia to its knees. Various people inside Russian/Soviet (the author perceives both terms to be identical) borders are helping the West to do this.

These individuals, who can to a certain degree be considered members of the fifth colony, include Russia historians who have spoken negatively of Stalin's crimes, Ukrainian or Baltic politicians calling for the dissolution of the USSR or in certain respects criticizing Lenin, who was paid by the Germans and whom Narochnitskaya refuses to forgive for weakening the massive Russian Empire (until Stalin renewed it) through revolution and subsequent civil war. See Natalia Narochnitskaya (2006), *Rusko a jeho místo ve světě. Za co a s kým jsme bojovali*, Prague: Ottovo nakladatelství, or Vladimír Naxera (2017), 'Vztah Ruska k Západu a státům postsovětské Evropy v díle Dugina, Solženicyna a Naročnické,' *Mezinárodní vztahy* 52(3), pp. 90–111.

96 For more details see Dugin (2012a).

97 Sergey A. Markov has actively presented ideas similar to those of Dugin. Markov is the vice-rector of the Russian University of Economics, political scientist (and former KGB employee) with close ties to the Kremlin, former Duma deputy for the United Russia Party, and member of the 'Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests'. At present, Markov is an advisor to the government establishment. In his arguments, Markov comes close to Dugin's opinions in some aspects, especially on the issue of the threat to Russia by international conspiracy, in which the obligatory West is joined by 'incompliant' states of the so-called 'near-abroad'. Markov actively speaks out on behalf of 'Russian imperial greatness and integrity' and is relatively known for his critique of historians from the former Soviet republics that took a critical stance against Moscow's supremacy. He became 'famous' for his stance against historians of the Katyn massacre who in his words were 'deforming and revising' history. He also accused Ukrainian writers of history schoolbooks for untruthfully distorting the history of Ukraine-Russia affairs and claimed they were ideologically biased against Russia. The performance and provocation of Pussy Riot in the Cathedral in Markov's mind was not only an inconsiderate act and protest against the restoration of caesaropapism and clericalization of the state, but a part of a global conspiracy against Russia and the Orthodox Church. In accordance with this interpretation of the punk-rock performance, Markov assumes that President Putin has the obligation not only to punish the three unreasonable female singers, but to protect the Russian Federation against a dastardly conspiracy. If Pussy Riot's sentence was lifted (or was too lenient), Orthodox believers would have the justified fear that they could next time become the victims of an even worse blasphemy and profanation than those that took place in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour – this act might not be necessarily led by a street-art group, but by NATO forces or 'terrorists from the Caucuses'. Here the same motif appears as with Dugin – the existence of a global anti-Russian conspiracy that relies on aid from the fifth column inside Russia which is made up of the minions of Russia's adversaries. The ladies from Pussy Riot are also a part of this group. See Kalinič and Naxera (2011). Despite these similarities, however, it should be mentioned that at present, after Dugin's situation has weakened, he now faces criticism from Markov, who proclaimed for example that Dugin is a brilliant philosopher but brilliance and madness often go hand in hand. Henry Meyer and Onur Ant (2017), 'The One Russian Linking Putin, Erdogan and Trump,' *Bloomberg*, available at: <<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-02-03/who-is-alexander-dugin-the-man-linking-putin-erdogan-and-trump>> (accessed 3 June 2017).

East Asian Economic Regionalism

Cooperation for Economic Development or Power Interests?

Ivana Miková

The rush for trade liberalisation has been a prominent feature of international trade since the late 1980s. Mainly developing and newly industrialised countries followed this trade policy as a tool for economic development. East Asian countries are signatories to almost 80 trade agreements. Nearly half of them have been concluded with states within the area. However, economic cooperation is equally active with the rest of the world, which makes East Asia the second most economically integrated region, uniformly outward and inward oriented. This paper evaluates theoretical approaches towards regional cooperation by acknowledging the qualitative differences of its forms. Therefore, the main question is what and whose interests the trade and investment agreements serve and what their purpose is. Multiple linear regression analysis of the collected panel data for the 13 countries from 1960 to 2016 evaluates the relationship between the volume of the trade in goods and services and foreign direct investments and the number of trade and investment agreements in East Asian countries. Ambiguous results show the different effects of the trade and investment agreements on the volume of commerce and capital movement in countries with different levels of economic development. This leads to asymmetrical dependencies generating unequal relations driven by the principles of competition.



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Regionalism

Regionalism comes in many forms, subject to endless debates and not only among academics. Even after detailed analysis it still does not lose its importance. The complexity of this phenomenon reflects the intensity of relations among states in many areas of interactions ranging from trade and social affairs to peace and security. It is considered to be a part of almost all spheres of human activity. Some observers even claim that regionalism is fundamental to the functioning of all aspects of world affairs¹ or that the current state of affairs can be described as an emerging regional architecture of global politics.² Despite such a broad generalisation, this paper examines economic regionalism from the perspective of the International Political Economy (IPE), which acknowledges interdependence as an important factor in the states' interactions and their probability of being involved in a peaceful or hostile relationship.³

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East Asian economies exhibit increasing trade interdependence within the region as well as with the economies outside the area. Moreover, a number of the trade agreements seem to have a statistically significant correlation with foreign direct investments (FDIs) and trade flow. This estimation leads to the presumption that cooperation among countries is a subject to a high level of economic interdependence. However, a central aim of this article is to find a rationale for the large number of trade and investment agreements in the East Asian region. For this purpose, theoretical approaches are discussed, and their critical values are compared.

This is not to say that only one hypothesis will or should be considered as the one with the most explanatory power. Following the rationale of Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, each model of the states' relationship will, under certain conditions, produce "accurate and satisfactory explanations"⁴, however, "the secret of understanding lies in knowing which approach or combination of approaches to use in analysing a situation. There will never be a substitute for careful analysis of the actual situation."⁵

The article is divided into four parts. The first section evaluates the concept of economic regionalism and interdependence and their mutual conditionality. The second part focuses on the theoretical

approaches - each offers a different explanation of economic regionalism and interdependence. The third part takes a closer look at the character of the regional cooperation and purposes it fulfils. Finally, objectives of regional trade and investment agreements are analysed by drawing from the literature on economic interdependence and its effects. Whether these agreements merely aim at economic development or have a multivariate purpose is the subject of the last section.

Economic Interdependence

The intensity of states' interactions is steadily increasing and creating dense networks of cooperation. These systems are characterised by the variability in the sense of a geographical determination as well as in the meaning of different dimensions of social interactions among a variety of actors.⁶ In other words, the concept of regionalism usually reflects the number of regions' mutations and permutations. Such complexity makes it very difficult to coin only one definition of a region, let alone regionalism. This has contributed to its increased intricacy and fragmentation of its research.⁷ For almost seventy years, political science has been focusing on the institutions and political context of the integration describing and explaining the process and different reasons for doing so. Therefore, a variety of cooperation forms is recognised according to their purpose, scope of activities, institutional designs and degree of power delegation.

Security regionalism describes a process of cooperative activities in conflict management within the distinct region where states face and manage common security problems via shared institutional platforms.⁸ Economic regionalism eliminates or removes trade barriers (i.e. tariff and non-tariff barriers) among states to promote mutual trade via agreements. Today more than one-third of the total world trade takes place within the regional trade agreements (RTAs).⁹ Cultural regionalism focuses on the process of regional identity formation via shared culture and identity. This type of regionalism does not have a settled form, although it might exist independently as a shared idea.¹⁰ Political regionalism reveals an even more complicated structure than the previous types. Integration in a political sense results in "building the political community, with the political units as its contents, through establishing the same frame of rules, creating common institutions with the power of decision-making, and projecting an identity of the integrated community."¹¹

Diverse forms of regionalism represent the changing character of world politics which is often described by the buzzword interdependence. The question arises of what exactly do we mean when we say that the world is becoming more interconnected, interdependent or even transformed into a global village?¹² Intensified transactions of goods, services, people, capital or information have contributed to the increased mutual dependence among states. However, interdependence is not the same thing as interconnectedness. The latter is not associated with significant constraints or costs, while the former implies reciprocal costs of transactions. The concept of (complex) interdependence has been put forth by Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye in their books *Transnational Relations and World Politics* and *Power and Interdependence*. They define interdependence as a process by which transnational actors creates new pathways of connections which are later transformed into social interdependence. Hence, this approach is different from the traditionalist point of view, mainly due to the addition of new actors besides the unitary state and the transfer of connectivity among actors to other levels besides the state's level. This consequently disrupts traditionalists' view on the hierarchy of states' interests.¹³

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Thanks to this new approach to the changing world politics and character of relations among states, we can better understand the complexity of regionalism. However, such relationships do not have to be always symmetrical. Whether or not these relations are symmetrical or asymmetrical depends on two factors identified by Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye: the sensitivity and vulnerability of states to the changes which determine the costs of the alternations in the transactions. In other words: the more costly the change is in trade and the less flexible states are in coping with the changes, the more asymmetrically dependent they are on their trading partners.¹⁴ States as participants in the trading network have to take the character of the dependency into consideration as every alternation in the division of labour may have severe economic consequences.

However, economic interdependence is not novel, and it has become a principal feature of the globalised economy founded on the specialisation and division of labour. Why then do states expand their economic linkages with other countries via trade and investment agreements that deepen their economic interdependence?

Theoretical Perspectives toward Economic Regionalism

Economic regionalism leads to the discussion mostly on explaining possibilities of cooperation among the states and reasons for doing so. The liberal hypothesis claims that determination of the states' interests is based on total benefits that enable collaboration in the anarchical system. Hence, long-term repeated cooperation brings more benefits for all actors. This situation is analogous to the repeated prisoner's dilemma game, because states experience repetitious and reciprocal contacts. However, such cooperation is possible only under the condition when the advantages override the costs. Since states are engaged in economic interdependence, they want to gain as many benefits as possible with the lowest price possible. This can be achieved only under stable relations. Therefore, the liberal hypothesis claims that economic regionalism helps bring peace and security to the states' relations. Countries that are economically integrated and interdependent share vested interests in well-functioning cooperation.¹⁵ Trade agreements can have, to some extent, a deterrent effect on states' intention to become involved in a conflict. Some empirical research brings supportive results to the liberal hypothesis. For example, Aysegul Aydin (2010) found a positive correlation between trade interdependence and the deterrent effect on the potential attacker with a significant role of institutions, which are critical factors in creating security and peace.¹⁶ Institutions like regional trade agreements (RTAs) play a vital role in regulating states behaviour, and they contribute to cooperation on multiple issues which deepen interdependence beyond trade. Therefore, economic regionalism and its institutions strengthen economic interdependence and zones of peace in the region.¹⁷

However, the traditionalist hypothesis contradicts the contention that economic regionalism serves the purpose of peace and security via economic development and mutual benefits. Realists claim that trade and investment agreements can act as tools for securing the power position of the dominant state in the region, or as politics of weaker states for constraining actions of the dominant actor.¹⁸ This argument is especially evident when states are part of asymmetrical trade relations, because "extreme interdependence asymmetrical or symmetrical has greater potential for increasing the likelihood of conflict."¹⁹ Moreover, states are always evaluating their relative gains compared to other countries. Dependence on other state actors can lead to the loss of short-term relative gains to their rivals, and even if

countries would prefer absolute gains from cooperation, conflict may arise over their distribution. Hence, according to the traditionalists' assumptions, cooperation among states should not take place. By the logic of the prisoners' dilemma, formerly cooperating actors will eventually trick one another due to the fear of exploitation, and due to the fact that states coexist in an anarchical system driven by conflict and in the absence of a central authority that would enforce cooperation or any rules of interaction. Therefore, fear and uncertainty of the other states' actions prevent them from cooperating, which would lead to the dependence on other countries. Nevertheless, neo-realists admit a particular scope of the coordination, even if it cannot be maintained permanently. States can be inclined to cooperate, but only certain circumstances, namely an external menace posing a threat to the national interests of states or a challenge such as a presence of a hegemon – regional or global. This kind of collaboration is for survival, while keeping in mind relative gains and national interests.²⁰ On the other hand, the presence of the hegemon in the region does not have only adverse impacts. Hegemon presence can also be seen positively as a means to incur substantial costs and as a way for collective goods distribution, which would not happen without its presence in the region. Smaller and weaker states would not bear such a burden themselves, because this would collide with their national interests.²¹ Traditionalists' critique of the liberal hypothesis is that they tend to focus on the beneficial aspects of trade and cooperation, assuming that its benefits will always be higher than costs. However, interdependence can be asymmetrical, which makes its costs far greater than benefits, at least for one party in such a relation. Dependency and neo-Marxist schools point to the problem of disadvantageous dependency, which can lead to adverse situations. Moreover, in some instances, dominant states can also use military power to maintain their advantageous position.

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Multivariate Purpose of the Regional Cooperation Schemes

Each theoretical approach emphasises different purposes of economic regionalism based on the intensity and balance of interdependence among states, which also determines the probability of stable long-term cooperation. Interests of the countries derived from the nature of world politics are also taken into consideration. However, none of the proposed hypotheses can be fully excluded at the expense of another. Different cooperation schemes can have multiple purposes that

may even change with the widening of the issues on which countries collaborate.

David H. Bearce (2003)²³ points to the fact that some trade agreements and their institutional structure can be later in its existence supplemented by other issues such as security agenda. Hence, their purpose “runs from commercial institutions to dispute resolution (and not only in the reverse direction).”²³ In the analysis, David H. Bearce uses examples of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In the latter case, founding documents mention solely economic cooperation, which, however, does not exclude the presence of the security threats in the region. These concerns were taken into account in the cooperation activities, as security issues prevent the expansion of economic cooperation and make the region less attractive to potential investors. In considering the former (regional cooperation), economic goals were also at the heart of the founding document as in the case of GCC. However, leaders recognised the importance of a peaceful environment for the development of economic cooperation and “thus, economic development and regional security became linked concepts, and commercial coordination spilt over into defence issues.”²⁴ In conclusion, evidence from the analysed cases supports the liberal hypothesis stating that trade institutions increase the opportunity costs of conflict and thus they contribute to peaceful relations.

On the other hand, cases like economic interdependence between China and Taiwan supports traditionalists’ arguments that emphasise the negative impacts of asymmetrical dependency. Such asymmetry can lead to exploitation and security threats on the part of the weaker partner. That is to say that the less dependent partner will use its relative gains from the cooperation to manipulate and destabilise the weaker and more dependent partner. The weaker partner is expected to retreat. However, the space for manoeuvring is often relatively limited as was the case of economic relations between China and Taiwan in the 1990s.²⁵ The results of the analysis are often very ambiguous. Evidence can be found for all main hypotheses about the purpose of economic interdependence and regionalism. Therefore, we can expect that economic cooperation in the East Asian region will be characterised by the mixture of the reasons for cooperation and by multiple purposes that can be defined as a spill-over effect.

Early regional projects among the countries of Southeast Asia were all marked by a profound security and postcolonial accent. Based on

the changing political and security situation in the region at the beginning of the 1950s, an organisation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) emerged with mixed membership of states from and outside of the region. Although its main aim was to block further proliferation of communism, later its activities spilled over to domains such as culture, education or strengthening the foundation for economic cooperation. However, for its numerous internal difficulties in efficient operation and also due to changes in international politics, SEATO was dissolved in 1977.

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Another cooperation platform was established at the beginning of the 1960s functioning alongside the SEATO. Southeast Asia Economic and Cultural Cooperation Organization known as an Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) was declared a non-political organisation with political stability and economic cooperation as its primary goals. Nevertheless, its non-partisan proclamations met with scepticism from some Southeast Asian states which believed in its pro-West orientation. Although ASA declared itself to be a solely economic organisation, its existence seems to be ambivalent regarding its relationship with the U.S, which realised ASA's importance for the containment of Communism in the region. For the U.S, regionalism became a popular movement in the region.²⁶ Later in its existence, it became clear that economics cannot be detached from politics and that similar efforts should be made on two fronts simultaneously. Military cooperation securing political stability should support economic transformation in the region. These foundations of economic cooperation can be explained in two ways. First, supporting the liberal hypothesis, ASA can be interpreted as an aim to bring security and peace in the region via economic cooperation and its institutions. In other words, resolving the military conflicts in the area was necessary to assist regional economic development, because the only way to achieve economic transformation was to stabilise and strengthen the economy of every country in the region. Second, by the traditionalists' approach, the U.S. support of the ASA and economic regionalism can be understood as an attempt by the dominant state to maintain its position in the region under containment politics. Although the position of the powerful actor can be considered as one factor explaining the development of regionalism in Southeast Asia, an asymmetrical economic interdependence was the central issue at the time.

Nevertheless, internal disputes among ASA and the Greater Malay-an Confederation (MAPHILINDO) members led to the transformation of the cooperation into institutionalised structure of dialogue in 1967. The new organisation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been an expression for the desired economic development and further reconciliation of the relations among Southeast Asian states. However, cooperation principles were not limited only to economic ones. Members committed themselves to cooperate also in cultural and security realms to provide peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

Before ASEAN members formed a free trade area (FTA) in 1992, trade cooperation had been conducted via the set of preferential trade agreements (PTAs) such as the ASEAN Industrial Projects (AIPs); ASEAN Industrial Complementation (AIC) and ASEAN Industrial Joint Ventures (AIJVs). Besides their economic goals, the intention was also to strengthen stability in the region at the time of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Indonesian instability,²⁷ and the fall of South Vietnam in 1975.²⁸

In considering the political and security situation in the region, these PTAs represented continuity of the ASA principles of economic cooperation for the stabilisation of the area. On the other hand, as proponents of the traditionalist approach claim, these industrial PTAs were early attempts to solidify a position of the Southeast nations against the external threat of China and as a reaction to the changed position of the U.S. in the region.²⁹

All mentioned examples of the old regionalism represent instances of the spill-over mechanisms which make regionalism a two-way street going either from economic to security agenda or vice versa. On the other hand, traditionalists would analyse these stages of regionalism from the principal actors' position in the region crafting Southeast Asian regionalism, which is following their hegemony argument. However, at this point, neither of the theoretical approaches can use the argument of symmetrical or asymmetrical economic interdependence and exploitation of the dominant states' power in the dependency relations.

Such relationships were strengthened at the beginning of the 1990s, which is in line with the so-called new wave of regionalism. ASEAN members formed FTA in 1992. This case of economic regionalism is explained as a reaction to the external threat posed by the foundation

of the Single European Market in 1992 and the free trade area connecting the two most developed industrial countries in North America (NAFTA) in 1993. It is argued by the neo-realists that the ASEAN countries' decision to create the FTA had sprung from their high economic dependence on the European and the North American countries that would lead to the reduction of exports from ASEAN countries. Moreover, neo-realists argue that the EU and NAFTA would increase their relative gains to the rest of the states.³⁰

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The traditionalists' argumentation is often applied also in other cases of East Asian regionalism. ASEAN China FTA (CAFTA) is explained as an attempt of states seeking economic cooperation only to constrain the hegemon's freedom of action, because regional trade agreements are seen as a response to small countries "trapped in the world of strong."³¹ Alternatively, it is an attempt by China to balance the power of the U.S. and Japan in the region via a strategy of peaceful ascendancy.³²

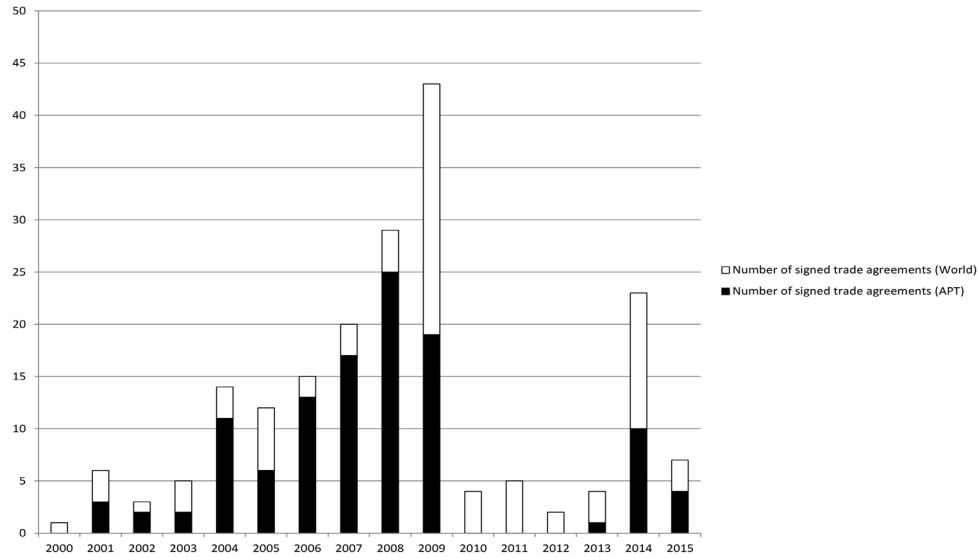
Since China is considered to be (at least) the economic hegemon in East Asia, its activism seems to have a more strategic character, which should solidify its position within the region. Therefore, this trading strategy might be considered as a tactic to become the dominant actor with significant capabilities in the security realm, because this FTA is regarded as the Chinese attempt to secure raw materials for its production and economic growth.³³ Changes in the economic and political situation in the region resonated with Japan and South Korea as well. However, a new wave of regionalism required striking a compromise between economic cooperation and competition and securing alliances. Therefore, CAFTA should not be explained only from the traditionalists' point of view. Japan and South Korea were looking for the enhanced competitiveness of their domestic industries via FTAs with ASEAN as well as for the protection of their investments at the global and regional markets, although it has not diminished geopolitical concerns whatsoever. The stable neighbourhood is still considered to be central factor necessary for economic development; it has only been complemented by competitive liberalisation.

The rapid increase in the trade and investment agreements can be attributed to the last added factor. Equally striking to the high number of agreements is their balanced inward and outward orientation (Figure 1, Figure 2). Structural pressures emitting from globalisation lead to re-

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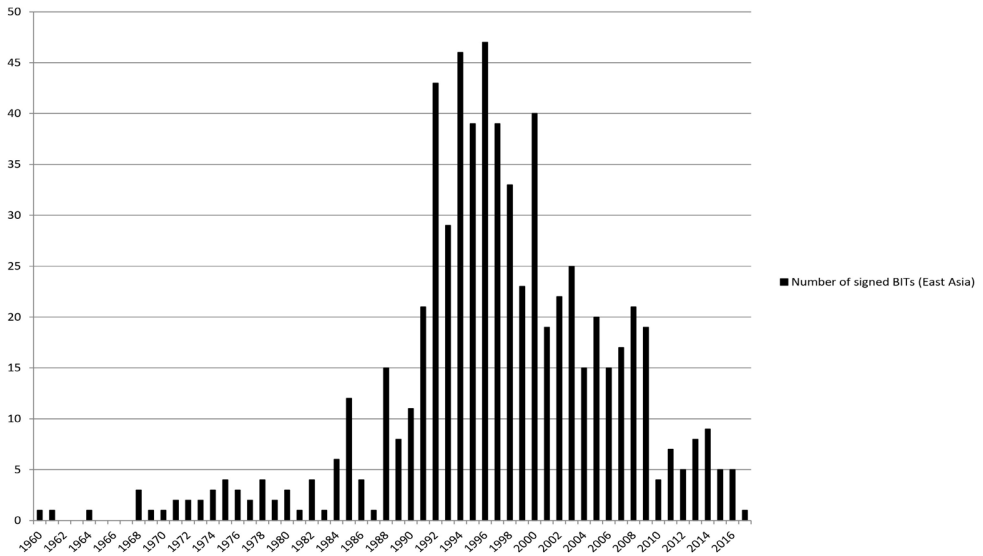
gionalism as one possible response. States can promote an open model of regionalism which aims at deeper engagement with the global trade networks. This approach to regionalism is supported by the increased numbers of trade agreements with outward-oriented characteristics.³⁴ On the other hand, states can react by the closed model of regionalism aiming at the protection of national interests in line with neo-realists' fear of extensive dependency on other countries. Therefore, they choose to disengage from the global market networks.³⁵ However, the former model asserts that states can benefit from globalisation by the purposeful action of cooperation through which they can alter otherwise adverse outcomes of the global markets. By this logic, states, trapped in the system of the global capitalist markets and flow of global capital, will seek an attraction of capital needed for economic development. Thus, opened markets are an opportunity for a capital investment and trade in goods and services. Accordingly, regionalism serves as a handy tool for the attraction of trade and investment, which are benefits of globalisation and interdependence.³⁶

Figure 1



Source: WTO Regional Trade Agreements Database

Figure 2



Source: UNCTAD Regional Trade Agreements Database

What Purpose? Empirical Analysis of the Data

East Asia is considered to be one of the most dynamic regions in the world regarding the pace of economic growth and intensity of cooperation within the region as well as with economies outside the area. However, countries' motivations to cooperate in the realm of the economy have been a debated issue since the advent of regionalism. One of the aims of this article is to contribute to the clarification of the purpose of the trade and investment agreements. Are they concluded solely for economic reasons or do they also fulfil other roles such as securing peaceful environments or power positions of the dominant states in the region? States enter into trade agreements for various reasons, primarily for reciprocity, the prospect of economic growth, access to global markets and more available goods and services, and to avoid being left out. The last factor is connected with the concept of the competitive liberalisation when countries compete for trade and investments. C. Fred Bergsten (1996)³⁷ attributes the situation to a "rapid increase of global interdependence" which explains why "so many countries, in so many different parts of the world, with such different economic systems, at such different stages of development, have all headed in the same direction."³⁸

If trade and investment agreements serve economic goals such as growth achieved via competitive liberalisation of trade and investment markets, then the number of these agreements should have a significant effect on the volume of trade and investments. On the other hand, if these agreements serve mostly political purposes, then the number of concluded treaties should not affect the amount of commerce and investments in the region and particular countries. Therefore, the hypothesis is stated as follows:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): number of trade and investment agreements does not affect the volume of trade and investments.

Alternative Hypothesis (H): number of trade and investment agreements has a significant effect on the volume of trade and investments.

The empirical part of the article concentrates on the statistical analysis of the relationship between the number of the trade and investment agreements and the volume of trade and investment in East Asian countries. Panel data has been extracted on the 13 East Asian countries for the period from 1960 to 2016. The delimitation of the region is derived from the concept of the Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir encompassing the geographical areas of Northeast and Southeast Asia, including China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Independent variables are trade and investment agreements concluded by the selected countries. Data on trade agreements has been extracted from the World Trade Organization (WTO) Regional Trade Agreements Information System (RTA-IS) and the database on Preferential Trade Arrangements. Data on the investment agreements has been extracted from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) database on the International Investment Agreements Navigator.

The decision to include all types of the trade and investment agreements has been made to cover as many specifics of the agreements that cover different areas of trade and investment liberalisation, and each can have a different effect on the volume of trade and investments in differently developed economies. Preferential trade agreements (PTAs) are non-reciprocal preferential schemes reducing trade barriers. How-

ever, they are not eliminated and non-tariff barriers are less strict, although still in place. Regional trade agreements (RTAs) such as free trade agreements (FTAs) and custom unions (CUs) eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers. Hence they create more opened markets with the enhanced movement of goods and services. The degree of freedom and areas of economy covered by two types of trade agreements vary considerably. Moreover, PTAs are concluded mainly with developing countries. Therefore, both types are included to avoid leaving out some of the East Asian countries in the analysis.

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Although some trade agreements also include investment clauses, covered areas of the economy can differ from those in the investment agreements. The comparably ambiguous situation is the inclusion of the investment agreements where there are also different types. International investment agreements are divided into three categories: bilateral investment treaties (BITs) promoting investments in the countries that are parties to the treaty; treaties with the investment provision (TIPs) that are not BITs and include limited investment provisions like free transfer of funds or framework for future cooperation; and finally, investment-related instruments (IRIs) covering tools like dispute settlement rules or clauses from international conventions. The number of trade and investment agreements has been coded as a numeric variable giving a numeric response for each year for each type of the trade or investment agreement.

Dependent variables include the volume of trade and investments covered by the amount of export and import of the goods and services and volume of inward and outward oriented foreign trade investments. Data on trade in goods has been extracted from the UNCTAD database under Merchandise: Total trade and share, annual, 1948-2016. "Imports include all goods entering the free circulation area of the compiling country, which means cleared through customs for home use, and exports include all goods leaving the free circulation area of a compiling country."³⁹

Data on trade in services has been extracted from UNCTAD database under Exports and imports of total services, value, shares and growth, annual, 1980-2013. "Services are defined as the economic output of intangible commodities that may be produced, transferred and consumed at the same time. International trade covers transactions between residents and non-residents of an economy."⁴⁰ Data on the FDI flow has been extracted from the

UNCTAD database under foreign direct investment: Inward and outward flows and stock, annual, 1970-2016. The table contains information on foreign direct investment (FDI) inward and outward flows and stock, expressed in millions of dollars. To avoid the bias of the statistical analysis missing data from 1960 till 1970, multiple imputations have been applied. Aggregated data on the volume of trade and investment are used as response variables, which are also considered to be fundamental indicators of economic development.⁴¹

Due to the possibility that every trade and investment agreement can potentially exert a significant effect on all specified response variables, the regression analysis studies the significance of relationship among every response variable and the set of the explanatory variables in the collected data set. The data set has been transformed by using logarithm transformation due to both positive and negative values in the data set, and a constant has been added to produce a set of nonnegative data, and to induce symmetry and variance homoscedasticity in the data, which range over several orders of magnitudes.

$$\ln(Y_{jt}) = \ln(\beta_0) + \beta_1 \ln(RTAs_{jt}) + \beta_2 \ln(PTAs_{jt}) + \beta_3 \ln(BITs_{jt}) + \beta_4 \ln(TIPs_{jt}) + \beta_5 \ln(IRIs_{jt}) + \ln(\varepsilon)$$

Where $\ln(Y_{jt})$ stands for the dependent variable in the \ln form for a particular country j in the given year t , $\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5$ are parameters to be estimated, and ε stands for the error term. To control for unobserved heterogeneity, a fixed model effect has been used according to the results of the Hausman test for fixed versus random effects model, where one of the models showed inconsistency. Separately fixed model estimation has been taken for each dependent variable with the set of the independent variables, and a cross-section dimension (Country) and a time dimension (Year) has been specified. Each model represents the analysis of one dependent variable for each independent variable in the following order: RTAs, PTAs, BITs, TIPs, IRIs.

Results of the fixed effects model show a significant effect of trade and investment agreements on FDI flow except for the PTAs. This can be explained by the fact that they cover only limited lists of the reduced tariff lines and no provisions for the movement of investments. On the other hand, the overall effect of PTAs is slightly better in the case of trade in merchandise, which is the area of liberalisation on which they focus.

However, results are different when the analysis focuses on the particular countries. The group of 13 states can be divided into three subgroups. In the first subgroup are countries like China, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea and Singapore, for which the number of the trade and investment agreements has the most significant effect on the volume of trade and investments. This can be explained by the character of their economies and volume of production and their foreign trade strategies. In the second subgroup are countries like Indonesia, Vietnam, Philippines or Thailand, for which trade and investment agreements have a significant effect only in certain areas such as export of goods or inflow of the FDIs. In this case, the effect of trade and investment agreements fluctuates due to the level of the economic development. These countries are more likely to attract investments into production but are less likely to increase their investments in other nations. In the third subgroup are countries like Laos, PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar or Brunei, for which the overall effect of trade and investment agreements have only limited or no effect on the volume of trade and investments. Only in the last case do trade agreements have a significant effect on its export, as Brunei is an important exporter of natural resources. The rest of the states in this group are developing economies with a weak production base and limited ability to accumulate capital that could be invested.

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The flow of commerce and investments into the East Asian countries varies considerably across the countries and over time. However, a significant number of the countries in the region are intensively engaged in global trade, even though the effects are negligible or almost non-existing. Therefore, the question is: why are they willing to participate in economic interdependence? Indeed, this cannot be answered only by looking at the number of trade and investment agreements, but also by considering other economic and political factors. This demands further research to address the domestic political and economic issues, which is unfortunately beyond the scope of this article.

Conclusion

Few concise conclusions can be deduced from the results of the multiple regression analysis. First, the number and character of the cooperation agreements seem to have an ambiguous effect on the volume of the international trade and capital in East Asian states. This can be caused by various factors like the level of economic development, the character of the production base, and ability to accumulate and invest

capital. Therefore, for some countries trade and investment agreements cause increased volume of commerce and capital movement. For other countries, specifically developing ones, the effects of the agreements are relatively negligible. Moreover, other factors besides the character of the economy can influence the trade policy in a given country. Therefore, these factors should also be added in future research on the impact of the trade and investment agreements on the flow of commerce and investments.

Second, the assets of the economic regionalism and interdependence seem to benefit only a particular group of countries. However, states receiving only negligible advantages from the cooperation are also involved in global trade and interdependence, which begs the question on their motivation to do so.

The reasons for doing so are as varied as the effects of trade and capital liberalisation. On the one hand, proponents of the liberal hypothesis can claim that state is willing to engage into interdependence even if it does not bring measurable benefits. It is because to be left out means to sacrifice potential mutual benefits from cooperation and liberalisation. Hence the opportunity cost of leaving is very high compared to the opportunity cost of being engaged in economic interdependence. Moreover, trade and investment agreements can also have a stabilising effect on the political situation in the region.

On the other hand, traditionalists can point to the asymmetrical interdependence among strong and weak economies in the region, and those principal actors can exploit their position toward the weaker economies. This creates a situation when the latter group of countries is heavily dependent on the former. However, the room for manoeuvring is insufficient, and therefore the asymmetrical relations persist. This applies to the relations among dominant and weaker actors, where asymmetries should not lead to an adverse situation and cooperation will continue. In such cases, the neo-realist argumentation stating that countries are reluctant to cooperate due to the fear of the potential loss to their partners, and therefore are unwilling to subordinate the national interests to the supranational entity associated with the global trade, may not hold true.⁴² But asymmetrical dependency can lead to an adverse situation. Such argumentation can hold true in the cases of the unequal economic dependency between politically equal trading partners or the case when one partner is politically supported by the dominant actor.

Traditionalists then can ask the question of why dominant or developed economies are more than willing to engage in economic interdependence and global markets. The character of regionalism and world trade has changed significantly since the advent of the so-called first wave of regionalism, when political and security concerns were at the centre of the debates on trade cooperation. It was a time when political situations had to be stabilised for future economic transformation. The new wave of regionalism can be characterised by the prominence of the commercial competition among states, where the most economically powerful countries also gain political leverage. For example, Japan has changed its foreign trade strategy due to the rising economic power of China. Therefore, Japan started finding new ways of supporting their domestic industries in the international markets. The ultimate goal of trade cooperation is to be the most competitive even at the expense of economic interdependence. The closed model of regionalism suggested by the traditionalists' approach is not a viable option because the current process of the trade cooperation is in line with the liberal argumentation. Nonetheless, its consequences can be traditionalist in its character.

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Table 1 – Fixed Model Effects for the Dependent Variable FDI Flow

Dependent variable:		Dependent variable:	
FDIsInflow		FDIsOutflow	
Xln_RTAsTN	0.991*** (0.096)	Xln_RTAsTN	0.913*** (0.098)
Xln_PTAsTN	-0.235** (0.099)	Xln_PTAsTN	-0.306*** (0.101)
Xln_BITsTN	0.565*** (0.056)	Xln_BITsTN	0.262*** (0.057)
Xln_TIPsTN	0.569*** (0.091)	Xln_TIPsTN	0.608*** (0.093)
Xln_IRIsTN	0.187** (0.073)	Xln_IRIsTN	0.126* (0.075)
Observations	741	Observations	741
R2	0.389	R2	0.296
Adjusted R2	0.375	Adjusted R2	0.280
F Statistic	92.164*** (df = 5; 723)	F Statistic	60.841*** (df = 5; 723)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2 – Fixed Model Effects for the Dependent Variable Trade in Merchandise

Dependent variable:		Dependent variable:	
ExportMerchandise		ImportMerchandise	
Xln_RTAsTN	1.415*** (0.161)	Xln_RTAsTN	1.362*** (0.156)
Xln_PTAsTN	-0.472*** (0.166)	Xln_PTAsTN	-0.483*** (0.161)
Xln_BITsTN	0.916*** (0.094)	Xln_BITsTN	0.901*** (0.091)
Xln_TIPsTN	1.239*** (0.152)	Xln_TIPsTN	1.148*** (0.147)
Xln_IRIsTN	0.292** (0.122)	Xln_IRIsTN	0.318*** (0.119)
Observations	741	Observations	741
R2	0.390	R2	0.384
Adjusted R2	0.376	Adjusted R2	0.369
F Statistic	92.451*** (df = 5; 723)	F Statistic	89.972*** (df = 5; 723)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3 – Fixed Model Effects for the Dependent Variable Trade in Services

Dependent variable:		Dependent variable:	
ExportServices		ExportServices	
Xln_RTAsTN	0.824*** (0.136)	Xln_RTAsTN	0.8238*** (0.1362)
Xln_PTAsTN	-0.348** (0.140)	Xln_PTAsTN	-0.3481** (0.1402)
Xln_BITsTN	0.734*** (0.079)	Xln_BITsTN	0.7343*** (0.0794)
Xln_TIPsTN	0.867*** (0.128)	Xln_TIPsTN	0.8666*** (0.1283)
Xln_IRIsTN	0.316*** (0.103)	Xln_IRIsTN	0.3165*** (0.1034)
Observations	741	Observations	741
R2	0.304	R2	0.3045
Adjusted R2	0.288	Adjusted R2	0.2881
F Statistic	63.308*** (df = 5; 723)	F Statistic	63.3078*** (df = 5; 723)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4a – Models of the Multiple Linear Regression for the FDIs Flow – Inflow

Dependent variable:					
	ln_FDIInflow				
	Model1	Model2	Model3	Model4	Model5
Brunei	0.034 (0.112)	0.168 (0.127)	0.133 (0.116)	-0.012 (0.115)	0.142 (0.128)
Cambodia	0.063 (0.112)	0.148 (0.129)	0.092 (0.116)	0.020 (0.114)	0.147 (0.128)
China	1.696*** (0.113)	1.927*** (0.127)	1.359*** (0.126)	1.733*** (0.115)	1.907*** (0.128)
Indonesia	0.351*** (0.112)	0.475*** (0.127)	0.160 (0.119)	0.324*** (0.114)	0.456*** (0.128)
Japan	0.455*** (0.113)	0.649*** (0.127)	0.496*** (0.117)	0.443*** (0.115)	0.607*** (0.129)
Lao PDR	-0.093 (0.113)	0.043 (0.128)	-0.090 (0.117)	-0.097 (0.114)	0.040 (0.128)
Malaysia	0.785*** (0.113)	0.980*** (0.127)	0.663*** (0.119)	0.770*** (0.115)	0.956*** (0.128)
Myanmar	0.071 (0.112)	0.174 (0.128)	0.148 (0.116)	0.056 (0.114)	0.175 (0.127)
Philippines	0.340*** (0.112)	0.479*** (0.127)	0.283** (0.117)	0.344*** (0.114)	0.462*** (0.128)
ROK	0.687*** (0.113)	0.940*** (0.127)	0.452*** (0.123)	0.784*** (0.114)	0.904*** (0.129)
Singapore	1.248*** (0.114)	1.561*** (0.127)	1.262*** (0.119)	1.295*** (0.115)	1.530*** (0.128)
Thailand	0.732*** (0.113)	0.888*** (0.127)	0.638*** (0.118)	0.672*** (0.115)	0.870*** (0.128)
Viet Nam	0.442*** (0.113)	0.599*** (0.127)	0.343*** (0.118)	0.403*** (0.115)	0.582*** (0.128)
ln_RTAsTN	1.293*** (0.090)				
ln_PTAsTN		0.155 (0.122)			
ln_BITsTN			0.738*** (0.062)		
ln_TIPsTN				1.163*** (0.088)	
ln_IRIsTN					0.152* (0.089)
Observations	741	741	741	741	741
R2	0.586	0.470	0.554	0.572	0.471
Adjusted R2	0.578	0.460	0.546	0.564	0.461
Residual Std. Error (df = 727)	0.845	0.956	0.876	0.858	0.955
F Statistic (df = 14; 727)	73.357***	46.023***	64.625***	69.507***	46.198***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4b – Models of the Multiple Linear Regression for the FDIs Flow – Outflow

	Dependent variable:				
	ln_FDIOutflow				
	Model6	Model7	Model8	Model9	Model10
Brunei	-0.091 (0.108)	0.035 (0.121)	0.015 (0.117)	-0.134 (0.110)	0.035 (0.122)
Cambodia	-0.100 (0.108)	-0.009 (0.123)	-0.044 (0.117)	-0.140 (0.110)	0.002 (0.122)
China	0.930*** (0.109)	1.148*** (0.121)	0.820*** (0.127)	0.964*** (0.110)	1.151*** (0.122)
Indonesia	0.230** (0.108)	0.352*** (0.121)	0.169 (0.120)	0.206* (0.110)	0.355*** (0.122)
Japan	2.123*** (0.108)	2.303*** (0.121)	2.214*** (0.118)	2.111*** (0.110)	2.299*** (0.123)
Lao PDR	-0.149 (0.108)	-0.013 (0.122)	-0.092 (0.118)	-0.153 (0.110)	-0.003 (0.122)
Malaysia	0.539*** (0.108)	0.723*** (0.121)	0.539*** (0.120)	0.523*** (0.110)	0.725*** (0.122)
Myanmar	-0.120 (0.108)	-0.014 (0.122)	-0.031 (0.117)	-0.135 (0.110)	-0.003 (0.122)
Philippines	0.068 (0.108)	0.204* (0.121)	0.089 (0.118)	0.071 (0.110)	0.208* (0.122)
ROK	0.801*** (0.109)	1.036*** (0.121)	0.754*** (0.124)	0.889*** (0.110)	1.035*** (0.123)
Singapore	0.851*** (0.110)	1.140*** (0.121)	0.967*** (0.120)	0.893*** (0.111)	1.137*** (0.122)
Thailand	0.247** (0.108)	0.398*** (0.121)	0.252** (0.119)	0.191* (0.110)	0.401*** (0.122)
Viet Nam	-0.056 (0.108)	0.095 (0.121)	-0.054 (0.119)	-0.093 (0.110)	0.098 (0.122)
ln_RTAsTN	1.190*** (0.087)				
ln_PTAsTN		0.075 (0.116)			
ln_BITsTN			0.425*** (0.063)		
ln_TIPsTN				1.075*** (0.084)	
ln_IRIsTN					0.017 (0.085)
Observations	741	741	741	741	741
R2	0.589	0.484	0.514	0.578	0.483
Adjusted R2	0.582	0.474	0.505	0.570	0.473
Residual Std. Error (df = 727)	0.812	0.911	0.884	0.823	0.911
F Statistic (df = 14; 727)	74.557***	48.649***	54.913***	71.270***	48.596***

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5a – Models of the Multiple Linear Regression for the Trade in Merchandise – Export Merchandise

	Dependent variable:				
	ln_ExportMerchandise				
	Model11	Model12	Model13	Model14	Model15
Brunei	0.934*** (0.191)	1.150*** (0.213)	1.089*** (0.195)	0.822*** (0.188)	1.106*** (0.214)
Cambodia	0.378** (0.191)	0.527** (0.216)	0.418** (0.195)	0.276 (0.188)	0.512** (0.214)
China	3.534*** (0.192)	3.909*** (0.213)	2.958*** (0.212)	3.551*** (0.189)	3.872*** (0.214)
Indonesia	0.885*** (0.191)	1.091*** (0.213)	0.559*** (0.200)	0.808*** (0.188)	1.054*** (0.215)
Japan	4.511*** (0.192)	4.821*** (0.212)	4.565*** (0.196)	4.447*** (0.189)	4.754*** (0.216)
Lao PDR	-0.003 (0.191)	0.226 (0.215)	-0.009 (0.196)	-0.045 (0.188)	0.209 (0.214)
Malaysia	2.717*** (0.192)	3.033*** (0.213)	2.500*** (0.200)	2.645*** (0.189)	2.990*** (0.215)
Myanmar	0.518*** (0.191)	0.696*** (0.215)	0.637*** (0.195)	0.463** (0.188)	0.684*** (0.214)
Philippines	1.954*** (0.191)	2.184*** (0.213)	1.849*** (0.197)	1.928*** (0.188)	2.150*** (0.215)
ROK	2.981*** (0.193)	3.386*** (0.213)	2.572*** (0.207)	3.100*** (0.188)	3.326*** (0.216)
Singapore	2.869*** (0.194)	3.368*** (0.212)	2.870*** (0.200)	2.887*** (0.190)	3.319*** (0.215)
Thailand	2.461*** (0.191)	2.718*** (0.213)	2.295*** (0.198)	2.317*** (0.189)	2.682*** (0.215)
Viet Nam	1.268*** (0.191)	1.525*** (0.213)	1.092*** (0.199)	1.160*** (0.189)	1.491*** (0.214)
ln_RTAsTN	2.059*** (0.153)				
ln_PTAsTN		0.170 (0.205)			
ln_BITsTN			1.225*** (0.105)		
ln_TIPsTN				2.097*** (0.144)	
ln_IRIsTN					0.239 (0.149)
Observations	741	741	741	741	741
R2	0.784	0.731	0.773	0.792	0.732
Adjusted R2	0.780	0.726	0.769	0.788	0.726
Residual Std. Error (df = 727)	1.436	1.603	1.471	1.411	1.601
F Statistic (df = 14; 727)	188.574***	141.048***	177.156***	197.183***	141.548***
Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01					

Table 5b – Models of the Multiple Linear Regression for the Trade in Merchandise – Import Merchandise

Dependent variable:					
	ln_ImportMerchandise				
	Model16	Model17	Model18	Model19	Model20
Brunei	0.419** (0.185)	0.624*** (0.205)	0.563*** (0.188)	0.314* (0.183)	0.570*** (0.207)
Cambodia	0.510*** (0.185)	0.659*** (0.209)	0.544*** (0.188)	0.415** (0.183)	0.627*** (0.207)
China	3.489*** (0.187)	3.847*** (0.206)	2.913*** (0.204)	3.507*** (0.184)	3.798*** (0.207)
Indonesia	0.863*** (0.185)	1.062*** (0.206)	0.538*** (0.193)	0.792*** (0.183)	1.012*** (0.207)
Japan	4.423*** (0.186)	4.717*** (0.205)	4.466*** (0.189)	4.365*** (0.184)	4.639*** (0.209)
Lao PDR	0.120 (0.186)	0.344* (0.208)	0.106 (0.189)	0.083 (0.183)	0.312 (0.207)
Malaysia	2.612*** (0.186)	2.914*** (0.206)	2.389*** (0.193)	2.546*** (0.184)	2.858*** (0.208)
Myanmar	0.537*** (0.185)	0.712*** (0.208)	0.647*** (0.188)	0.486*** (0.183)	0.684*** (0.206)
Philippines	2.175*** (0.186)	2.397*** (0.206)	2.064*** (0.190)	2.152*** (0.183)	2.349*** (0.207)
ROK	3.097*** (0.187)	3.482*** (0.205)	2.684*** (0.200)	3.212*** (0.183)	3.409*** (0.209)
Singapore	2.979*** (0.188)	3.453*** (0.205)	2.964*** (0.192)	3.000*** (0.185)	3.394*** (0.207)
Thailand	2.595*** (0.186)	2.842*** (0.206)	2.424*** (0.191)	2.462*** (0.184)	2.793*** (0.207)
Viet Nam	1.465*** (0.186)	1.712*** (0.206)	1.285*** (0.191)	1.366*** (0.184)	1.666*** (0.207)
ln_RTAsTN	1.948*** (0.149)				
ln_PTAsTN		0.125 (0.198)			
ln_BITsTN			1.198*** (0.101)		
ln_TIPsTN				1.972*** (0.140)	
ln_IRIsTN					0.277* (0.144)
Observations	741	741	741	741	741
R2	0.793	0.745	0.786	0.800	0.746
Adjusted R2	0.789	0.740	0.782	0.796	0.741
Residual Std. Error (df = 727)	1.394	1.549	1.418	1.373	1.545
F Statistic (df = 14; 727)	199.453***	151.743***	191.119***	207.133***	152.665***

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 6a – Models of the Multiple Linear Regression for the Trade in Services – Export Services

	Dependent variable:				
	ln_ExportServices				
	Model21	Model22	Model23	Model24	Model25
Brunei	-0.005 (0.159)	0.130 (0.168)	0.079 (0.155)	-0.092 (0.155)	0.061 (0.169)
Cambodia	0.106 (0.158)	0.208 (0.171)	0.106 (0.155)	0.028 (0.155)	0.151 (0.169)
China	1.563*** (0.160)	1.797*** (0.169)	1.047*** (0.168)	1.553*** (0.156)	1.731*** (0.169)
Indonesia	0.388** (0.159)	0.520*** (0.169)	0.095 (0.159)	0.324** (0.155)	0.450*** (0.170)
Japan	2.247*** (0.159)	2.438*** (0.168)	2.237*** (0.156)	2.188*** (0.156)	2.343*** (0.171)
Lao PDR	-0.082 (0.159)	0.068 (0.171)	-0.131 (0.156)	-0.124 (0.155)	0.013 (0.169)
Malaysia	1.164*** (0.159)	1.362*** (0.169)	0.938*** (0.159)	1.098*** (0.156)	1.287*** (0.170)
Myanmar	-0.007 (0.159)	0.112 (0.171)	0.051 (0.155)	-0.055 (0.155)	0.062 (0.169)
Philippines	0.726*** (0.159)	0.873*** (0.169)	0.602*** (0.157)	0.695*** (0.155)	0.805*** (0.169)
ROK	1.628*** (0.160)	1.879*** (0.168)	1.239*** (0.165)	1.686*** (0.155)	1.788*** (0.171)
Singapore	1.612*** (0.161)	1.919*** (0.168)	1.527*** (0.158)	1.597*** (0.157)	1.847*** (0.169)
Thailand	1.300*** (0.159)	1.463*** (0.169)	1.123*** (0.158)	1.189*** (0.156)	1.395*** (0.169)
Viet Nam	0.435*** (0.159)	0.598*** (0.169)	0.251 (0.158)	0.348** (0.156)	0.534*** (0.169)
ln_RTAsTN	1.262*** (0.127)				
ln_PTAsTN		0.049 (0.162)			
ln_BITsTN			0.958*** (0.083)		
ln_TIPsTN				1.399*** (0.119)	
ln_IRIsTN					0.330*** (0.118)
Observations	741	741	741	741	741
R2	0.573	0.516	0.591	0.593	0.521
Adjusted R2	0.565	0.506	0.583	0.586	0.512
Residual Std. Error (df = 727)	1.193	1.271	1.168	1.164	1.264
F Statistic (df = 14; 727)	69.758***	55.322***	74.881***	75.785***	56.470***
Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01					

Table 6b – Models of the Multiple Linear Regression for the Trade in Services – Import Services

	Dependent variable:				
	ln_ImportServices				
	Model126	Model127	Model128	Model129	Model130
Brunei	0.065 (0.166)	0.204 (0.176)	0.150 (0.162)	-0.031 (0.162)	0.130 (0.177)
Cambodia	0.051 (0.166)	0.157 (0.179)	0.050 (0.162)	-0.034 (0.162)	0.095 (0.177)
China	1.575*** (0.168)	1.817*** (0.177)	1.026*** (0.176)	1.558*** (0.163)	1.746*** (0.177)
Indonesia	0.489*** (0.166)	0.625*** (0.177)	0.178 (0.166)	0.418** (0.162)	0.550*** (0.177)
Japan	2.489*** (0.167)	2.687*** (0.176)	2.475*** (0.163)	2.421*** (0.163)	2.585*** (0.179)
Lao PDR	-0.122 (0.167)	0.034 (0.179)	-0.176 (0.163)	-0.170 (0.162)	-0.026 (0.177)
Malaysia	1.305*** (0.167)	1.510*** (0.177)	1.063*** (0.166)	1.230*** (0.163)	1.429*** (0.178)
Myanmar	0.002 (0.166)	0.126 (0.179)	0.061 (0.162)	-0.052 (0.162)	0.071 (0.177)
Philippines	0.640*** (0.166)	0.792*** (0.177)	0.506*** (0.164)	0.603*** (0.162)	0.719*** (0.177)
ROK	1.599*** (0.168)	1.859*** (0.176)	1.184*** (0.172)	1.654*** (0.162)	1.761*** (0.179)
Singapore	1.485*** (0.169)	1.803*** (0.176)	1.390*** (0.166)	1.461*** (0.164)	1.726*** (0.177)
Thailand	1.339*** (0.167)	1.507*** (0.177)	1.150*** (0.165)	1.217*** (0.163)	1.434*** (0.177)
Viet Nam	0.469*** (0.167)	0.638*** (0.177)	0.272* (0.165)	0.373** (0.163)	0.569*** (0.177)
ln_RTAsTN	1.308*** (0.134)				
ln_PTAsTN		0.052 (0.170)			
ln_BITsTN			1.011*** (0.087)		
ln_TIPsTN				1.485*** (0.124)	
ln_IRIsTN					0.355*** (0.123)
Observations	741	741	741	741	741
R2	0.566	0.509	0.586	0.590	0.514
Adjusted R2	0.558	0.499	0.578	0.582	0.505
Residual Std. Error (df = 727)	1.251	1.330	1.222	1.216	1.323
F Statistic (df = 14; 727)	67.685***	53.784***	73.404***	74.602***	54.977***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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Book Reviews

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Charles L. Lister. *The Islamic State: A Brief Introduction*. Washington D.C., Brookings Institution Press, 2015. ISBN 9780815726678.

The Islamic State: A Brief Introduction

Reviewed by Maged Srour

In mid-2014, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi declared the establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in a move to turn the terrorist group into a territorial entity—a state with borders and, importantly, recognition. The combined weight of local and international efforts limited, retracted and has — by now — overwhelmed ISIS (as a state) and sent the group hurling to the far-flung “provinces” of the Islamic State.

Charles Lister’s work (2015) *The Islamic State – A Brief Introduction*, provided a well-intentioned view on how a gang of terrorists went on to conquer land and intimidate the world. While many of Lister’s conclusions may not have been validated, the research devoted to understanding the rise and impact of the group is exceptional.

How ISIS Succeeded

Lister’s book provides an incredibly clear and well-structured analysis over ISIS’s state-building capabilities. The book is — as stipulated — a brief introduction to the Islamic State, yet despite being brief, it is perfectly organised and readers can identify and locate the main and crucial information needed to understand the reasons of ISIS’s military success on the ground and its social success amongst the Sunni populations of Iraq and Syria.

Additionally, Lister provides an interesting analysis on how ISIS was militarily successful—it combined three forms of warfare: convention-

al, guerrilla and terrorism. This capability was unprecedented in the Arab world. And, Lister provides an overview on how ISIS financed itself through the smuggling of oil, gas and antiques, and how its leadership was incredibly efficient while planning internal policies to match the level of finances it raised. Such as leadership-financing-strategy nexus effectively produced the trappings of a state, even though its legitimacy was based on a perverted ideology that mixed mis-readings of Islam and combined authoritarianism with wanton violence.

Degrading and Destroying ISIS

Understanding what ISIS is is a descriptive task. Teasing out ways to destroy the proto-terrorist state requires analytical tools. In this, Lister expresses some interesting points. His strategy starts by viewing ISIS “as something qualitatively more significant than a terrorist organisation, but with a significant counterterrorism component in any suitable strategy for thwarting it”(p. 51). He goes on to suggest that “it must incorporate not only counterterrorism practice but also aspects of economic, political, diplomatic, social, and religious policy” (p. 64).

The only strategy adopted, until now, is military by nature. Efforts to promote economic and social development, to facilitate diplomatic solutions to the internal and regional conflicts that helped ISIS rise, seem too weak. Certainly the Geneva Peace Talks on Syria represent an international effort to solve the Syrian crisis, which is linked to the issue of spread of extremism in the region and globally. But apart from these — so far unsuccessful — efforts, the international community is mainly focused on backing the factions it supports, namely the Kurds, the Iraqi Army or the Syrian opposition. Doing so will not provide a long-term solution. Only a multi-pronged solution can.

To guarantee peace and stability in the region the key is to support to people—Sunni, Shia and the minorities. Whoever has the responsibility of governance over the territories that was once held by ISIS, needs to develop policies in a way that meets the deep and real needs of the populations living there. We cannot afford to ignore the discrimination and sectarian policies of some of the more restrictive regimes in the region (re: Syria). If we do, then we ought to be ready to deal with ISIS II since the fertile soil that gave rise to it will remain fertile. Many thanks to Lister for providing insights into a dynamic world of hate so that we may learn from our mistakes.

Bernard Rougier. *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017. ISBN 9780691177939.

The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS

Reviewed by Wouter Jansen

In *The Sunni Tragedy in the Middle East: Northern Lebanon from al-Qaeda to ISIS*, Bernard Rougier provides a very detailed and well-structured account of different historical events, including the Lebanese civil war and the struggle between Lebanon and Syria from the early 1960s until the 1990s, when Northern Lebanon served as the battleground between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Syrian regime. Rougier divided his book in multiple chapters, each focusing on a specific event in history that leads up to a better understanding of the situation in the Middle East today.

Large parts of this book discuss the city of Tripoli and its surroundings in Northern Lebanon. Tripoli, once saw itself as a new, Arab version of modernity and is now a broken town, fragmented into multiple militant spheres. In the early 1990s, those who supported a Salafi conception of Islam set their sights on Tripoli as a site for their missionary activities. When the Syrian army occupied Tripoli in 1985, a lot of young people fled the city and moved to Saudi Arabia where they were educated at the University of Medina. After receiving Salafi education,

they returned to spread the “true Islam.” Now, north Lebanon hosts a multitude of militant Sunni Islamist ideological currents such as the Muslim Brotherhood, a Salafi network, Jihadi networks, Al-Qaeda affiliates, Tawhid and others. Rougier provides in-depth information on many different militant groups, their history, goals and actions in Lebanon that paint a clearer picture and helps to understand the regional conflicts from the 1980s until today.

For many in Europe, radicalisation is mostly known as being against the West. Rougier argues however that radicalisation and terrorism are very much present within Muslim majority countries, such as Lebanon, where Sunni and Shia affiliated groups fight each other for religious, political and geographical reasons and where influences from foreign countries such as Syria and Iran are present and often further ignite tensions. On the international stage, Middle Eastern countries often deny that they support terrorism, however, as Rougier shows, multiple countries in the region have backed and supported militant groups in Lebanon as a proxy to their own goals. Iran and Syria have backed Shia groups such as Hezbollah in order to retain a strong foothold in Lebanon’s northern parts and help the “resistance” against Israeli occupation from the south, while Saudi Arabia supported Rafiq al-Hariri who aided the Syrian revolt (of which some groups involved are considered terrorist groups) in order to topple the Assad regime and form a stronger Sunni dominated position. Some of these Sunni groups, like Tahrir al-Sham are still actively fighting the Syrian regime with Western backing. Interestingly, Rougier also points out the change in terrorist attacks over the years. Hezbollah used political assassinations – such as the murder of Rafiq al-Hariri – to achieve political goals. The attacks on Western fast-food chains by other groups were used as a statement against American foreign policy. These kinds of attacks were more common in the 1980s and 1990s. Opposed to what we are used to today, both did not yet include the aim of causing mass casualties to achieve their goals. That policy changed after 9/11 where maximising the number of victims became the goal to achieve global media coverage, the spreading of fear and achieving political change.

At the beginning the book might seem a bit overwhelming due to the many names of people, events, parties, places, groups and dates. But Rougier does a good job at guiding the reader through the information. It must be stated however that some previously contained knowledge is very much recommended. The different events described

in the book are already very complicated and intertwined. For someone without much knowledge on the history, structure and goals of the different players involved in Lebanon's history, it might be hard to understand or follow. Nevertheless, this book is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of the groups active in Lebanon such as Hezbollah, ISIS, Al-Qaeda and the Sunni/Shia divide and the events that formed the surrounding region and Lebanon as it is today. Scholars and students and anyone else wanting to broaden their knowledge on terrorist groups and Middle-Eastern conflicts would do very good by consulting this book. It is a very useful, broad and well written account of history and a fantastic source of information.

Book Reviews

Roland Dannreuther. *Energy Security*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017. ISBN 9780745661919.

Energy Security

Reviewed by Sabit Ibrahim Akca

Increasing dependence of modern societies on energy resources has pushed energy security to the top of the international agenda, turning it into an indispensable means of preserving and advancing economic prosperity. This prosperity, however, is not divided equally among states and the role of multi-billion dollar modern energy systems in controlling energy resources is overwhelming, becoming a root cause of unjust and corrupt social, economic, and political relations.

Energy Security, as pointed out by Roland Dannreuther, is a book that focuses on the politics of energy security while also recognizing that understanding and addressing energy security issues cannot be done without taking a multidisciplinary approach. In order to understand or address the issues of energy security along with vulnerabilities, challenges and conflicts that the increasing dependence on key energy resources have brought to modern civilization, the book focuses on explaining the nature of energy security, locating it within a global, regional and national political framework.

There are significant differences in how the concept of energy security is applied relative to the particular energy source in question. Each source has its own unique advantages and inconveniences. Coal, for example, is rarely included in international energy security concerns since it is cheap and geographically more distributed than oil and gas. At the same time, despite the alarming damage that the usage of coal is bringing to our global environment, major developing nations, such as India and China, keep using coal as their primary source of energy

and the availability of coal as local resource is seen as a fundamental component of their energy security.

Gas, in comparison, raises far more concerns. This is illustrated in *Energy Security* by the case of Russian energy supplies to Europe. Since any disrupt in oil trade between Europe and Russia could be compensated for rapidly by other oil-producing states, European consumers are more distressed about possible disruptions in gas trade with Russia due to long-term contractual arrangements in order to make gas trade profitable, a lack of alternative providers of gas and already fixed inter-continental pipelines. For nuclear energy, the risks to security come from the danger that countries may undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and might seek to produce nuclear weapons. There is also the possibility of accidents while producing nuclear energy, which have gained attention particularly after major accidents such as Chernobyl in 1986 and Fukushima in 2011. In the book, each of these difficulties and advantages is evaluated by analyzing the linkages between security, power and justice relations in chronological order.

When analyzing energy security concerns, oil is observed as the major source for anxiety and vulnerability. What are the reasons for this anxiety? Is the so-called 'resource curse' thesis valid? How did oil manage to seize the throne from coal as the key resource for energy despite the risks it imposed? Roland Dannreuther draws attention to these questions in *Energy Security* through observations by a multidimensional approach. The reality that main reserves for oil are constrained to a few locations along with the political instability of these locations is a source for concern and anxiety for supplier and consumer states. Also, the economic advantage that oil brings for resource-rich states and significant higher revenues than those of other energy sources are factors contributing to energy insecurities. While production costs for a barrel of oil is low, the price that is paid on the international market is vastly greater. This economic advantage of resource-rich states instigates a sense of resentment and envy from other less resource-rich states and has contributed to the development of unequal social and political relations throughout the world, which subsequently has resulted in a rise of conflicts for energy resources.

The "resource curse" thesis consists of the idea that resource abundance might be a constraint on development. Experiences of Latin America in the interwar and immediate post-World War II period have contributed to this thought. It was argued that those who develop

extractive industries for energy resources are constrained to the production of raw materials, resulting in underdevelopment and domestic insecurities. However, the cases of the United States and Norway (regarding their development during the 1970s while they were energy self-sufficient states with resource abundance) discredit the “resource curse” thesis. Dannreuther argues that a change from a “resource curse” to a “resource blessing” is dependent on the capacity of states to invest in technological innovation and scientific knowledge in order to diversify their economies in a sustainable way.

In a remarkable manner, this book explains the nature of energy security by analyzing the concept in different contexts. In order to understand energy security issues, Roland Dannreuther gives particular weight to historical legacies and developments that still continue to impact the ways in which energy security is currently conceptualized and questioned. However, on a critical note, despite the sufficient historical and contemporary coverage of energy security issues, the lack of attention paid to cyber risks in the energy sector is a shortcoming. With growing dependency on technology that has accompanied the information age, the energy sector has developed into a target for cyberattacks. Such attacks can result in infrastructure shutdown, triggering economic and financial disruptions. Therefore, including cyber security studies while analyzing issues related to energy security has the potential to become an essential part of security studies due to rapid technological advancements. Despite this shortcoming, the book is a must-read for students and professionals seeking a comprehensive overview of energy security issues.



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