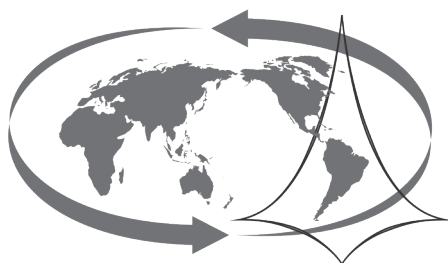


e-ISSN 2238-6912

AUSTRAL

Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations
Revista Brasileira de Estratégia e Relações Internacionais



Porto Alegre, v.10 n.20 | Jul./Dec. 2021



Austral	Porto Alegre	v.10, n.20	p. 1-341	Jul./Dec. 2021
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About the Journal

AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy and International Relations was the first Brazilian journal in the field of International Relations to be fully published in English (2012). It is an essentially academic vehicle, linked to the Brazilian Centre for Strategy & International Relations (NERINT) of the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). Its pluralist focus aims to contribute to the debate on the international political and economic order from the perspective of the developing world.

The journal publishes original articles in the area of Strategy Studies and International Relations, with special interest in issues related to developing countries and South-South Cooperation – its security problems; the political, economic and diplomatic developments of emerging countries; and their relations with the traditional powers. *AUSTRAL* is published semi-annually in English and Portuguese. The journal's target audience consists of researchers, experts, diplomats, military personnel and graduate students of International Relations. The content of the journal consists ensure the publication of authors from each of the great continents of the South: Asia, Latin America and Africa. Thus, the debate and diffusion of knowledge produced in these regions is stimulated. All contributions submitted to *AUSTRAL* are subject to rigorous scientific evaluation.

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This journal is supported by the

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AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations is available online in English and Portuguese at www.seer.ufrgs.br/austral

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**www.seer.ufrgs.br/Austral
Cataloging-in-Publication (CIP)**

Austral : Revista Brasileira de Estratégia e Relações Internacionais = Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations / Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, CEGOV/FCE.

- v. 10, n.20 (Jul./Dec. 2021). – Porto Alegre: NERINT-CEGOV/PPGEEI-FCE/UFRGS, 2021-

Semestral.

e-ISSN 2238-6912

1. Political Science. 2. International Relations.
3. International Politics. 4. Diplomacy. 5. Developing Countries.

CDU 327

Biblioteca Gládis Wiebelling do Amaral, Faculdade de Ciências Econômicas da UFRGS.

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e-ISSN 2238-6912 | v.10, n.20, Jan./Dec. 2021

EDITOR'S NOTE

In its twentieth edition, *Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations* celebrates its tenth anniversary. Initially, there is a balance of the activities of the Journal, consolidated with a focus on South-South Academic Cooperation and an independent posture. Below is a sequence of four articles that analyse aspects of China's global projection, two of which also include Russia, at a time when the Biden administration exerts even greater pressure on both countries than that of former President Trump. The next seven articles address Defence and International Security Studies, with texts that provide an academic review of Security Studies, Naval Power, export of defence products, the role of NATO, Obama's policy towards the Middle East and North Africa, and on the role of the UN in the fight against terrorism in West Africa. It ends with an additional updated text on the South African political crisis.

Following the structure implemented in 2020, there are the texts that integrate the *NERINT Strategic Analysis* segment. The main event of the semestre (and of the year 2021), the fumbling North American withdrawal from Afghanistan and the control of the country by the Taliban, is covered in three analyses that describe not only the situation, but also a balance of 43 years of wars and a qualified study on the drug trafficking problem. The meaning of the semestre's electoral processes is explored in three analyses: Germany and Scandinavia, with a tenuous victory of the left, and Uzbekistan, with the affirmation of a pro-Western government. Finally, an analysis on the AUKUS Agreement and Iran's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation in Organisation (SCO) is accompanied by another on the situation in North Korea, which has as a backdrop the containment of China by the Biden administration.

In time: recent events in Kazakhstan, it seems, constitute yet another Colour Revolution of Regime Change. It could become a fatal blow to the New Silk Road initiative and the Eurasian integration of the SCO if the deployment of a Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) peacekeeping force does not reverse the situation. While tensions were orchestrated in Ukraine and Taiwan, the "spontaneous" explosion took place at the heart of Eurasia. The problem is that Kazakhstan has strategic and geopolitical importance on a global scale in Brzezinski's Grand Chessboard.

This publication was possible thanks to the Research Office at UFRGS through the Support Program for Journal Editing (PAEP), as well as the entire team of editors and translators, in particular to the Editorial Assistants Guilherme Geremias de Conceição and Guilherme Thudium, with the collaboration of Bruno Magno, Luana Margarete Geiger, Marina Felisberti, Eduardo Secchi, Gabriela Ruchel, Maria Gabriela Vieira, Frederico Fróes, Magnus Kenji Hiraiwa, Felipe Werner Samuel, João Pedro Funck, and Karolayne Gonsalves. Once again, we would like to thank Professor Cristina Soreanu Pecequilo for reviewing the translations, as well as the reviewers, without whom the Journal would not be able to maintain its regularity and quality. Finally, a heartfelt thank you to all of those who collaborated in Austral's graphic and editorial production, and to those who sent their studies from the four corners of our troubled planet, over the course of a decade. In the pages of *Austral*, the South found itself, without the need for intermediaries, and with that, another way to connect with the world.

Disclaimer: *AUSTRAL* prioritises British English as the standard variety of the English written language. Some English translations, however, may be written under the American English dialect.

AUSTRAL: 10 YEARS OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Paulo Fagundes Visentini¹
Guilherme Thudium²

The editorial policy prioritised by the Brazilian Centre for Strategy & International Relations (NERINT), as a pioneering centre in the field of International Relations (IR) in Southern Brazil, was the publication of reference works aimed at the new undergraduate and graduate courses that emerged in the country. With the structuring of the Doctoral Program in International Strategic Studies (PPGEEI) at UFRGS, favourable conditions emerged for NERINT to establish a partnership for the publication of an academic journal. The name *AUSTRAL* was chosen for it means “South” in Portuguese, Spanish, English, French, and German, in addition to other languages, with minimal spelling variations. It also reflected the choice to focus on South-South Relations, with a philosophy that favoured cooperation with academics from all continents without harmful corporate competitions, a common feature inside universities.

Independence, scientific rigour, and giving opportunity for scholars from countries lacking the deserved space in reputed institutions of the North-Atlantic circuit were always priorities. And they created solid links, revealing another world, barely visible, but possible, as was the motto of the World Social Forum before it was mischaracterized in a “Thematic Forum” by post-modern activists. Upon completing 10 years, *AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations*, discreetly, fulfilled its foundational objective, bringing together those who are the true agents of the ongoing

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global transformation. A space that connects Latin Americans, Africans, and Asians, as well as Europeans and North Americans with a truly cosmopolitan vision, in a project that seeks to contribute to overcoming the multiple crises that humanity is facing. Science and humanism can, and must, walk side-by-side.

But what credentials did Brazil have to launch such an initiative, from Porto Alegre, a city located in the “South of the South”? Brazilian foreign policy reached, in the first decade of the 21st century, a truly global projection and recognition, which qualitatively and quantitatively improved the great advances of the Independent Foreign Policy (1961-64) and the defining moments of the Military Regime (1964-85), such as Responsible Pragmatism and Universalism. Quantitatively, Brazilian diplomacy was present, in addition to traditional regions and partners, in small African, Asian, and Arab nations, in the former Soviet republics and even in the distant archipelagos of the Pacific Ocean, with a decisive role played by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Itamaraty) and by other government agencies in this process.

From a qualitative point of view, such presence gained remarkable political, economic, and pragmatic intensity with the “active, affirmative, and purposeful” participation in important international fora and multilateral organisations, such as the BRICS and the G-20, in addition to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United Nations (UN). This diplomatic advance was accompanied by world GDP expansion and by the growth of the Brazilian economy, which surpassed the economies of several countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Brazil also received the status of Strategic Partner of the European Union and celebrated the same link with emerging powers such as China and India, as well as South Africa and other important nations. South American integration made consistent progress for the first time, including with extra-regional initiatives. Thus, the axis of South-South Cooperation was elevated as a priority for Brazilian diplomacy, with an intense presence in Africa and Asia.

Although such advances have been addressed abroad and in several national scientific journals, we lacked a bilingual vehicle (Portuguese or Spanish and English) that was exclusively focused on the analysis of such performance. At the same time, we lacked an instrument that would put us in direct contact with other centres of reflection in developing nations, with which we have established high-level contacts in recent years – in addition to academics and institutions that, in the North, think critically about the intense transformations that the modern world-system is undergoing.

Thus, since the founding of NERINT, in 1999, our team of researchers

planned the creation of a scientific journal that would disseminate their research, points of view and establish a dialogue with academics from other nations and with members of the Brazilian diplomatic body. To this end, contacts were established in Brazil and abroad over the years. The journal had to reflect the perspective of the developing world: the “South”. And this old dream came to life exactly a decade ago, with the launch of *AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy and International Relations*.

It was the first periodical in Brazil, in the field of IR, to be published entirely in English. Instead of professional translators, however, the journal sought to integrate undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers from the university in its editorial body as a way to train them by promoting direct contact with advanced scientific research, under the supervision of its Editorial Board – such as Professor Cristina Soreanu Pecequillo, to whom we are extremely grateful for her diligent review of translation efforts.

The journal had initial support from the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), a governmental think tank linked to the Ministry of Economy in Brazil, and the International Relations Office of the State of Rio Grande do Sul. Today, it's currently financed by the Support Program for Journal Editing (PAEP) at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). Thus, *AUSTRAL*, since its inception, has been linked both to the intense activity of postgraduate teaching and research, as well as to the dialogue with official bodies and decision makers from all federative entities, as well as to the great contemporary and *scientific* debates of both IR and Strategic Studies (Brodie 1949).

A Decade of Dialogue with the South

Since 2012, *AUSTRAL* has established itself as an essentially academic publication focused on international politics, security, and economic issues, with an emphasis on the international affairs of developing countries, which normally receive limited or ethnocentric attention from major international journals. The focus of the periodical, therefore, was always South-South Cooperation and the international relations of the emerging world with traditional powers, in a context of crisis and transformation of the international system – a theme chosen as headline for the first issue of the journal (vol. 1, no. 1, 2012).

The tone was, initially, to draw attention to a global crisis (geographical and thematic) in the making. Therefore, we paid attention to the acceleration of the political, securitarian, and economic patterns of international relations.

Finally, from 2016³ onwards, we can speak of a real earthquake shaking an already fragile world order. A real war of positions, which constitutes the common thread that articulates contemporary conflicts and tensions. Many of the localised conflicts and regional tensions in the South that stem from this phenomenon, however, have received *post factum* attention by academia, in a dissociated way. We still lacked a totalising reflection mechanism capable of satisfactorily interpreting current events in an integrated manner – a gap that *AUSTRAL* has sought to fill since its inception.

By also prioritising strategic and security topics, *AUSTRAL* was able to contribute to the deepening of reflection on issues of enormous value to Brazil's foreign policy, defence, and development, as predicted by former Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs, Celso Amorim (2012), in an article presenting the first issue of the journal. The inaugural issue also featured an article by Brazilian senior diplomat Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães (2012) on the future of Mercosur, as well as two in-house articles on Brazilian foreign policy and the 2008 financial crisis – whose consequences were still felt globally – and international contributions on the Russian and South African foreign policy, the China-Africa Cooperation Forum and the role of the Persian Gulf countries in South-South Cooperation.

AUSTRAL was officially launched at the Seminário Brasileiro de Estudos Estratégicos Internacionais (SEBREEI), an event held from June 20th to 22nd, 2012, in Porto Alegre, and organised by the Doctoral Program in International Strategic Studies (PPGEEI) of the Faculty of Economics at UFRGS, by the Government of Rio Grande do Sul, and by the Brazilian Centre for Strategy and International Relations (NERINT) under the theme “Regional Integration and South-South Cooperation in the 21st Century”. The wide acceptance obtained at launch was consolidated with the edition of its second issue, which focused on Brazilian Foreign Policy and South-South Cooperation, written mainly by Brazilian authors and presented by Professor Amado Luiz Cervo (2012) – the dean of this theme in Brazil.

In the last decade of the 20th century, with the end of the Cold War, security themes started to be neglected and eclipsed as objects of study, in the context of a predominantly economic agenda of neoliberal globalisation, both in academia and in political discourse. But the September 11 attacks have put security back at the centre of academic debate as part of the War on Terror and asymmetric non-state warfare. The approach prioritised, however, was directed towards the cleavage between Western powers and new threats from

3 Interestingly enough, 2016 is the year that influential American scholar John Mearsheimer (2019) identified as a transitional milestone towards an effectively multipolar international system.

terrorist groups, as well as the so-called “Rogue States”.

Few analysts explored the geopolitical dimensions implicit in such a scenario. At the start of the second decade of the 21st century, the landscape underwent substantial change: the economic crisis in OECD countries had an impact on the international balance of power, while China became the second largest economy in the world and the BRICS grouping acquired substance and political-strategic materiality. Then, international security studies gained a new dimension, reaching the South. This was the central theme of the third issue of the journal, which inaugurated another of its founding objectives, namely, the contribution to the theoretical-analytical renewal of Strategic and International Studies.

Among the southern regions, the journal also stood out for the attention devoted to the strategic insertion of Africa in international affairs – a serious bibliographical gap in Brazil, until the emergence of the Brazilian Centre for African Studies (CEBRAFRICA) and its Brazilian Journal of African Studies (RBEA) within the scope of NERINT. The African continent, in a short period of time, went from a situation of lesser relevance to most analysts to a region of high strategic value. However, the complex academic understanding of this evolution was made difficult, in Brazil, by the lack of specialised knowledge of the region.

As the nucleus of the world-system moves to the Indo-Pacific, Africa, due to its geopolitical position and its new vectors of international insertion, becomes an extremely relevant space for the repositioning of forces on a global scale. It's a space of (until now) low strategic density, where the use of limited resources can have an amplified effect. Even the United States, which had shown little interest in Africa, quickly became present and active. The War on Terror, the establishment of AFRICOM (United States Africa Command) in Germany, the re-creation of the Fourth and Fifth fleets in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean, respectively, and the growing military, economic, and political presence are some examples.

These processes took place in parallel with the launch of the New Partnership for African Economic Development (NEPAD) and the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU). These events contributed to economic, social, and political advances in Africa, which resulted in greater autonomy and diplomatic protagonism for its nations, as well as greater international insertion of African academics and specialists.

AUSTRAL also played a decisive role in the expansion and consolidation of important IR approaches in Brazil, whether classical or critical, such as the theoretical, historical, and strategic study of the world-system, focusing

on the analysis of the alternation between hegemonic cycles and crisis; and the concept of Geopolitical South, which contrasts with the amorphous concept of Global South. More than creating a postmodern theoretical fad, the introduction of the Global South phenomena represented a strategy to depoliticize the meaning of third-worldism. The Global South is not defined by a positive agenda, but a negative one, since, after all, isn't the North "Global" either? Thus, according to this new phenomena, there would be no meaning for the existence of the Group of 77 or the Non-Aligned Movement: all Southern States were diluted by globalisation, and the leading nations in this space would be simply referred to as "emerging market economies".

The Non-Aligned Movement, however, continued to exist (and grow) and the 60th anniversary of the Bandung Conference, discussed in the eighth issue of *AUSTRAL*, demonstrated the importance and continuity of third-worldism. These aspects were also explored in an important article by Beatriz Bissio (2016), who was one of the editors of the famous *Cadernos do Terceiro Mundo*. As a registered trademark of *AUSTRAL*, therefore, the Geopolitical South (Third World) became not only the thematic focus, but also the theoretical and analytical axis for understanding the world's greatest problems.

In this sense, we also published, at first hand, innovative analytical proposals, such as "The Axes of World Power in the 21st Century" (Visentini 2019). Among the many ways of classifying powers and nations, we sought to propose a vision that would account for the fracture lines that are being formed, as well as the alliances that can emerge from such a reality. In this context, the discourse that emerges in different sectors of society and the state in Brazil (and in different nations) is paradoxical. It is as if the Cold War had been reloaded, against all logic, arguments, and facts that suggest otherwise, since 20th century bipolarity depended on the capitalism *versus* socialism cleavage – and the latter survives only residually in very small nations. Great power rivalry today, therefore, is predominantly economic and, in part, geopolitical.

The analytical-interpretative proposal in question emerged from research and dialogue with academics, diplomats, the media, and the military, as well as other sectors, and seeks to categorise today's international political landscape into different groups. The first of them coalesces into the *Anglo-Saxon Military-Rentier* axis: the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and, tangentially, Israel. The second is the *Developed Industrial* axis of the European Union, Japan, and the Asian Tigers. The third consists of the *Emerging Unorthodox Industrial* axis, integrated by the BRICS nations, especially China and Russia, as well as Turkey and Iran, where the

intervention of the state is decisive. Finally, the fourth is the *Agrarian, Mineral and Demographic Peripheral* axis, integrated by the medium and small nations of Latin America, Africa, and geographical Asia (which includes the Middle East). Brazil and South Africa, absorbed by their internal political agendas, are at risk of joining this group. Recent events, such as the AUKUS treaty between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States for the construction of nuclear submarines for the Oceanic country, under strong protests from European nations such as France, seem to corroborate the analytical proposal in question.

Thematic Dossiers

With the journal's rapid consolidation and its growing worldwide network of contributors and readers, *AUSTRAL* saw the need to expand in order to absorb the increased flow of articles. Thus, as of the ninth issue, *AUSTRAL* enlarged its list of articles per issue from ten to twelve. There was also an increase in demand for the publication of dossiers containing collective research results, which were accepted according to their quality and thematic relevance. A positive "problem", resulting from an editorial policy that did not make a priority to meet the changing criteria of academic agencies. The objective, which still remains, has always been to connect authors and nations through innovative reflection in a strongly institutional field such as IR.

The main initiative in this regard was the publication of a Special Dossier (vol. 7, no. 14) organised by Professors Juliana Viggiano and Rafael Duarte Villa on "Security and Defence in South America", within the framework of the *Pró-Defesa* project, headed by the Pandiá Calógeras Institute of the Brazilian Ministry of Defence and the Brazilian National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq). This initiative supported the development of Security & Defence (S&D) as a priority for *AUSTRAL*, NERINT, and PPGEEL.

It is also worth mentioning the "Special Dossier on Brazil-Angola Relations", authored by Professors Fabio Morosini (UFRGS) and Michelle Ratton Sanchez Badin (FGV), published in 2016, alluding to the forty years of independence of the African country; another on "World System: Theory and Geopolitics", whose set of articles opened up the last issue of 2020; and, most recently, a "Special Dossier on Latin America" that inaugurated the latest issue of the journal with an analysis of the 30 years of Mercosur, authored by Professor Leonardo Granato (2021), showcasing that each decade of Latin and South American (dis)integration had a different character, with interspersed

periods of unsustainable expansionism and crisis.

Situation Analysis

The growing contribution of academics from an increasing number of countries showcases the journal's global and independent presence. It also shows that NERINT, after serving as a catalyst for the institutionalisation of academic IR studies in Southern Brazil, continues, after two decades, to analyse the international landscape in a serious, independent, and creative way.

In addition to the bilingual bi-annual *AUSTRAL*, NERINT was also the birthplace of the quarterly publication *Conjuntura Austral*, edited by PPGEEI since 2011. Initially, *Conjuntura Austral* would be in charge of situation analyses, in a more immediate approach, while *AUSTRAL* would publish academically denser analyses. However, with the evolution of PPGEEI's national and international projection, both journals have become high-level analogous references in Brazil, respecting the theoretical differences between both editorial bodies.

For this reason, NERINT also started to offer a digital and bilingual Research Bulletin (2016-2019), under the responsibility of its Assistant Researchers, Master's and Doctoral students, in order to resume more objective analysis of the international situation for the general public. In 2020, the Research Bulletin was absorbed by the NERINT's Strategic Analysis, which became part of a new regular segment of *AUSTRAL*, to be found at the end of each issue. It brings brief analytic notes on current and relevant international events, not covered in the articles, written by thematic specialists. Important international events usually take almost a year to appear as a traditional scholarly article. Meanwhile, what is projected on the public eye and academia itself boils down to journalistic articles and social media. Therefore, it was imperative to explain the major international events in an objective way, initially on NERINT's website, transcribing them every six months into the journal.

Indexers and Statistics⁴

AUSTRAL is registered in major indexes and databases worldwide: Scopus Elsevier, Google Scholar, LivRe!, Columbia International Affairs Online, Directory of Open Access Journals, ETHzürich, Journal TOCs, Latindex, Directory of Open Access Scholarly Resources, Journal Summaries Brazilians, Beardsley Library Journals, WZB Berlin Social Science Research Center, GIGA Information Centre, CAPES Journal Portal, UFRGS Scientific Journal Portal, and Cariniana Network.

The journal has published authors from all continents and regions of the world (in chronological order of submission): Brazil, Russia, Canada, South Africa, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Spain, Australia, India, Argentina, Turkey, Sweden, Germany, Mexico, Pakistan, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Portugal, Czech Republic, Italy, Japan, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Cuba, China, Chile, Angola, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, United States, Costa Rica, Iran, Indonesia, Romania, Ecuador, Colombia, Paraguay, Poland, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Singapore, and New Zealand. Overall, there are 257 authors, including professors and doctors from 143 different institutions (see Table 1 and Annex).

Table 1 - The Matrix of International Currency Use

Region	Articles	Countries	%
South America	165	6	64,2
Europe	31	13	12,1
Asia	28	10	10,9
Africa	22	6	8,6
North America	5	3	1,9
Central America	3	2	1,2
Oceania	3	2	1,2

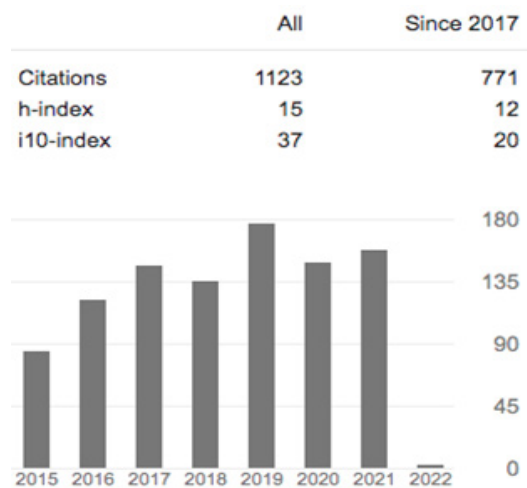
Source: Elaborated by Felipe Werner Samuel based on *AUSTRAL*'s archive: seer.ufrgs.br/austral/issue/archive.

AUSTRAL's platform, which uses Open Journal Systems (OJS) through UFRGS' Journal Portal, adds up to nearly half a million accesses to the final compositions of its articles (491,392 accesses as of October 2021). The issue with the highest number of accesses was published in the second half of 2013 under the theme "South Atlantic, Brazil and the Cooperation between Periphery and Semiperiphery". The article with the highest number of views,

⁴ With the collaboration of Felipe Werner Samuel.

entitled “Kwame Nkrumah and the Pan-African Vision: Between Acceptance and Rejection” was published by Henry Kam Kah (2016), professor at the Department of History at the University of Buea, Cameroon. The most cited article according to Google Scholar is authored by Australian professor and Brazilianist Sean W. Burges (2012), published under the title “Developing from the South: South-South Cooperation in the Global Development Game”.

Figure 1 - AUSTRAL’s Google Scholar Citations



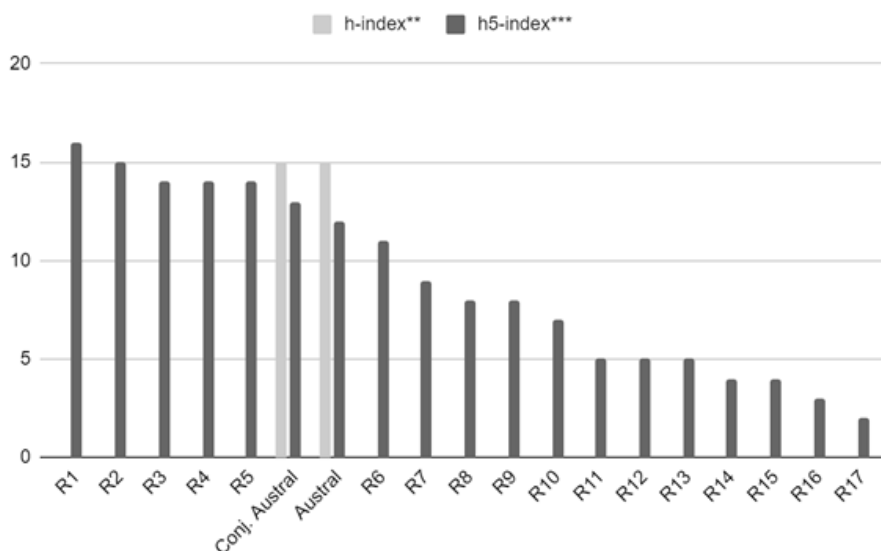
Source: Google Scholar (2022).

The dual nomenclature of the journal – *AUSTRAL: Revista Brasileira de Estratégia e Relações Internacionais*, in Portuguese, and *AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations*, in English –, as well as spelling variations, harmed its academic projection in light of the new evaluation system in Brazil, which appears to have reduced knowledge production and collaborative networks to mere algorithms – a technical error that CAPES corrected in 2021. Thus, the best way we found to properly index both the articles in English and Portuguese was through the creation of a Google Scholar profile. There, we obtained a high number of citations (1123 overall and 898 between 2016-2021) if we consider the bimonthly format of the journal, which in turn is reflected in the h (value 15)⁵ and h5 (value 12)⁶ indexes (see Graphs 1 and 2).

5 h index is the largest number h such that h publications have at least h citations.

6 h5 index is the largest number h such that h publications have at least h new citations in the last five years.

Graphic 1 - Comparison of h and h5 indexes of “A” journals in the area of Political Science and International Relations*



Source: Google Scholar, based on CAPES Journal Classification (Quadrennium 2013-2016 and Preliminary List 2019). Data in reference to October 2021. Own elaboration.

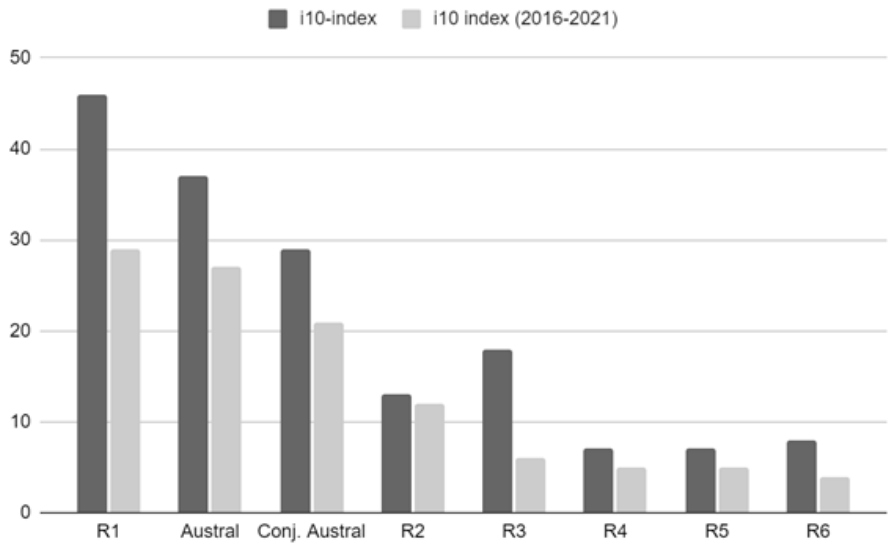
* For academic courtesy, the titles of the journals that are external to UFRGS were not disclosed.

** AUSTRAL's and Conjuntura Austral's h index, both published by UFRGS, were extracted from their respective profiles on Google Scholar. Data in reference to October 2021.

*** h5 indexes were extracted from the journals' official Google Scholar profile and, in the absence of one, from the platform ranking, always taking the highest value as reference: https://scholar.google.com.br/citations?view_op=top_venues

We also highlight the number of *AUSTRAL* articles with at least 10 citations each (index i10) on Google Scholar (see Graph 3):

Graphic 2 - i10 Index Comparison (total and last five complete years) of “A” journals in the area of Political Science and International Relations with a Google Scholar profile*



Source: Google Scholar, based on CAPES Journal Classification (Quadrennium 2013-2016 and Preliminary List 2019). Data in reference to October 2021. Own elaboration.

* For academic courtesy, the titles of the journals that are external to UFRGS were not disclosed

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APPENDIX

List of institutions of the authors published by *AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations* in the last 10 years. Elaborated by Felipe Werner Samuel.

Institutions	Country
ABCI Institute	United States
Academy of Science	Russia
Ambrose Alli University	Nigeria
American University of Central Asia	Kyrgyzstan
Australian National University	Australia
Brazilian Central Bank	Brazil
Cankiri Karatekin University	Turkey
Centro Austral de Investigaciones Científicas/ CONICET	Argentina
Centro de Investigaciones de Política Internacional	Cuba
Christ University	India
CIRAD	France
City University of Macau	China
Dalhousie University	Canada
ECEME	Brazil
Ekiti State University	Nigeria
Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam	Netherlands
Escola de Guerra Naval	Brazil
Escola Superior de Economia	Russia
Escola Superior de Guerra	Brazil
ESPM Sul / UNISINOS	Brazil
Exército Nacional do Zimbábwe	Zimbabwe
FACAMP	Brazil
Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales	Ecuador

Federal University of Lafia	Nigeria
FGV	Brazil
FIRB	Brazil
FUMEC	Brazil
German Institute of Global and Area Studies	Germany
Greenwich University	Pakistan
Hodja Ahmet Yassawi International Kazakh Turkish University	Kazakhstan
IFRS	Brazil
Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis	India
Institute of Strategic Research and Analysis	Pakistan
Instituto Brasileiro de Estudos de China Asia-Pacífico	Brazil
Instituto do Oriente	Portugal
Instituto Rio Branco	Brazil
Instituto Superior de Relações Internacionais Venâncio de Moura	Angola
Isfahan University	Iran
Islamic Azad University	Iran
Istanbul Bilgi University	Turkey
Itamaraty	Brazil
Jawaharlal Nehru University	India
John Cabot University	Italy
Kazimierz Wielki University	Poland
King's College London	United Kingdom
Landmark University	Nigeria
Lomonosov Moscow State University	Russia
London School of Economics and Political Science	United Kingdom
Makassar State University	Indonesia
Mercosul	
Metropolitan University Prague	Czech Republic
Ministério da Defesa	Brazil
Momoyama Gakuin University	Japan
National Defense College of Islamabad	Pakistan
National University of Singapore	Singapore
PPG San Tiago Dantas	Brazil

Programa de Estudios América Latina-África	Argentina
PUCMG	Brazil
Renmin University of China	China
Ruprecht-Karls-Universität	Germany
Școala Națională de Studii Politice și Administrative din București / SNSPA	Romania
SDECT-RS	Brazil
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kiev	Ukraine
Tarbiat Modares University	Iran
UEPB	Brazil
UERJ	Brazil
UFABC	Brazil
UFBA	Brazil
UFF	Brazil
UFJF	Brazil
UFMG	Brazil
UFPB	Brazil
UFPE	Brazil
UFPEL	Brazil
UFRGS	Brazil
UFRJ	Brazil
UFRRJ	Brazil
UFS	Brazil
UFSC	Brazil
UFSCar	Brazil
UFSM	Brazil
UFU	Brazil
UNB	Brazil
UNESP	Brazil
UniBH	Brazil
UNICAMP	Brazil
UNIFESP	Brazil
UNILA	Brazil
UniLaSalle-RJ	Brazil
UNIPAMPA	Brazil

UNISC	Brazil
Unisinós	Brazil
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid	Spain
Universidad Católica de Temuco	Chile
Universidad Complutense de Madrid	Spain
Universidad de Buenos Aires	Argentina
Universidad de Guadalajara	Mexico
Universidad de los Andes	Colombia
Universidad de Santiago	Chile
Universidad Militar Nueva Granada	Colombia
Universidad Nacional da Costa Rica	Costa Rica
Universidad Nacional de Assunção	Paraguay
Universidad Nacional de Rosario	Argentina
Universidad Nacional de San Martín	Argentina
Universidad Tecnológica de Mexico	Mexico
Universidade Anhembi Morumbi	Brazil
Universidade Candido Mendes	Brazil
Universidade Católica de Portugal	Portugal
Universidade de Cabo Verde	Cabo Verde
Universidade de Salvador	Brazil
Universidade de São José	China
Universidade Estadual da Paraíba	Brazil
Universidade Federal de Viçosa	Brazil
Universidade Lusíada Porto	Portugal
Universidade Nacional de Rosario	Argentina
Universidade Privada de Angola	Angola
Universidade Vinoba Bhave	Brazil
Universitas Indonesia	Indonesia
Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta	Indonesia
Universitatea din București	Romania
Université de Montréal	Canada
Universiteit Leiden	Netherlands
Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin	Malaysia
University of South Africa	South Africa

University of Afe Babalola	Nigeria
University of Buea	Cameroon
University of Calabar	Nigeria
University of California	United States
University of Exeter	United Kingdom
University of Gothenburg	Sweden
University of Ibadan	Nigeria
University of Isfahan	Iran
University of Johannesburg	South Africa
University of Johannesburg	South Africa
University of Lagos	Nigeria
University of New England	Australia
University of Waikato	New Zealand
University of Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe
University Sun Yat-Sen	China
UNLa	Argentina
Uppsala Universitet	Sweden
USAL	Argentina
USP	Brazil

Translated by Luana Margarete Geiger

THE SINO-RUSSIAN GEOPOLITICS IN EURASIA AND CHINA-USA DISPUTES: ASIA-PACIFIC-GREATER EURASIA VS INDO-PACIFIC

Marcos Cordeiro Pires¹

Lucas Gualberto do Nascimento²

Introduction

The Eurasian landmass is a key geopolitical zone in the international system. According to Moniz Bandeira (2017, 1-2), Eurasia is the landmass that extends from Europe to Asia, having its Heartland essentially in Central Asia. The control of this “pivot area”, as called by Mackinder (1904) in the geopolitical classic *The Geographical Pivot of History*, grants a country the advantage of land power – World Island, in what is known as “the greatest natural fortress on Earth”. The agent who dominates the Heartland, in the logic of land power, dominates Eurasia. Therefore, a better geopolitical position in Central Asia is a decisive factor in the current hegemonic disputes, in which important actors, such as the United States, the European Union, Russia, and China are opposed.

From a historical perspective, it is important to emphasize how strategic the Heartland domain is. It is worth remembering the success of the troops of Genghis Khan, in the 13th century, which advanced from Mongolia to Central Europe; of the Turkish-Mongolian troops of Tamerlane, in the 14th century, which came close to the conquests of the former, or even to the Ottoman expansion, in the 15th and 16th centuries, which conquered the Balkans, Egypt and besieged Vienna on two occasions. In the 18th and

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19th centuries, given the reflux of the Ottoman-Turkish Empire, the main disputes for control of the Heartland took place between the British Empire, after consolidating its power in India – The Raj - and the Russian Empire, which had been advancing since the Caucasus to Central Asia and later into territories of the decaying Qing dynasty in China.

Already during the 20th century, the Soviet Union consolidated control over the former areas of the tsarist empire, a fact which persisted until 1991, when its implosion took place. Later, after a decade of instability and decay, Russia's leadership sought to recreate its strategic area of influence, just as new political actors entered the scene, such as the nationalism of the former Soviet republics, the Sunni insurgency, Turkish nationalism, and the US presence in Afghanistan.

Currently, the new political and economic reconfigurations of Eurasia have been a relevant topic in international relations. Regional powers which were subjugated in the past are reemerging, as China and India. Russia's traditional areas of influence are the object of political actions by extra-regional powers such as the United States and the European Union. Russia tries to regain its ground through the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU); China offers Asian countries (but not only) the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); while the United States seeks to align with India, Japan, and Australia through the Quad, as a tool to curb growing Chinese influence. In this sense, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), led by Russia and China, seeks to organize regional security strategies to deal originally with the Sunni insurgency, but which seeks to increase coordination by incorporating India, Pakistan, and Iran, among others.

To face these transformations which are profoundly altering the direction of world politics and economy, this article aims to analyze the main elements and processes underway in Eurasia, involving more specifically the action of three essential actors: the United States, Russia, and China. In this sense, it is organized into six sections, including this introduction and final considerations. At first, it is emphasized the importance of Eurasia as a space that has historically influenced the hegemonic disputes between Great Powers. Then, due to the region's new economic configurations, Eurasia is analyzed as a space for development cooperation, presenting in general lines the objectives of the Russian initiative - EAEU, as well as the Chinese BRI. Next, it is analyzed more specifically the intersections of Russian and Sino-Russian economic strategies, in BRI and the EAEU. Last, the US approach to China is addressed, specifically the transformation of its Asia-Pacific strategy, formulated during the Barack Obama administration, into articulating the Indo-Pacific approach, which includes India in the Chinese regional

containment mechanism, developed by Donald Trump, and continuing under Joe Biden's presidency.

Eurasia as a Space of Hegemonic Disputes

To assess the geopolitical importance of Eurasia, it is important to rescue the ideas of theorists who highlighted the importance of land power in the balance of international politics. As seen, different powers throughout history have attempted to establish hegemony to conquer this part of the world. In his writings on geostrategic developments in Eurasia, former US National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski emphasized the importance of Eurasian geopolitics for the Great Game in international relations. As one of the main objectives of US foreign policy is the prevention of a rival Eurasian counter-hegemonic partnership, the identification and "trusteeship" of pivot powers in Eurasia has been a constant strategy of the US foreign policy, such as how to break the possibility of alliances between regional powers against Washington. Following the same geopolitical strategy, Brzezinski states that

Identifying and protecting the main geopolitical pivots of post-Cold War Eurasia, therefore, is also a crucial aspect of America's global geostrategy. [...] Under current global circumstances, at least five important geostrategic actors and five geopolitical axes [...] can be identified on the new geopolitical map of Eurasia. France, Germany, Russia, China, and India are important and active players. [...] Potentially the most dangerous scenario would be a grand coalition of China, Russia, and perhaps Iran, an "anti-hegemonic" coalition united not by ideology but by complementary claims (Brzezinski 1998, 41-55, own translation).

In practice, this objective was achieved in 1972, when the governments of China and the United States created an informal alliance to contain the influence of the Soviet Union in Asia, notably in Southeast Asia. It was a very important action, as it managed to separate the two main socialist countries, a fact that made the defeat of the USSR in 1991 feasible. This issue is addressed by one of the architects of this solution, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who explained the logic of the Mao Tse-Tung's government in the "Paper Tiger", as he called the United States, based on Chinese millenary experience - in this case, the logic of allying with a distant enemy to face what is closer (Kissinger 2011).

In addition, in the late 1970s, the US strategy against the USSR took shape by stimulating Islamic insurgencies on the fringes of the Soviet Union,

forcing this country into an ill-fated invasion of Afghanistan, which threatened the allied government of Moscow and which had the potential to unleash revolts within the country, especially in regions with strong Islamic influence. In this endeavor, the US had the support of Pakistan, which, as is well known, is a traditional ally of the Chinese government. In the post-USSR context, it was these forces that destabilized the regions of Chechnya and Dagestan within the Russian Federation. To make the situation more complex, the United States supported several initiatives to include ex-Soviet bloc countries in its sphere of influence, as occurred in Georgia and, after the beginning of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, through the implementation of military bases in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan (Le Monde Diplomatique 2003). In response to the cross-border Islamic extremist threat, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was created in 2001 to coordinate security, intelligence, and anti-insurgency actions in Russia, Central Asia, and China.

After the brief period known as the “unipolar moment” (Wohlforth 1999), when the US was virtually unrivaled in the international order during the 1990s and early 2000s, this situation has been questioned due to greater alignment between Russia and China, not only in the SCO but in other forums such as the BRICS, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). This new configuration, at least in theory, marked by the Greater Eurasia paradigm, aims to establish a Eurasian Economic Partnership, by connecting the borders of the Pacific to the borders of the European Union. Given this new situation, US foreign policy seeks to prevent other emerging powers - especially China and Russia - from establishing an alternative power pole in the region. According to Lukin (2020, 175-176),

The main US imperative [...] would be to prevent the emergence of a single state or alliance of states capable of unifying non-European Eurasia against the United States. [...] Thus, it was recognized that the danger to the United States would not be a particular political regime, but simply all the major independent and influential states [...] namely, Washington's loss of control over Eurasia resulting from the deepening rapprochement between the two main Eurasian powers: Russia and China (own translation).

The change of course in international politics towards Eurasia gained greater momentum after the 2008 crisis, which boosted the Chinese role in the international arena, and the Ukrainian crisis, which led the Moscow government to incorporate the Crimean region of Russian majority, as well as to the imposition of a series of sanctions imposed by the US and the European Union (EU) and the advance of NATO forces towards the Russian borders

(Laruelle 2017, 156-157). Russia's strong dependence on EU markets for the flow of its gas and oil supply, amid sanctions, triggered a warning signal about the country's economic vulnerabilities, prompting it to prioritize its ties with the East, especially with China, with which it established an agreement (The Guardian 2014), in May 2014, in the amount of US\$400 billion, for the sale of gas and construction of gas pipelines for a period of 30 years, the first section of which was inaugurated in 2019 (CNN 2019).

The actions of China and Russia are seen as a strong threat by the US government, a perception that is distant from the Obama administration, especially after the Ukrainian incidents in 2014. Recently, the US government, through the document "Renewing America's Advantages: Interim National Security Strategic Guidances" (2021), reaffirmed concerns about China and Russia present in other prospective studies which seek to support the country's defense strategies. According to the report,

We must also face the reality that the distribution of power around the world is changing, creating new threats. China, in particular, quickly became more assertive. It is the only competitor potentially capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to launch a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system. Russia remains determined to strengthen its global influence and play a disruptive role on the world stage. Beijing and Moscow have invested heavily in efforts to verify US strengths and prevent us from defending our interests and allies around the world (The White House 2021, 7-8) (Own translation).

It is not in the scope of this article to describe all recent movements which are part of the increasing rivalry between the United States, on the one hand, and China and Russia, on the other; regardless of cyclical fluctuations, the theme of strategic disputes in Eurasia is a structural issue, and as such deserves to be addressed. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the movements of "tectonic plates" which occur in the region and how this will impact the international context. In this aspect, the new economic articulations must be better understood, as they are not just the construction of infrastructures, but of interdependence ties that can support new levels of political articulation.

Eurasia and Development Cooperation

As described previously, it is necessary to reflect on the logic of strategic competition between the United States, on the one hand, and Russia and China,

on the other, to understand how these actors have positioned themselves on Eurasia. In this section, regional actors will be on focus, notably the cooperation mechanisms led by Moscow and Beijing.

From the Russian standpoint, the concept of *Greater Eurasia* assumed a geostrategic priority intending to establish greater autonomy, not seeking a subordinate role in an Atlantic-facing order, nor ignore the Asian eastward rise. Thus, Eurasian integration in a Russian perspective stems from these two factors. On the one hand, due to the failure of its partnership with the European Union and the United States, as the country was expelled from the G8 in 2014 after the annexation of Crimea; also as it has been suffering from trade sanctions and increased military pressure from NATO, which seeks to strategically encircle Russia's western borders, in the Baltic, Ukraine, and Georgia (Flag, op. cit., 61). As a result, Russia sought to integrate itself into the rise of East Asia, led by China, as an escape valve for its oil and gas production in the face of the aforementioned sanctions.

China, in turn, has sought to mitigate instability on two borders, as many liabilities with its neighborhood persist: (1) the threat of the Sunni insurgency to the West; (2) the demarcation of borders with India and Pakistan to the Southwest; (3) Taiwanese reunification to the East; (4) the guarantee of its maritime and islet rights in the South China Sea; (5) instability on the Korean Peninsula; and (6) the traditional rivalries with Japan. Considering items 5 and 6, the presence of US troops in these countries must be considered. In this sense, the creation of arrangements, such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the work in the BRICS group and the SCO, as well as the creation of the AIIB and the NDB, can be considered actions not only to empower the Chinese economy but also as tools of a diplomatic effort to reverse part of the threats perceived by Beijing.

Therefore, the new configuration of the geopolitical map of Greater Eurasia is based on the complementarity of Chinese trade and its economic interests, together with Russian concerns about security on the western flank, and governance along the entire route which encompasses the EAEU and the BRI led by China (Serbin, op. cit., 41).

The development of Greater Eurasia as an established partnership between Russian and Chinese geostrategies was incorporated into the official joint declarations of Sino-Russian relations. To commemorate the 15th anniversary of the 2001 Friendship, Neighborhood, and Cooperation Treaty, which paved the way for the development of greater cooperation between Russia and China, the two powers established, concerning the EAEU and the BRI:

The parties emphasize the paramount importance they attach to the implementation of the Russian-Chinese cooperation agreement in conjunction with the construction of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Silk Road Economic Belt, as recorded in the relevant Joint Declaration of 8 May 2015. Russia and China are in favor of creating a comprehensive Eurasian partnership based on the principles of openness, transparency, and taking into account mutual interests, including the possible involvement of EAEU, SCO and ASEAN countries. In this regard, the Heads of State instructed the governments of both countries to work with the competent bodies and propose measures for the implementation of the initiative, to contribute to the deepening of integration processes in the region (Совместное 2016, own translation).

Therefore, formed on the basis of EAEU and BRI, the Greater Eurasian partnership is based on the following points: (a) Sino-Russian *rapprochement*, linking BRI and EAEU; (b) Non-Western groupings, especially the SCO, ASEAN, and BRICS; (c) Partnership of non-Western states in the goals of Greater Eurasia; (d) Convergence of political and economic interests to overcome the perception of unipolarity sought by the United States, in a movement similar to the 1955 Bandung Conference; (e) Economic partnerships as platforms for greater cooperation, especially across Central Asia and Europe, with the establishment of the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB), and the Maritime Silk Road through ASEAN partners, both sectors of BRI; (f) Greater Eurasia is an open partnership, as long as the principles of non-interference and multipolarity are respected; therefore, European countries and other possible partners can be included (Lukin, op. cit., 177-178).

China and Russia are articulating their foreign policy strategies and paradigms based on their projected visions with a focus on Eurasia. Despite having different priorities in their geostrategic orientations, China and Russia have sought complementary interests in Eurasia, especially concerning greater economic integration and the establishment of preferential partnerships. The Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union, together with the China-led Belt and Road Initiative - especially the Silk Road Economic Belt - demonstrated synergies towards building a Sino-Russian strategic partnership to influence future developments in Eurasia in a movement of both powers in their geostrategic terms. These two initiatives will be discussed below.

Main Aspects of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), officially launched in 2015, is

a crucial international organization in contemporary Russian foreign policy. The Union represents the Russian views on regional trade, integration, and international insertion. Prior to its creation, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was the main regional organization bringing together the post-Soviet republics, especially in the 1990s. The first three member states - Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan - joined Armenia and Kyrgyzstan in creating the EAEU, which came into force that year. Nowadays, the EAEU is a regional organization in Eurasia representing 183 million people, with a combined GDP of US\$2.2 trillion and trade of US\$900 billion. While the Ukrainian non-participation is worrisome, due to geopolitical disputes in terms of regional and security alliances - especially concerning the EU and NATO - the EAEU is an advancement of current Russian foreign policy in regional and Eurasian affairs (Serbin, *op. cit.*, 79-80).

Currently, the main aspiration of the EAEU is to become a Eurasian organization capable of representing a pole of influence between Europe and Asia-Pacific, especially with regard to the Chinese rise in the world system. It represents a Russian assertive stance in reshaping the configuration of its immediate zone of influence; is a relaunch of a Russian initiative for the post-Soviet space, representing the country's current vision for future developments in Eurasia. A Russian consideration as a great power encompasses its notions of regional integration, trade, and security. The introduction of the free circulation of goods, services, capital, and labor, as well as common agricultural, transport, and energy policies, can contribute to an expansion of the organization in the future, if more successes are demonstrated along its development.

Despite having an abundance of natural resources - such as energy sources, minerals, and the agricultural sector - the EAEU members lack a fully developed financial sector and technological resources which drive innovation (Sergi 2018, 4). There is a complementarity between EAEU resources and Chinese capabilities, as the strengthening of the Union, within a common market framework, drives China to negotiate with EAEU countries as a bloc, increasing its influence in bargaining relations with Beijing. The geopolitical sense in the creation of the Union has turned Eurasia into a region of multipolar relations, as there is a provision for trilateral relations between the EAEU, the EU, and China, as well as other countries in the Asia-Pacific, especially the ASEAN. Therefore, the Union is part of a Russian strategy to reestablish its own geopolitical sphere, which would guarantee greater stability in economic and security terms (Serbin, *op. cit.*, 83).

Finally, the EAEU seeks to establish China as its main partner, as its rise has offered greater economic opportunities for the region than the European front, while simultaneously offering greater economic stability and a platform

for dialogue with China on an equal footing. Discursively, Russia understands the Greater Eurasia paradigm and its Chinese partnership not as a threat to other powers (US, Japan, India) but as an opportunity to leverage investments and cooperation, especially in transport and infrastructure, as this partnership tends to bring economic development to the Russian Far East, a strategic region for Moscow's aspirations (Lewis 2018, 3-4).

Main Aspects of the Belt and Road Initiative

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), officially launched during Xi Jinping's visit to Kazakhstan in 2013, is an ambitious economic project, inspired by the ancient Silk Road, capable of integrating East Asia to Western Europe, mainly through Russia and Central Asia, by its land route, and through the Indian Ocean by its maritime route. This project was inspired by the ancient Silk Road, which had great relevance between the 2nd century BC and the 15th century CE (Sang 2019, 13). In total, the initiative encompasses six economic corridors, which cross over 60 countries in total, which account for 60% of the global population and a third of the world's GDP (CBBC 2015).

The Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB), according to the China-Britain Business Council (CBBC 2015), develops "Eurasian land bridges" in a logistics chain that connects the Chinese coast to the Port of Rotterdam, in the Netherlands, with several economic corridors along the route, connecting China to Mongolia, Russia, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. This land route is inspired by the ancient connections between the Roman and Chinese Empires, which emerged during the Han Dynasty (3rd century BC – 1st century CE).

Furthermore, the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, a sea route, runs along the east coast of China, through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, to the European continent, also covering the so-called "Horn of Africa" and the Suez Canal. Its objective is to improve the efficiency of sea routes between major ports in different countries, including the development of a maritime corridor in the Indian Ocean – which would directly depend on agreements beneficial to India, for it to participate in the project. The BRI maritime route looks for historical inspiration in the routes that emerged in the Tang Dynasty (7th century – 10th century), with its peak in the Ming Dynasty in the 15th century, when Admiral Zheng He established trade routes with the African continent, crossing the Indian coast and the Persian Gulf, such as the current Maritime Silk Road (Conti, Mozas 2020, 213).

The initiative, which began operating in 2015, aims to "[...] connect the vibrant Asian economic circle, on the one hand, to the European economic

circle, on the other, and align countries with great potential for economic development” (CBBC 2015). This strategy unfolds into several objectives, such as: promoting economic growth in the Chinese countryside; the integration of the infrastructure of countries that are part of the corridor, and intensifying their trade exchanges; political and diplomatic *rapprochement* between the countries of Eurasia, among some of the main ones. Such goals aim to expand Chinese influence, given its rising technological standard in production and its large material accumulation.

Furthermore, Conti and Mozias (op. cit., 213-215) highlight BRI as the result of a Chinese accumulated potential in economic terms of a quantitative scale; Chinese overproduction, manifested as early as 2014 by excessive production capacity in steel and cement sectors, in addition to the huge number of buildings without demand, requiring the export of idle capacity as a solution to this problem, when the investment package launched after the 2008 crisis exhausted its ability to contain the effects of the international crisis. However, it is important to note that China has emerged from the 2008 crisis strengthened, as since 2014 it is already the largest economy in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), in addition to becoming the largest trader in the world, in exports and imports, and having the largest international foreign exchange reserves, including the Renminbi in the IMF foreign exchange basket in 2015.

In order to finance BRI infrastructure projects, a network of financial sources was created, consisting of the Silk Road Fund (initial capital of US\$40 billion); the Asian Infrastructure Development Bank (AIIB, with Chinese capital of US\$100 billion); and the New Development Bank, also known as the BRICS Bank, with US\$50 billion. The consequences of this expansion of Chinese projection power are evident in the current China-US disputes.

[...] the competition between China and the US is also increasing in Africa, Latin America, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. Both powers are interested in raw materials and markets in these regions. This new emerging bipolarity in the world practically determines the context and content of BRI: by offering the so-called developing countries a co-development project, China pulls them to its side (Conti, Mozias, op. cit., 215, own translation).

This large volume of resources has given China a prominent role as a source of financing for development among developing countries, far surpassing loans from multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and its regional counterparts in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The beneficiaries of BRI projects will use Chinese technologies and innovations, especially high-

speed rail transport, long-distance transmissions and communications - with emphasis on 5G, renewable energy technologies - especially solar, wind power, and civil construction. Seen from developing countries, the BRI and the success of the Chinese economic reforms have become an important advantage for Chinese diplomacy.

Due to its dimensions, BRI has the potential to push China to the center of the world economy, reinforcing its importance in international trade and its relations with other countries (Conti, Mozas, *op. cit.*, 216-218). It also leverages Eurasia as the great expansion area of Chinese presence, mainly through an active and strategic partnership with Russia. Such political-economic relations are part of a paradigm of international order, often called “common destiny community” diplomacy in Chinese speeches, as has been happening since the meetings of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, in 2012, which emphatically mentioned the search for shared development with other developing countries and regions (Sang 2019, 14).

For the analysis of the BRI action plan, it is outlined the following prioritized corridors (Sang, *op. cit.*, 15-16):

1. New Eurasian Land Bridge: China's connecting route to the European Union, integrated to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU);
2. China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor: Route from northeast China to Mongolia and Russian Siberia, through railways, oil, and gas pipelines; there are parallel projects aimed at promoting tourism, agriculture, and science and technology;
3. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: BRI corridor capable of connecting the western province of Xinjiang to the Indian Ocean from the Pakistani port of Gwadar;
4. Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor: Route from the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean to southern China, through railways, highways, ports, pipelines, and canals;
5. China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor: Connecting the Southeast Asia peninsula to southern China, through high-speed trains and ports;
6. China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor: Runs through Central Asia, Iran, and Turkey, until reaching the European continent.

To conclude this section, the Greater Eurasia paradigm encompasses the Sino-Russian strategic partnership in international politics, which primarily combines Chinese economic perspectives and objectives, together with Russian security concerns and regional integration structure. Therefore, in order to shape future Eurasian interstate relations, both powers are contributing to build their joint capabilities in the region, merging their main geopolitical interests. Even though there are major challenges to the development of this strategy, notably the containment action of the United States and its NATO partners with a view to co-opting or destabilizing the most fragile countries, both powers can mutually benefit from the combination of objectives between the EAEU and BRI as pillars of Greater Eurasia.

The Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership in BRI and EAEU: Greater Eurasia and Asia-Pacific

As discussed in the previous section, driven by pragmatic foreign policy objectives, Russia and China started a process of *rapprochement* based on a new centrality of Eurasia (Freire 2013). From new guidelines based on the 2001 friendship treaty, Sino-Russian relations have rapidly intensified since then. Several positive results were obtained from a greater mutual understanding, highlighting the following: resolution of remaining border issues; strong intensification of trade relations; important political-economic integration and infrastructure programs. Such factors are preponderant to analyze the Sino-Russian approach as a constituent element of new dynamics in the growing Eurasian integration (Mikhailova 2013).

The convergence between these two powers is demonstrated in the agreements signed for the launch of the BRI infrastructure integration platform. From the Sino-Russian cooperation platform, both the BRI program and the EAEU are in deep cooperation, which encompasses a political-economic alignment corridor capable of integrating Asia-Pacific with Western Europe (Escobar 2017). Such trade corridors, mentioned above, together with financing platforms launched by China, such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB), this one within the BRICS, have the potential to lead the expansion of its technological standard, in alliance with other emerging powers in cooperation platforms. The concept of strategic partnership, which permeates the Chinese relations with crucial allies for the BRI success – especially Russia, due to its key geographic centrality in Eurasia – is expressed by Kowarski (2013, 108) as a partnership which

[...] operates at a deeper level: in the exchange of ideas and views on the contours of the international order. This exchange of perspectives, on global issues, in which the Russian and Chinese voices have different intonations from the United States and other Western countries, finds its basis in official documents and the analysis of the comparative performance of both at the UN, as well as influencing the creation of a forum of states like the BRIC and in the trilateral level understandings between China, Russia, and India (own translation).

Therefore, it is from the vision of strategic partnership that it is possible to understand the recent intensification of Sino-Russian relations, and how they are fundamental to BRI's success in a first Eurasian expansion plan. In search of changes in the international order which favor them as emerging countries, China and Russia seek to benefit each other in coordinated actions; which becomes more evident with the analysis of new Chinese trends for the world economy, with a focus on infrastructure and trade, coordinated in joint actions. Serbin (2019, 63-65) highlights how Russia is gradually becoming China's main energy partner, as well as one of the main weapons suppliers.

The complementarities between these two powers result in joint positions which go beyond gas and oil trade, such as economic and security cooperation, as the aforementioned SCO; and cooperation in Central Asia, where both countries understand the strategic interests of the other - such as the Russian interest in keeping the former Soviet republics under its sphere of influence; and the Chinese interest in maintaining the expansion of their trade routes in an area of less competition than Asia-Pacific. This situation results in the current Chinese cooperation agreements with the EAEU.

In this sense, it is necessary to look into the characteristics of two important projects involving China and Russia within the scope of BRI - the New Eurasian Land Bridge and the China-Mongolia-Russia Corridor routes. The first is intended to become the main logistical gateway between Europe and Asia in the coming decades. The route is faster than the currently existing maritime route, with the potential to reduce the logistical cost with intensive use in scale, and cheaper than air transport (Bradsher 2013). By crossing seven Chinese provinces, all of Kazakhstan, Western Russia, and all of Belarus, until finally reaching the European Union, the route demonstrates the cohesion for the cooperation currently existing between the Chinese government and the Eurasian Economic Union, represented by the last three countries aforementioned. In addition to the integration between the existing railway systems in these countries, another strategy adopted for the due success of the economic corridor is the facilitation of customs clearance along the way, with the adoption of trade agreements with Poland, Russia, and Kazakhstan.

The second route, called China-Mongolia-Russia Corridor, involves two high-speed lines: Beijing/Tianjin/Hebei-Russia, via Inner Mongolia, and from Dalian. Based on pre-existing routes, there are joint projects to expand their use between these countries. The northern passage was built to connect the Bohai Bay Economic Circle (Beijing, Dalian, and Tianjin) to Western Europe, integrating BRI with Russian and Mongolian infrastructure initiatives: the Transcontinental Rail Plan and the Steppe Route, respectively. In this context, it is important to add the strategy of using the Renminbi as an international currency, since such financing was made in Chinese currency, in May 2015, valued at US\$25 billion.

The strategy of mutual accommodation of interests has proven to be positive, in which the Chinese government adopts the position of establishing agreements with EAEU member countries as a block, and not separately, which maintains the structure of regional integration led by Russia (Gabuev 2015). Thus, both countries accommodate their main interests in the region; the Chinese economic and commercial expansion, which needs new markets for its products, and the maintenance of the post-Soviet Russian influence zone, focused mainly in terms of security and energy. The Sino-Russian partnership, together with the integration of their respective economic projects, represents a geostrategic competition against the positions defended by the United States in Eurasia.

The China-US Disputes in Eurasia: Asia-Pacific vs Indo-Pacific

The intensification of trade and technological disputes between the United States and China impacted political-economic relations in Eurasia. Chinese advancements in production, finance, and technology have changed the scenario of the dispute. The Asian country has a great capacity for action, given its huge foreign exchange reserves, which reach around US\$3 trillion; a large import capacity that rivals the US volume; a strategy to support productive and infrastructure investments around the world through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); and, recently, technological advances in the information technology sector, such as creating a competitive base for 5G Internet and artificial intelligence systems which also rival the US. All these factors make the PRC a strong competitor to Washington, whose policy of containing China intensified since 2011, when the strategy of a “pivot to Asia” was launched, also known as the strategy of “An American century in the Asia-Pacific”.

This strategy was announced by then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in October 2011, in Hawaii, on the eve of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit. It is an initiative to gather support among its allies, guarantee

the US hegemony in the region, and also create embarrassments for the Chinese rise, which at the time postulated its strategy of “peaceful development” (Pires; Lacerda Mattos 2016). In the words of Clinton:

But today, there is a need for a more dynamic and durable transpacific system, a more mature security and economic architecture that will promote security, prosperity, and universal values, resolve differences among nations, foster trust and accountability, and encourage effective cooperation on the scale that today’s challenges demand. And just as the United States played a central role in shaping that architecture across the Atlantic – to ensure that it worked, for us and for everyone else – we are now doing the same across the Pacific. The 21st century will be America’s Pacific century, a period of unprecedented outreach and partnership in this dynamic, complex, and consequential region (Clinton 2011).

As part of this strategy, there are, since 2010, greater efforts by the United States in this region, not only to increase its military presence, but also to strengthen ties with allies to curb the Chinese rise. In this regard, it is important to mention initiatives in trade to isolate China, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TTP) and the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The rise of Donald Trump, despite the United States withdrawing from both agreements, in the first days of his term in office, has not altered the course of containment on China. The approach became more direct, with the imposition of heavy taxes on the import of Chinese products (trade war), as well as starting a series of sanctions against technology companies, such as the case of Huawei and ZTE, the technological war (Paulino, Pires 2021).

The so-called trade war, still in progress, and the mutual imposition of tariffs, which started in 2018, are imbricated in the fierce technological dispute for the vanguard in the so-called Industry 4.0, especially the worldwide establishment of 5G as a new telecommunications standard. An attempt is underway by the US to isolate the Chinese 5G as a standard, suggesting its banishment to its closest allies in the European Union, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (Pires, Nascimento, *op. cit.*, 11). As established by the National Defense Strategy of 2018,

The central challenge to U.S. prosperity and security is the reemergence of long-term, strategic competition by what the National Security Strategy classifies as revisionist powers. It is increasingly clear that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model—gaining veto authority over other nations’ economic, diplomatic, and security decisions (Department of Defense 2018, 2).

Currently, there has been a very significant change in the US strategy to contain China. What used to include only “Asia-Pacific” has been extended to the Indian Ocean basin, in a clear attempt to involve India, a neighbor with whom China has controversies over the delimitation of their borders. This new position is represented by the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) – USA, Japan, Australia, and India – and by the geostrategic vision of containment, the Indo-Pacific. This geopolitical narrative of Eurasia seeks to counterbalance the gradual Chinese preponderance in the Asia-Pacific region. The US Pacific Command – renamed on May 30 2018, as Indo-Pacific Command (Usindopacom) – (Uspacom 2018) has promoted this vision for Eurasia since the Cold War, when Soviet influence became more present towards the Indian shores. The update of this regional narrative follows the security concerns, above all, of Australia, India, and Japan, who fear the establishment of a sinocentric alignment in the so-called Asia-Pacific, putting the Indo-Pacific as a competing vision of containment (Serbin, op. cit., 30).

The Indo-Pacific strategy seeks alternatives to counterbalance the strong presence of China in the trade of the main allies of the United States in the region, such as Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan. In this sense, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), signed in November 2020, is worth mentioning, which appears as a trade agreement to replace the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), an initiative led by the United States and frustrated by the isolationist views of the Trump government (Pires and Nascimento 2020, 9-10).

The RCEP was consolidated in 2020 as a trade agreement between 15 Asia-Pacific countries - 10 ASEAN members and 5 of its largest trading partners - being: Australia; Brunei; Cambodia; China; South Korea; Philippines; Indonesia; Japan; Laos; Malaysia; Myanmar; New Zealand; Singapore; Thailand, and Vietnam; 9 of these, members of the frustrated TPP, which did not obtain sufficient ratifications to enter into office, and had to be reshaped without the United States – thus losing most of its economic relevance. This brings together in a single trade agreement - the largest in history – one-third of the world population and economy without the presence of the US (Wong; Zhou 2020), which leaves the PRC at an advantage for a global economic recovery in a post-pandemic Covid-19 scenario. The absence of India, which participated in the negotiations and abandoned the agreement when it was signed, is noteworthy.

Due to the overlapping agreements, and the potential success of the RCEP, a Chinese preponderance amid economic and geopolitical disputes with the US in Eurasia must be considered – as well as the growing interest of more members in the supercontinent to join the BRI. Currently, the Chinese initiative has 138 members, 65 of these in the supercontinent and in Asia-Pacific

(Green BRI 2020). In this way, a fierce dispute for spaces of influence and economic integration is configured, with a recent Chinese relative advantage in the success of its geostrategic projects.

China is in a privileged position in trade agreements for access to Asia-Pacific markets, especially Southeast Asia, through ASEAN. The Indian absence from concluding the RCEP agreements is a reflection of mutual mistrust in Sino-Indian relations and also Washington's pressure on the right-wing government of Narendra Modi. The "Holy Geoeconomic and Geopolitical Alliance of the USA, India, Japan, and Australia" (El Horizonte 2017 *apud* Serbin, op. cit., 31) is an ongoing opposition to the RCEP - despite the absence of an established trade agreement in this view of the Indo-Pacific. In this context, concerns for India's regional security are mainly expressed by the construction of the Maritime Silk Road, in which the Indian Ocean is crucial for its development, but also by what India sees as a threat to its security in the face of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

In this sense, from the perspective of the United States and its allies, in addition to BRI as a Chinese proposal for Eurasia – mainly from the exposed Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road – the RCEP is perceived as a threat and as it is able to bring the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) even closer to China as the new center of gravity of the world economy.

In contrast, the Quad claims to seek a "free and open Indo-Pacific, [...] inclusive, healthy, anchored in democratic values, and free from coercion" (White House 2021). The US State Department, in 2019, in a document called "A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision", openly cites the People's Republic of China (PRC) as an adversary and contrary to the values advocated by the Quad partnership. In the mentions made to Beijing, the PRC is accused of brutally repressing ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, interfering in Tibet province, and preventing Hong Kong's autonomy; moreover, in defining criteria for maritime security, Washington urges Beijing to resolve disputes in the South China Sea "without coercion", defining Chinese claims as "provocations" that would be preventing ASEAN members from accessing US\$2.5 trillion in revenues from energy resources; finally, the Quad would be responding to such aggressions through joint military exercises (Department of State 2019, 21-23). Therefore, the rhetoric aimed at the PRC focuses on military strategy and is antagonistic, establishing Chinese initiatives and interests as a threat to the quadrilateral and ASEAN countries.

In China-US strategic competition, the US containment in the face of Chinese advance is the keynote of the dispute for geostrategic partnerships in Eurasia; China from its economic preponderance in the region, and the US

using its greater military power, despite losses of leadership in economic power. In these competing strategies, the bargaining power of countries like India, Indonesia, and Australia increases, as they are included in the agreements established by Beijing and Washington. India's marginal position in the Asia-Pacific plan may reinforce its predilection for the US plan, despite the lack of a better structured economic plan compared to the Chinese one. Its geographic position becomes strategic and better privileged in the Indo-Pacific configuration. Serbin highlights that

The most obvious winner is India, a regional power that has a growing global impact and a greater role in the globalization process, both because of its rapid economic growth and its demographic weight. On the other hand, its privileged geographic location between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific – where 90 percent of global trade flows – ‘places India at the forefront of world geopolitics’. The concept of Indo-Pacific gives it a central position in the face of the geographical marginalization which it is left in the usual conception of Asia-Pacific, and, in turn, constituted a stimulus to develop its Navy and become a naval power. Precisely, the Maritime Security Strategy that the Indian Navy elaborated in 2015 already mentions the Indo-Pacific [...] among the areas of primary maritime interest, it includes the bottlenecks between the two oceans: the Straits of Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok (Serbin, op. cit., 33, own translation).

The European Union, given the Eurasian character of the Indo-Pacific geostrategy defended by the USA, is also included by the latter in a plan to contain Chinese influence in the supercontinent. Based on regional security partnerships established mainly within the scope of NATO, the great powers of Europe - such as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom - are included in the US security interests and containment in Eurasia from the west, against Russia and the EAEU.

Nevertheless, when considering the perspective of the European Union, the competing character of the Indo-Pacific and the Quad in regard to the BRI, especially in terms of regional security, may face internal resistance in their institutions, especially from countries that are members of the BRI and seek Chinese investments in infrastructure and trade, such as Portugal, Italy, and the countries of the Visegrad Group – Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary. This situation is even more complex when it is observed that the United States has adopted extremely tough strategies to avoid the completion of the Russian-German gas pipeline Nord Stream II, strongly contradicting Berlin's interests.

The European market, with approximately 450 million inhabitants (the

EU-27 group), and a GDP per capita above 30 thousand euros, is extremely important due to its demand capacity - which, as well as the Chinese market, encourages Sino-European economic cooperation. European investments in China, as well as the European common market, are advantageous under the Chinese economic and commercial paradigm, as the European Union is a frequent consumer of Chinese products, in addition to providing sources of foreign direct investment. Likewise, Chinese investment in infrastructure, technology, and acquisitions in Europe, as well as the negotiation since 2014 of a trade treaty, demonstrates the indispensable character of the Union as a Chinese partner (Szczudlik; Kulesa 2020, 12-13) – being an important hub of BRI and of essential geostrategic relevance in Eurasia.

However, the opportunity for economic cooperation is counterbalanced by geopolitical and security concerns, given the similarity of EU and NATO members – and therefore of the forerunners of the Indo-Pacific contention geostrategy. Overall, the European Union's great challenge is to accommodate competing and diverging interests of different partners and their conflicting geostrategic plans (Kuo 2018); in this case, the competition between the Asia-Pacific and the Indo-Pacific configurations, and the different plans for the inclusion of the European Union in both strategies: the first plan points to a deepening cooperation in economic and infrastructure plans, while the second emphasizes a security structure and containment of a growing Chinese influence.

Final Remarks

As discussed throughout this research, the political movements carried out by the United States, Russia, and China are a key variable for understanding the direction of international politics in the coming decades. There are three positions that stand out in this process: the United States, when it seeks to create the means to curb the advance of its competitors with a view to extending its hegemonic position; Russia, which seeks to re-establish its status as a great power by rebuilding its influence in Eurasia, as it had been in the period of the USSR; and China, which seeks to guarantee the means to achieve its internal strengthening, the modernization of its economy, and reach the condition of a fully developed country in 2049.

Specifically regarding disputes between China and the United States, it is important to consider China's increased influence in Asia-Pacific, and the US containment strategies on the European front, against Russia, and on the newly named Indo-Pacific, against China. Different perceptions are observed in the performance of these actors: on the one hand, a Chinese cooperative position;

on the other, the US position is defensive and aggressive, based on a logic of security and containment. Instead of offering economic cooperation plans parallel to the Chinese in Eurasia, of the same magnitude, the United States does not offer economic alternatives, on the contrary: since the beginning of the Trump government, and now in the Biden government, there is increasing protectionism, and initiatives to rebuild, in the US, nowadays Asia-based production chains, especially after the episodes of shortages seen after the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic.

In contrast, there are incentives for Sino-Russian cooperation in Central Asia and closer ties with ASEAN and other countries in the Pacific Ocean basin. Therefore, from the Sino-Russian convergence of economic integration initiatives in Eurasia, the EAEU, BRI, and RCEP together form the Sino-Russian scheme for cooperation in Asia-Pacific; while the US organizes a strategy to contain this coordinated advance, based on the Indo-Pacific geostrategy, centered on the Quad, in order to dispute preponderance mainly in ASEAN.

Despite the strong pressure exerted by the United States and its allies, seeking to contain the rise of China and a new status for the Russian Federation, reality has shown that the advances made so far by the two Eurasian powers will be difficult to reverse. The United States' strategy of rivaling both powers creates a scenario that the country's foreign policymakers do not want, namely, to avoid cooperation between two giants, such as China and Russia. This puts the US in a defensive position, as both countries are members of the UN Security Council, have strategic weapons, and, more specifically in relation to China, possess an economic weight that the extinct USSR never projected. The path of History is always open, but simultaneously constraining two great powers seems to be a strategic error of the hegemonic power.

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the main elements and processes underway in Eurasia, involving three essential actors: the United States, Russia, and China. At first, it is emphasized the importance of Eurasia as a space that has historically influenced the hegemonic disputes between Great Powers. Then, Eurasia is analyzed as a space for development cooperation, presenting the intersections of the Chinese BRI and the Russian EAEU. Last, the US approach to China is addressed, specifically the Indo-Pacific strategy. We conclude that, despite the intense pressure to contain the rise of China and Russia in Eurasia, rivaling both powers is not feasible. In the current path, it will boost the cooperation between two giants, China and Russia.

KEYWORDS

China; Russia; United States.

Received on August 08, 2021

Accepted on December 09, 2021

CHINA AND RUSSIA: THE NAVAL PROJECTION OF LAND POWERS

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Introduction

China and Russia, from a geopolitical perspective, are large continental states (the first and the fourth, respectively), characterized by their configuration as land powers. However, recently, through its development and extroversion of its economy, China has built a naval power with a world presence. The Russian Federation, on the other hand, which lost much of the naval and coastal power that the USSR had, is trying to rebuild its capacity for maritime defense and exploration of the new Arctic Route, but still with limited global projection. By analyzing the recent naval projection of these traditional land powers, the article seeks to discuss the extent to which traditional geopolitics is reaching its zenith and initiating its own overcoming. This is part of a survey carried out within the framework of the Edital Álvaro Alberto (Instituto Pandiá Calógeras of the Ministry of Defense and CNPq) on the presence of China and Russia in the South Atlantic and on the west coast of Africa.

China: Geopolitical Position and Naval Projection

The main objective is to present and analyze the naval policy of the People's Republic of China for the 21st century from a structural strategic perspective. Like Brazil, China is a country with continental dimensions and an extensive coastal region, in which an important part of its economy is concentrated, as well as the largest portion of its immense population. The combination of these two aspects reveals the importance that the recent naval modernization process played in the country's economic development. The economic opening process promoted by Deng Xiaoping since 1979, the strong presence of the United States in the vicinity of Taiwan and the developments of the Gulf War on the profile of war in the 21st century can be considered the

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main drivers of a more active maritime strategy.

It is necessary to consider that, despite the continental territorial dimensions and the coastal extension, the situation of Brazil and China are very different in geopolitical terms. Brazil has an “open” (unhindered) coast to the Atlantic Ocean, although less extensive than the Chinese. China is more “wetted” in Asia and its access to the World Ocean (via the Pacific and the Indian Ocean) is limited by island rings controlled by other nations (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, United States, Philippines and others from the South China Sea).

Thus, Popular China suffers from a certain “siege complex”, as the extroversion of its economy demands wide maritime access to export its goods and import raw materials and energy (especially oil). The more its economy globalizes, the more China seeks to strengthen its Navy, in parallel with the expansion of its Merchant Navy, and gain footholds in all Oceans. It is very important for the analyst *to understand the Chinese perception of the problem*. It is from this that the strategies of the “Empire of the Center” are formulated.

Since the end of the 20th century, there has been debate about the role (and consequent responsibilities) that China could assume in the International System in a context of disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the instability of American unipolarity. After a few decades, multipolarity emerges as a new reality – since 2016, according to Mearsheimer (2019) – and China is certainly one of its poles of greatest economic, political and military strength (Dufourcq 2017). To reach this position, however, it was necessary to combine economic reforms with a reform in the dominant thought (essentially terrestrial) regarding the formulation of naval policies and strategies in the country. Thus, it is of interest to both academics and military personnel, diplomats, analysts and decision makers to analyze the path taken by the People’s Republic of China to the status of maritime power in the 21st century.

Geopolitical Position of the People’s Republic of China

China is the largest country in East Asia and the third largest country by land area in the world – 9.6 million square kilometers. It is also the most populous country in the world with 1.4 billion inhabitants, 20% of the world’s population. It has borders with 14 countries and a coastline of 14,500 kilometers, being delimited by its South and East seas, in addition to Taiwan, the Korean Peninsula and Japan. The country has more than four millennia of historical state continuity and, since 1949, it has been a Socialist People’s

Republic under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CCP). It is important to emphasize that the regime's legitimacy is based on two elements of collective perception: the recovery of *national sovereignty* (after 150 years of external interference) and the increase in popular consumption with the reforms and recent development. The regime's authoritarianism is similar to that of the imperial phase and there is little receptivity to liberal democracy, except in Hong Kong, which has a distinguished history and constitution.

Unlike most countries on the periphery and semiperiphery of the International System, China was never colonized by foreign powers. However, this did not mean the absence of attempts to subjugate her. The largest and most significant of these occurred in the 19th century, when the British Empire began to promote its economic interests by military means. The Opium Wars (1839 and 1856) deeply marked China's relationship with the West and also with the seas and oceans – since the enemy was the greatest naval power at the time. Despite the humiliation and social and economic wear and tear caused by the Unequal Treaties, the British advances also meant a break with the old Chinese domestic structures and awareness by the ruling elite (Epstein 1980). Later, the Japanese threat also came from the sea.

For a long period, the Chinese dragon remained with its forces focused on its internal affairs (the *Chinese Civil War*, the proclamation of the *Republic of China*, the resistance to the Japanese occupation of 1931-45 and, later, to the *People's Republic of China*), resulting in the adoption of an isolated position in the International System.

During the second half of the 20th century, this posture of Socialist China gradually gave way to a limited role in international relations: the PRC began to seek alliances with the periphery – Asian, African and Latin American countries (Spence 1995). They would be of paramount importance for the country during the years of the Cold War (Non-Aligned Movement), which would still go through two important events before replacing Nationalist China (Taiwan) in the UN Security Council in 1971, being, then, accepted by the International Community: the *Great Leap Forward* and the *Cultural Revolution*.

Deng Xiaoping's rise to power in 1976 after Mao Zedong's death represented a new phase for the PRC. Among the main strategies during the period in which Deng was in power, the following stand out: the *Four Modernizations* (economic, technological-scientific, agricultural and *military*) and the *Economic Opening* – political-economic efforts seeking to retake China's place of greatness in the world – and which consequently impact contemporary international relations.

All the events mentioned above were essential for the process of

transforming the “Middle Empire” into a Great Power, the country developed both raw power (*hard power*) and *soft power*. The efforts of Chinese leaders and diplomats in the constant (re)affirmation of the peaceful character of the Chinese development process – including in the field of military modernization – deserve to be highlighted. In recent years, however, Chinese *hard power* has raised concerns for its neighbors (Japan and India, for example) and for traditional Western powers (US and France, for example). The growing dependence of the global economy on the Chinese economy and the development of military capabilities (including nuclear) with a much more offensive character have raised doubts about Chinese *soft power*.

It is undeniable that China today plays a leading role in the Great Powers game and, so far, does not seem to want to change the rules of this game. Parallel to the moment of crisis of the *Liberal International Order* and of questions about the viability of maintaining the structures, institutions, values, and of the US hegemony itself, opportunities arise for China (and other powers) to renew the current order or establish a new international order.

Chinese Naval Strategy

To analyze the current Chinese Naval Strategy it is necessary to understand the military modernization movement as a whole. This process is, above all, the result of internal historical processes and China’s interaction with the international environment. According to Kondapalli (2000), the history of Chinese maritime activity goes back more than twenty centuries. However, the Industrial Revolution that took place in Western countries ended up making the Chinese navy obsolete and, consequently, contributing to the vulnerability of its territory. This asymmetry of maritime power is evident in the course of the Opium Wars². Western and Japanese imperial forays into China’s coastal region and the flight of nationalists to Taiwan shaped the elaboration of the PRC’s maritime strategy throughout the 20th century. Taiwan survived in 1949-50 because China did not have an armada.

The People’s Liberation Army (PLAN) Navy has adopted a *Coastal Defense Strategy* for more than three decades. The emphasis on safeguarding the coast and its nearby seas and defending the interior from external threats makes China’s defensive posture evident. To accomplish these objectives, PLAN had a surface fleet without great defense or attack capabilities. Three-

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quarters of the submarines used until the late 1990s dated back to the 1950s (CSIS 2019). The Coastal Defense Strategy reflected the strategic thinking of the time in China: prioritizing land power over naval or air power – also in line with the National Defense Strategy (People's War). The Sino-Soviet rupture and the Chinese economic opening had a great impact on the elaboration of a new naval strategy for the PRC. Thus, between the 1970s and 1980s, fears of Soviet expansionism sparked growing debates about the importance of a naval doctrine consistent with Chinese interests.

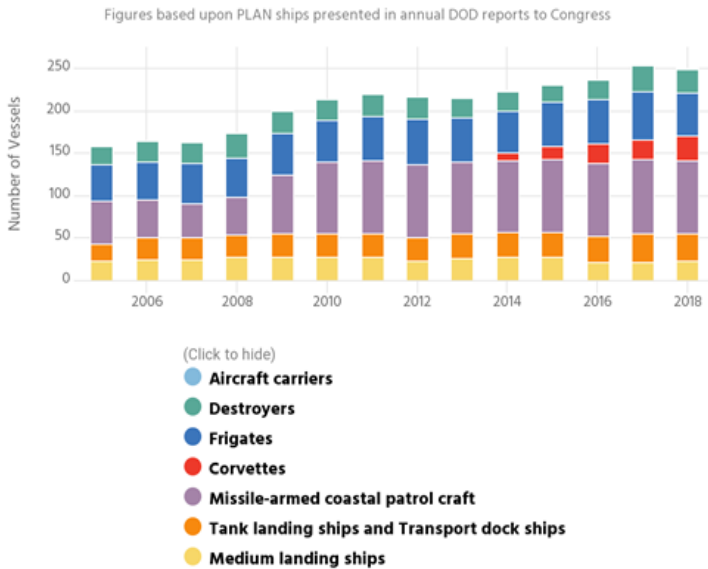
According to Kondapalli (2000) and Brisset (2018), in 1986 the PLAN abandoned the Coastal Defense Strategy and started to adopt an *Advanced/Active Defense Strategy (Offshore)*, seeking a naval projection beyond its coastline. More than ever it was necessary to modernize the obsolete Chinese navy. One of the big names within the Chinese summit responsible for this new phase of China at sea was Liu Huaqing, who crafted a three-phase modernization strategy that would transform PLAN into a navy with global projection capabilities by 2040. The first phase (until the 2000s) would aim to strengthen existing forces to control inland waters and deter regional threats (Japan and the South China Sea). The second phase (until 2020) would aim to build and purchase new vessels (including aircraft carriers and new technologies) in order to increase offshore combat capability, expand maritime control to Guam and Indonesia, and project beyond the Western Pacific – exploring other oceans. The third phase (until 2040) would have as its main objective to transform the PLAN into a blue water navy, with combat capability and global surveillance (Kondapalli 2000; Brisset 2018).

The strategic thinking that shapes the role of the PRC today is also a result of the contributions of Zhang Loanzhong. In 1988, he defined three possible perimeters for the allocation of defense forces both for modernization and for further action: (i) inland; (ii) medium; and (iii) abroad. Brisset (2018) delimited Beijing's efforts for naval modernization (and subsequent projection) into two axes. The *first axis* is marked mainly by the control of the interior seas – Chinese natural projection area, and, therefore, referring to the country's sovereignty. The *second axis*, in turn, would be its “pearl necklace” or “Maritime Silk Route” (to Africa, the Middle East and Europe) – important areas in economic, strategic and diplomatic terms. The first axis would incorporate the inner and middle perimeters and the second would be basically the outer perimeter.

As far as the South China Sea is concerned, the Chinese interest is not just territorial domination for economic purposes. More important is the geopolitical dimension, in an attempt to have a presence in the connection with the Indian Ocean (through the strategic Malacca and Sunda Straits) and

the Pacific Ocean, south of Taiwan, skirting the ring of islands limiting the Chinese naval projection. The speed and efficiency with which China expands or builds islands in the region, with naval and air bases, is noteworthy. Even the fishing activity is carried out by members of the popular militia in plain clothes, and it is not just an economic activity (Tertrais 2018). But in the region there are several diplomatic tensions with Southeast Asian nations such as the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Vietnam, now close to the United States. The greatest tension is on the Spratleys and Scarborough Reefs, in addition to the Paracels Islands. Chinese naval projection will be further developed in the next section.

Figure 1 – PLAN Surface Fleet Discrimination



The change in naval strategy can also be understood as a response to the “power vacuum” left by the Soviet withdrawal from the region (Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam) and the partial withdrawal of the US from the Philippines. Thus, two new potential threats were posed to China: the expansionism of Western countries and their attempts to increase influence in the Asia-Pacific region; and attempts to supplant regional leadership in Japan and Vietnam as well as nationalists in Taiwan. In this sense, having the ability to control (and win an eventual war) on its coast (MSC and MLC) involved modernizing its

navy³ and its strategic thinking. In addition, the perception of many Chinese officials that wars in the 21st century would be local and of high technological intensity corroborated the lobby of those who prioritized the development and acquisition of light vessels, but capable of attacking, ensuring an efficient mobile defense (Kondapalli 2000).

Finally, it can be said that the main guidelines of strategic thinking developed in the late 1980s are being implemented by PLAN. Since 2012, the idea of the People's Republic of China as a Maritime Power has been repeatedly strengthened. In the recent *China's 2019 Defense White Paper*, the CCP again draws attention to the need to develop an increasingly strong and modern Navy capable of operating in deep/blue waters. And, unlike Russia, such initiatives are supported by a growing economy.

Chinese Naval Projection: Challenges and Limitations

The seas and oceans are essential for human activity in the 21st century. According to Admiral Dufourcq (2011), two aspects must be considered to analyze the movements of naval power projection in recent decades: (i) the discovery of new strategic resources in the oceans (notably on the South American and African coasts); and (ii) the emergence of new actors (multipolarity). Furthermore, it mentions three challenges to be faced by countries when formulating their naval strategies: the demographic challenge, the ecological challenge and the economic challenge. Once again, this opens up the possibility of establishing a new form of global governance in the oceans, which incorporates the demands for "territorialization"⁴ and sovereignty of the seas and the rules established in the 1990s. Regarding the constraints and limitations to Chinese naval projection, we highlight the US presence close to the territorial seas of China (either by the Korean Peninsula or by Japan) and the possibility of balancing and containing Russia and India

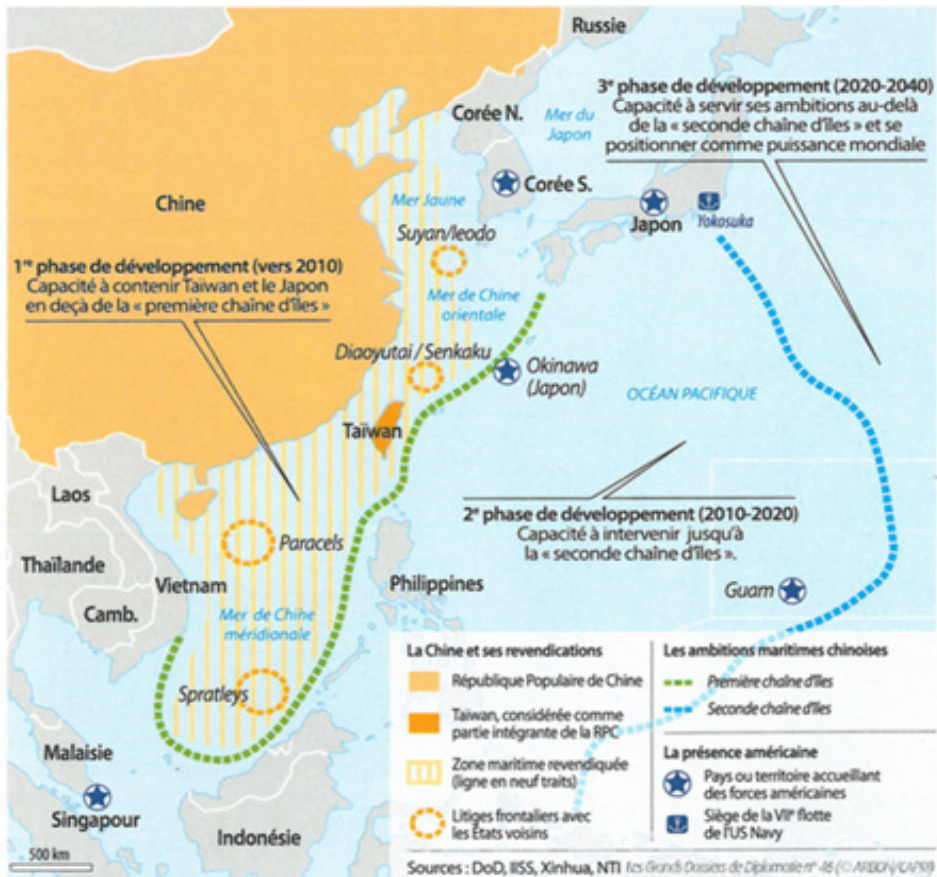
3 Regarding the modernization of the Chinese Navy, it is interesting to note that the process was initially marked by the purchase and exchange of technology (and of the vessels themselves) via agreements with countries in the region (USSR, followed by Japan and South Korea). However, the Chinese government has always been aware of the importance of developing such a strategic sector locally and has spared no effort to do so. Thus, with a lot of reverse engineering, the RPC has managed to maintain a fast pace of shipbuilding – with an emphasis on the construction of its third aircraft carrier (the first not based on Soviet models). An interesting fact to be highlighted is the exchange between the shipbuilding sectors for commercial and military purposes, which is not very common, but which for the CCP represents an incentive in the transfer of technology. Three-quarters of shipbuilding (commercial and military) is dominated by the state-owned China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation and the China State Shipbuilding Corporation – which have a total of six shipyards across the country (CSIS 2019).

4 Defined by Dufourcq (2011) as "new sea sovereignty", the process of "territorialization" is related to the discovery and search for appropriation of new wealth.

- on the external plane - and the limitations in in terms of personnel (training and qualification) and energy – internally (Brisset 2018).

At the end of the 20th century, China showed concern regarding the scarcity of natural resources, and this fear was one of the motivators for its military modernization. It would be part of the Chinese Naval Strategy not only the defense of its strategic resources, but also the search for new ones – as well as the other Great Powers of the International System. While much of its efforts are focused on protecting its coast, as has already been demonstrated, Beijing has also sought tools and capabilities to reach beyond its shores. Loanzhong's outer perimeter, or Brisset's second axis of action (2018), would be the main guidelines for PLAN's projection towards the first chain of islands – or what Beijing called the *Blue Territories of China*. Both reflect China's aspirations to possess maritime power with global operational capability. Although strong maritime power is considered a prerequisite for a Great Power, Chinese decision makers are well aware that the promotion of their interests must be accompanied by international responsibilities. It is by condensing these Chinese aspirations and fears that in 2013 the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was launched, a project on a transcontinental scale with the central objective of improving connectivity and cooperation and, thus, promoting economic development.

Figure 2 – Chinese Maritime Claims



BRI projects China's economic (financing of large infrastructure works and opening markets for Chinese products) and military power (demonstrating that the country has the means to defend its interests beyond its coasts). It is important to highlight that this initiative is not just a set of infrastructure projects, but one of the main vectors of Chinese foreign policy and its Grand Strategy. The ultimate goal of this ambitious project is to build a new and alternative political, economic and security system, called *Community of Common Destiny for Humanity*. In this system, China would be positioned at the center (Nantulya 2019).

The Chinese projection towards the African continent is mainly through BRI: China seeks to help African countries overcome the infrastructure bottleneck (railways, highways, ports and airports) and accelerate their

economic development process. On the other hand, geostrategic returns are expected for both Africa and the PRC, such as the case of *Walvis Bay* in Namibia, in which financial investments in ports were followed by military agreements with the ELP Navy. Despite its important presence in the countries of the West African coast, the priority for the projection of its forces, so far, is in the Pacific and Indian oceans.

It has been increasingly difficult for Chinese diplomacy to ensure the peaceful intentions of its modernization and actions, as is evident in recent publications by American think tanks regarding Chinese naval projection:

In addition to building a modern Blue Water Navy, the PRC has taken a wide range of destabilizing actions that pose a growing threat to global security. Among these actions are the construction of naval air stations in the South China Sea, including the Mischief Reef [Scarborough], located within the US-ally Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ); its declaration of an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea near Japan; its claims to sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands; and its total repudiation of the authority of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), the oldest arbitral body under international law in the world. Such threatening actions also include China's growing naval operations in the Western Pacific, South Pacific and Indian Ocean; the Mediterranean Sea and the Baltic Sea; the Arctic and the Antarctic; and finally the Atlantic Ocean. These actions are empirical indicators of China's future evil intentions and actions (Fanell 2019).

It is extremely important for the continuity of the Chinese Strategy for the construction of a Blue Water Navy that its soft power is strengthened in the same measure as its hard power. Even with a naval power still limited compared to the US power - there are 11 US aircraft carriers against only 1 Chinese commissioned aircraft carrier (CSIS 2019) -, to avoid tensions and clashes with the other Great Powers, as well as with their Asian neighbors, remains a priority for the Chinese government. Especially when the rapid quantitative and qualitative expansion of the Chinese Navy constitutes a picture that recalls the German naval expansion in the years before World War I, challenging the Royal Navy.

The training of qualified personnel still falls short of the capacity to build ships, but as China has demonstrated in all fields, it can quickly overcome this situation. The growing Chinese naval presence in all oceans stems from the internationalization of its economy, but it is accompanied by actions considered legitimate such as combating piracy, humanitarian aid (such as hospital ships) and rescuing thousands of Chinese workers, as occurred in Libya in 2011. Hence, the presence of a Chinese Navy is

relatively “camouflaged” amidst the various naval activities. Interesting is the establishment of a Chinese naval military base in Djibouti, together with several countries, having its diplomatic and strategic effect diluted in the face of “public opinion”.

Finally, the predatory extractive activity of international marine resources is another source of concern for the international community. In addition, large Chinese investments in poor countries are silently multiplying support points around the world, while competitors such as India see limited access to their strategic environment. Investment in port structures also takes place in Africa and even in Europe, such as Athens/Pireo, which has become a hub for *Made in China* products and services.

There is a Chinese Grand Strategy, and naval power is increasingly occupying a privileged position within it, which is considered the greatest threat in the near future (Interviews with Admirals Antonio Silva Ribeiro and Jean Dufourcq). It is also worth reflecting on the factions of the CCP that seek to shape such a strategy and whether Chinese naval power is tactical or strategic: the New Silk Road would be the basis for the construction of a Eurasian continental and terrestrial space challenging the Anglo-Saxon naval powers?

Russian Federation: Geopolitics and Naval Projection

The Russian State, despite having an immense coastline, has as its basic characteristic being a land power of continental dimensions. There are certain historical and geopolitical conditions that did not change during the three phases of the country’s evolution, the Russian Empire (until 1917), the Soviet Union (USSR, until 1991) and the Russian Federation (until now). The legacy of the Cold War, when the USSR constituted the “Second Superpower”, has contaminated some contemporary analyzes of the real power of Russia led by Vladimir Putin. Thus, it is of fundamental importance to separate the objective reality, vital for analysts and decision makers, from the media discourse, dictated by political, ideological and strategic needs, aimed at the lay public.

Russia has limited capacity to project power outside its “near abroad” (former Soviet Republics), even though it retains, residually, certain deterrent vectors inherited from the USSR, in addition to being a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council. This is particularly visible with regard to Naval Power, as will be seen later. In geopolitical terms, Russia has three determining peculiarities: 1) it is the state whose nerve center is located further north

(except for small Finland), with a large part of its territory within the Arctic Circle and a transition zone to the east; 2) it is the largest country, with continental characteristics, inserted in the Eurasian space, connecting the strategic regions of Europe and East-Central Asia; 3) despite the vastness of the territory and coastline, Russia has very limited access to the World Ocean, due to the maritime freeze and the configuration of the seas to which it has access, which generally have their exits controlled by adversaries. The partial melting of the polar ice cap does not qualitatively alter this last factor.

Russian Geopolitical Position

Russia is still the largest state in the world, with 17 million km² of land surface (the USSR had 22.8 million km²) and 7.5 million km² of maritime Exclusive Economic Zone and 40 thousand km of coastline (due to the cut profile and the existence of numerous islands) (Delanoë 2018). However, it is a terrestrial power, which has been incorporating almost uninhabited territories and decaying States. After centuries of Mongolian domination, the objective of the leaders, since Ivan the Terrible (16th century), was a kind of “defensive expansion” with the purpose of obtaining *strategic depth*, with the distance from borders. Russia does not have “natural borders” or geographic features that can demarcate them. The aim was not economic expansionism, but to protect Muscovy from the Teutonic Knights, Poles, Swedes, Turks and Mongols.

Thus, a country with very limited resources formed a Eurasian continental empire, which spans 11 time zones from the Baltic to the Pacific, constituting Mackinder’s geopolitical heartland, which connected Europe and Asia by land. This explains England’s strategic rivalry, which controlled maritime spaces.

The Russian giant, however, lacked access to the *warm and open seas*. Its coastline was frozen most of the year or was located in narrow seas whose access to the Oceans was controlled by opposing powers. This was the case with the Black Sea, as the Bosphorus Strait was dominated by the Turks (and the two exits from the Mediterranean by the British), and the Baltic Sea, controlled by Scandinavian powers and easily blocked by the British navy. The White Sea has only a narrow corridor between the ice shelf and the coast of Norway and the Japan Sea has its outlets controlled by the Japanese (Ewitts 2019). Hence the Russian insistence on maintaining control of the three small Kuril islands, claimed by Japan, and which give access to the Pacific Ocean through a corridor under Russian control. The Caspian is an inland

and closed sea.

This reality had profound consequences for Russia, which for centuries was on the sidelines of the great world trade circuits, which would also allow the entry of innovation. The result was isolation and delay. When Peter the Great defeated the Swedes and gained access to the Baltic, he immediately built the city of St. Petersburg, which became the capital and was “open to Europe” and progress, and created a fleet. Catherine the Great did the same for the Turks and the Black Sea. But the leaders who followed did not follow through on these initiatives. Subsequently, circumstances linked to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 led to the overwhelming defeat at the Naval Battle of Tsushima. The Baltic fleet, which had covered 14 thousand km, with immense difficulties in supplying coal (England supported Japan), was sunk in a quick fight.

It was the first time that a European state was defeated by an Asian. And the consequences for Russian strategic thinking were profound because, due to rivalry with England, the Baltic fleet had to bypass the British Isles and the African continent. Then came the First World War and the Russian fleet was stranded in its ports, and then the Soviet Revolution, starting a new cycle of isolation. Russia lost most of the Baltic coast and the capital was transferred back to Moscow for security reasons, with the navy being relegated to the role of coast guard. In World War II, history repeated itself and Stalin’s vision of the primacy of land defense was maintained. But two situations provoked an internal debate: the difficulty in guaranteeing the sending of aid to the Spanish Republic by sea during the Civil War (1936-1939) and the inability to contribute to the protection of Anglo-American convoys that transported aid to the USSR through the north during the German invasion, which angered Churchill (Fairhall 1971).

In the passage from the 1950s to the 1960s, the voluntarist Krushov developed a truly world-wide policy and commissioned Admiral Gorshkov to create a navy for the World Ocean. The Cuban crisis in 1961-62, with the fiasco of the Missile Gap (which led to the overthrow of Krushov in 1964) and the logistical-security difficulty of guaranteeing the transport of supplies to the island reinforced this concept. In addition to maintaining a limited fleet of surface ships equipped with missiles, a squadron of nuclear submarines also equipped with missiles was planned, capable of responding to a virtual US atomic attack. It was a response to the emergence of Polaris missiles in the USA in 1960, which could be launched by submarines without the need to surface (Lovett 2010). Part of Russian nuclear submarines circulated permanently in several oceans, including near the coast of the United States. This was only realized in the late 1960s by Brezhnev (Fairhall 1971; Gorshkov

1983).

It was a strategic, allegedly deterrent, resource that is still in place in the new post-Soviet Russia, albeit with a smaller fleet. Thus, there was a certain strategic balance in the contact zone between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, and Moscow's attention turned to other scenarios.

During the Brezhnev period (1964-82) the Soviet projection for the Third World (Asia, Middle East, Africa and Latin America) expanded a lot, both for diplomatic-strategic reasons and due to the emergence of several revolutionary regimes. In a framework of growing and intense competition with China, the USSR supported almost all of these regimes, which would have profound political, economic and military implications for Moscow. In naval terms, the Pacific Fleet gained priority, as it served as a containment for China and had access to the Indian Ocean, where the Soviet Union cooperated with India. From there, the connection with the Middle East and Africa was also possible. Although the Soviet Navy did not get involved in conflicts, there were gains such as strategic presence and the exploitation of the advantages offered by the establishment of port facilities in "sister or friendly countries". It was not just the traditional policy of "showing the flag" but getting support points (Eitss 2019).

However, this extended military presence and aid to pro-socialist regimes (involved in local wars), from Nicaragua to Vietnam, from Angola to Afghanistan, came at a cost that seriously affected the Soviet economy. The USSR's GDP was approximately 50% that of the US, and Moscow lacked such prosperous allies as Japan and Western Europe. Worse still, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had become an aging, stagnant and structurally corrupt elite (the *Nomenklatura*), with the population increasingly discontented. The strategic-military heyday of the USSR in the late 1970s, with its missiles, squadrons, satellites and immense ground forces in eastern Europe, concealed a giant with mud feet, which could not withstand the reaction of the United States and its allies in the 1980s (Westad 2007).

Russian Federation Naval Strategy

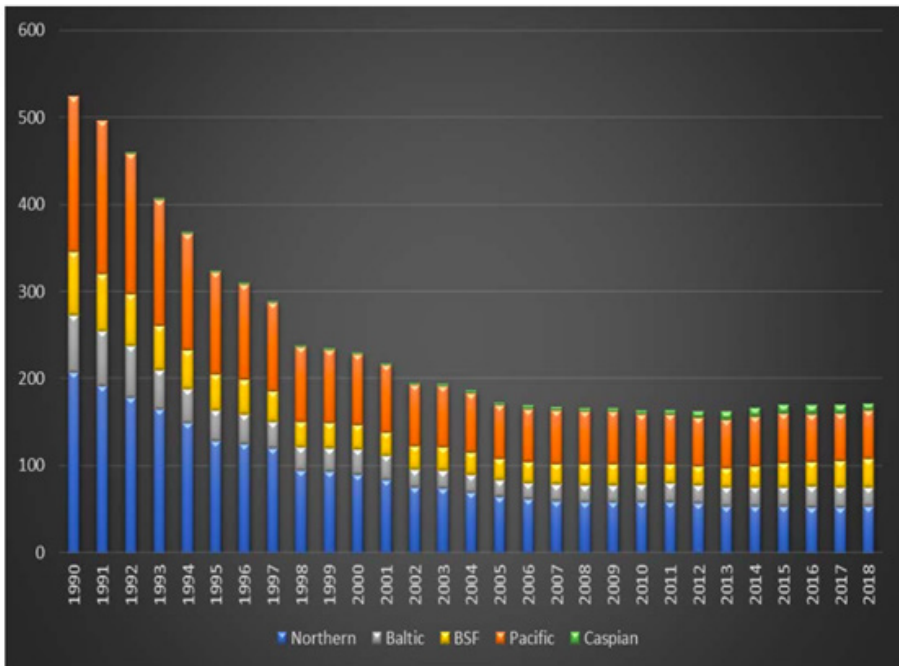
There was an ongoing debate within the Soviet Navy about the role of a surface fleet, whether or not to build aircraft carriers, and about the underwater weapon. The predominance of army lobbying and land defense doctrine, the role of ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) and strategic aviation, as well as budgetary constraints, meant that the Soviet navy remained secondary.

And Gorbachev's rise to the leadership of the USSR, seeking to relax relations with NATO, further aggravated the situation in the navy. Cutting military resources and seeking diplomatic accommodation with the West especially hit the fleet, which was costly. Basically, the navy had a role more aimed at giving visibility and prestige to the Soviet Armed Forces as an instrument of a global superpower, displaying it as a complete power (Lovett 2010).

The collapse of the Soviet Union, from 1989 to 1991, dismantled the Soviet geopolitical space, eliminated an instrument of national cohesion (the Communist Party), and generated the near collapse of the Armed Forces. While the navy rusted in ports (aircraft carriers sold before completion), major aeronautical projects were abandoned and the army had a humiliating performance in the Chechnya War. The fourteen years of Gorbachev and Yeltsin's government witnessed the quantitative and qualitative decline of the Russian navy, in a context of political disorganization and economic crisis. The excellent thesis of US Navy serviceman Jonathan Evitss (defended at the Naval Postgraduate School), as shown in the chart below, underscores the decay of the Russian navy. Even in the initial years of the Putin government, with the decommissioning of old ships, the Russian armada continued to decline until it stabilized in 2005.

The Russian Federation was the successor state to the USSR, occupying the Soviet seat on the UN Security Council and enjoying the status of recognized nuclear power. The country also inherited instruments of power such as an aerospace and defense industry with its own technology, in addition to immense energy resources (oil, gas and uranium) and minerals, including noble ores for cutting-edge technologies. However, the country is dependent on commodity exports, has no consumer goods industries, its population is aging and declining, and its borders are difficult to control. Worse still, unlike China, the new Russia does not have a *national identity* or elements that articulate power, as was the case with the Communist Party. Power is concentrated in the State, which has declined a lot in terms of cohesion in relation to the Soviet, and Putin has to bet a lot on personal power, controlling a caucus of deputies, which does not have the strength of a political party (Monaghan 2017). Likewise, he permanently seeks a synthesis of identity between the Russian Czarist Empire, the Soviet Union and the Orthodox Church. The mix of national symbols is impressive.

Figure 2 – Russian Naval Combatents by Fleet (1990-2018)



The first objective in terms of Defense is the so-called Near Abroad, the former Soviet internal space, except for the Baltic countries. The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the defense and security cooperation agreements and the Constitution of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO, with China, the ex-Soviet Central Asian States and, more recently, India and Pakistan), as well as the Eurasian Economic Union (Eurasian Union) demonstrate a Eurasian regional vocation, superior to the world projection. Next, NATO's eastward expansion represents a structural concern for Kremlin strategists, as the former Warsaw Pact countries and former Soviet Baltic republics have been integrated into the Western military bloc, bringing it closer to the nerve center of Russia. The almost obsessive preoccupation with a "siege", which already existed during the powerful Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, was aggravated by the limitations of the current Russian Federation.

According to Evitss, the Kremlin considered itself particularly threatened at three times: NATO military action against Yugoslavia/Serbia/Kosovo in 1999, US invasion of Iraq in 2003, and, especially, the Ukrainian crisis in 2004 and 2014, which he saw as "Western meddling". According to him, "Moscow routinely interprets NATO actions as provocative, but Russia unleashes actions that may be considered dangerous and even warrior-like,

creating a growing risk of miscalculations by the military forces” (Evitss 2019, 22). Thus, Russia’s biggest concern is with its strategic environment. However, the 2014 Ukrainian crisis brought about a change of perspective. While the West considers the annexation of the Crimean peninsula the biggest problem, Moscow felt even more threatened by the change that took place in Ukraine, fearing its accession to the European Union or, worse, to NATO. One of the consequences was to seek to project power outside the region, as a way to obtain a better bargaining position and strategic balance. This was felt through a greater naval presence in the North Atlantic and in the Syrian conflict.

In 2001, the document *The Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation* 2020 was prepared, updated in 2015 (Maritime, 2001). Originally it was a proposal that did not have the means to be fully materialized, but it reorganized the Russian navy, with the constitution of the North Fleet (Arctic and North Atlantic), the Baltic Fleet, the Black Sea Fleet, the Pacific Fleet and of the Caspian Sea Flotilla. Undoubtedly, the priority is the first, due to the resources allocated, such as new nuclear submarines replacing obsolete models, both for their presence in NATO waters and in the partial melting Arctic ice cap⁵.

But the annexation of Crimea altered the geopolitics of the Black Sea, allowing Russia a greater prominence in that Sea and projection of power to the eastern Mediterranean Sea. In addition to the presence of air and aides and special ground units deployed in Syria, the Russian navy’s use of the Tartus naval base is a very strong signal⁶. It is necessary to take into account the change in Turkey’s position, which, due to the new regional strategic reality, moved away from the USA (although it remains in NATO) and towards Russia, and the Russian-Iranian alliance. Thus, in the case of the region, the Russian navy is not only “showing the flag”, but is effectively present militarily.

Russian Naval Projection and Its Limitations in The World Ocean

In 2010 the Russian government launched the document *Mirovoi Okean Oceanographic Program* (World Ocean), which projects the objectives and shipbuilding until 2035. In addition to the security aspects already

⁵ There are oil and sovereignty disputes in the region, made even more explicit by President Donald Trump’s recent proposal to buy Danish Greenland by the United States.

⁶ See Alexandra Paléologue. *La Méditerranée: un mer sous surveillance*, in *Diplomatie. Mers et Océans, géopolitique et Géostratégie*. Paris: Août-Septembre 2018. The author is a French military, in charge of Missions.

mentioned, what stands out are the economic objectives, such as the exploitation of natural minerals and living resources in territorial waters and non-sovereign areas of the World Ocean.

Here is a crucial methodological challenge for the strategic and historical analyst: *what is cause and what is consequence?* Many of the actions and reactions of Putin's government (or "regime") stem from the Russian Federation's internal and external weaknesses, not just a growing structurally based strength. A more detailed view shows a Russia that feels cornered and region in a determined but dangerous way, amid difficulties in the economic, demographic and governability areas. Andrew Monaghan's *Power in Modern Russia* (2017), conceived during a course at the NATO Defense College (Rome), demonstrates in detail the internal precariousness of the "Putin system".

This becomes even more visible when the country is compared to China's growing economic-military power, which has direct consequences for the expansion of naval capacity. Few scholars pay attention to the fact that Russia fears the Chinese might, which Donald Trump understood very well. In a deft strategy of a pragmatic entrepreneur, he bet on the weakest of opponents and, like Kissinger in his latest book (*World Power* 2014), identified Russia in that position. But reconciling domestic and foreign policy is not an easy task... China is aggressively projecting into the Arctic (it already has several economic concessions even in Greenland) and the demographic void of resource-rich Siberia is a source of concern in Moscow. Of the 470 airports that existed in the Russian Far East in 1991, only a sixth still function and thousands of villages have been abandoned in Siberia (Delanoë 2018). In number of submarines, Russia is being surpassed by China and in aircraft carriers by China and India. So, it is believable that much of the Russian naval reequipment effort is not aimed exclusively at the United States and NATO, but at finding a balance with China.

Russia is not just an energy power in the field of production, but its globalized capitalism (whatever the adjective is added) has oil, gas and mining companies operating worldwide in exploration in other countries. Russia is no longer just an exporter of energy and minerals, but a player among transnational companies. The projection of economic interests has historically always been accompanied by a corresponding increase in military power. The North Atlantic and Arctic, in terms of Defense, is the priority maritime space for the Russian Navy, especially with the growing possibility of using the Northern Route to connect the Atlantic to the Pacific, using only its securitized territorial waters. Although NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in December 2017 expressed concern about the growing Russian

naval presence in the North Atlantic⁷ (Paillard 2018).

However, according to Admiral Antônio Silva Ribeiro, Chief of Staff of the Portuguese Armed Forces, Russia does not have the economic resources and military capacity to threaten the West, which would be more the case for China⁸. In official documents on naval power, the South Atlantic is not even mentioned as a specific operating zone. There is a brief passage about economic and “scientific” interests in Antarctica, but in the item which refers to the Indian Ocean, a region where the Russian navy has a certain presence, due to cooperation with India and interests in the Middle East and East Africa.

In the specific case of Africa, undoubtedly the Russian economic presence is growing, as a way to circumvent the international sanctions that the country has suffered since 2014 as a result of the annexation of Crimea. The *Russafrica* project (Fituni and Abramova 2010) had already been emphasizing the return to African markets, with the sale of weapons (especially to countries that have Soviet equipment), machinery and chemical products, in exchange for tropical products, phosphate and construction contracts infrastructure, energy and mineral exploration. What is observed is the emphasis on the need to earn profits, as in addition to the trade embargo, there was a reduction in the price of oil, which affects the Russian economy. The country is also interested in industrial fishing, although its fishing fleet has been surpassed by the Chinese. As a matter of fact, there are several conflicts of interest between the two countries in the economic field in Africa. And although the Russian presence in Peace Missions (support) and training in the military area is a reality, the country is qualitatively below China. The main Russian strategic partner is Egypt, which is more focused on the Middle East than on the rest of the African continent.

The Russian Federation is particularly concerned about the US concept of Global Stryke and considers it important to maintain its deterrence capability through a second ballistic missile strike fired by its nuclear submarines, especially with the US withdrawal of missile limitation agreements signed in the Russian Federation. Gorbachev’s era (Evitss 2019). It is correct that the Gulf of Guinea (with 20 coastal states and 5 Mediterranean) is rapidly acquiring economic and strategic importance, in a framework disturbed by piracy, kidnapping, robbery at sea, drug trafficking, terrorism and illegal fishing and migration. This tends to foment the security agenda, involving the powers, including Russia. In 2006 NATO carried out the Steadfast

7 The previous month, an Inter-Arms Command was created to protect the North Atlantic Maritime Routes, replacing the SACLANT command, dissolved in 2003.

8 Interview conducted by the author at the Portuguese Ministry of Defense, Lisbon, 4/15/2019.

Jaguar maneuver in Cape Verde, to demonstrate the ability to move troops out of its area of operation, and the following year it mounted a flotilla that circumnavigated Africa (Smith-Windsor and Pavia 2014).

Interestingly, the Russian Federation Navy is also developing its amphibious landing capabilities and support ships (such as helicopter carriers) for bridgehead securitization. All of this is incipient, but it deserves attention in terms of strategic planning (See article by Antonov 2016). Elsewhere, the Russian navy remains strategically concentrated in its nearby waters, which includes the Mediterranean Sea. According to Jonathan Eitss (2019), it has limited capacity to operate in the Caribbean and South America as a way of “showing the flag”, but not of projecting power. Essentially, Russia remains a land power and its ability to project naval force worldwide is limited to nuclear submarines. However, even in relation to these, Russia lacks the economic resources to sustain a competition with the maritime powers and even with China, which appears as a competitor, albeit an occasional ally.

Final Remarks

The domination of the oceans by the Western European powers during the formation of the World System, followed by that of the United States of America, kept large continental states, such as China and Russia, contained within the Eurasian mass. Despite the Soviet Union’s naval efforts, from the 1960s to the late 1980s, to be present in the World Ocean, the country maintained a predominantly terrestrial military doctrine, with difficulties in accessing open seas. When the Cold War ended and the USSR collapsed, with its territory dismembered, its status as a naval power was further downgraded, while China just launched its economic-technological development in an extroverted way.

The socioeconomic development of the most populated region on the planet (more than half of the human community inhabits the ellipse between Karachi and Tokyo), however, has altered the previous world balance, in a movement with ramifications for Africa, the Middle East and even Latin America. The relative economic and civilizational (absolute?) decline of the North Atlantic states, in turn, accelerated a perception of threat, with the growing integration of the immense Eurasian space, with China and Putin’s Russia emerging. Everything became even more complicated with the Chinese naval projection and the increase in Russian deterrence capacity.

Even though the Chinese objective is clearly to guarantee (its) free navigation in the seas and that Russia lacks a global naval capacity, the West

is challenged by the difficulty in penetrating Eurasian space and also by the growing naval presence of ancient earth powers. This is a completely new reality, in which short, medium and long-term factors are mixed, in a difficult plot to unravel. Not only are the continental land powers back in the third millennium, they are challenging the naval power established by the West five centuries ago. All of this is exaggerated, for containment purposes, but it is an exaggeration supported by developing trends.

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ABSTRACT

The Russian Federation and China are large land States (the first and fourth, respectively), characterized by their configuration as land powers from a geopolitical perspective. Recently, through its development and extroversion of its economy, China has built a naval power with a world presence. Russia, on the other hand, which lost much of the naval and coastal power that the USSR had, is trying to rebuild its capacity for maritime defense and exploration of the new Arctic Route, but still with limited global projection. By analyzing the recent naval projection of these traditional land powers, the article seeks to discuss the extent to which traditional geopolitics is reaching its zenith and initiating its own overcoming.

KEYWORDS

China; Russia; Naval projection.

Received on October 11, 2021

Approved on December 16, 2021

Translated by Gabriela Ruchel

REVITALIZATION OF MARITIME SILK ROAD BASED ON THE SECURITY IMPLICATIONS AND COOPERATION

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Introduction

The “Maritime Silk Road” concept first emerged during President Xi Jinping’s first trip to Southeast Asia on October 2013. The proposal was raised during the speech to the Indonesian parliament, in which he called for increased maritime cooperation between China and the ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) countries, in order that the “maritime silk road” would have both diplomatic and economic components (Tiezzi 2014; Odubajo 2017). According to President Xi Jinping, to build the new “maritime silk road”, China will strengthen maritime cooperation with ASEAN countries “to make good use of the China-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation Fund set up by the Chinese government” (Jiao and Yunbi 2013). In November 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced plans to create a 40 billion USD development fund, which would help finance China’s plans to develop the New Silk Road and the Maritime Silk Road (Xinhua 2013). On March 2015, China issued the document entitled Vision and Actions on Jointly Building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (Tracy et al. 2017; Kong 2015; Summers 2016; Dunford and Liu 2019). The 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road is designed to go from China’s coast to Europe through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean in one route, and from China’s coast through the South China Sea to the South Pacific in the other (Kong 2015; Tracy et al. 2017). Regarding this, there are two maritime silk routes.

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This paper will try to investigate the security aspects, as following step of economic cooperation (Pereira 2013), along the first route of Maritime Silk Road through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. This route may be divided into four paths. The first path is the South China Sea, Malacca Strait establishes itself as the second path, the third path is through India Ocean to Indian Ports and the additional path is as a branching tree of the main road towards ASEAN ports as the fourth route. Those paths of maritime silk road may touch national and regional security in the South China Sea, South East Asia and the Indian Ocean as well. This paper aims to discuss the security implications and cooperation of the economic belt of China's proposed Maritime Silk Road (MSR) through ASEAN countries.

The China-ASEAN Relation Overview

China practices dual-track diplomacy in the China-ASEAN relation. First track diplomacy is the cooperation between China and ASEAN as an organization, while the second track diplomacy is the cooperation between China and each member state bilaterally. At East Summit 2014, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang stressed that “the two wheels of the political and security fields and economic field should move forward at the same time” (Keping 2009; Barton 2017; Yang and Li 2016).

China – ASEAN Relation. The Association of South-East Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China signed the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity at the Seventh ASEAN-China Summit on 8 October 2003 in Bali, Indonesia. Plan of Action was formulated to serve as the “master plan” to deepen and broaden ASEAN-China relations and cooperation in a comprehensive and mutually beneficial manner for the next five years (2005-2010) with the view in strengthening the strategic partnership for regional peace, development and prosperity and playing a proactive role to tap the opportunities and meet the challenges of the new millennium. This Plan of Action also supported the implementation of the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II, signed in Bali on 7 October 2003, leading to an ASEAN Community. In the light of the above, ASEAN and China will pursue the following joint actions and measures: Political and Security Cooperation, Economic Cooperation, Functional Cooperation, Cooperation in International and Regional Fora, Funding and Institutional Arrangements (Secretariat 2015). By this Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity and then continuing by Plan of Action documents, it has indicated that China and ASEAN have fostered closer relationship. On economic cooperation, ACFTA

(ASEAN-China Free Trade Area) was formally launched on January 1st 2010. It reached \$292.78 billion in 2010, making ASEAN the third largest trade partner of China and China the third largest partner of ASEAN (Jiang, Chen and Wang 2019; Greenwald 2006; Chin and Stubbs 2011; Irshad and Xin 2014).

China – ASEAN Member States Bilateral Relation. Although there are ongoing disputes in the South China Sea between China and some of the ASEAN member states, China and these ASEAN member states have also established good bilateral relations in many aspects. However, if there are problems along the path of cooperation, security dialogues will be established to maintain security and stability. China's efforts to settle territorial and jurisdictional disputes with neighbouring countries are in line with the principle of 'putting aside disputes and seeking common development' (Fravel 2011; Buzan 2014).

The ASEAN Connectivity. In recent years, ASEAN has proposed the ASEAN Connectivity to enhance the relations among ASEAN peoples. This ASEAN Connectivity is similar to a modified version of the Old Southeast Asia connection road. From ancient times, peoples of Southeast Asia have engaged each other on trades, empire relations and influences through land route and sea route. The sea route of Old Southeast Asia connection road includes the South China Sea and Malacca Straits. ASEAN Connectivity is helping to accelerate the establishment of the ASEAN Community by 2015. The Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity was adopted by the ASEAN leaders in October 2010 (Greenwald 2006; Chin and Stubbs 2011). ASEAN Connectivity intends to connect ASEAN through enhanced physical infrastructure development (physical connectivity), effective institutions, mechanisms and processes (institutional connectivity), empowering people or people-to-people connectivity. Through an enhanced ASEAN Connectivity, the production and distribution networks in the ASEAN region will be deepened, widened, and become more entrenched in East Asia and the global economy (Secretariat 2011). The support for the ASEAN Master Plan for Connectivity (AMPC) as a whole and the ASEAN RO-RO (Roll On-Roll Off) network (ARN) in particular will enable China to gain not only investments but also the goodwill of its neighbours (Solmecke 2016; Lu and Cai 2018).

The Route and Port Destinations of Maritime Silk Road. The maritime route was opened by Emperor Han Wudi (reigned between 140-87 BC) to provide access to the Roman Empire via India. It marked the first oceanic route as well as the earliest marine trading route in the world. This has enabled China to actively seek out overseas markets and establish foreign trade relations and laid the foundation for the development of the Maritime

Silk Road (Blanchard and Flint 2017; Zhang 2017; Len 2015). The history of silk route goes back to 15th century when Chinese first constructed the Silk Road, the oldest maritime trade routes of silk which existed between China and Coast of Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, including Kuilong in the Indian peninsula, Sumatra, Orr Island and Gulf of Siam and Vietnam coast (McLaughlin 2010).

The new “maritime silk road” is an attempt of re-branding China. Now the concept has been officially extended. There are two assumptions upon the revitalization of Maritime Silk Road, whether it will be an exclusive or just an ordinary passage. Another assumption is whether it will keep the old route and port destinations or use a modified route. If the revitalization is exclusive, it could be a problem since it portrays a hegemonic intent which contradicts China’s foreign policy. If it is ordinary trade as the now existing trade cooperation among China and other countries, it may be better to be enhanced in many aspects. If the revitalization is to keep the old route and destination ports, it could limit the trade activities. ASEAN has designated 47 ports as the main ports in the trans-ASEAN transport network (Secretariat 2011). It could affect the new destination ports of the new maritime silk road. Hence, the best solution could be to modify according to the trend and the new ports of destination countries instead of keeping the old ports of the maritime silk road.

Security Along the Maritime Silk Road

In general, when we talk about maritime security, at least it will concern about the piracy and armed robbery and also petty theft at sea (non-traditional threats at sea), the safety of navigation (safety of navigation along the strait may cover inter alia: navigational aids, visibility, depth, traffic density and crossing vessels, fishing vessels, traffic separation scheme, and vessel traffic service) and the freedom of navigation (Karma, Shukry, and Woon 1998). The word ‘freedom of navigation’ is used in UNCLOS 1982 at article 87 as part of freedom of high sea as well as article 58 (Geng 2012) in the exclusive economic zone and article 38 as part of the right of transit passage in straits used for international navigation.

Non-Traditional Security Threats. Along with the first of MSR, there were some incidents concerning non-traditional threats at sea. According to Dr Same Bateman, there were merely 4 piracy incidents that occurred at the South China Sea and at Malacca Strait – a total of 4 armed robbery incidents occurred in 2013 (Bateman, Gamage, and Chan 2017). But some petty theft could have occurred at some ports of ASEAN countries though.

Safety of Navigation. In Malacca and Singapore Straits, a survey conducted found that in the opinion of the navigators, the main hazards to navigation in the Straits were: Traffic Density (29 per cent), Shallow Water (26 per cent), Fishing Boats (24 per cent), Unavailability of VTS (12 per cent), Lack of coverage of TSS (6 per cent) and Other (3 per cent), but all agreed that traffic density within the Strait is mostly higher or denser than the straits with other waterways by more than 70 per cent. Therefore, the Straits are considered as two of the most hazardous straits in the world (Karma, Shukry and Woon 1998).

Since the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean are vast and have deep waters, the safety of navigation, in general, is not the biggest concern in that regard. Additionally, in general, the channels to the ASEAN ports have good navigation aids for entry and departure of vessels.

Freedom of Navigation. In article 39, UNCLOS (Geng 2012) states that ships and aircraft, while exercising the right of transit passage, inter alia, shall proceed without delay, refrain from any threat or use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of states bordering the strait. Furthermore, in article 59 UNCLOS states that in cases where this Convention does not attribute rights or jurisdiction to the coastal State or other States within the exclusive economic zone and a conflict arises between the interests of the coastal State and any other State or States, the conflict should be resolved based on equity and in the light of all the relevant circumstances, taking into account the respective importance of the interests involved to the parties as well as to the international community as a whole.

Although there are disputes on maritime border delimitation among littoral states adjacent to Malacca Strait, the principal ASEAN ways and the ASEAN treaty of amity guarantee the freedom of navigation along Malacca Strait. Previously on resolving problems, they have taken measures by Government to Government negotiations and settling at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) without impacting maritime security along the strait (Leifer 1996). More than 200 vessels pass through the Straits daily and this gives an annual throughput of approximately 70,000 ships, carrying 80% of the oil transported to Northeast Asia as well as one-third of the world's traded goods including Chinese manufactures, Indonesian coffee, etc. (Qu and Meng 2012) and also there are disputes in the South China Sea, besides the peaceful settlement being in an on-going process. Over half of the world's super-tankers and commercial fleets (measured in tonnage), or over 40,000 various vessels, pass through the South China Sea annually (Yaodong and Shicheng 2014).

Existing Security Cooperation Along the Road

ASEAN Bilateral And Regional Maritime Security Cooperation. Every country must secure its maritime area. ASEAN member states can secure their waters with their maritime power by conducting many maritime operations and deploying naval ships along its territorial waters and Economic Exclusive Zones (EEZs). When the waters border with the neighbouring countries' waters, they established a bilateral coordinated patrol (Damayanti 2017). These activities indicate that the security along the proposed MSR would have been already taken care of by the respective countries. Over the Malacca and Singapore straits, there is also regional maritime cooperation. The Malacca Straits Patrols Joint Coordinating Committee (MSP-JCC) established in 2006 works as the channel of communication and coordination for all activities and issues on Malacca straits and Singapore straits security matters by Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The MSPJCC executes the coordinated Malacca Straits Sea Patrols (MSSP), Eye in the Sky (EiS) as combined maritime air patrols and intelligent exchange group (IEG). Defence ministers from seventeen countries including the United States, China, India, Japan and the ASEAN states who attended the fourth Shangri-La dialogue in Singapore in 2005 agreed the following three basic principles for multilateral security cooperation in the Straits of Malacca, which in places deviate from the UNCLOS arrangements: 1) Primary responsibility for the security of the entire maritime territory of the Straits of Malacca, even outside territorial limits, remains with the three littoral states. 2) The international community and the user states fulfil a supporting role based on consultation with the littoral states. This includes financial and material support, capacity-building measures, exchange of information and joint anti-piracy exercises, but not the active conduct of security measures by external actors. 3) All multilateral cooperation must be compatible with the International Law of the Sea, and the sovereignty of the three littoral states must be respected (Mair 2011).

Dialogue on Regional Security Cooperation Along the Road. To guarantee the maritime security in the South East Asia region, it cannot be achieved merely by deploying the maritime powers operating in the field, but also by conducting dialogues to enhance coordination and cooperation. ASEAN Chief Defense Force Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) is an annual regional military community meeting to promote dialogue among the ASEAN members. At the defence level, all Ministers of Defense of ASEAN members have annual meetings related to strategic and defence dialogues, named ASEAN Defence Ministerial Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM plus with other members from outside of ASEAN countries region, including China. There is also ASEAN

Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and Expanded AMF with other members from outside of ASEAN countries region, including China. Furthermore, there are also Jakarta International Defense Dialogue as an international forum attended by the military and political elite from about 34 nations, and The Shangri-La Dialogue as an inter-governmental security forum held annually by an independent think tank.

Besides those regional security dialogues highlighted above, other dialogues in the region discuss maritime security issues including along the road namely Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), Indian Ocean Naval Symposium and Chief of Defense Forces Conference (CHOD). CHOD serves as an annual regional avenue that allows top military leaders to come together, interact closely and discuss cooperative matters relating to defence and security (Prakash 2011). In 2014, Brunei Darussalam hosted the CHOD, which was attended by military leaders and representatives from 26 countries including China taking part for the first time since the conference was introduced in 1988 (Panda 2019).

The burden of Ensuring Navigational Safety and Pollution Prevention. In Malacca Strait, the Malacca Strait Council as a council funding to secure the safe use of International navigation was established in 1968. Since the late 1960s, the Malacca Strait Council has put tremendous efforts into addressing and resolving risk governance issues in the Straits, focusing primarily on navigational safety and preservation of the marine environment (Chatterjee 2014). Maritime Port of Authority (MPA) Director-General Mr Chen Tze Penn said in his opening address that the burden of ensuring navigational safety and pollution prevention and responsibility should not rest on the three littoral states alone, but that it is also imperative that the international community and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) are involved in the Tripartite Technical Expert Group's joint efforts to keep waterways safe and clean (R. Beckman and Liliansa 2019). Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore have concluded a Joint Technical Arrangement (JTA) with the IMO to institutionalize an IMO Trust Fund that supports co-operation among stakeholders towards enhancing safety and marine environment protection in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (Ba 2018; Karma, Shukry, and Woon 1998).

On the Security Implications and Cooperation

Peaceful means and dialogues to resolve any disputes to guarantee the freedom of navigation. Freedom of navigation at sea should be maintained - otherwise, any military conflicts at sea will affect the sea lane of communication.

The manoeuvre and gunfire of naval ships will disrupt any merchant ship movement at sea. Border maritime delimitation disputes in Malacca straits should be kept resolving by peaceful means and disputes in other places along the road as well. The China's way in solving the problem as stated in its White Paper vividly describes that China's security and development are closely connected with the peace and prosperity of the world as a whole and with frequent participation in international affairs and China is increasing its obligations in upholding world peace and regional stability (Economic and Cooperation 2013).

Respect to the state's sovereignty and sovereign rights along the route. Every state must secure their land and waters from any threat that may disrupt their entire countries. Since the respective countries along the maritime route have already put in so much effort to secure their sovereignty and sovereign rights waters through national, bilateral and regional maritime cooperation; hence, it is reasonable to expect other countries to respect those efforts. Should there be any unsatisfactory concerns from the other country's maritime security interest, these countries should communicate openly in a good manner with due respect to the sovereignty and by international law. Nevertheless, if such country does not have the capability in controlling its land and waters, she may or will ask the UN as the International organization for help. In this case, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) will come up with certain resolutions to deal with such problems, for instance, UN Resolution to Somalia waters (Dalton, Roach, and Daley 2009).

Matching the priorities along the maritime route among countries. The proposed MSR is a vital sea lane of communication to revitalize the connection between China and other countries. For China, the most important thing about this route could be its maritime security. If such priority is shared by other countries, then there will be no problem at all, since all countries will share similar concerns over the route. Yet, if the route is not on the top list of other countries, there should be some adjustments to match these discrepancies. For instance, Malaysia will give more attention to the security and safety of navigation on the western coast of the Malacca straits where most of her vital port trade is located, rather than on the eastern coast. Indonesia, as a huge archipelagic state, will give more attention to the security and safety of navigation to its international ports rather than its domestic ports. Therefore, to match them is not just to match the security itself but also mainly to match the interest in specific areas. For instance, in economic trade, all of them will need the same security as a priority. A strategic partnership may be created to pave the ways and will make matching the priorities easier.

Non-Intervention. The norm of non-intervention has dominated the

majority of international relations as firmly established in the UN Charter (Mayall 1991; Jones 2010). Furthermore, almost all countries along the first path to the fourth path of MSR are ASEAN members, which have established ways of resolving problems. The ASEAN way has a strong Asian flavour of consultation rather than compulsion, of harmony rather than intervention, and of soft cooperation approach rather than hard coercion (Jones 2010). For China's MSR initiative to be welcomed, it would be better if it follows Asian flavour such as the ASEAN way.

Use of the established maritime trade route. Although the proposed MSR is China's idea which is rooted in the traditional route, it does not have any special implication before the International Maritime Law. The route will be the same as the other maritime routes. No rights will be provided to secure the route by undermining the very principle of freedom of navigation or the coastal states' sovereignty. According to UNCLOS (Geng 2012), the only reason for escorting any ship is not based on its route but its cargo.

Maritime Security Cooperation

Bilateral and Regional Security Cooperation. No country can stand alone facing the dynamic global world developments. Since the proposed route will be passing through other countries' waters, it is better to continue cooperating with the respective countries bilaterally or regionally and without the need for providing exclusive security. When dealing with the neighbouring countries, China's diplomacy is characterized by friendship, sincerity, reciprocity and inclusiveness (Xi 2014). The word 'friendship' on China's character diplomacy with neighbouring countries indicates that China will not be the adversary in terms of security. As described in the book titled "Xi Jinping, the Governance of China", China should work with its neighbours to speed up the connection of infrastructure between China and our neighbouring countries and establish a Silk Road economic belt and a maritime silk road geared towards the demand of the 21st century. The Silk Road needs safety and peace, hence, security cooperation will be paramount. China has held extensive strategic consultations and dialogues with relevant countries on security and defence issues. It also has established mechanisms for such consultation and dialogue with 22 countries (Paltiel 2018). Furthermore, security cooperation may encompass conflict prevention.

Contribution. Although the littoral states have established such solid cooperation in taking on the safety and security issues within their waters, it does not mean they will reject other states' contribution. The littoral states

are fully aware that there are other means of enhancing maritime safety and security outside their radar. Hence, other states or non-state actors contribution are also welcomed as long as they are given through appropriate channels and are approved by the littoral states. Some examples of such contributions include building confidence and mutual understanding, followed by tangible products to build trust and by promoting cooperation through activities such as information sharing, technological cooperation and exchange of visits of authorities concerned; exploring every opportunity in developing cooperation in the context of capacity building, information sharing, logistic support and equipment by promoting cooperation in regional and multilateral exercises on maritime security as well as training and education.

Burden sharing. Some of the global sea lanes of communication may be part of other countries' waters. Malacca and Singapore straits are examples. These straits are not international straits but straits used internationally. Currently, to promote the safety of navigation, the littoral states share the burdens, either financially or environmentally, for the benefit of the transiting vessels. However, it is quite clear that if someone uses others' property, the user must maintain and keep that property operating well. Analog to this, if foreign countries make use of the littoral states' straits, these foreign countries should be obligated to make those straits safe and secure for navigation. Maintaining and enhancing navigational aids and other equipment needed may also be shared (Geng 2012). Moreover, aids to the community along the coast in the form of education and other humanitarian assistance may be given since the people often sacrifice their fisheries life to the international vessels passing through near the coast. As reported on International Workshop on Risk Governance of the Maritime Global Critical Infrastructure: Straits of Malacca and Singapore Exposed to Extreme Hazards, "Locally, the Straits are unique, tropical estuarine environments rich in renewable and non-renewable natural resources. While the Straits are important to the global community, the local communities' interests must not be forgotten or ignored. Approximately 50 per cent of locally-consumed fish comes from the Straits. The livelihoods of people living on the coasts would be directly and significantly impacted by any extreme hazards, natural or man-made. Blockage of the Straits may cause harm to the region and to surrounding hub-ports, which may never recover as detour routes could be made available and take away valuable business" (Hariyono and Akib 2019; Geng 2012; R. C. Beckman and Sun 2017; Qu and Meng 2012; Karma, Shukry, and Woon 1998).

Final Remarks

The revitalization of the “Maritime Silk Road” may give positive impacts to China’s foreign affairs for the good interaction and communication among people by economic trade. The global community could potentially benefit from the MSR initiative as well. In this regard, ASEAN countries may welcome the MSR initiative as long as it complements the existing ASEAN Connectivity Master Plan.

On security, the security along the first route of proposed MSR currently remains secure which is proven by the safe passage of approximately 70,000 vessels through Malacca and Singapore Straits and over 40,000 vessels through the South China Sea annually. Therefore, the security implications of the proposed MSR such as the guaranteed freedom of navigation, respect to state’s sovereignty and sovereign rights along the route, matching the priorities on maritime route among countries should be seriously considered while working towards the successful revitalization of the MSR. Maritime security cooperation should be established to guarantee the economic silk route connection by working on the existing bilateral and regional maritime cooperation, reviewing the contributions and burden-sharing of respective states along the MSR. These are the recommended measures for ensuring the security and safety of navigation along the route. To this end, security cooperation may encourage more confidence-building and conflict prevention measures, which will set the conditions necessary for the proposed initiative.

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ABSTRACT

The revitalization of the Silk Road as a trade route, cultural exchange, religion, science and civilization based on the "Maritime Silk Road" (MSR) is the focus of strategic studies and international relations. ASEAN countries, including Indonesia in the MSR route and the contestation of the United States and China who are fighting for dominance in the Indo-Pacific region, face challenges and opportunities. The results of this research, which uses a normative approach, show that the revitalization of the MSR may give positive impacts to China's foreign affairs for the good interaction and communication among people by economic trade.

KEYWORDS

Revitalization; Silk-road; Maritime Silk-Road.

Received on October 29, 2020

Approved on September 09, 2021

THE DYNAMICS OF THE SUCCESSION OF CURRENCIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY – A CASE OF CHINESE FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP?

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Introduction

Since the Industrial Revolution, the history of the world has changed in infinite aspects. The Middle Ages was marked by a low-growth period and almost no division of labor. The long-distance trade and the rise of a market-guide enterprise production defined the breakthrough of the capitalist system. The local governments autonomy and their relation to the king and enterprises would be fundamental, not only for Europe, but as a framework example to other economies. The mercantilist economic understanding dominated Europe after the Middle Ages, emphasizing trade balance surpluses and the role of exports as a development instrument. Mercantilism ruined at the end of the 18th century with a shift in Britain's economic system. The Industrial Revolution would emphasize property rights and economic openness as a means to increase productivity and trade efficiency.

Great Britain emerged as the economic and political power in the 19th century. After 1850, the gold overpassed the silver role in the monetary system, a movement that would support the creation of the gold-standard framework. In the post-1880 period, The Pound Sterling, as a consequence of economic circumstances and the gold-standard, rose as a key-currency in the sense countries could hold foreign exchange reserves to prevent liquidity risks.

In the 20th century, the United States would assume the role of protagonist in the international scenario. During the First and Second World

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War, the country provided goods to Europe, boosting its trade balance. Further, the United States inferred an important role in European reconstruction during the Post-War period. The United States Dollar would emerge as the most important key-currency, appreciating against the Pound Sterling mainly after the half of the 20th century. Therefore, since the end of the Bretton Woods system in 1971, the United States Dollar has maintained its position in the international scenario.

According to the World Bank (2019a), in 2018 China accounted for 18.34% of the world's population, while the United States, economic and financial power accounted for 4.3%. Further, the Chinese annual average GDP growth since 1978 accounts for 9.5% (World Bank 2019b), a circumstance that has elevated future perspectives to its economic power, its income standards, and its role in the global economy.

This article aims to investigate the necessary conditions for China to develop the Renminbi in the international scenario and to infer its current status in that progress. The main hypothesis is divided in: (1) an analysis of patterns in the internationalization of both the Pound Sterling and the United States Dollar; (2) an interpretation about how had China shifted from a poor economy to a high-growth open economy and its reforms aspects; and (3) an evaluation about the Chinese future steps between real and financial economy, in what extent they are associated with the balance of payments, and its future effects on the internationalization of the Renminbi.

All things considered, this paper is structured in this introduction, three sections ensuing to answer the main objective, and a conclusion. Section 2 intends to analyze the international economics effect and the theoretical presumptions. Section 3 investigates the history of the British pound and the US dollar hegemonies and the perspective of the Chinese development in terms of goods, money, and foreign exchange markets since 1978, and its aspect of gradualism towards a market-driven economy. Section 4 stresses the Chinese dichotomy between real and financial economy. Last but not least, conclusive commentaries are established.

Theoretical Discussion

In the 18th century, David Hume built up a structure involving exports, imports, and gold reserves. The specie-flow mechanism explains how reserves should naturally self-regulate - gold flows as a result from imports and exports should adjust prices and net exports to zero.

In this model, money is considered neutral. Thus, an exogenous

expansion in it would just increase prices. Suppose England imports more than it exports in relation to France. An outflow of gold from England would reduce its money supply and lead prices to deflation, reducing comparative prices to international economics. That scenario encourages France - facing an increase in money supply and consequently inflation - to import from England:

Nor is it probable, that the diminution of circulating money was ever sensibly felt by the people, or even did them any prejudice. The sinking of the prices of all commodities would immediately replace it, by giving England the advantage in its commerce with all the neighbouring kingdoms (Hume 1768, 363).

The Balance of Payments, BoP, is key to understanding exchange rate movements. Feenstra and Taylor (2012) argue that macroeconomic fluctuations are exposed by three interdependent markets: the goods market, the money market, and the foreign exchange market. These factors are associated to several variables - interest rate (i), investment (I), real money supply (M/P), real money demand (MD), domestic and foreign returns (DR and FR), exchange rate (e), and output (Y).

The forex market is the uncovered interest parity (UIP) attainment, “when the expected returns expressed in domestic currency are the same on foreign and domestic interest-bearing (money market) bank deposits”. (Feenstra; Taylor 2012, 270). Domestic returns should equalize foreign returns plus an expected rate of depreciation of the domestic currency. Consequently, a suppose decrease in domestic returns leads to a capital outflow to foreign markets, depreciating home currency.

Nonetheless, three distinct factors influence how the IS-LM-BP model interacts with those markets (goods, money, and foreign exchange): the exchange rate regime, capital flows, and monetary autonomy. The policy trilemma emphasizes that, in an international economics approach, policymakers face an impossible trinity. “They can attain only two of the following three policy choices: (1) a fixed exchange rate, (2) unrestricted international financial or capital flows, and (3) monetary policy autonomy, or independence”. (Salvatore 2013, 654).

Therefore, policymakers have three different options: (1) free capital flows and fixed exchange rate - domestic and foreign returns need to be equal, then monetary policy autonomy would be impracticable, (2) free capital flow and monetary policy autonomy - domestic and foreign returns would equalize through changes in a floating exchange rate regime, and (3) fixed exchange rate and monetary policy autonomy - the only possible way to maintain this

set of policies is restricting financial flows.

Simonsen and Cysne (2009) argue that, except in a purely floating exchange rate regime, the adjustment of the balance of payments occurs by extreme coincidence. Then, successive surpluses may be possible, and deficits can persist under international reserves or other compensatory capitals. The authors justify that those permanent shortfalls must be corrected by one of the following measures: (a) real exchange rate depreciation, (b) output shrink, (c) import restrictions, (d) export aid, (e) higher interest rate, or (f) capital outflow controls. The last two methods can be effective only in the short-run, due to the fact that a higher i adjusts BoP under an increase in financial liabilities, and a control to capital outflows may be a janus-faced method, considering that it may jeopardize capital inflows.

The dichotomy between the real economy (CA) and the financial economy (KA + FA) is even more visible when comparing emerging, rich, and poor countries. Simonsen and Notwithstanding, the authors argue that current account balance in some way feedback itself. A country with CA deficits adjusts its balance of payments receiving foreign capital. However, this inflow represents a future outflow of profit and earnings to previous external agents. Crowther (1957) suggests a theory in which countries can be divided in creditors and debtors, and capital importers or exporters. The creditor or debtor state refers to the primary income (NFIA). A country that accumulates positive net investment income is a creditor, whereas a negative net investment income refers to a debtor nation. The IMF (2009) argues that the investment income takes into account (1) income associated with the production process such as compensation of employees, and (2) income associated with the ownership of financial and other non-produced assets, such as returns of financial assets, dividends, interest, returns from direct investment. The capital status can be divided by countries with a negative capital account (capital exporters) and with a positive capital account (capital importers). The capital account balance is inversely proportional to the current account balance.

In the first stage, there is an accumulation of net external liabilities, due to a current account deficit, especially in response of a negative trade balance. The intermediate debtor starts to obtain trade balance surplus, but not in a sufficient amount to compensate net income sent to abroad. A mature debtor country holds a surplus in trade balance greater than net income sent to abroad, and starts to decrease its net external liabilities. In a certain instant, the country leaves the debtor state to a creditor one. In that moment, net external liabilities turns itself to net external assets as a result of resource transfers and the net income received from abroad. In the fifth step, trade balance deteriorates but in lower amount than the net income received from

abroad surplus. Then the country disposes of its foreign assets in the last stage, when the resource gap overpasses net income received from abroad (Simonsen; Cysne 2009).

Surpluses in BoP can be allocated in several ways. Generally, they are allocated in exchange reserves, that are claims on nonresidents in the form of: currency and deposits, securities, financial derivatives, or other claims (IMF 2019). Nonetheless, at the end of the nineteenth-century, exchange currencies “were held because governments borrowing in London, Paris, or Berlin were required by the lenders to keep a portion of the proceeds on deposit in that financial center”. (Eichengreen 2008, 22). Further, even if it was not required, the creditworthiness prevalence influenced borrowing countries to maintain those reserves.

The requirement of those claims increases whereas those currencies become liquid, trustful, and internationally manipulated. Peng and Shu (2010) argue that two separate concepts define the notions on international role of currencies: the distinction between domestic and international - in terms of the currency usage degree outside the currency area, and the international debt market - market of issuances by non-residents of a country or currency area. The authors discuss the function of the international debt in providing international role for a currency in terms of finance and investment. The authors conclude that the international debt market provides information to match with the functions of money matrix theory, which emphasizes currency features that can characterize a more internationalized currency.

Table 1 - The Matrix of International Currency Use

<i>A: Theorist's matrix</i>	Private use	Official use
Medium of exchange	Vehicle currency	Intervention currency
Unit of account	Quotation currency	Anchor currency
Store of value	Investment and financing currency	FX reserve currency
<i>B: Practitioner's matrix</i>	Use in financial markets	Use in third countries
	International debt markets	Exchange rate anchor, FX reserves
	Foreign exchange markets	Cash and parallel currency use
	International trade invoicing	

Source: Peng and Shu (2010).

Further, the authors measure the international role of specific

currencies. The evaluation is “based on both the size and the structural characteristics of each currency’s capital market and underlying economy” (Peng and Shu 2010, 11). Factors such as the size of economy, size of financial markets (debt market, stock market, derivatives market, FX exchange market), financial market regulation (disclosure, liability, supervision, access to equity, and financial market sophistication), size of state (property rights, freedom of corruption, state-owned enterprise investment, and share of government-owned banks), monetary issues (central bank independence, inflation volatility, and inflation absolute in a specific year), and trade barriers (freedom of regulatory trade barriers, international capital market controls, capital account openness, and freedom to own foreign currency bank account) are key points to a more internationalized currency. It is important to highlight that the global role of a currency, in that case, is directly proportional to the size of the market/economy, and to its liberalization/openness.

Evolution of the Pound, the Dollar and Recently the Renminbi

Clark (2007) foments the discussion that probably something systematic was avoiding early societies to reward from innovation. Property rights and a weaker power from the state could have broken this systematic process and enable individuals, and not groups, to make decisions of trade, allocation of values and search for their own wellbeing.

Ferreira et al. (2011) argue that, in fact, England had a set of laws protecting private property that could entail the right incentive to investment and innovation. Further, “those institutions did not exist, at that time, anywhere in the world.” (Ferreira et al., 2011). The increase in human capital and knowledge possibly was induced by an individual perspective to decide, given by that new systematic.

According to Ferreira et al. (2011), although private property rights were necessary to the Industrial Revolution, IR, it was not sufficient. The IR did not just bring good institutions, property rights and let innovation and the private initiative come in. It brought essentially a new wave of international trade, the first great globalization shock.

Whereas international trade took place, two concerns in the monetary system started to rise: global connections and network-externalities. An open economy tends to increase exports and imports share in national production, backdrop that connotes more trade between countries - nations better integrated. Subsequently, a common monetary standard is fundamental for reducing negotiating costs.

Up to the mid-19th century a bimetallic monetary system contained those network-externalities. According Eichengreen (2008, 9), only Britain operated a gold standard, while “the German states, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Scandinavia, Russia, and the Far East operated silver standards. Countries with bimetallic standards provided the link between the gold and silver blocs.”

The network-externalities narrowed when the gold standard became widespread in 1870. The Industrial Revolution innovations in Britain led the gold standard to emerge regionally, and, as a consequence of the global British economic leadership, it developed internationally. Besides necessary, these events were not sufficient to the pattern change. Prior to 1870, silver-based countries experienced instability in terms of silver supply. Silver discoveries in 1850 and Germany's monetary policies were fundamental to explain the adherence of the Britain's gold standard.

Since the 18th century, the United Kingdom experienced specific but cyclical events that would impact directly in the British currency, especially the Industrial Revolution and its innovations, and the British relevance in the global economy. Thus, the second half of the nineteenth-century would be crucial to the pound sterling to develop a huge influence in the international monetary system.

According to Thirlwall (1986), up to 1870 British trade data was really uncertain, although between 1854 and 1870 there are values declared by shippers. In the period post the mid-eighteenth century, Britain emerged as the global economic power, mainly in terms of commerce and industry. The production of manufactures brought by the Industrial Revolution innovations boosted its balance of trade. Therefore, British products crossing all over the world, especially in Europe and India, accentuated the first wave of globalization.

Britain changed its international influence from a great exporter and a debtor country to a creditor status. The current account balance even increased during the 19th century, and was essentially high before the WWI. That shift can be explained by high capital outflows as a response to surpluses in the trade balance. These transfers to other countries aim profitability under institutional investments in foreign assets. In a certain moment, these remittances come back to the home country in the form of income from abroad, impacting positively the NFIA. Then, a natural movement to an appreciation in the pound sterling took place.

The war necessities of credit expansion were the linchpin to the temporary abandonment of the gold-standard. The trilemma solution before WWI was designated to floating rates and capital controls. Then, exports

and imports as a percentage of world's GDP dropped significant levels, and monetary autonomy continued detached.

After WWI, the United States, that emerged as the leading country in terms of GDP at the end of the nineteenth-century, increased even more its trade balance surpluses. Britain and France pegged its exchange rate on the U.S. Dollar (USD) under depreciated rates, draining gold reserves, specially from the U.K, and the incorporated for recently created Federal Reserve. Further, Eichengreen (2008) points out that Britain, in the advent of the First World War, had to sell off larger part of its foreign assets, and creditor countries like Germany became dependent on imports from the United States, being reduced to a debtor status.

The pre-WWI environment was fueled with cuts in discount rates by central banks. Then, exchange rate depreciations reached high amounts over great part of Europe. According to Ammous (2018), during WWI, Austria's currency devalued 68.9%, Germany's 48.9%, Italy's 22.3%, France's 9.04%, and U.K.'s 6.63%. The 1920s was then marked by hyperinflation in countries like Germany, and a massive North-American production. In a scenario with monetary instability, exchange reserves lose credibility, and its holders migrate their claims to other financial assets. Eichengreen (2008) exposes the League of Nations function in replenishing reserves by loans, and a fortification of central banks independence. In that case, the loss of credibility empowered the return of the gold-standard. Several countries restored the gold parity between 1923 and 1927, and a new peak of countries on the gold-standard was reached in 1931.

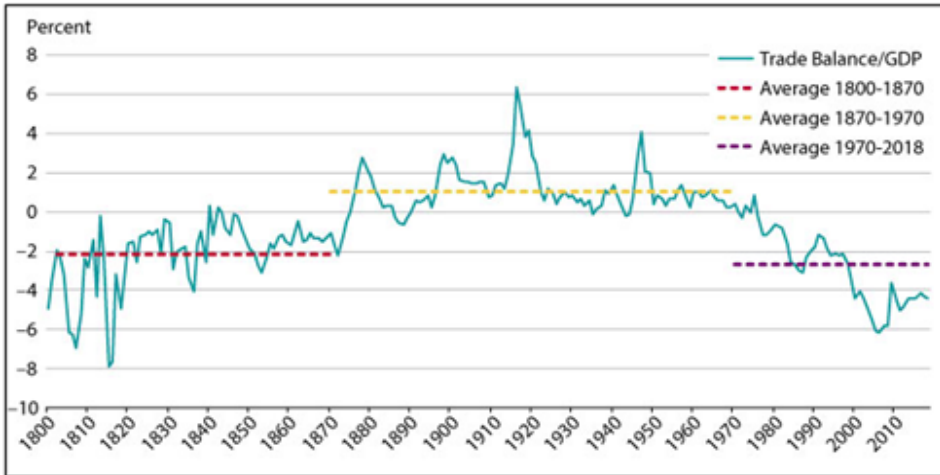
The sterling suffered a crisis in 1931. In 1930, protectionism and higher tariffs to imports undermined world trade. The United Kingdom suffered instabilities facing a trade balance discharge due to a decline in exports. Higher discount rates could not contain reserves losses. Then, the Britain's drop of the gold-standard in 1931 would impact to a general suspension of convertibility.

In 1932, according to Eichengreen (2008), the monetary system divided by three: (1) gold-standard: Western Europe, United States, and Latin America, (2) proper currencies and exchange controls: Central and Eastern Europe, and (3) peg to sterling. Notwithstanding, with the Glass-Steagall Act, and the presidential victory of Roosevelt, the United States was "free" from the gold-standard impossible trinity, and increased monetary autonomy, under a system of floating rates.

The U.S. Dollar would be essential for the European reconstruction during and after the WWII. How it happened in the WWI, the United States trade balance would be boosted, and as a response of an adjustment

mechanism, capital outflows would perdure, alleviating pressures on the exchange rate.

Figure 1: U.S. Goods Trade Balance to GDP



Source: FRED.

The Bretton Woods system, according to Feenstra and Taylor (2012), would aim exchange rate stability to inspire the European reconstruction and the recapture of trade. Countries would peg their currencies to the U.S. Dollar, constituting it as a central currency, while it would be pegged to gold.

The reestablishment of the monetary system would move the dynamic center from Britain as the global economic and financial power to the United States. It is attractive to examine this movement not just as a political and transversal decision, but as a movement through cycles. The huge North-American economy and its shift from a debtor nation to a creditor nation, along with unrestricted capital flows, could allow a natural core movement. The appreciation of the USD over the pound sterling is evident after the Bretton Woods system.

Further, China would give its first steps towards fundamental institutional reforms. Tobin and Volz (2018) argue that China would start reforming its mono-banking system at the same time the Bretton Woods collapsed in 1971, and the competition from non-bank financial institutions and the emergence of global central banks and money center banks would emerge.

Garnaut and Song (2012) argue that at the end of 1978, 22nd of

December, the third plenary meeting of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party would be one of the most important meetings for China's economic future, in domestic and foreign fields. Subsequently that meeting, China would replace its economic and political core to a globalization-bias process.

Masiero (2006) extends the relevance of the third plenary meeting arguing the CPC conduction to modernizations in agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense. This modernization can be denominated as the Fourth Revolution, after other Chinese historical circumstances: the Republican Revolution (1911), the Communist Revolution (1949) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-76).

According to Garnaut et al. (2018), the Cultural Revolution had a terrible impact in China, in 1978 representing its brink of economic collapse. Lin (2013) indicates that China had been stuck in poverty for centuries. In 1978, the author exposed that its income per capita was US\$154 and it represented around one-third of the average in Sub-Saharan Africa. Further, its trade-to-gross domestic product ratio was less than 10%.

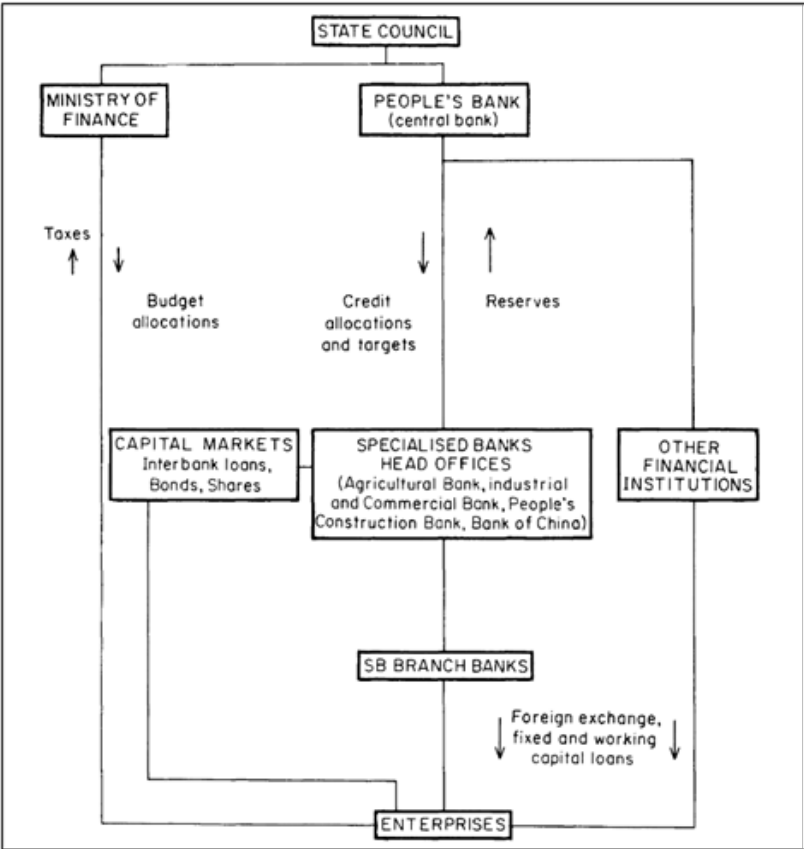
The anti-export inclination, the Chinese non-integration with the world, and the overvalued exchange rate of the Renminbi (RMB) undermined export incentives and import of technologies and production techniques. Garnaut and Song (2012) emphasize that in 1978 a trade system reform would be done gradually, intending specially an import substitution. According to the authors, the first stage of the trade system reform between 1978 and 1984 decentralized foreign trade authority by giving the right to municipalities, provinces, industrial sectors, and enterprises to conduct foreign trade.

The financial system is essential for public and non-public enterprises. Garnaut et al. (2018) argue that China was financially powerful at the turn of the twentieth century as it was an important international fund center. The authors argue that the *Silver Purchase Act* (1934), the Chinese war against Japan in 1937-45, and its civil war in 1946-49 shrunk the financial industry in China, centralizing the whole system in a monopolized institution, the Public Bank of China (PBOC), which acquired 93% of all Chinese financial assets in 1978. The socialization period after 1949 exacerbated the resistance for open financial markets.

The centralization of the monetary system and highly restrictions for the financial market inhibited money and credit to stabilize the monetary system. Tam (1987) argues that monetary authorities could not attain real economic growth also due to the fact that the volume control of the currency in circulation was inefficient to contain demand pressures on the supply of goods. Further, financial development was a necessary but not sufficient

measure to attain real economic growth.

Figure 2: China's Financial Framework, post-1984



Source: Bowles and White (1989)

Sit (1985) exposes that China intended to promote technical and economic exchange with foreign countries. To achieve this promotion, a social influence of capitalism was a price to pay. Hence, in order to maximize benefits and diminish this cost, the Chinese government proposed the establishment of Four Special Economic Zones, which would serve as specific areas for concentrated development and easier governmental control. The aversion to foreign capital flows could be contained through a special regulative structure that was outlined to conceive knowledge spillovers, and concentration of labor and technological import.

Property rights would relocate from local governments to enterprises.

The Property Rights Theory emphasizes that this shift occurs when local governments contribution to enterprises outcome decreases. Then, according to Taube (2002), unclear ownership rights have a tendency to set clear definition and distributions of property rights. A sharecropping system tends to substitute a fixed wage system. The author exposes that the residual profit retention rights are inclined to award the part that impacts more significantly business results. The system is associated with the fiscal feudalism policy accomplished before the breakout of the violence trap in the Middle Ages period.

Subsequently the three trade reforms mentioned earlier - decentralization of power and the weakening of the Foreign Trade Ministry (1979-84), tariff rates and monetary regime adjustments, and the GATT application (1985-86), and the contract system (1987-90) - the CPC would continue to incite changes in the trade framework.

The reform would aim three topics between 1991-93: (1) the GATT requirements for transparency, central planning, and export-licensing, (2) import management and control, (3) distortion of prices and exchange rate equilibrium. Garnaut and Song (2012) argue that the Chinese intention in that period was to incentivize a competitive environment for foreign trade involved enterprises.

The Shanghai Stock Exchange (SSE) and the Shenzhen Stock Exchange (SZSE) would emerge respectively in 1991 and 1992. Garnaut and Song (2012) argue that non-tradable ownership shares were issued in 1984, on the employee share for Beijing state-owned department store. They argue, further, that prior to 1989 joint stock companies started to emerge, and during the 1990s, the capitalization in both stock exchange would rise as an important capital channel.

A new stage of the reform would take place after 1994, when “the PBC gradually narrowed the scope of credit control and introduced foreign exchange open market operations” (Guofeng 2015, 77). Further, Li (1997) argues that, in the 1993-94 period, the Chinese government announced a reduction of tariffs on almost three thousand items by an average of 8.8%. Additionally, an abolishment on all import substitution lists in 1987, and the unification of the exchange rate system in order to increase its currency convertibility by a managed floating exchange rate regime against a basket of foreign currencies were implemented.

Between 1994 and 1996, according to Geiger (2006), a crawling peg with higher trading bands was used, and led to an appreciation of the Renminbi from 8.7 RMB per USD to 8.3 RMB per USD. The author then argues that after 1994 the Chinese monetary policy aimed the stabilization of

the higher inflation rate, a significant economic growth, and an exchange rate target vis-à-vis the USD.

In 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) substituted the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Chartier (1998) argues that the central government of China gained considerable political support in order to lower tariff rates and attract foreign investments by special treatments and concessions to investors, and decentralizing power to provinces, mainly after the 1990s. Then, the privatization and restructuring of the Chinese SOEs post-Asian crisis would be the fuse for its WTO accession in 2001.

The assent of the WTO to China represented the constancy of a gradual process to a market-driven economy. The country would avail the agreement to change its ownership framework and to follow an internationalization mode. According to Wakasugi and Zhang (2015), that mode would be similar to countries like the United States, Europe, and Japan, in the way exporters and non-exporters benefited from an increase in productivity.

The Chinese reforms that have started in 1978 “transformed it from a highly protected market to perhaps the most open emerging market economy by the time it came into the World Trade Organization at the end of 2001” (Lardy and Fellow 2003, 13). Also, China was converted in one of the best examples of a positive linkage between openness and economic growth.

At that moment, China has continued its path through trade liberalization, while it would reap benefits in terms of exports and agricultural productivity growth. Wakasugi and Zhang (2015) mention that in the first decade of the 21st century, it is well known that members of the WTO removed trade barriers by liberalizing and reestablishing their economies.

Although China had had a kind of immunity in front of the Asian crisis, the economic scenario, mainly the monetary, changed perspectives for China’s export and GDP annual growth. According to Wang (1999), the fact that the crisis decreased import demand from other countries had a huge impact in the export-based China. Further, the depreciation of those other countries’ currencies increased their competitiveness in the market, threatening the Chinese international market-share. In that time, the author argues that China resisted to depreciate the RMB, the reason that had shrunked FDIs projects growth.

The international circumstances influenced China to take two economic instruments, (1) monetary and fiscal expansionism, (2) financial reform. Wang (1999) argues was pursued that the first one in order to stimulate domestic demand, whereas the second aimed a movement towards an economic and financial globalization. The author mentions that the

Chinese financial system was similar to those in other Asian countries, such as Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Korea, it could be diagnosed by “bank dominance of the financial system, lack of central bank autonomy, policy and political lending, accumulation of bad loans, and absence of a strong and disciplined equity market” (Wang 1999, 541).

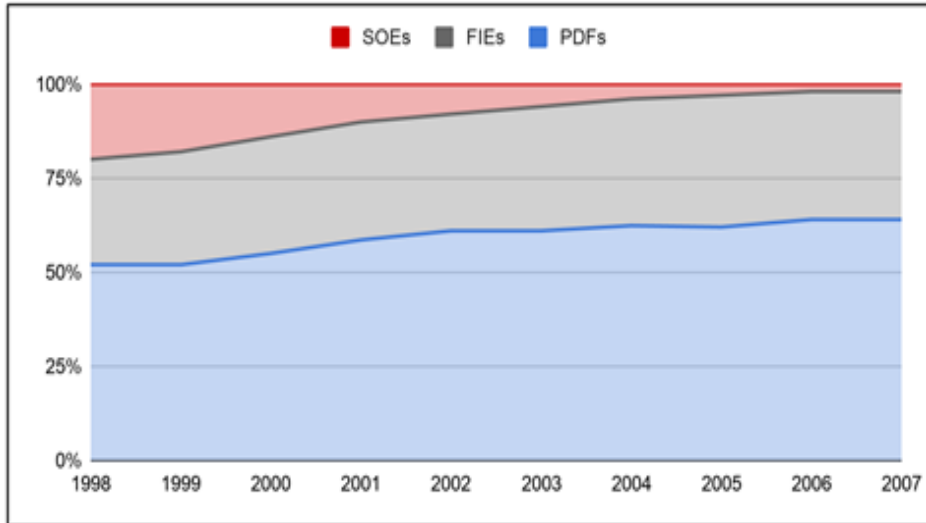
Huang and Wang (2011), and Ang and McKibbin (2007 apud Garnaut et al. 2018) developed a financial repression index that is fundamental to understand the Chinese financial system and gradualism after the Fourth Revolution. Garnaut et al. (2018) indicate the composition of the index: (1) real deposit rate, (2) interest rate control, (3) capital account control, (4) reserve requirement ratio, (5) state banks’ share in total lending, and (6) share of loans to SOEs.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the Chinese government besides the internationalization mode, adopted less trading restrictions, reduction of the special treatment that SOEs received compared to other enterprises, and the liberalization process WTO members would pursue.

The WTO controversy would be in terms of its effect in the agricultural sector as it exposes China to an open market and to global comparative advantages. Although the majority of the population lived in rural areas, 62.91% in 2001 according to the World Bank (2019c), the agricultural sector was composed by arable land scarcity and large labor supply. According to Garnaut and Song (2006), China’s per capita arable land was 0.11 per hectare, 43% of the world average. After the WTO, according to Garnaut and Song (2006), the Chinese agricultural comparative advantage declined at an accelerated rate, while agricultural imports grown at a greater pace than agricultural exports. The USDA (2016) demonstrates that China became an agricultural net importer from 2003, and after that period, imports had continued to grow at a greater pace than exports.

The asymmetric liberalization that created the dual-track system between the state and non-state sector has started to be reformed after the Asian crisis. Less trading restrictions and the distortive market and prices led China to reduce the special treatment to SOEs, and to let more efficient enterprises to flourish. Wakasugi and Zhang (2015) analyze the effect of the accession in the structural change in export decision of Chinese enterprises, and how it affected the ownership framework between foreign-invested enterprises (FIEs), private domestic firms (PDFs), and SOEs.

Figure 3: Number of Firms Composition (turnover higher than RMB 5 million)



Source: Wakasugi and Zhang (2015)

The Chinese entry to the WTO signified a huge change in terms of technological access, exposition of comparative advantages, improve in the trade balance, and a rapid economic growth. Garnaut and Song (2006) argue that after the WTO, the average annual growth of the GDP was more than 9.8% (2002-05). Also, the authors mention that China's foreign trade in the same period average annual growth was 28.6%. Further, according to the World Bank (2019d), the Chinese trade balance had an average annual growth of 55.1% between 2001 and 2007. Cui and Syed (2007) argue that the fundamental components for that improvement had been electronics, machinery, iron, steel, textiles, and chemicals.

The Succession of Currencies in the 21st Century

China's surpluses in the trade balance and its liberalization of the current account were analyzed in the previous section. The dichotomy between real and financial economy is essential to understand the role of a currency in the international scenario, as also its support for external and internal balances.

Geiger (2006) indicates that the PBC could reach its targets - inflation

stability, GDP growth and peg to the USD - through instruments with ratio (reserve requirements), instruments with interest rates (central bank lending rates), quantitative instruments (open market operations (OMO), and other instruments, such as central bank bills. China would shift considerably its monetary policy. The first key-point was the Asian financial crisis with the change in the Chinese exchange rate regime, and the second was the WTO entry, which intensified its liberalization of price controls and its use of indirect controls on the monetary system, such as central bank bills (a type of OMO).

Table 2: Chinese Monetary Instruments

Instruments of the PBC as the central bank	
<i>Indirect Instruments: Price-based</i>	
I.	PBC lending and deposit rates
II.	Discount and rediscount rate
III.	Reserve requirements
IV.	Open market operations
<i>Direct Instruments: Quantity-based</i>	
I.	Window guidance
II.	Direct PBC lending
III.	Capital controls
Other non-monetary policy instruments	
I.	Price controls
II.	Wage controls

Source: Geiger (2006)

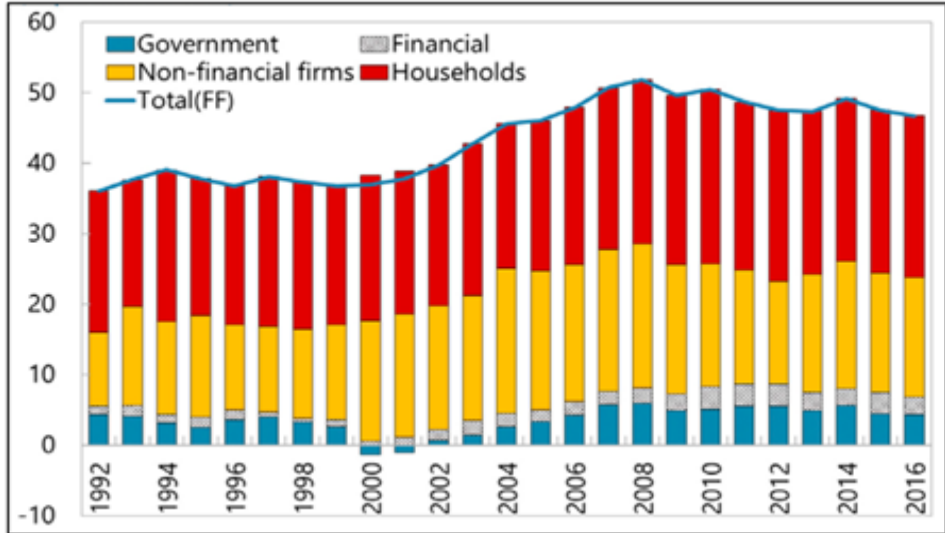
Governments can adopt FX intervention by two means: sterilized and non-sterilized interventions. Ng (2013) specifies that the non-sterilized type alters the monetary base and can jeopardize monetary policy goals, while the

sterilized maintain the monetary base at consistent levels with its established monetary goals. Suppose the Chinese government wants to depreciate RMB against USD, the non-sterilized would have 7 steps: (1) buy of USD assets and sell of RMB, (2) increase in RMB supply and USD demand, (3) depreciation of RMB against USD, (4) increase in the Chinese monetary base, (5) lower Chinese interest rate, (6) encourage more investment and less saving, (7) increase in inflation rate. China had opted for the sterilized method: (1) buy of USD assets and sell of RMB, and to counterbalance the impact of it in the monetary base, the government (2) “engage in contractionary monetary policy, such as selling government securities, to remove the excess renminbi supply from the domestic market” (Ng 2013, 5).

In that sterilization process, Ng (2013) argues that China had deepened its IIP in United States financial assets, mainly by holdings of U.S. Treasury and U.S. securities. Garton and Chang (2005) comment that in 2004 at least 80% of all the Chinese foreign exchange reserves were dollar-denominated. That composition infers risks for China as interest rates received (U.S. assets) by the Chinese government are lower than interest rates paid (Chinese bonds/bills). Further, the fact that the composition of China’s financial assets is given by foreign assets increases even more the country’s risks, whereas an appreciation of the RMB would reduce financial earnings.

Notwithstanding, according to Elliott and Yan (2013), the Chinese financial system differentiates from developed financial systems in the sense it assumes high levels of state ownership and control. “The five largest Chinese banks are majority-owned by the central government and there are significant government stakes in many of the other banks” (Elliott and Yan 2013, 3). Johansson (2012) demonstrated that state-owned commercial banks had a share of 48.47% in China’s banking assets, followed by joint-stock commercial banks (18.13%), rural commercial banks and credit union (10.73%), policy banks (8.63%), city commercial banks and credit union (7.09%), postal saving banks (3.35%), non-bank institutions (1.92%), and foreign banks (1.68%).

Figure 4: Chinese Saving Rate Composition (% of GDP)



Source: Zhang et al. (2018)

Interest control is evidenced by its manipulation during the sterilization process. Further, Xu (2018) argues that the Chinese interest rates and credit allocation had been majorly influenced by political rather commercial factors. Lardy (2012 apud Xu 2018) demonstrates that in some periods China presented negative real interest rates, in a result of the financial system rigidity. The author argues that in households interest income had been far lower than in more liberalized financial economies.

Liping and Evenett (2010) argue that the service sector serves as a sustainable architecture for international trade - provide inputs to production, such as capital and labor, generate knowledge, concentrate economic activity, and increase productivity. For the authors, the increasing share of the service sector, in general, (1) increase demand for labor, (2) increase wages, (3) exporting firms reduce their employment without an offsetting increase in productivity, (4) the share of other sectors decline, (5) manufacturing exports fall and the trade balance in goods worsen. According to the World Bank (2019e), in 2010 the average share of the service sector in value added to GDP was 54.42% in emerging countries, while China amounted for 44.18%. Understanding the role of the service sector and savings of households, it is important to point that households are important in terms of future consumption and service sector insertion, mainly if the economy displays dynamization in structural balancing.

The banking sector in China flourished stuck in the heavy industry development. As previously mentioned, the major share of state-owned banks privileged SOEs and other specific industry corporations in terms of favors and credit, “despite the fact that SOEs are on average less productive than private firms. In contrast, private firms have access to credit only at higher market interest rates.” (Liu and Spiegel 2019, 2). In addition, Tobin and Volz (2018) argue that the rural area lack access to adequate banking and financial services.

After 2005, China has allowed the Renminbi to float, increasing its trading bands, and accepting the effects of an increase in productivity. The accumulation of reserves leads China to expand its monetary base, fact that created inflationary pressures, and consequently caused real exchange rate appreciation. Chan (2018) argues that in a response of the sterilization costs, the Chinese government adopted an exchange rate based on a trade-weighted basket of currencies to diminish the real effective exchange rate effects of other currencies except for the USD.

Assuming an increase in the Chinese productivity, a RMB appreciation is inevitable. The essential capital controls to outflows, an anticipation of that appreciation is probable to occur through capital inflows, such as increasing amounts of inward FDI. If China shifts its interest rates to answer that scenario shift, internal balance would be in check. The capital controls under these circumstances, and possible inflows of FDI could bring monetary and financial instability: “a currency crisis that may trigger a banking crisis is a possibility” (Allen et al., 2015, 306).

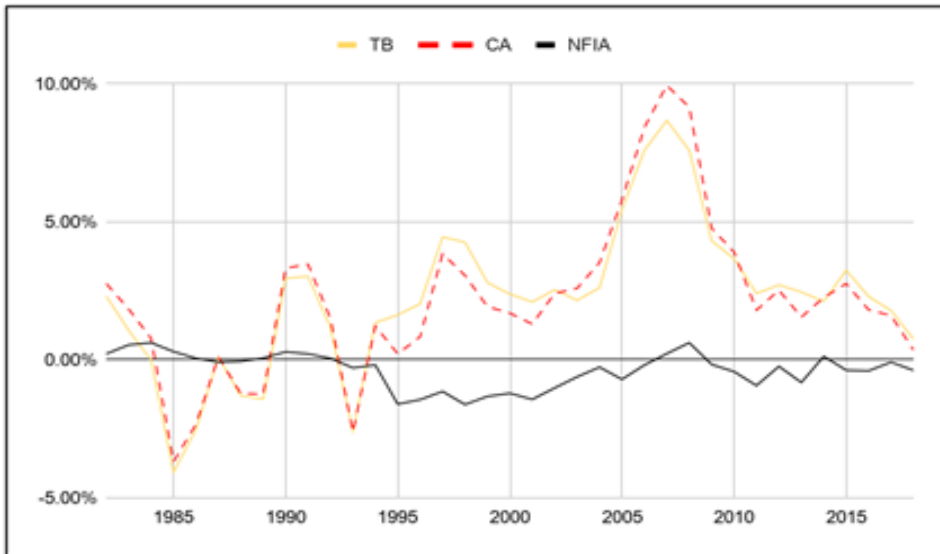
In terms of the financial account, the Chinese authorities may (1) expand financial repression, or (2) liberalize capital flows to contain instabilities and to maintain internal and external balance. According to Johansson (2012, 15), “financial repression may cause external imbalances due to the imbalance in the economic structure”. Actually, China’s inflows of FDI are essential for the manufacturing sector, to the maintenance of the SEZs and the TVEs, and to its function as one of the major China’s sources of investment. Then, limiting capital inflows may threaten domestic production. Notwithstanding, the liberalization of capital flows in China may incentivize massive capital outflows.

Relaxing capital controls can demonstrate a win-win policy between China and investors. According to Ito (2011), China could benefit from liquidity, deep markets for domestic financial products and increasing expertise in financial management and product development. Investors could have a more predictable and trustful market to invest, and access to a fast-growing economy in pursuance of financial returns.

A more flexible exchange rate requires specific functions to the capital account. As mentioned in section 4.1.2, China faces risks whereas it accumulates dollar claims in response of current account surpluses. McKinnon and Schnabl (2014) argue that the fact China does not lend in its own currency (RMB) can infer in currency risks: if China completely withdrew from the FX market, (1) China's CA surplus would be uncovered - financial institutions would not provide a matching liquid capital outflow, and (2) the RMB would appreciate indefinitely.

In terms of current account, a future appreciation of the RMB would infer in less competitive product for China. The TB would be reduced, and imports would emerge in a response of higher income per capita and attractiveness of foreign products prices. Thereafter, a TB contraction may be countervailed by an increase in the investment income (NFIA). Notwithstanding, China does not lend in RMB, factor that hamper the accumulation of claims and credit in RMB with other countries. Further, the high share of international transactions between China and United States increases returns discrepancies among them: the United States displays FDI outflows to China (U.S.'s assets, China's liabilities), and accumulate liabilities in treasury bonds and other governmental assets (U.S.'s liabilities, China's assets). The inconsistency framework acts in the sense the United States accumulate assets of a rapid-growing economy, whereas China accumulates claims of the most "reliable" economy in the international scenario, fact that dismisses risks and creates low-return assets. Capital account liberalization may emerge in place of a possible shrink in the trade balance, due to the necessity to increase the net factor income from abroad and the Chinese financial market liquidity in the international scenario.

Figure 5: China's Trade Balance, Current Account, and Investment Income to GDP (%) timelapse



Source: World Bank and author's calculation

A growing China with an open capital account would be able to benefit from international seigniorage in a greater extent, due to a larger dimension of the RMB in the global economy. An increment of the RMB supply held by other countries would increase in relation to its inflation, allowing a growing seigniorage revenue through time. Further, the exporter faces some risks in the foreign exchange market. First, the value of an ongoing production can suffer a contraction if an appreciation of the domestic currency occurs. Second, if the domestic currency is of great volatility, uncertainty can undermine international transactions in goods and services, due to the fact that exporters need to hold certain amounts of foreign currency for transactions. Also, a less international currency may require third-party currencies to trade with other countries. In the case of China, the USD is used to trade with developed and neighbouring developing countries. Therefore, the internationalization of the RMB may reduce foreign exchange risks and transaction of costs, and increase bilateral trade with neighboring countries (Peng and Shu 2010).

De Sousa and De Freitas (2018) discuss that the internationalization of the RMB is beneficial for China in the sense it could expand its economic influence, protect, and boost country's exports and investments. Peng and

Chu (2010) argue that an internationalization of the RMB may expand financial markets and financial institutions efficiency. The authors suggest that in the banking industry domestic commercial banks could reach international standards, would be able to marketize interest rates, diversify financial services, and modernize internal management systems. Further, the authors discuss the benefits to the internationalization of the security market - no nationality limitation on both investors and debtors - as a reflection of a developed financial system, and the internationalization of financial institutions - admission of foreign banks in the domestic financial system and autonomy for financial institutions to operate internationally.

The Global Financial Crisis (GFC) that happened between 2007-2008 would have a huge impact in the monetary system. The United States, country that pursues the dominant international currency, was responsible for a global financial instability. De Sousa and De Freitas (2018) argue that the GFC had simply accentuated the Chinese criticism to a dollar-based international monetary system, and in fact created incentives for China to implement an internationalization of the RMB.

China, in order to pursue a more internationalized currency, may follow four steps of liberalization (1) current account liberalization, (2) floating exchange rate regime, (3) financial development, and (4) capital account liberalization. The current account liberalization actually happened in the WTO accession in 2001. A floating exchange rate regime has gradually been implemented in China's monetary system, mainly since 2005, although in a response to the GFC the country had narrowed currency trading bands. Financial developed is required for internal factors and to support a capital account liberalization to allow China to acquire benefits from an internationalization of the RMB.

Further, if China accepts the fact that an increase in productivity should lead to an appreciation of the RMB, the country must develop its financial system to support the continuity of economic growth, may promote a more floating exchange rate regime to adjust domestic and foreign price levels and to reduce monetary intervention costs, and must open the capital account to guarantee an increase in the NFIA to countervail the appreciation of the RMB and its effects on the TB. The capital account openness requires a more developed financial system to avoid capital flight by discrepancies in international and domestic returns, mainly from households.

De facto, China has been going through this path. Deng Xiaoping's gradualism has not given a step back since 1978. According to Kwon (2015), China has adopted two different strategies without the full convertibility of the RMB after 2008: a global, and a regional strategy. The global strategy

aims to expand the RMB's circulation in international financial markets, also it encourages the use of the RMB as payment for exports and imports. The author argues that China launched in 2008 a pilot program between provinces and major cities of RMB settlement in trade. The program expanded to more provinces and cities, and to neighboring countries in 2010.

McCauley (2011) indicates that the Renminbi in 2010 started to operate in a trifurcated market, dividing the Chinese Yuan aspect: strictly offshore Chinese Yuan (NDF), onshore market Chinese Yuan (CNY), and the offshore market Chinese Yuan outside China (CNH). The author argues that trifurcated Renminbi can act as a bridge from a socialist to a market-driven economy, in the sense that the prices in the onshore and offshore markets differ, hence enabling signal sending from the offshore to the onshore market.

The global strategy included bilateral swap agreements (BSAs). McDowell (2019) argues that the technique was introduced in 1960s with the United States. The technique is simply an agreement in which parties exchange their currencies for a certain period and amount. The BSAs act like collateralized bonds: "the creditor holds the newly acquired foreign exchange while the borrower uses its newly acquired funds to address its financial needs" (McDowell 2019, 124). The author exposes 35 countries in which China had BSAs in 2017, with a total amount greater than 3 trillion RMB.

China's focus on the four internationalization elements have been followed by monetary and political authorities: current account liberalization, floating exchange rate regime, financial system development, and capital account liberalization. These elements must support China's progress through the Crowther's model, probably promoting its displacement from the third state of a mature debtor to a mature creditor status in future decades. A future negative trade balance after the fifth stage of the balance of payments cycle will allow the Renminbi to flow to other countries, at the same time China will allow countries to accumulate claims in the Renminbi in order to finance its current account deficits at the sixth stage of the cycle. These movements are crucial for the RMB internationalization, although not sufficient.

There are three school of thoughts on the future of the Renminbi. According to Harrison and Xiao (2019), the first school of thought expects the RMB to become an international currency alongside the USD. The second argues the importance of financial depth in determining a currency acceptability, fact that delay the RMB internationalization. The third discards the RMB potential for an internationalization, unless China "embarks on a broad range of financial system and economic reforms" (Harrison and Xiao 2019, 4).

The regional plan of China has prioritized a promotion of the

Renminbi in Asia. Chun and Kawai (2011) argue that this fact can differentiate the country from Japan, due to the fact that an internationalization of the yen might require the country to import more from East Asian countries in order to promote the currency in the region. The authors point out that Japan did not accept a reduction in the current account as a burden to internationalize the yen. China, adopting the four internationalization elements and adopting both regional and global plans, is presumed to increase the role of the RMB, accepting a contraction in the current account balance and moving to a more developed country in terms of financial economy.

According to the IMF (2019), the Currency Composition of Official Foreign Exchange Reserves (COFER) may suggest a weakening of the United States Dollar and the Euro in the international scenario. After 2008, from the allocated reserves, claims in currencies except in USD or Euro accounted for 10.02%. In 2018 the same composition increased to 17.63%, explaining a contraction of claims in USD and Euro from 89.98% to 82.37% in the same period. The effect can be explained by a devaluation of both currencies after the GFC. However, that event may have increased central banks tendencies to diversify portfolio investments. Eichengreen (2011) consents with that shift, at the same time he argues that China may increase its efforts to internationalize the RMB in a response to the USD and Euro aversion.

The future of China is unknown, notwithstanding “no one country in human history has ever grown so fast for so long as China did in the past three decades” (Lin 2013, 265). Further, Maddison (2010 apud Lin 2013) argues that the Chinese path on economic growth is similar to that of Japan, Singapore, Korea and Taiwan in the second half of the 20th century. If China continues to grow at the same pace, its economic size may surpass that of the United States in considerable scale. Eichengreen (2019) accentuates the importance of the size, liquidity, and stability for a potential international currency. China’s challenge on internationalizing the Renminbi is far greater than the United States’ on rising the USD against the Pound Sterling. The author mentions that the U.S. size of financial markets was already bigger than the Britain’s in 1920s.

Final Remarks

Since the Industrial Revolution, uncountable events had conducted the global monetary and economic system. This inquiry distributes these events in two generic periods: the first takes into account Britain’s economic and political dominance and the importance of the Pound Sterling. The second

focuses on a dollar-based monetary system, with the United States as the leading economy. Therefore, in that succession of events, a third period may develop in further decades. The main objective of this thesis was to investigate the conditions for China to internationalize the Renminbi and to infer how the country has progressed towards that circumstance.

After the 18th century, international economics became essential for national accountability and emerged as an essential mechanism to support economic development. Section 2 and 3 indicates that both Britain and United States trailed the same track through the Crowther's balance of payments cycles. In the first moment their trade balances supported a gradual increase in the current account, surpassing a negative primary income. The second moment shifts the surpluses in the real economy to deficits, at the same time the net factor income from abroad became positive, indicating a creditor status, and financial inflows took place.

At the beginning of the 21st century, China would continue to expand free economic zones and to focus on its real economy. Section 4 indicates that foreign exchange interventions to support an undervalued Renminbi created several consequences in terms of savings, inflation, and interest rates. That circumstances, alongside with an underdeveloped financial system created strains on a necessary upgrade in the tertiary sector, increased the importance of a shadow financial system and indirect channels for financing, and had started to narrow the potential levels of households future consumption.

Further, we conclude that China's increase in productivity must and in fact lead to an exchange rate appreciation. The relative decrease of external prices may gradually attenuate the Chinese trade balance, and consequently its current account balance. China is positioned in the third stage of the balance of payments cycle as a mature debtor country. An appreciation of the Renminbi and its consequences in the trade balance requires China to increase its net factor income from abroad to countervail a future negative trade balance. Since China presented twin surpluses in past years, a financial outflow is necessary to guarantee future returns and inflows of the primary income.

Further, the Chinese path may establish international characteristics to the Renminbi in the sense it increases China's size of economy and financial markets, decreases its financial market regulation and size of state, accentuate central bank independence, and stabilize inflation rates, and reduce trade barriers. The internationalization of the Renminbi may emerge as a consequence of the Chinese economic institutions and its gradual liberalization towards a market-driven economy.

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of the global monetary system since the Industrial Revolution can be divided into two periods. First, a period with Britain as the great economic and political power and the Pound Sterling as the most important international currency and a second, with the United States as the leading economy and a dollar-based international scenario. The relation between goods, money, and foreign exchange markets is important to understand patterns in terms of exchange rate and currency internationalization. Therefore, the Crowther balance of payments cycles may be important to identify these patterns and to serve as a standard of reference to investigate shifts in exchange rate, and their consequences on balance of payments movements. Since 1978, China has emerged as a strong candidate to assume the role of a protagonist in the global monetary system, displaying high and stable economic growth. This paper aims to investigate the necessary conditions for China to internationalize the Renminbi, local currency, and to infer its status in that progress.

KEYWORDS

Exchange Rate; China; Renminbi; International Financial System.

Received on April 21, 2021

Approved on December 23, 2021

THE ENDURING RELEVANCE OF NAVAL POWER: REFLECTIONS ON DEFENCE, SECURITY AND POWER PROJECTION OF SEA FRONTIER

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Introduction

The seas, oceans, rivers, and other water bodies have played critical roles in the advancement of human civilisation. The sea, or the water bodies generally, constitute one of the frontiers that are available for humanity to advance development and security interests. Other frontiers are land, airspace, and outer space. Beside the land, which is a natural habitat, the sea is the second oldest and most explored and exploited frontier to support human survival and progress. This does not come as a surprise, given that 71 per cent of the surface of the planet Earth is covered by oceans and seas, and the only 29 per cent that are covered by land are widely divided by these large water bodies (Luard 1977). Until the recent advancement with aircraft and space-based or supported communication technologies, maritime transportation and communication provides exclusive (and have continued to serve as a major) means to transcend this planetary divide across ages (Oyewole 2015). Accordingly, the act of advancing strategic interests, such as transportation, commerce, mining, food production, defence, security, power projection, prestige, research, and communication through the water bodies cannot be taken for granted. These among other things can be referred to as elements of sea power.

The sea is a strategic frontier with numerous potentials for the developments and security of states that share boundary, have access, and

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capacity to utilise and control, it. Therefore, it is a frontier in power politics, that is, the struggle for power among nations in international relations (Jungpang 2012; Mahan 1890; Synge 2010; Wescott 1918; Willmott 2009). These among other things have necessitated the development of specialised military forces to operate at sea, that is, the navy, which is expected to defend and promote the interests of the sponsored state, most especially when they are contested by or in conflict with other states. However, the rise of air, nuclear and space powers in the 20th century has affected the roles and relevance of naval power in defence, security, and power politics. Yet, naval power continues to retain its relevance.

This article seeks to examine this military dimension of sea power, that is, naval power, and its enduring relevance for defence and security strategies as well as power projection and politics. This is expected to bridge the gap between distance and recent history of naval power and capture its changing dynamics amidst the rise of air, nuclear and space powers. To this end, this article is further divided into five sections. The next section provides the conceptual clarification of naval power as an integral part of sea power. The second section examines the instrumentality of the navy by state. The third section focuses on the evolution of naval power up to its golden age, while the subsequent section examines its enduring relevance amidst the rise of air, nuclear and space powers. These are followed by a section that provides concluding thought of the paper.

The Concept of Naval Power in the Framework of Sea Power

The concept of sea power has several meanings. It has been defined in military, economic, and political terms. Sea power has been associated with shipping, maritime force, shipbuilding, ship-repairs, ports, fishery, offshore-based industry, hydrography, oceanography, and the activities resulting from them (Chang 2012; Edgerton 2013; Herbert-Burns et al. 2009). It therefore represents an interlocking system of sea utilisation, for civil and military purposes, which has the potential to advance the interests of a state, including contribution to the power capability of the sponsored state (Grove 1990; Mahan 1890). Sea power is synonymous with maritime power and represents one of the many instruments in the orchestra of power that states use in the pursuit of their national interests. Elements of sea power, in strategic terms, consists of flourishing commercial fleets with effective naval forces, bases, harbours, ports, and an oceanographic fleet.

An important aspect of sea power, most especially for the student of

military and strategic studies, is naval power, which simply means fighting power at sea (Mahan 1890; Wescott 1918). This is the military power that is deployed and employed at sea or from the sea. Naval power has been associated with navigation, exploration, commerce and its protection, military campaign and power projection at sea across ages (Cumings 2009; Gilbert 2008; Jung-pang 2012). Advocates of naval powers in 18th and 19th centuries largely believed that the navies have two major purposes: the protection of commerce and the acquisition of stations, colonies, and bases in distant lands (Mahan 1890; Wescott 1918; Synge 2010). Naval power is also critical to national and empire defence, and colonial policing in early 20th century, as well as strategic deterrence during the Cold War (Willmott 2009). As it will be shown in this study, however, the missions of a navy broadly cover military, diplomatic and policing functions (Booth 1977; Kraska 2011).

Naval power is the operationalisation of military power on, above or underneath the sea. Navies have been radically transformed with a series of advancements in technologies of warfare at sea. Navies across ages have operated on the sea and landed troops (army or marine forces) onshore with various surface ships. However, the advent of aircraft carrier and associated naval air power in early 20th century first make it possible for navy to operate in air above the sea (Bowman 1999; Gates 2003; O'Brien 2015). At the same time, the invention of submarine makes it possible for them to operate underneath the sea. Sea platforms have equally grown in their delivery capacity. Prior to the 20th century, naval platform can only deliver surface to surface bombing. In this case, the surface is usually a nearby targets, mainly sea platform, and the land, most especially coaster community and associated facilities like ports, bases, and industrial complexes. The advancement in missile technology with long range trajectories and guidance system have made it possible for navies to expand the reach of their operations on the land and at sea beyond the limit of their immediate location, as well as registered their presence in air and space (Camille 2011; Klein 2006; Van Riper 2004). Amidst these, there are now orbital launcher from sea platforms. Radar and anti-radar technologies as well as navigation satellites equally gave naval power its cyber and space dimensions. Accordingly, naval power has been interlocked with air, cyber, land and space powers, even as it maintains its roots in sea power.

Naval power is one of the factors that has enabled individual states to advance into the ranks of great powers. The sea remains, as Mahan (1890) wrote, "a great highway... a wide common over which men may pass in all directions." Peter the Great of Russia once said: "Every potentate who has only ground forces has only one hand, yet whoever has a navy too, has both hands

(Wood 2007).” Accordingly, General Henry Hithles of the United States Marine Corps affirms that “the pathway of man’s journey through the ages is littered with the wreckage of nations which, in their hours of glory, forget their dependence on the sea (The Nigerian Military 1988).” Pandit Nehru, the great Indian political thinker, once said that “to be secured on land you must be supreme at sea” (The Nigerian Military 1988). In the sixteenth century, Francis Bacon had contended that “he that command the sea is at great liberty and may take as much and as little of the war as he will (Wescott 1918).” The doctrine of sea power is built on the assumption that any nation which derives benefits from the sea cannot simply turn its back on it (Mahan 1890; The Nigerian Military 1988).

The Navy as an Instrument of State Power

The need to have a powerful navy is consequent upon the geographical position of a nation and its desire to influence the behaviour of other states and thereby achieve their national interest and objectives. The source and significance of national power lies in the political, economic, and strategic importance of sea utilisation, which necessitate a nation to have a navy. Most littoral states have developed, and to a large extent depend on, their maritime environments to enhance their economy prosperity. Accordingly, many countries, most especially the littoral ones, have developed their national interests to cover their secure navigation of their immediate waters. The national interests of more powerful countries ranged from secure passage, exploration, exploitation and in some cases control of the sea in their immediate region/s or globally (Cumings 2009; Borressin 2004; Jung-pang 2012; Mahan 1890; Synge 2010; Wescott 1918; Willmott 2009).

Navy generally serves the state as an instrument of statecraft and contribute to its power capabilities through military, diplomatic and policing functions. Consequently, naval forces are usually organised strategically to serve these purposes. Different specialisation and sub-specialisation are often designed, and training of personnel are often tailored accordingly, after the initial general training. Similarly, different platforms and weapon systems are designed, designated, and deployed for different types of warfare among other operations. The concept of a balanced fleet presupposes that a navy has an assortment of platforms to engage in different forms of operation, depending on perception of threats, the resources available and the level of risk a nation is prepared to take by providing adequately for eventuality (Borressin 2004). The ability to exercise required naval power of a nation is largely premised on a ‘balanced navy’ (Grove 1990).

Chief among the roles of a navy is military function: war engagement to defend the homeland against targeted enemy and attack a target to defend the interests of sponsored state. Naval capabilities can be deployed and employed in limited ways or its totality, depending on the stake for the national interests of concerned state party. Equally, naval capabilities can be deployed and employed independently or in collaboration with other services of armed forces, as a joint task force, in warfare. In any case, the goals of any navy in warfare are to defeat the enemy through destruction of its forces as well as their material capabilities and associated fighting will. Naval operations are therefore planned to advance tactical interests, which are in turn expected to advance military and then strategic national interests of the state (Bartholomees 2008; Elleman 2004; Gray 2002).

Ideally, the attainment of military objectives should promote and entail the achievement of national objectives, but in many cases the national objectives require the integration of military success with non-military instruments of national power through politics (Bartholomees 2008; Gray 2015; 2016). Apparently, war is a continuation of politics by other means: it is preceded and succeeded by politics (Clausewitz 1982). This involves grand strategy; 'grand' because it integrates all relevant military and non-military elements of national power, and 'strategy' because these elements of national power are marshalled within coherent and carefully planned and implemented policy framework to achieve the specified national objectives (Gray 2015; 2016; Morgenthau 2006). Accordingly, naval interests are a component part of military objectives that are usually subsumed into national interests, which often cover issues of development and security trajectories, and their implications for domestic and international orders, including regional and global distribution and balance of power (Morgenthau 2006; Yakubu 2010).

Although the primary role of the navy is warfare, it has found many other roles in peacetime. Naval power is one of the essential instruments in deterring the outbreak of armed conflicts, in exerting influence and pressure on a target as part of diplomatic activities to influence other actors and secure concession and enforcing developed corpus of international law and regulations that prevents the maritime environment from dissolving into chaos (Grove 1990). In peacetime, navy usually place emphasis on enhancing capabilities, including personnel strength through training as well as the maintenance of existing and acquisition of new platforms and supporting assets. These are critical to maintain the preparedness of the force and deter potential threats of war. Most of the navies around the world often perform policing and constabulary duties. This can occur in absence of specialised institution for coast guards and in suppressing internal insurrection among

other support for civil or any other constituted authorities. Amidst these, navy also serve the state as instrumental of national development through its research as well as patrol and protection of sea lane and associated trade against bandits or sea robbers and pirates, within maritime jurisdiction and international waters respectively.

As an instrument of diplomacy, navy is used in a non-military sense to advance the political objectives of a state. Naval diplomacy involves creating generally favourable and military-specific image abroad and establishing a state's 'right' in areas of interest, providing reassurance to allies and friendly nations, influencing behaviour of other governments or groups indulging in sea-borne crimes or other forms of strategically threatening maritime activities (Cable 1994; Camille 2011). Amidst these, gunboat diplomacy refers to the use or threat of limited naval force in order to secure advantage or avert loss, either in an international dispute or against foreign nationals within the territory or the jurisdiction of their own state (Cable 1994). The concept became popular in 19th century, and it was associated with sea control, projection of power ashore by amphibious means, and naval presence. These were prevailing ideas behind the missions of navies up to the end of World War II, and their relevance endure till date (Willmott 2009).

The general decline in major wars and the rise of Cold War uncovered a new dimension of naval diplomacy, with emphasis on deterrence. The concept can be further expanded in post-Cold War era to include friendly visit, joint training, and capacity building. However, the popularity of naval diplomacy does not diminish the primary place of warfare in naval strategy, which has equally undergone a series of transformation across time and space. It is against this background that the next section will briefly examine the evolution of sea power with emphasis on the navy.

Evolution and the Golden Age of Naval Power

The role and importance of sea power to nation-state and its equivalent across history cannot be underestimated. The history of sea power can be traced back to the ancient Egypt about 6,000 years ago. This ancient civilisation was built on the capacity to explore and exploit River Nile for basic sustenance of human community, which is essential for the development and security of the ancient Egyptian kingdom (Gilbert 2008; Hall 2005). However, the military dimension of sea power, naval power became more popular much more later. The Athenians, Persians, Romans, Chinese, English, Spanish, French and Americans among other peoples that have developed into great empires or

power status built renowned naval power capabilities at various time across history.

It is a historical fact that naval power played critical role in the military power capabilities and status of Athens, Persia, and Rome as Mediterranean powers between 500BC and 300AD. Amidst these, naval power is important in the Greco-Persian wars of 4th century BC, as evident with the victory of Athens against Persia in Salamis (Thucydides 1928). In the Punic Wars (264BC-146BC), Roman navy greatly contributed to defeat of the Carthaginians who were deny the use of sea power and could not give support to Hannibal's troops on land in Spain due to the Roman blockade of the Mediterranean Sea. The Roman control of the sea forced Hannibal to long and perilous march through Gaul, where more than half of its troops were lost. The naval battle of Ecnomus (256 BC) stands out as one of the decisive battles of this era; it was the death blow to Carthaginian naval power, with sixty-four vessels and their crew captured and twenty-four sunk, the Romans won the war, and the supremacy of their naval power was established (Silburn 1912).

With the decline of Roman Empire, which started in 3rd century AD, sea power became less pronounced in major wars and power dynamics of the then international politics of Eurasia until the tail end of the Middle Ages (between 14th and 15th centuries). In the far east Asia, however, China developed its maritime capabilities for commerce and military purposes to become a major sea power during the Southern Song and Yuan periods, between 12th and 14th centuries. Naval power played important role in Chinese invasions of Korea and Japan among other neighbouring entities in 12th and 13th centuries. The decline of Chinese sea power, which first started with the death of Qubilai Qan in 1294 attracted subsequent Japanese invasion of 1304 and the rise of maritime piracy in mid-14th century. Subsequently, the efforts to rebuild Chinese sea power was marked with a series of explorations cum commercial and naval expeditions, some of which reached the East coast of Africa, especially between 1400 and 1433 (Jung-pang 2012). These established China as a leading sea power in Eastern Pacific and Indian Ocean during this period.

At the tail end of the Middle Ages, the strategic relevance of sea power gained currency among the emerging nation-states of Europe, most especially England/Britain, France and Spain. Amidst these, Britain emerged as the greatest sea power the world ever knew before World War II. Spain and Portugal had over a century head-start over Great Britain in maritime expedition, the same way that both Holland and France took off in the quest for sea power before the British (Mahan 1890; Silburn 1912). The reign of Elizabeth was however a turning-point in the development of British sea

power. One of the major indicators of the ascendancy of British naval power was the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 (Chadwick 1915; Mahan 1890; Silburn 1912).

Naval power played critical roles in the conquest and territorial ambitions of the British Empire in Americas, Asia, and Africa. Equally, British's victory against France in North America owed a lot to naval power, although the supporting roles of the French navy for American revolution also caused the Great Britain to relinquished sovereignty over the thirteen colonies that formed the United States of America in the 1770s. The British navy was also a major actor in the effort that made the great expansionist policy of France under Napoleon the "baseless fabric of a vision" (Mahan 1890). Remarkably, the British navy defeated the combined forces of France and Spain in the battle of Trafalgar in 1805. These among others made the Great Britain a global sea power of 19th century, a status that gave the country an edge over its continental rivals (Lambert 2004).

It is against this background that there was major struggle for sea control among major powers in the wake of 20th century. This was more salient to protect line of communications for those that relied on the sea for their basic supplies, especially food, fuel, ammunitions, and raw materials. The need to maintain sustainable relationship with overseas territories for military mobilisations and economic survival (sources of raw materials to run production lines and markets for finished goods) also raised the strategic importance of the sea lanes and their control as subject of defence and power projection (Grove 1990; Lambert 2004; Till 1987; Willmott 2009). These among others were evident in the political dynamics that lead up to the World Wars. Prior to this, however, the United States of America and Japan joined the exclusive club of sea powers that were dominated by European powers (Cumings 2009; Patalano 2015; Willmott 2010). At the same time, the golden age of sea power, when naval power is a decisive factor in war and associated power politics, started to decline (Willmott 2009; 2010). The two World Wars subsequently questioned the classical notion of naval power and sank the glory of many emperies that were built across the seas. The rise of air, nuclear and space powers alter the decisive notion of naval power, which were largely held in war and power politics until early 20th century. Yet, the strategic relevance of naval power endured as Cold War replaced World War II.

Naval Power in the Age of Air, Nuclear and Space Warfare

The rise of air power, and subsequently nuclear and space powers, from the first decade of 20th century, marked the end of the Golden age of naval power. Air power is the ability to perform strategic functions in the airspace. The advent of modern aircraft, and its military adoption and utilities in warfare, from early 20th century, signify the ascendancy of air power. The Italians made history for their record of using modern aircraft for reconnaissance and bombing against Ottoman forces in Tripoli in 1911 and 1912. Prior to these, other European powers like Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia have developed army and naval aviation (Gates 2003). In the wake of World War I in 1914, Germany had acquired 232 military aircraft, while Russia had 264, France had 165, Britain had 63, Austria-Hungary had 48 and Belgium had 16 (Creveld 2011). Air power played important roles in the World War I, inter-war armed conflicts and the World War II. The relevance of the air frontier has further endured the rise of nuclear and space powers during the Cold War, and the asymmetric warfare that dominated post-Cold War era. Amidst these, air power is operationalised with air airstrike, interception, transportation, as well as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR).

The rise of air power considerably undermined the strategic importance that is attached to sea power prior to the 20th century. Compared to sea power, air power provides unique opportunity to operate over the land and the sea. This is connected to the prospects of using air assets for transportation, deep penetration of hostile territory, insertion and evaluation of troops and logistics in/out of theatre of operation, bombing of hostiles, ISR, and interception. These encouraged some scholars to argue for air power as a veritable instrument that can deliver decisive victory independently, or as forerunner of the joint forces (Harding 2005; Till 1987). On December 7, 1941, for instance, Japanese air campaign in Pearl Harbour had great destructive impacts and challenged American sea power in the Pacific. However, the effectiveness and prospects of air power have been undermined by the rise of air defence systems, which have land, sea, and air components. Amidst these, sea power is critical to area denial and national security of coastal states (Murfett 2003; Pugh 2005). Besides, the concept of naval sea power, which is largely connected to aircraft and recently helicopter carriers, retain the relevance of naval power in the age of air power.

The rise of nuclear weapons and associated power from mid-1940s became another major factor that questioned the relevance of naval power as conceived by its classical proponents. The destructive power of nuclear weapon is like nothing that human has seen before. Its prospect in wiping out

tens and hundreds of thousands of people became evident in Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and its further advancement and testing thereafter. The invention of this weapon played critical role in fast-tracking the conclusion of the World War II, especially in the Pacific, and made direct military confrontation irrational between/among the superpowers and some of the great powers during the Cold War. As a result, the weapon became an object of deterrence, enhancing bargaining power in diplomacy, and means of communicating a nation's intentions strategically to potential adversaries (Kissinger 1990; Hosti 2001).

Considering the destructive impacts and potentials of nuclear weapons, some observers have argued that war can be won by a state with this capability without the participation of the navy and perhaps other services of the armed forces, either by deployment or mere threat of the weapon (Gorshkov 1974; Seigei 1979). Meanwhile, the critical roles of aircraft and missiles in delivery of nuclear weapons covered early advantage on air power in the age of nuclear power. However, naval power retained its relevance in relation to nuclear weapons, most especially with the prominence of submarine. Besides, naval power became a major factor in balance of power or terror, given the critical role of submarine-stocked nuclear weapons in ensuring Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) between the superpowers during the Cold War. The advent of nuclear bunker buster raised the threats of total destruction of home territory with limited retaliatory capacity.

Amidst these, naval power make it possible for nuclear powers to deter ambitious adversary from resorting to first strike, as maritime domain provides the opportunity to maintain second strike capability, which guarantee retaliation in case of destruction of home territory. Although the limitation of this option has been with the advent and advancement in submarine/underwater tracking systems, it remains a critical dimension of the complex system of deterrence mechanism adopted for defence, security and power projection by nuclear powers.

The advent of space age opened up some new challenges and opportunities for naval power. Space assets have been used in conflict, competition and cooperation with different terrestrial assets. The launch of *Spotnik*, the first artificial satellite of the Earth, into orbit by the Soviet Union, in 1957, marked the beginning of the space age. Space exploration and exploitation raised the prospects for militarisation and weaponisation of the highest frontier. Although this was not actualised, the threat of deploying nuclear weapons in orbit was raised with space race between the superpowers during the Cold War. This could have created unpopular third frontier of nuclear retaliation. Militarisation of space commonly appears in form of

support for military command and control via computers, communications, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR). These made it possible to track, monitor and connect with military formation and assets anywhere they are across the world, be it in the air, on the land, and on or under the sea (Dawson 2018; Klein 2006; Mowthorpe 2004). Accordingly, space support has further undermine myth and invisibility of military powers, including at sea, while it enhanced naval C4ISR. Equally, the advent of sea platform for orbital launch and tracking as well as recovery of reentry spacecrafts are key indicators of the enduring relevance of naval power in the space age.

Final Remarks

The relevance of traditional conception of naval power is open to question with the advent of air, nuclear and space technologies. In the light of these, the term 'sea control' has gained currency instead of 'command of the sea' that popularly used by earlier naval thinkers such as Mahan and Corbett. Sea control is intended to describe a more realistic operational control in limited areas and for limited periods. It is conceivable today to temporarily exert air, submarine and surface control in the area while moving ships into position to project power ashore or re-supply overseas forces during wartime (The Nigerian Military 1988). The command of the sea was modified into theories of 'control' or 'dominance' of those parts of the sea that were necessary for the fulfilment of any particular objective; hence, 'battle' was not something that necessarily needed to be sought but must be prepared for with the prospect of success (Richard 2006). Sea control, equally continued to emphasise the concept of protected shipping, with at least the principles of convoy widely accepted and provided for, even if they did not follow in full the precepts and 'laws' (Grove 1990). In classical thinking, command of the sea had always had an obverse quality: denial of its use to the enemy; in sea control, denial still has a place (Richard 2006). The argument here is not that the enemy cannot do anything, but that the enemy cannot interfere with or succeed in undermining the objective and goals of the operations so seriously as to affect the overall strategy of the war and policy, and that it cannot carry on with its own operational objectives and goals except at such risk and hazard to its own implemented strategy.

Sea control recognises the limitations on ocean control brought about by the development of the submarine, airplane, the nuclear age and even the laws governing sea use. However, the concept of 'battle space dominance' is more important to navies in the 21st century than sea control. This concept ensures a more permanent presence of one's own naval forces off the enemy

coast to enjoy all the benefits accruing from denying to the enemy the use of the coast (Raja 1998). The object of naval warfare directly or indirectly remains to secure the control of the sea for the advancement of sponsored state's strategic national interests, and to prevent the enemy or potential adversaries from securing it or using against such state and its interests. It is against this background that this article presented the enduring relevance of naval power in changing strategic environment, which marked by the advent of air, nuclear and space powers since the 20th century.

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ABSTRACT

The sea/maritime domain is a critical frontier of human exploration and exploitation for food production, transportation, commerce, research, communication, mining, defence, security, power projection and prestige in international system. These made it a frontier of strategic cooperation, competition and conflict. Consequently, the sea has been militarised by littoral states, which have led to the rise of naval powers, across time and space. Naval power is strategically relevant in defence, security and power projection, as evident in its roles in warfare, deterrence, policing, and diplomacy across history. This is even more pronounced during the golden age of naval power, when the roles of the navy were decisive in outcomes of war, territorial defence and conquest, empire building and maintenance, bargaining, industrialisation, commerce and global policing. However, the strategic relevance of naval power has undergone notable changes with the rise of air, nuclear and space powers. Against this background, this article examines the enduring strategic relevance of naval power over the last century, vis-à-vis its challenges and prospects among other instruments of force and frontiers of defence, security and power projection that have emerged.

KEYWORDS

Naval Power; Navy; Sea Power; Air Power; Military; Nuclear Power; Space Power.

Received on April 21, 2021

Approved on November 06, 2021

PRIORITIZATION OF MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS ON EXPORT CONTROL OF DEFENSE PRODUCTS AND SENSITIVE TECHNOLOGIES BY HIERARCHICAL ANALYSIS PROCESS

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Introduction

The Brazilian intention to project itself internationally and to assume a role compatible with its territorial, population and economic magnitudes, necessarily obliges the country to take part in multilateral organizations and inter-regional mechanisms that enable participation in international decision-making processes (Miyamoto 2000, 122; Sardenberg 2005, 347). Another important attitude to gain prestige and achieve that goal is the careful adherence to international agreements, in order to gain visibility and credibility, in order to be able to use this position as an advantage in any bilateral and multilateral negotiations (Silva and Guimarães 2020, 23).

Several of these international agreements are intended to control the sale and transfer of arms, supplies and related technologies, in order to prevent terrorist organizations or even countries that do not commit to peace and regional and international balance from doing wrongful use of that material. Possessing modern weapons, materials and technology to build them, they could potentialize the outbreak of violent conflicts, with the possible occur-

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rence of actions of mass destruction, crimes against humanity and/or war crimes (Nayan, Nayan, and Ghosh 2019; Casarini and Tsuruoka 2021, 95).

Consistently, countries that undertake not to supply such equipment and technologies, voluntarily limiting their commercial possibilities, also undertake to refrain from taking part in the reprehensible actions that such agreements seek to avoid.

The adherence to Multilateral Export Control Regimes (MECR), by increasing the adherent country's credibility with the international community, can also facilitate access to these same products and technologies that are controlled by the agreements in question (Gahlaut 2017).

Then a window of opportunity opens in which our country can acquire supplies from the international war industry that, until then, were denied to us, forcing us into a long and costly process of development, as well as representing an opening of new markets and new customers to our Defense Industrial Base (DIB). In short: paradoxically, increasing export controls on sensitive products, rather than weakening our position as a war material supplier, can strengthen it (Khokhar 2018, 27).

Brazil has a substantial peaceful tradition, being recognized for actively participating, through diplomacy, in several global initiatives to mitigate conflicts and maintain balance between nations. Moreover, the art. 4 of the Federal Constitution presents the principles that guide our international relations. Among others, the following stand out: the defense of peace, the peaceful solution of conflicts and cooperation among peoples for the progress of mankind (Brasil 2016, 11).

Themes such as arms control, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, renouncing the development and use of nuclear devices, demonstrate that Brazil respects the norms of International Law, investing in transparency, submission to international control agencies and in multilateralism. This posture constitutes a basis for building mutual trust between international actors (Oliveira and Onuki 2000, 111).

In this sense, several actions are aligned with the National Defense Policy (NDP) and the National Defense Strategy (NDS), as they contribute to the country's projection in the concert of Nations. The eighth National Defense Objective (NDO) encourages the country to assume a leading role in more international organizations, as long as the benefits outweigh the costs for adhering to the agreements considered (Brasil 2020). For the achievement of the NDO, the NDS details Strategic Defense Actions (SDA). Here we highlight the SDAs directly related to the research problem:

SDA-45 - Promote exports from the Defense Industrial Base.

SDA-79 - Intensify foster measures in order to promote mutual trust and

international security.

SDA-80 - Intensify exchanges and agreements in the defense area with other countries.

SDA-82 - Intensify action in multilateral forums and inter-regional mechanisms.

SDA-86 Intensify the performance of the Defense Sector in international organizations (Brasil 2020).

According to the Defense Ministry, Brazil is a signatory to the following Treaties and Regimes with reflections on Defense (Brasil 2021):

- Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW);
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC);
- Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC);
- OTTAWA Treaty;
- Arms Trade Treaty (ATT);
- Tlatelolco Treaty;
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); and
- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

The major Multilateral Export Control Regimes (MECR) in the world today are (Beck and Jones 2019; Gahlaut 2017):

- Wassenaar Arrangement (WA);
- Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR);
- Australia Group (AG);
- Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG); and
- Zangger Committee (ZC).

Among the five current MECR, Brazil is a signatory to only two: the MTCR and the NSG (Pecequillo and Bertolucci 2019, 168). Thus, the country's adhesion to the WA, the AG and the ZC can be seen as a natural step for Brazil, as it is coherent with its aspirations for regional protagonism, international projection and its peaceful tradition. However, it is necessary to think about the burden involved in adhering to each of these Agreements, as well as the possible resulting benefits, for later comparison and establishment of a priority for adhesion, rationally supporting strategic decision-making.

The Research Design

Given the context presented, the following question guided the research: among the three agreements within the scope of the MECR in which Brazil does not participate (WA, AG and ZC), which one presents the greatest feasibility of being implemented, indicating a priority for Brazil's adhesion? This "feasibility" translates into advantages in adhesion from different points of view, of a political, legal, economic, military, industrial and even cultural nature, in a way that adheres to the expressions of National Power (Spiller 2013, 180).

This problem can be solved through the development of a decision support model capable of analyzing the cost-benefit ratio of complying with the WA, AG and ZC clauses, serving as an advisory instrument for the Brazilian political and strategic levels. To achieve this general objective, intermediate objectives were selected, which contribute to the general achievement:

- Describe WA provisions on export controls on conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies (dual employment);
- Describe the AG clauses on export controls for chemical and biological elements;
- Describe ZC provisions on export controls on nuclear products and radioactive elements;
- Develop a decision support model that allows solving the research problem;
- Apply the model based on expert assessments on the topic.

Establishing a priority of choice for a set of alternatives is a subject studied and analyzed in depth in the Operational Research (OP) through multicriteria decision support models (Sant'Anna 2015; Almeida 2013). These models seek satisfactory solutions for the choice or classification of alternatives evaluated under multiple criteria. They also make it possible to reduce the subjectivity of the processes of choice or classification of alternatives for a problem, proposing solutions that avoid biased or arbitrary decisions which do not reflect institutional or corporate interests.

Among several possible models of application to the problem of this research, the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) was chosen for its simplicity, its suitability to the need to present a final priority to the Agreements, its internal validation instrument that assesses coherence logic of the experts' opinions and for not requiring the quantification of measures to the selected criteria for the evaluation (Saaty 1990; 1980; Saaty and Vargas 2012; Bhushan

and Rai 2004). The AHP is widely applied in decision support problems in the most varied areas of human knowledge, including applications in decision-making problems at the political-strategic level (Hassan and Lee 2019; Elezaj et al. 2021; Duleba 2019; Chen, Hayat, and Alsaedi 2017).

In general, the signing of an international agreement involves different interest groups. In the case of agreements under the MECR, the Defense Ministry (DM) stands out as the main stakeholder due to the nature of the content of those Agreements, including formally designating the Department of Defense Products (DDP) to monitor the negotiations related to the subject. Thus, the research established this design for the application of the model, seeking DM specialists to identify the priority among the three selected Agreements.

Arms Control Agreements

Arms control is not a new issue, societies have been dealing with it since industrial processes have lowered production costs to the point where such “tools” could be within the reach of individuals, companies and governments (Lafer 1998; Croft 1996; Gillespie 2011, 8).

Perhaps the most famous international agreements on limiting the use of weapons in a situation of war are the Hague conventions on means and methods of combat, which, together with the Geneva conventions on the protection of victims, constitute the International Law of Armed Conflicts (ILAC) also known as International Humanitarian Law (IHL) (Gillespie 2011, 21). Both conventions were promoted by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), a Swiss private body, founded in 1863, whose purpose is notably humanitarian (Gillespie 2011, 50).

Although several other agreements of this nature have been signed throughout history, it was not until 1945 that their true need was verified. The use of nuclear devices in World War II and the subsequent arms race that began with the so-called “Cold War” alerted the world to the need for rules, agreements, treaties, resolutions, regimes and any other pacts that could control weapons and ammunition, including its inputs and storage (Gillespie 2011, 124). That is why the Charter of the United Nations highlighted the purpose of “preserving future generations from the scourge of war” (UN 1945, 3).

The most significant UN resolutions are usually issued by its Security Council (SC/UN). However, the Security Council’s veto power often hinders the UN’s internal decision-making process, considering that its permanent members have divergent interests and that unanimity is needed between them for the resolutions to be signed (Silva and Tavares Filho 2020, 18). In

this context, this lack of consensus on resolutions dealing with arms control led to the emergence of other forums capable of promoting this activity. The WA, for example, has its origins in the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (CoCom), a pact of countries aligned with the US that aimed to restrict the export of sensitive military material to communist countries (Li et al. 2019; NTI 2021).

The Wassenaar Arrangement

Wassenaar Arrangement is the shortened name of the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Control for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies (WA 1996). Usually, the available literature on the subject refers to it in a simplified way as Wassenaar Arrangement or even WA, notation adopted hereinafter.

The WA was established in 1995 with the participation of 28 countries: Germany, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Slovakia, Spain, United States of America, Finland, France, Greece, Netherlands, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. Over time, 14 more countries joined: South Africa, Argentina, Bulgaria, South Korea, Croatia, Slovenia, Estonia, India, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Romania and Ukraine. The European Union is considered an observer of the WA (WA 1996).

Its purpose is to contribute to regional and international security and stability, preventing destabilizing accumulations of military material through transparency and increasing accountability in transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use technologies and equipment (civil and military). Through national policies, member countries seek to ensure that transfers (sale, resale, donation, among others) of these materials do not contribute to the development or improvement of destabilizing military capabilities, and that they are not diverted for use by terrorist organizations (WA 1996).

To achieve this goal, member countries undertake to inform each other every six months about transfers of materials under control to non-WA countries, or even refusals to transfer, which must also be reported.

There is an eight-category list that lists the materials and technologies to be monitored through export control. The categories are as follows:

1. Battle Tanks;
2. Armoured Combat Vehicles;
3. Large Caliber Artillery Systems;

4. Military Aircraft / Unmanned Aerial Vehicles;
5. Military and Attack Helicopters;
6. Warships;
7. Missiles and Missiles Systems); and
8. Small Arms and Light Weapons - Man-portable Weapons made or modified to military specifications for use as lethal instruments of war.

In turn, the Lists of Dual-use Goods and Technology lists dual-use materials and technologies, with the following categories:

- Category 1 - Special Materials and Related Equipment);
- Category 2 – Material Processing;
- Category 3 – Electronics;
- Category 4 – Computers;
- Category 5 – Part 1 – Telecommunications;
- Category 6 – Part 2 – Information Security;
- Category 7 – Sensors and Lasers;
- Category 8 – Navigation and Avionics;
- Category 9 – Marine;
- Category 10 – Aerospace and Propulsion;
- Sensitive List [SL];
- Very Sensitive List [VSL]; and
- Munition List.

It should be noted that this commitment to report on material transfers does not imply an obligation on the member country to transfer or deny transfer of such materials. This is a sovereign decision, under the sole responsibility of the member country.

Nevertheless, it is necessary for the member country to establish, at a national level, an effective control of exports through a legal framework, a regulatory system for international trade and a licensing system for products controlled by the WA. It is not an easy task as it involves, mainly in the regulatory and licensing systems, the active participation of international trade regulatory agencies and defense product certification agencies, the Armed Forces, the Public Security Forces, Customs, companies in the Defense sector, export companies, brokers and even charter companies, especially those of the maritime modal (WA 1996).

Since the legal and regulatory issues are specific to each country and there is a myriad of conditions that shape them, the WA cannot dictate the

rules to be adopted by each member. However, in an attempt to homogenize these issues, the WA also functions as a forum for exchanging experiences among member countries, making available a series of documents that report on good practices that have been positively tested, divided by thematic areas (WA 1996).

One of the most interesting recommendations of this forum concerns the transfer of dual-use material, even if not formally listed by the WA, to countries that are subject to an arms embargo by the SC/UN and/or some other relevant embargo at regional reach. The WA recommends establishing the regulation so that the exporting company is obliged to request authorization from the Government to proceed with the transfer of these materials when there is a suspicion that they could be used, in whole or in part, for military purposes. The WA defines the term “military purposes” as the use of unlisted material in conjunction with any listed material, but the final definition and classification criteria remain at the discretion of each member country. This type of regulation is commonly known as Catch-all (WA 1996).

Another very effective recommendation concerns the control of chartering companies. There are members of the WA that are not among the main producers of military material, but they are headquarters of large transport logistics companies. In this case, good practice recommends that the member country exercise effective control over the products that are transported by the ships and/or planes of these companies, even if such cargoes do not even transit through its territory. And there are also cases in which the member country functions as a true logistical hub, that is, it has important port/airport facilities, through which a good part of international trade transits. In this case, good practice recommends that the member country exercise effective control of what leaves or enters these facilities, including through electronic detection means, also covering what only transits through these places, even if they are considered free zones or free trade areas (WA 1996).

One of the provisions of the Agreement concerns refusals to transfer listed materials to countries that do not participate in the WA. The refusal of a transfer made by a member country does not oblige the other members to also refuse to carry out similar transfers, but obliges them to communicate to the other members any license or authorization of identical transfer (same materials and same recipients) that have been denied in the last three years by another member country (WA 1996).

The WA is headquartered in Vienna, Austria, where a small secretariat is maintained, and member country representatives meet annually, usually in December, forming what is known as the “WA Plenary”. During these meetings, issues related to the functioning of the WA are discussed, the control

policies to be proposed are studied and reviewed, and the lists of controlled materials are updated. The most current discussions going on at WA concern the inclusion of cyberwarfare-related materials and technologies on checklists. In these plenary sessions, the membership proposals of new members are also evaluated. All decisions are taken by consensus. (WA 1996).

Candidate countries for WA membership are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Whether the country is a producer/exporter of arms or related industrial material;
- Whether the country uses the WA lists as a reference for its national export controls;
- Its non-proliferation policies, including adoption of the NSG, ZC, MTCR and AG policies, checklists and rules;
- Whether the country has adhere to the NPT, the Biological and Toxicological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Strategic Weapons Reduction Treaty, if applicable; and
- Whether the country effectively controls its exports.

The Australia Group

The Australia Group, also known by the abbreviation AG, is an informal forum of countries that seeks to minimize, through effective export control, the risk of proliferation of chemical and biological weapons. (AG 2007).

After the UN found in 1984 that Iraq had used chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq war, in violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, several countries implemented export controls on certain chemicals products that could be used to produce chemical weapons (Torres and Colasso 2018, 38). At the time, it was found that part of the chemical precursors used by Iraq were acquired through conventional channels of international trade (Walker 2017; Foroutan and Tu 2017). As there was no uniformity in the export control rules, which still allowed the acquisition of dangerous chemical inputs by belligerent countries, Australia proposed a meeting with the purpose of standardizing the control rules through cooperation between the countries that adopted them. The initial participants of this meeting, which took place in Brussels - Belgium in June 1985, formed what was later known as the Australia Group. Currently, the AG holds an annual meeting in Paris - France and its decisions are taken by consensus, that is, unanimously. (AG 2007).

Originally, 17 countries plus the European Union formed the GA: Germany, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Spain, United States of America, France, Greece, Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Portugal and United Kingdom. Currently, the AG has 42 members plus the European Union, having joined over time: Argentina, Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, South Korea, Croatia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, India, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine (AG 2007).

The purpose of the AG is achieved through the harmonization of export controls among member countries, so that everyone can meet the minimum control requirements, preventing countries or terrorist organizations willing to build chemical and biological warfare capabilities from achieving their intent. To guide export controls, the AG draws up lists of chemical and biological products that must be under the constant attention of States (AG 2007).

All member countries are committed to establishing licensing procedures for 89 chemical weapons precursors, in addition to requiring specific licensing for: facilities, equipment and technologies related to dual-use chemical and/or biological manufacturing; animal and plant pathogens and biological agents. By adopting such licensing procedures, member countries serve as an example to the international community, encouraging other countries to do the same within the international effort to comply with the provisions of CS/UN Resolution No. 1540/2004 on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Stewart 2018).

Naturally, the AG member countries are signatories to the International Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on the Destruction of the World's Existing Chemical Weapons (known as the Chemical Weapons Convention) and the Convention on the Prohibition on the Development, Production and Storage of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin-Based Weapons and their Destruction (known as the Biological Weapons Convention). In order to fulfill their obligations under these two Conventions, member countries exchange information on export control measures and are not obliged under the Agreement to restrict international transfers of the listed materials. The decision to transfer or not is a sovereign decision of the participating State, based mainly on the judgment it makes about the non-proliferation practices of the destination country (AG 2007).

The laws, regulations and standards that each member country adopts must prevent the production of chemical and biological weapons, must be easy to implement and must not impede the normal trade of materials and

equipment intended for legitimate use (AG 2007).

The AG recommends that when exporting controlled materials to countries not participating in the AG, the member country should ensure that the products will not be re-exported; and that, if re-exported, the products will continue to be controlled by the country of destination and, in this case, the country of destination will obtain the consent of the member country where the transaction originated in order to carry out the re-export. Among the non-proliferation measures of chemical and biological weapons that the member country adopts, the AG recommends the inclusion of sanctions for potential violators (AG 2007).

Member countries should be careful to also maintain control over items which, although not controlled by the AG, contain one or more controlled components and which are subject to removal for use for other purposes. For this purpose, the effective quantity of the controlled product must be taken into account and whether the country of destination dominates the technology necessary to extract the controlled element.

The AG recommends that member countries also adopt Catch-All type legislation, also sharing information with other member countries about transfer refusals (Seevaratnam 2006). It should be noted that it is the obligation of member countries, in cases where the sale of an identical item has been denied by another member, to consult it before authorizing the licensing for export (AG 2007).

Export controls involve several actors, which obliges the member country to establish pertinent legislation, regulatory frameworks and licensing agencies that can effectively bring the chemical, biological and pharmaceutical industries, as well as the brokers specialized in the sector, under the state's attention. (AG 2007).

Countries interested in becoming AG members must fully meet the following requirements:

- Be a party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention;
- Be a producer, exporter or logistical intermediary of items controlled by the AG;
- Adopt and implement the AG rules on the transfer of sensitive chemical or biological material;
- Have an effective export control system that allows the country to inspect and control all items listed by the AG through a licensing system;

- Have a legal system that provides for punishment for actors who do not comply with the rules being able to apply it;
- Create channels for exchanging information that are capable of providing confidentiality, establishing links between specialists and providing a transfer refusal system that protects commercial secrecy; and
- Agree to participate in the AG in order to strengthen its effectiveness in preventing the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons.

The Zangger Committee

The Zangger Committee was formed after the establishment of the NPT to serve as the “faithful interpreter” of paragraph 2 of Article III of that Treaty, in order to harmonize the interpretation of nuclear material export control policies among NPT member countries. In this sense, the Zangger Committee is a complement to the NPT, in addition to having an informal character (ZC 2021).

Its denomination derives from the name of its first President, Professor Claude Zangger. Initially, a group of 15 countries held informal meetings between 1971 and 1974, in Vienna – Austria, with the purpose of reaching a common understanding on the meaning of “equipment or material specially designed or prepared for the processing, use or production of special fissile material”, since such expression appears in the text of the NPT, but is not defined in that Treaty. Another point on which common understanding was sought was: “the conditions and procedures that would regulate the exports of that equipment or materials in order to meet the obligations of paragraph 2 of Article III of the NPT, based on fair commercial competition” (ZC 2021; Schmidt 2000, 144).

The ZC currently has 39 members: South Africa, Germany, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, Kazakhstan, China, South Korea, Croatia, Denmark, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, United States of America, Finland, France, Greece, Netherlands, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine, plus the European Union as a permanent observer (ZC 2021).

Decisions are taken in the ZC by consensus, that is, unanimously, and do not constitute legal obligations for member countries. The first ZC consensus was reached in 1972, when two Memoranda containing the “basic understandings” were issued. These two Memoranda form the ZC guidelines to this date and each describes the procedures for the export of materials and

equipment described in paragraph 2 of Article III of the NPT. The first Memorandum deals with supplies and fissile material, while the second deals with equipment dealing with fissile material (ZC 2021).

These two Memoranda became known as the Trigger List as the export of listed items triggers International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. Due to the constant development of nuclear technology, the Trigger List is constantly updated by member states, including an annex that specifies and details the equipment that handles fissile material (Sevini and Janssens 2020).

From the detailed study of the ZC guidelines, a qualification emerges that separates States into two categories: States that have nuclear weapons and those that haven't. For the sake of simplification, in order to provide greater fluidity to the text, we will name the former as "Nuclear States", and the latter as "Non-Nuclear States". That is, even if a country uses nuclear equipment for peaceful purposes, such as power generation or propulsion, even if applied to equipment for military use, it will be called a Non-Nuclear State (ZC 2021).

The ZC interprets that there are three supply conditions:

- Fissile material exported to Non-Nuclear States cannot be diverted for use in nuclear weapons or nuclear explosives;
- Fissile material exported to Non-Nuclear States, as well as transferred equipment and non-nuclear material, will be subject to safeguards as established by the IAEA; and
- Fissile material, equipment and non-nuclear material may not be re-exported to Non-Nuclear States unless the receiver State accepts the safeguards on the re-exported item.

In this regard, clarification is needed on the meaning of the safeguards applied by the IAEA. Safeguards are activities carried out by the IAEA to ensure that a State is not violating the international agreements it has signed and through which it has pledged not to develop nuclear weapons programs. Thus, the safeguards are intended to prevent the diversion for hidden purposes of nuclear material that allegedly would be used for peaceful purposes. They usually comprise surveillance and inspections, scheduled or unannounced (Carlson 2021; IAEA 2021).

Unlike the WA and the AG, the ZC does not impose rules aimed at increasing control over exports, nor does it make objective recommendations on legislation, licensing systems or sanctions. These functions are already the responsibility of the IAEA, which emerged before the ZC, in 1957, and with which Brazil already has signed agreements. Nor does the ZC establish the policies and strategies necessary to prevent the proliferation of nuclear wea-

pons devices and to allow the peaceful use of nuclear energy. This prerogative belongs to the NPT, to which Brazil is already a signatory. The ZC only interprets the NPT in a technical way and publishes the Trigger List in order to allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the Articles of the NPT and to enable the triggering of safeguards by the IAEA. In short, membership of the ZC does not impose additional obligations that a member of the NPT and the IAEA has not previously accepted, which is the case of Brazil.(ZC 2021).

The ZC meets twice a year, in May and October, in Austria. Their work schedule typically involves updating the Trigger List and other administrative measures, such as reviewing the membership of a new member (Schmidt 1994, 41). To join the ZC, the country must first be part of the NPT. Furthermore, “any country that is a supplier of nuclear material, current or potential, and that is prepared to implement the Committee’s understandings, is eligible” (Assembly 2015, 5). The decision to admit a new member to the ZC is taken by consensus (ZC 2021).

Development of the decision support model

The research was carried out in four stages. The 1st Stage consisted of outlining the hierarchical structure of the problem, based on the objective to be solved, the research problem, the evaluation criteria and the alternatives capable of solving it. This framework follows the AHP problem-solving model (Wind and Saaty 1980; Saaty 1980; 1990).

Figure 1 illustrates the hierarchical tree created for the research. The top of the structure is composed by the general objective of prioritizing the Agreements, from the DM’s point of view. The 1st level consists of criteria selected from the attributes observed in international agreements. Criteria 1 to 5 were taken from (Nayan 2019) research, which looked at a similar problem in India, and criteria 6 and 7 were added based on the experience of the experts consulted. Table 1 describes the meaning of the criteria considered for the assessment of the three Agreements, indicated in the 2nd level

Figure 1: Hierarchical structure of the problem

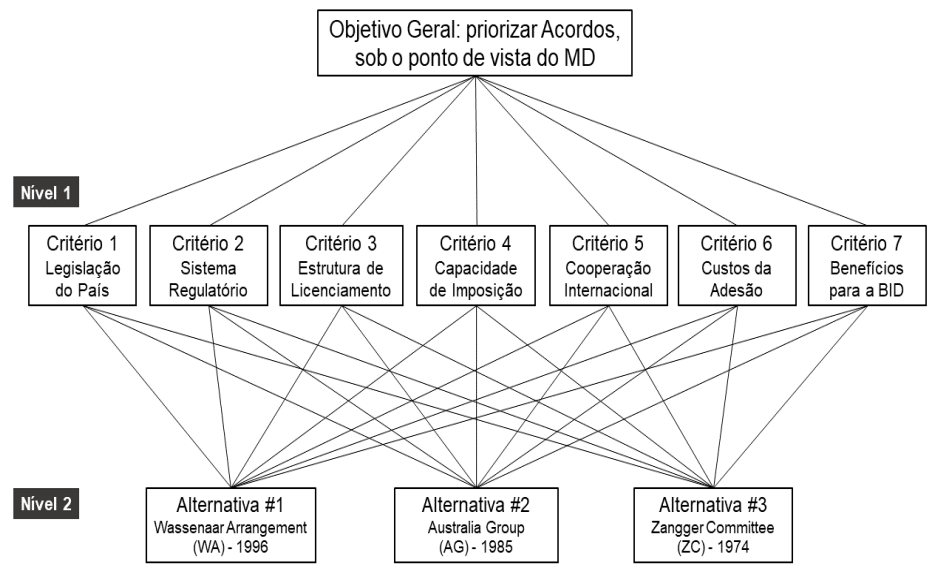


Table 1: Description of criteria

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
1. Country Legislation	Existence of a legal framework already in place that favors the adherence of the country to the agreements considered.
2. Regulatory System	Bureaucratic facilities for international trade and/or control of the products related to the Agreements considered.
3. Licensing Structure	Existence of bodies and agencies that favor the licensing of products related to the Agreements considered.
4. Enforceability	Existence of infrastructure capable of preventing the illicit transaction of products related to the Agreements considered.
5. International Cooperation	Existence of cooperation from the signatory countries to encourage and comply with the considered Agreements.
6. Membership Costs	Costs considered for formal adhesion to the agreement's managing committee, including the eventual need for creating and maintaining permanent committees in the country and/or abroad, committee travel, among other costs involved.
7. Benefits for the Defense Industrial Base (DIB)	Stimuli and benefits that joining one Agreement can bring to the Defense Industrial Base (DIB), favoring joining one over the other by comparison.

The 2nd stage of the research consisted of the elaboration of questionnaires, which collected information on the qualification of specialists and their evaluations regarding the selected criteria and alternatives. Subsequently, this information was added for modeling, following the steps of the decision support method chosen for the solution.

The 3rd stage consisted of choosing DM specialists, with academic background and professional experience capable of properly evaluating the requested information. Table 2 presents the demography of the experts consulted.

Table 2: Expert Demographics

Exp	Graduation	Post-graduation	Current occupation	Professional Experience	Experience in Agreements and Treaties
Exp.1	Naval Sciences	Senior Policy and Strategy Studies	Director of the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation of the Defense Ministry - Representative at the Interministerial Commission for the Control of Exports of Sensitive Goods (CIBES)	38 years	Over 1 year
Exp.2	Chemical Engineering	Master in Nuclear Technology	Advisor in the nuclear area - Defense Products Department of the Defense Ministry	28 years	Over 9 years
Exp.3	Chemical Engineering	Master in Military Science	Manager of the Department of Science and Technology of the Secretariat of Defense Products of the Defense Ministry	30 years	Over 5 years

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Exp.4	Pharmacy	Biochemistry and hospital pharmacy	Coordinator of the Department of Health and Social Assistance of the Defense Ministry	20 years	Over 5 years
Exp.5	Aeronautical Engineer	Specialization in Flight Test Engineering	Coordinator for Missile, Aerospace and Space Technologies at the Defense Ministry	45 years	Over 15 years
Exp.6	Aeronautical Sciences	Aerospace Sciences	Coordinator of the Department of Commercial Promotion of the Ministry of Defense	38 years	Over 7 years
Exp.7	Marketing	MBA in Commercial and People Management	Manager of the Department of Commercial Promotion of the Defense Ministry	20 years	Over 2 years
Exp.8	Naval Sciences	Advanced Studies in Maritime Strategy and Business Management	Advisor to the Secretary of Defense Products of the Defense Ministry	29 years	Over 1 year
Exp.9	Naval Sciences	Advanced Studies in Maritime Strategy and Business	Coordinator of the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation of the Secretariat of Defense Products of the Defense Ministry	32 years	2 years

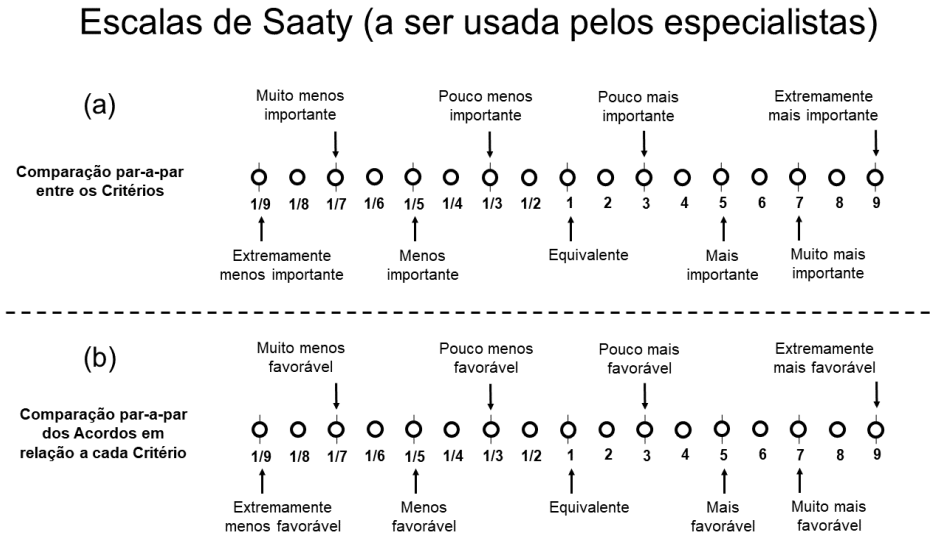
The 4th stage consisted of modeling the assessments with the AHP. This process is composed of a sequence of procedures and calculations to produce the final weights of the alternatives, the highest value of which indicates the Agreement deemed preferential for the group of consulted experts.

Initially, the experts' assessments need to be standardized, as each respondent chooses his reference for the assessment of the others. This standardization follows the principle of additive transitivity, as presented in Alonso et al. (2008), Alonso et al. (2009), Li et al. (2019) and Gavião, Lima, and

Garcia (2021). In this way, the number of joint evaluations required from each specialist is considerably reduced, reducing the response time and possibly guaranteeing greater reliability in the results.

Assessments are carried out based on the nine-point scale proposed by Saaty (1980). For the peer-to-peer evaluations of the criteria and alternatives, the linguistic variables of the scales presented in Figures 2(a) and 2(b), respectively, were adapted.

Figure 2: 9-Point scales



Source: adapted from Saaty (1980).

After completing the matrix of peer evaluations, described in Equation (1), the sequence of Equations (2) to (6) are applied in the AHP to calculate the weights of the alternatives and the Consistency Ratio (CR) of the evaluations. The literature registers some techniques for calculating the weights of the AHP, with the original proposal deriving from linear algebra, also called the eigenvalue model. Thus, the equations listed were detailed in Liu and Lin (2016). The cutoff value considered for the CR is 10%, below which the expert's judgments are considered logically consistent.

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & a_{12} & \dots & a_{1n} \\ 1/a_{12} & 1 & \dots & a_{2n} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 1/a_{1n} & 1/a_{2n} & \dots & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$w_i = \frac{\left(\prod_{j=1}^n a_{ij} \right)^{1/n}}{\sum_{i=1}^n \left(\prod_{j=1}^n a_{ij} \right)^{1/n}}$$

$$A^s = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & a_{12} & \dots & a_{1n} \\ 1/a_{12} & 1 & \dots & a_{2n} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 1/a_{1n} & 1/a_{2n} & \dots & 1 \end{bmatrix} \times \begin{bmatrix} w_1 \\ w_2 \\ \vdots \\ w_n \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} w_1' \\ w_2' \\ \vdots \\ w_n' \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\lambda_{\max} = (1/n) \times (w_1' / w_1 + w_2' / w_2 + \dots + w_n' / w_n)$$

$$IC = \frac{\lambda_{\max} - n}{n - 1}$$

$$RC = \frac{IC}{IR}$$

In which:

A: Matrix of Peer Assessments by an Expert

a_{ij} : value of the peer evaluation corresponding to the Saaty scale

w_i : eigenvector of alternatives (criteria weights or Agreements)

$\lambda_{\max}$: maximum eigenvalue of the reciprocal matrix

IC: Consistency Index

RC: Consistency Ratio

RI: Random Index, calculated based on the reference table with the matrix ratio

Table 3: AHP Random Index Values

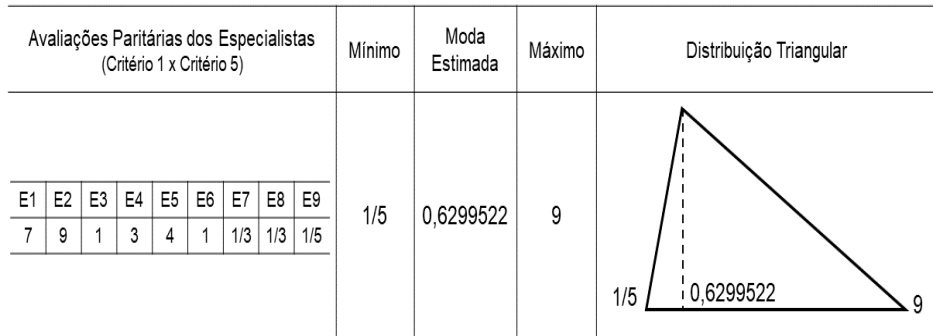
Matrix reason (number of variables)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Random Index (RI)	0	0	0,58	0,9	1,12	1,24	1,32	1,41	1,45

Since it involves a group of experts, in a process of independent collection of judgments, it is difficult for peer assessments to converge. Thus, it is possible that an expert judges that criterion “A” is more important than “B”, for example, while another expert judges it differently, evaluating that “A” is less important than “B”. These different assessments can be aggregated into single values (example: averages) or they can be fitted to probability distributions to simulate a significant amount of values with the same profile as the data sample.

The use of averages with small samples, usually less than 30, can cause distortions, as they try to reduce a series of few data to a single value. Considering the sample of nine experts in this research, the use of the averages of the initial assessments could distort the results and reflect an unreliable order of preference to the Agreements. For example, if nine people usually consume a liter of water a day and one only drinks ten liters of water a day, the average $[(9 \times 1) + (1 \times 10)] / 10 = 1.9$ liters/day is different from reality, since it represent almost twice the per capita water consumption of the majority of individuals considered. Therefore, we opted for the simulation approach instead of computing the averages of the initial evaluations.

The simulation procedure is performed based on a probability distribution that allows adjusting the collected data. Each assessment of a sample has a different associated probability. For example, if in a sample of ten evaluations most of them focus on the value 1/5 of the Saaty scale, it is possible to assume that in a simulation of ten thousand random values, more values appear close to 1/5 than the extreme values.

In this research, the triangular distribution was used to adjust the experts' assessments. The function that defines this type of distribution requires three parameters from the dataset: the minimum sample value, the most likely value (mode), and the maximum value. The minimum and maximum of the samples are easily identifiable. The mode of each sample needs to be estimated, being calculated with the aid of the modeest application, of the R statistical software (Poncet 2019). Each evaluation simulation was submitted to the AHP equations, with its result being maintained if the $CR < 0.1$ and discarded if the $CR > 0.1$. Figure 3 illustrates the procedure for fitting the data set, referring to the peer assessments of Criterion 1 in relation to Criterion 5 in a triangular distribution.

Figure 3: Data adjustment procedure

Collection of data from experts

Table 4 shows the data collected (already standardized for common reference) from the Specialists through the questionnaires. This need to standardize the data derived from the option in the questionnaire for the specialist to choose the reference that gave them more confidence to compare with the others. For example, considering the peer assessments of Level 1, Expert 2 could have chosen a different benchmark than the other experts. Applying these results, with different references, directly in the AHP equations would distort the results.

The standardization procedure followed the logical principle of additive transitivity proposed by Gavião, Lima and Garcia (2021). In this procedure, it is possible that compliance with this principle requires the extrapolation of the nine-point Saaty scale, to extreme values of up to 17 or 1/17. For this reason, it is possible to justify the existence of values above 9 in Table 4.

Table 4: Collected data (standardized)

Lev.	Ref.	Exp.1	Exp.2	Exp.3	Exp.4	Exp.5	Exp.6	Exp.7	Exp.8	Exp.9	Goal
1	Criterion 1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Criterion 1
		4	5	7	1/3	1	1	3	1	1/3	Criterion 2
		7	3	1	1	1	1/7	1/7	1/9	3	Criterion 3
		8	1/3	1	1/3	2	1/5	1/5	1/5	1/5	Criterion 4
		7	9	1	3	4	1	1/3	1/3	1/5	Criterion 5
		10	11	1/3	9	3	1/7	1/7	1/9	3	Criterion 6
		2	5	3	5	1	1	1	1/3	1/5	Criterion 7
2 – C1	Wassenaar Arrangement	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wassenaar Arrangement
		1/7	1	5	XXX	1	1	3	5	1	Australia Group
		4	5	5	XXX	1	3	1	5	1/5	Zangger Committee
2 – C2	Wassenaar Arrangement	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wassenaar Arrangement
		6	1	1	XXX	1	3	5	3	1	Australia Group
		6	5	1	XXX	1/2	3	1/3	3	1/7	Zangger Committee
2 – C3	Wassenaar Arrangement	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wassenaar Arrangement
		5	1/3	1	XXX	1	3	1	3	1	Australia Group
		1/5	1/5	1	XXX	1	3	1/3	3	1/7	Zangger Committee
2 – C4	Wassenaar Arrangement	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wassenaar Arrangement
		3	1/5	1	XXX	2	1/3	1/5	7	1	Australia Group
		1/7	1/7	1/3	XXX	2	1/5	1/7	7	1/9	Zangger Committee

2 – C5	Wassenaar Arrangement	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wassenaar Arrangement
		5	1/5	7	XXX	2	1	1/3	5	1/3	Australia Group
		1/7	1/7	7	XXX	3	1	1/7	5	1/3	Zangger Committee
2 – C6	Wassenaar Arrangement	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wassenaar Arrangement
		1/3	1	1	XXX	1	3	1	1	1/3	Australia Group
		1/2	5	1	XXX	1	1/3	1	1	1	Zangger Committee
2 – C7	Wassenaar Arrangement	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Wassenaar Arrangement
		8	1	9	XXX	7	5	1/3	7	1	Australia Group
		4	7	9	XXX	5	3	1/7	7	1	Zangger Committee

Table 5 shows the parameters of the triangular distributions used to simulate ten thousand assessments of each sample. The columns show the minimum, maximum and estimated mode values for the scores obtained when comparing each criterion with the others, according to the data obtained in the questionnaires.

Table 5: Triangular distributions parameters

Level	Reference	Minimum	Estimated Mode	Maximum	Goal
1	Criterion 1	1	1	1	Criterion 1
		1/3	0,7410264	7	Criterion 2
		1/9	0,7116237	7	Criterion 3
		1/5	0,3195537	8	Criterion 4
		1/5	0,6299522	9	Criterion 5
		1/9	1,207711	11	Criterion 6
		1/5	0,9390724	5	Criterion 7

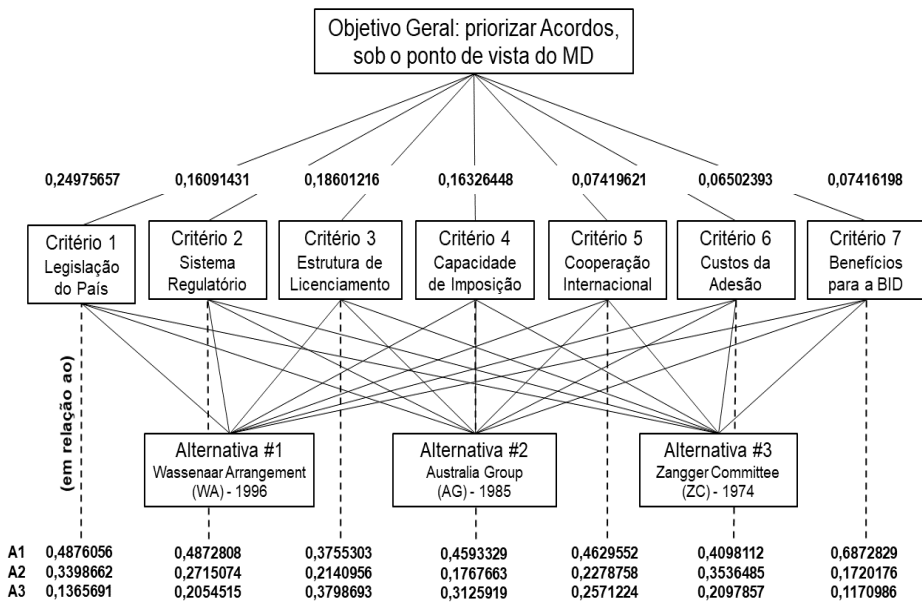
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2 – C1	Wassenaar Arrangement	I	I	I	Wassenaar Arrangement
		1/7	0,8457952	5	Australia Group
		1/5	4,663565	5	Zangger Committee
2 – C2	Wassenaar Arrangement	I	I	I	Wassenaar Arrangement
		I	1,007513	6	Australia Group
		1/7	0,5344237	6	Zangger Committee
2 – C3	Wassenaar Arrangement	I	I	I	Wassenaar Arrangement
		1/3	0,9286321	5	Australia Group
		1/7	0,3291595	3	Zangger Committee
2 – C4	Wassenaar Arrangement	I	I	I	Wassenaar Arrangement
		1/5	0,4877779	7	Australia Group
		1/9	0,178056	7	Zangger Committee
2 – C5	Wassenaar Arrangement	I	I	I	Wassenaar Arrangement
		1/5	0,453637	7	Australia Group
		1/7	0,1961331	5	Zangger Committee
2 – C6	Wassenaar Arrangement	I	I	I	Wassenaar Arrangement
		1/3	0,8734841	3	Australia Group
		1/3	0,8472322	5	Zangger Committee
2 – C7	Wassenaar Arrangement	I	I	I	Wassenaar Arrangement
		1/3	7,852908	9	Australia Group
		1/7	5,651251	9	Zangger Committee

AHP Results

Equations (1) to (6) were applied to each evaluation simulation, generating ten thousand results. However, some simulations generated inconsistency coefficients above the 10% threshold, which were then discarded. Of the consistent results, the geometric average indicated the preferences shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Partial results



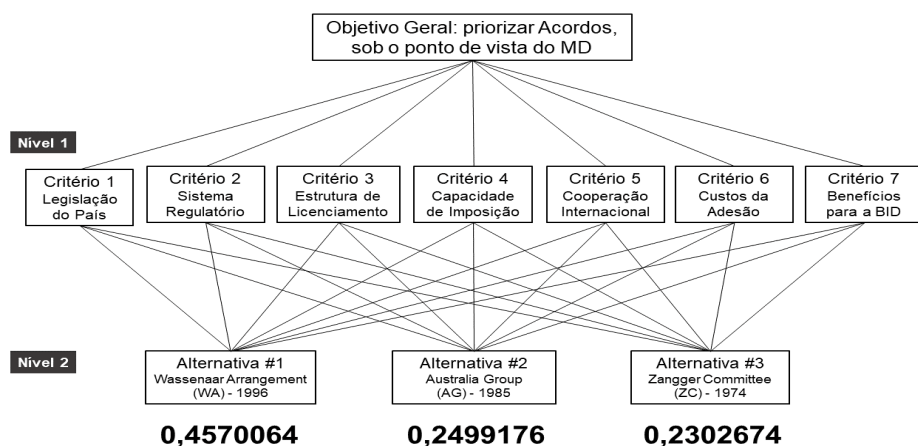
The partial results indicated above the criteria show the average preferences of the group of experts for that level. For example, it is possible to verify that Criterion 1 was considered the most important, as it obtained an overall assessment of 0.24975657, a value higher than the others. Experts considered that the existence of a legal framework already in force, which favors the country's adherence to the considered Agreements, is the most important attribute to assess their priority. This view is reinforced by the fact that the next three Criteria considered the most important - 3, 4 and 2, respectively - are also directly related to regulatory issues, as well as the existence of an adequate government structure capable of imposing the necessary sanctions.

On the other hand, the costs of adherence to the Agreement indicated

the least important criterion for decision making, with a weight of 0.06502393, probably because they consider that any costs arising from the creation and maintenance of permanent committees in the country and/or abroad, travel of delegations, among other costs involved, are less representative due to the benefits that the Agreement generates for the country. The weights of the last lines of Figure 4 indicate the results of the global assessments of the Agreements in relation to each criterion.

Finally, the final results in Figure 5 reflect the clear preference for the WA, with 45.7% of the preference, indicating the priority for adherence to this Agreement, from the point of view of Defense specialists. These final weights were obtained by the weighted sum of the evaluations of each Agreement for each criterion. Thus, this weight of 45.7% results from the sum $(0.24975657 \times 0.4876056) + (0.16091431 \times 0.4872808) + \dots + (0.07416198 \times 0.6872829)$.

Figure 5: Final results



The results in Figure 5 also show a “technical tie”⁴ between AG and

4 The research presents an exploratory bias, in the sense of presenting a decision support methodology for the prioritization of alternatives, being desirable to deepen with samples of respondents from other sectors of interest (IDB/private sector, Academia, or Itamaraty civil servants, for example). Results with samples from different groups may indicate a more significant difference in score than obtained, or even an inversion favorable to the ZC. Regarding the sample size, it is worth noting that the simulation procedure of ten thousand values, implemented based on information collected from the sample of nine experts, tends to considerably reduce the distortions caused by small samples.

ZC preferences. The AG obtained better scores than the ZC in criteria 1, 2, 6 and 7. In addition to representing the majority, it is possible to verify that the AG involves lower costs and brings more benefits to the DIB, when compared to the ZC. Thus, between these two Agreements, it would be interesting for the MD to prioritize joining the AG, leaving the ZC to the last option.

Final Remarks

The careful adherence to international agreements can enable the country to participate more actively in international decision-making processes, projecting itself into the concert of nations as a relevant actor, providing more visibility and credibility.

Specifically, the Brazilian tradition of opting for the peaceful resolution of disputes, as well as its recognized diplomatic capacity, makes it natural to adhere to agreements that have the purpose of controlling the sale and transfer of arms, supplies and related technologies, known as Multilateral Export Control Regimes (MECR).

Among the five MECR in vogue in the world, Brazil is not a signatory to three of them: the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA), the Australia Group (AG), and the Zangger Committee (ZC).

Having in mind the interest of the Department of Defense Products (SEPROD) of the Defense Ministry (DM) in this topic, which can be used to prioritize a possible decision to join the WA, the AG and the ZC, this research sought to develop a model decision support capable of analyzing the cost-benefit ratio of complying with the clauses of the WA, the AG and the ZC, from the point of view of an expression of the National Power, in order to serve as an advisory instrument for the Brazilians Political and Strategic levels.

The methodology used to meet this goal was the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), a current method in the field of Operational Research, which is adequate to support decision processes in which judgment and human perceptions are involved or when the problem is expressed in uncertain, fuzzy and/or confused terms.

The research consisted of outlining the hierarchical structure of the problem, based on the objective to be solved, the research problem, the evaluation criteria and the alternatives capable of solving it. Then, questionnaires were created for data collection and specialists with recognized experience and academic training were selected to answer them. The focus on specialists from the Defense Ministry was due to the relationship between the object of study and the Defense Industrial Base, which establishes a specific Secretariat

for the study and monitoring of the topic. Finally, the answered questionnaires were analyzed, and the necessary data for modeling the assessments with the AHP were extracted.

After modeling the assessments, the method indicated the priority for adherence to the Wassenaar Arrangement, from the point of view of the consulted Defense specialists. The decision support model clearly identified that the WA was superior to the other Agreements in all criteria, with the exception of the negligible difference for the ZC in Criterion 3. It was also possible to verify a small difference between the importance of the WA and of the ZC, according to Criterion 3 (Licensing Structure), probably because Brazil is a signatory of the NPT, due to mastering the uranium beneficiation cycle and for having a nuclear program for peaceful purposes. As the ZC is closely linked to the NPT, it is to be assumed that experts considered that, according to Criterion 3, Brazil is as well prepared to join the WA as it is to join the ZC.

It is also noteworthy the great preference that the WA had over the other agreements when considering Criterion 7 (Benefits for the DIB). The result shows that there is a consensus among experts as to the possible benefits of joining the WA, since, by increasing Brazil's credibility with the international community, such adhesion will also open the doors of a very restricted market, where only the members of this group have the possibility of accessing strictly controlled technological components, which has great potential to boost Brazilian defense products.

It is also important to add that the AHP method is based on the opinion of experts, through judgments that can take into account their professional experiences, their interests in the proposed subject and their academic background. In this sense, the present result expresses the opinion of a group of specialists who are professionally linked to the MD's assistance in the process of joining the MECR, whose methodology reduces the subjectivity and arbitrariness of a direct choice for an Agreement.

Thus, it is recommended that this decision support model, validated in this study, be deepened with samples of experts from other expressions of National Power, with different views on the subject, such as components of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy, from the National Nuclear Energy Commission, from the Defense Industrial Base and from the Academy, providing greater robustness to the results achieved.

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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a model to support the decision to choose which multilateral export control regime of defense products and sensitive technologies in which Brazil does not yet participate, namely, Wassenaar Arrangement, Australia Group and Zangger Committee, should be prioritized for adhesion. For the development of this model, the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) method was used, considered adequate for solving problems where criteria are qualitative and decisions tend to be based on personal experiences. The hierarchical structure of the problem used seven criteria (Country Legislation, Regulatory System, Licensing Structure, Enforcement Capacity, International Cooperation, Costs of Adhesion and Benefits for the Defense Industrial Base) to compare the three mentioned agreements. A questionnaire was set up and specialists related to National Defense were selected to answer them, after which their answers were collected, standardized, processed and analyzed. At the end, the agreements were ordered by preference to support decision making, illustrating the application of the proposed model.

KEY WORDS

National Defense Industrial Base; National Security; Defense; Trade Treaties; International Economic Relations.

Received on October 30, 2021

Approved on December 23, 2021

Translated by Marina Felisberti

DEFENSE EXPENDITURE AND STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES: DISSIMILARITIES AMONG SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES

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Introduction

From an interstate conflict perspective, South America is generally characterized as a stable region marked by the absence of wars and defense investments below global averages (Vaz 2019), constituting what is commonly called the as “tradition of the long South American peace” (Villa 2018).

At the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century, there was also the hope that the UNASUR Defense and Security Council could strengthen the bonds of mutual trust and cooperation in defense, which would further promote a “permanent zone of (democratic) peace in South America” (Villa and Souza-Pimenta 2016). Some authors question the tradition of the “long peace” and argue that there is in fact a “violent peace” in South America. From this perspective, they discard the classification of conflicts made based on extra regional comparisons that do not take into account historical traditions and characteristics of the countries in the region, as they do not account for correctly perceiving the tensions existing between nations (Franchi, Migon, and Jimenez 2017). Also, South American countries deal with intra-state threat issues, such as drug production and trafficking, urban violence, illegal arms trafficking, and environmental threats for which, as a rule, the Armed Forces are deployed (CEPAL 2014; Costa Vaz 2015; Andrade et al. 2019; Oliveira 2017).

To think about how countries organize themselves to promote their security and defense, Barry Buzan proposed the theory of regional security

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complexes. In this theory, South America may be divided into two complexes: (i) Southern Cone countries, more peaceful and aimed at building a security community; and the (ii) Andean Region countries, which experienced more internal instabilities and border issues (Buzan et al 2003).

However, Buzan's conception has suffered criticism for failing to account for the complexity of regional political realities (Fuccille and Rezende 2013), and even for being unable to realize that defense expenditure and military modernization spending do not respect the proposed security complexes.

"In fact, arms purchases transform the region into a single regional security complex since it is operated not only in the Andean system nor in the Southern Cone but by countries from both sub-regions" (Villa 2018, 139).

Another way to think about it, considers the question from a defense economy view, since it reflects events occurring in the country. In this sense, the amount a country separates from its wealth for maintaining its sovereignty and security reflects how unstable and threatened it is (Hartley 2013).

The fact is that in the beginning of the twentieth century there was an augmentation in the investment in defense, with nominal expenditures and the percentage relative to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increasing, reflecting in greater acquisition of technology and quantity of equipment by South American countries, most notably by Brazil, Chile, and Venezuela. This behavior made South America responsible for 5% of the volume of international arms imports in the 2003-2007 period, and the amount in this period was 47% higher than the previous period of analysis, 1998-2002 (Pagliari and Sources 2010). The second fact that stands out is that defense investments and expenditures have declined in the last decade, as a direct consequence of the economic crisis in South American countries. This does not correspond to a big change in the percentage of the GDP allocated to Defense, but is a reflection of the drop in the nations' GDP. Hence, the amount of resources allocated to the Defense expenditure has diminished — with an increase in personnel spending and a decrease of technology and capabilities investment (Costa Vaz 2019). Defense economics is the branch of economic science that is devoted to these analyses.

Defense economics deals with the application of economic theory to defense-related issues, being "the reasoning and application of economic methods to study defense and the economic aspects related to this area" (Leske 2018, 784). It has an expanded focus on peace and war studies, covering defense and its consequences, disarmament, and peace spending.

The determinants of defense expenditure — investment and personnel, including base defense industry, arms races, and military alliances — are this area interests and scope (Hartley 2013).

Defense economics is the study of resource allocation, income distribution, economic growth, and stabilization applied to defense-related topics. As such, defense economics involves an investigation of the impact of defense expenditures, both domestically and internationally, on macroeconomic variables such as employment, output, and growth. It also has a microeconomic dimension involving analysis of the defense industrial base, collaborative programs, offsets, the pricing and profitability of military contracts, and the regulation of contractors. (Hartley 2013, 6).

The historical development of the concept of defense economy shows the concern based on the concept of “national interest understood as the integration of the political and economic interests of a geographical unit in a nation in an integral way, making itself predominant in the face of external ideas, policies and actions” (Castro-Gómez et al. 2013, 44).

National defense, as a public good, requires policies to meet social needs for security and defense, in which the economics of this sector must be directed to provide the necessary strategic capabilities (Jimenez 2016). Historically, South American countries have modest defense expenditures (World Bank 2020). And perhaps because of the experience of recent military governments, the few inter-state conflicts in the region, and the poor communication between the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces with the civilian population, the subject of defense and its expenditure is little discussed among these countries, being obscure to them the need for a robust defense expenditure, at the expense of other social needs, such as education and health (Almeida 2010). Despite this similar political and cultural experience and limited expenditures, countries may behave differently in investing their economic resources — given the distinct challenges they encounter in their territories and on their borders —, creating their defense identity by moving away from or closer to other countries (Fonfría 2012).

If the interpretations of security complexes, or traditions of long peace or violent peace do not fully explain how South American countries are organized regarding Defense, we can start from this more pragmatic point of view, the defense expenditures, and the material defense capabilities to understand the dissimilarities and approximations among the South American countries. This is because a country’s security and defense needs are reflected in its defense economy:

Based on the definition of the Armed Forces' mission and strategic planning, a plan and a expenditure are structured, with a multi-year horizon, from which an estimate of the resources required to meet the proposed objectives is made. These resources are the personnel, physical facilities, equipment, supplies, technology, and the operating expenditure.

The defense economy is related to two important areas of national coexistence: economic and defense. In this sense, it seeks the best way to allocate resources to provide protection to the nation, not only in periods of conflict, but also in times of peace, considering that the scarcity of resources is a permanent situation (Ecuador 2018).

Taking into account these considerations, we return to the question of this research: how are South American countries organized, considering defense macroeconomic data and their current strategic capabilities? Answering this question will allow us to understand the current events and threat scenarios considered by countries, as these are reflected by defense economy (Hartley 2013).

The information on the proximities between countries, based on the analysis of macroeconomic data and joint defense strategic resources, can be useful for planning cooperation treaties, investments in equipment and even in the defense industrial base in bi, tri or multinational actions.

This study, based on data from the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI) and *Military Balance*, analyzes a macro-economic dataset, seeks to identify how South American countries are organized, determining those that are most similar to each other (which would form complexes) and how they differ from the others (dissimilarities), only with respect to variables such as: % GDP for the defense budget; defense investment per capita; defense spending; acquisitions of defense equipment.

Defense Economy Trends in South American countries

In this section, we will present some information about the macroeconomic indicators and defense investment of South American countries. As we have already stated, these are countries that historically have low military expenditure (Table 1).

Table 1: Percent of GDP allocated to Defense Expenditure

Country	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Argentina	0.88	0.85	0.81	0.86	0.85
Bolivia	1.9	1.74	1.63	1.54	1.5
Brazil	1.33	1.37	1.35	1.42	1.47
Chile	1.96	1.9	1.92	1.94	1.89
Colombia	3.13	3.13	3.08	3.19	3.17
Ecuador	2.74	2.62	2.51	2.36	2.38
Guyana	1.28	1.46	1.51	1.68	1.69
Paraguay	0.99	1.07	0.95	0.89	0.93
Peru	1.58	1.72	1.3	1.24	1.19
Uruguay	1.81	1.82	1.88	1.98	1.95
Venezuela	1.16	0.94	0.45	0.49	---
Latin America & Caribbean	1.29	1.28	1.24	1.26	1.26

Source: World Bank³ and Macro Data (specifically for Guyana)⁴

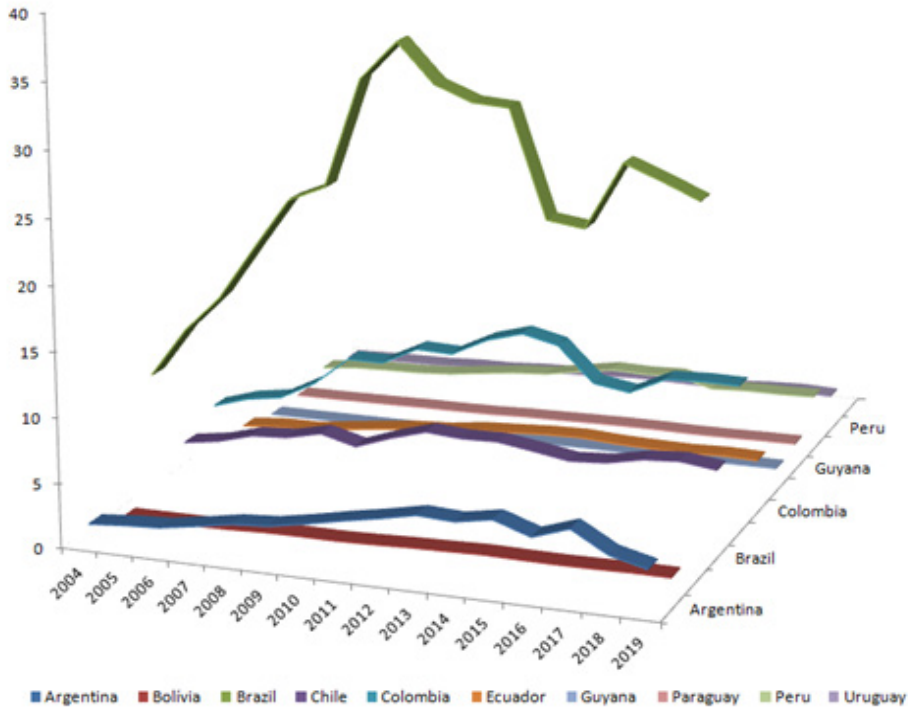
However, one cannot try to understand these countries as a single — South America — and homogeneous entity. Each country has its own particularities. Colombia, for example, consistently devotes more than 3% of its GDP above the 2% recommended by the UN (LEE 2015). In 2019, Brazil (51% of the region total; 1.5% of its GDP), Colombia (19% of the region total, 3.2% of its GDP) and Chile (5.2% of the region total and 1.8% of its GDP) were the three countries with the largest defense expenditures in South America (SIPRI 2019).

However, the percentage of GDP devoted to the defense expenditure does not exactly represent the amount of resources invested. For example, take Ecuador: The percentage of GDP is relatively stable, but the number of resources has been decreasing year after year, especially since 2014 (Figure 1).

³ Available at: <https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS&country=>.

⁴ Available at: <https://datosmacro.expansion.com/estado/gasto/defensa/guyana>.

Figure 1: Defense expenditures (US\$ Billion) in South American countries – 2008-2019



Source: World Bank (2020)⁵

In the case of Chile, although the amount of resources has been gradually increasing, the percentage of GDP dedicated to the defense expenditure is stable.

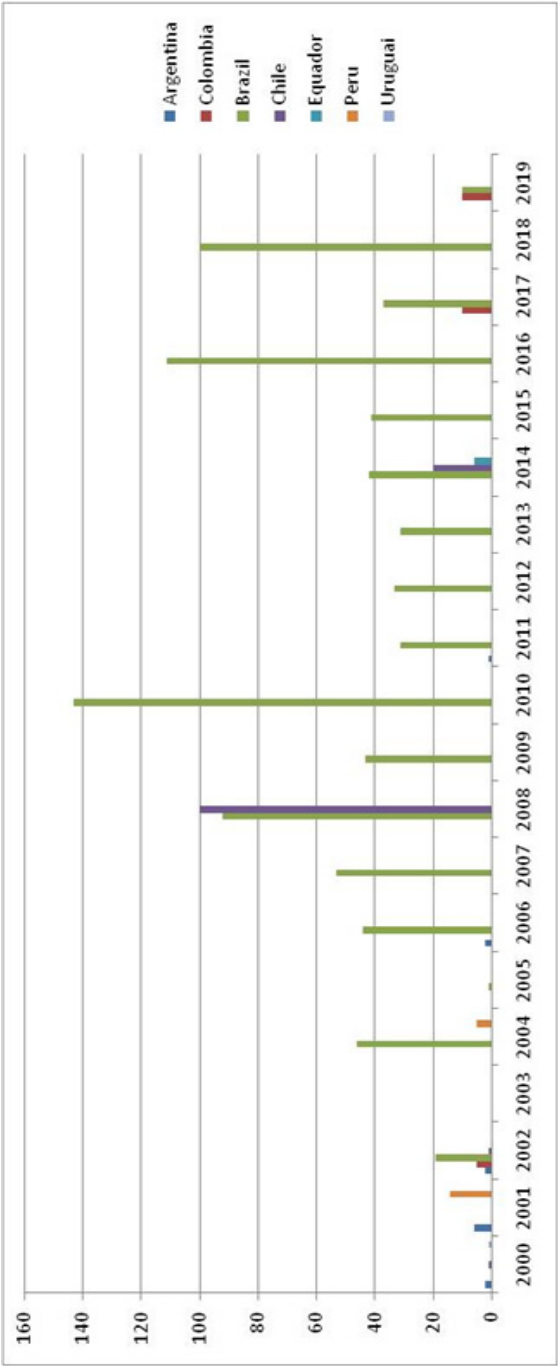
Chile has not increased its defense spending as a percentage of GDP. The indicator ranged from 1.7% in 2001 to 0.93% in 2016. Additionally, in relation to the behavior of both curves (“total expenditure” and “Expenditure Law”) in the same period, a proportionally homogeneous spending can be observed, although, since 2011, a stage of stagnation or equilibrium of spending is evidenced (Chile 2017).

Approximately in the last decade, especially Brazil, Chile, and

⁵ Available at: <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/USA/united-states/military-spending-defense-budget>.

Venezuela, and to a lesser extent Peru, have increased their spending on defense acquisitions and investments, in order to carry out a technological upgrade and address the insufficiency and obsolescence of equipment (Costa Vaz 2017). Specifically, Chile's ambition was to become a regional military power, achieving North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military status (Gonzales 2005), which has not yet materialized. At the time of the beginning of this movement, it was speculated that there was an "arms race in South America," while in fact, it was also a reflection of the periods of economic growth that these countries had during this period (Villa 2018). Figures 2 and 3 summarize the arms export and import transactions by South American countries in the 2000-2019 period, respectively. What is observed is a Chilean increase in arms exports in 2008, followed by a Brazilian response in 2010. Furthermore, Brazil is the country that exports the majority of arms, followed only by far by Colombia in the last three years.

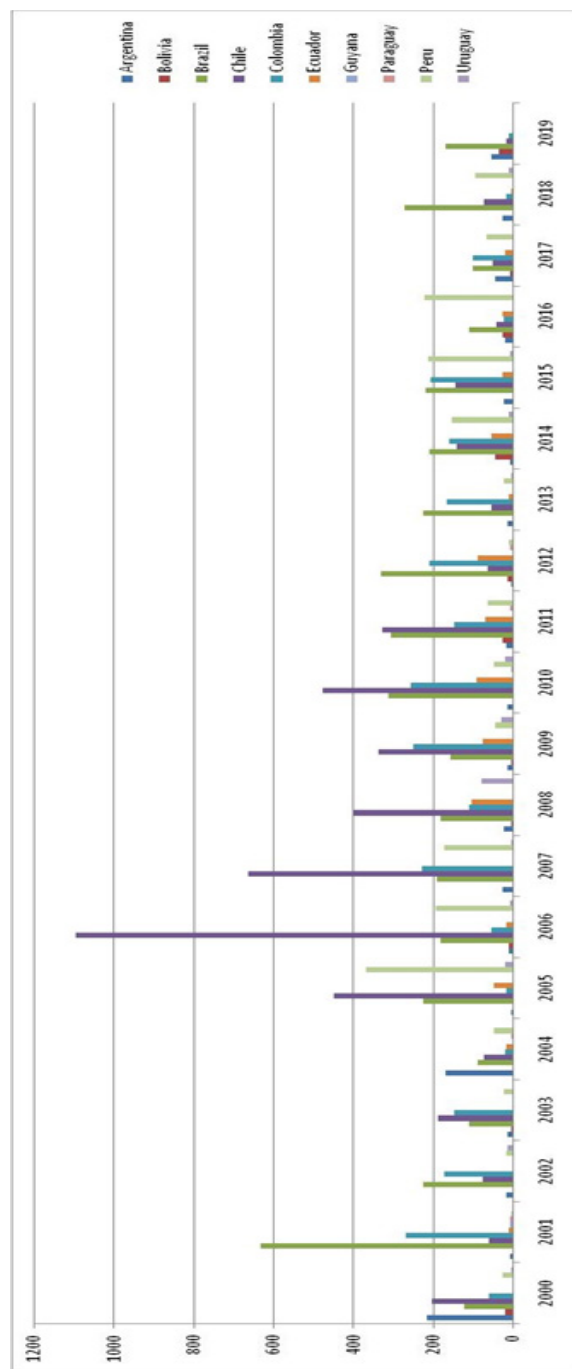
Figure 2: Arms exports by South American countries



Source: SIPRI 2020⁶

⁶ Available at: <http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/page/toplist.php>.

Figure 3: Arms imports by South American countries



Source: SIPRI 2020⁷

⁷ Available at: <http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/page/toplist.php>.

The Chilean movement toward greater weaponry beginning in 2005 provoked a response from the Peruvian and Argentine governments, countries with which Chile still has territorial disputes, triggering an increase in defense investment in those countries (Gutierrez 2007). The analysis of figure 3 also allows us to infer a response from Ecuador, which, in turn, has a history of conflicts with Peru and Colombia. There was a slowdown in all this movement in 2014-2015 compared to previous years (with cuts ranging from 56.5% to 7.2%), when the performances of the economies of these countries declined, but with a subsequent pickup (Costa Vaz 2017)

Even though they do not have this configuration of a “race,” Chile, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil continue to invest in improving their military capabilities, with a stable or slightly higher defense expenditure each year (IISS 2017). What is interesting to note is that in that 2014-2015 period, Argentina, Colombia, Guyana and Uruguay and Paraguay increased their defense spending. When analyzing the specific issue of investment in military modernization — with the acquisition and improvement of defense resources — Argentina has a less accentuated pace than Brazil, Chile and Venezuela (Moraes 2011).

Defense expenditure is not completely devoted to investing in equipment, training, and funding operations. Part of it is also committed to the personnel payroll. The average proportion of investments drops when the total expenditure decreases, because personnel expenditure requires a larger portion of the expenditure, since the number of staff — unless the government acts directly — does not decrease. To this picture we can add a deficient management of resources to limit investments in defense.

In a severely restricted scenario, where “fixed costs” in terms of personnel represented the largest part of the expenditure, suboptimal management of the resources available for variable costs was unacceptable. This reality became a constant in which spending was applied in an unnecessary and redundant way due to the lack of integration between the Armed Forces (Argentina 2010, 193).

Recently, between 2012 to 2016, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile experienced an increase in the proportion of personnel spending in their defense expenditures (Brazil 2020; Costa Vaz 2017; Chile 2017; Peru 2005). Ecuador, meanwhile, had a slight decrease from 2014 onwards, with strong governmental action to “increase the contribution of defense investment in order to achieve a more efficient, technology-based institution” (Ecuador 2018, 123)

Peru and Venezuela have an off-expenditure mechanism, which allocates 20% of gas revenues from the *Camisea* field to the defense expenditure, which minimizes in part the impact of fluctuations in the economic performance of these countries (Costa Vaz 2017). Chile, for its turn, relies on the *Ley Reservada del Cobre*, since 1958, which reallocates 10% of the amounts obtained from the export of state-owned copper companies to the acquisition of strategic defense purchases (Silva Filho and Moraes 2012)

The impact on the proportion of investment can also be minimized, in the long run, by the development of a sustainable defense industrial base, which refers to the set of state and private companies engaged in research, development, production, distribution and maintenance of strategic defense products (Brazil, Ferreira and Sarti 2011). In South America, the development of this industry has not been historically homogeneous; there are countries with a more structured defense industry than the others, such as Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Colombia (Parra, Játiva and Vásquez 2019).

The development of the defense industry in the different countries of South America depends on public policies and specific strategies, taking into consideration that there are many other demands other than defense issues still to be addressed, such as the social components of health and education. This reality is generalizable to almost all spheres of public spending, marked by limited expansionary potential for defense industry investment in the region (Esquivel and Loaiza 2018).

Taking into all these different information regarding defense expenditure and investment, it is hard to reach a clear conclusion on how South American countries behave. A method that combines and finds similarities among data is helpful to generate an understanding of how South American countries can be seen through these economic perspectives.

Methods

This research has a cross-sectional research design, being exploratory in nature, using discrete and continuous data (Gil 2017).

Data and Data Source

Two data sources were consulted for this research. The information about the macroeconomic indicators analyzed (defense expenditure; % of GDP to defense expenditure; defense expenditure *per capita*; % of defense expenditure in government spending), active duty personnel and data on arms

imports and exports were collected from the Stockholm International *Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI), considering the base year of 2019. Of the eleven countries and one French overseas territory that make up South America, there were available data on Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. Specifically, the databases *Data for all countries from 1988–2019 in constant (2018) USD* and *Data for all countries from 1988–2019 as a share of GDP* were consulted.

The eighth chapter of the *Military Balance 2020* report (2019 database), titled Latin America and the Caribbean, was consulted to collect the data about equipment and active personnel. Data from all South American countries were found there.

Procedures

In SIPRI's platform, the data were consulted for the available countries and transcribed into an Excel spreadsheet, keeping the reference currency (US dollar).

In the *Military Balance* the data were queried and transcribed only for those countries that were also present in SIPRI. The number of capabilities — such as weapons, helicopters, transport and combat ships, missiles — present in the document for each country was recorded by type of Force (Army, Navy — including naval aviation and *mariners* — and Air Force). The total number of capabilities for each category was registered, but without specifying the quantity per equipment type (e.g.: there are five transport helicopters of three different models in the Brazilian air force. It is the total number of helicopters that was recorded, and not the number by model).

The second author made the spreadsheet and, independently, it was checked by the first author in order to identify errors in recording and even interpretation of the data. This procedure was taken to ensure the reliability of the analyzed information. Only four occurrences out of a total of eighty-three variables were identified, and these were checked and corrected. After this process, the data were transferred to the software SPSS 22 for statistical analysis.

Statistical Analysis

To achieve the objective of this research conglomerate cluster analysis was chosen. It is a descriptive, non-inferential multivariate approach,

exploratory in essence. Conglomerate cluster analysis is a multivariate interdependence statistical technique used to combine observations into groupings or clusters. In other words, it classifies objects (respondents, variables), separating groups with internal homogeneity and, at the same time, dissimilarity among themselves (Hair et al 2009).

With hierarchical cluster analysis it is sought that: i) each group or cluster is homogeneous in certain characteristics. That is, the observations of one group are similar to those of the other; ii) each group should be different from the other groups with respect to the same characteristics, that is, the observations of one group should be different from the observations of the other groups (Sharma 2008).

Clusters identification is based on the increment of distances between each cluster stage. When the increments rise substantially, it indicates that inhomogeneous countries are being clustered, indicating that the *cluster* should be formed by the variables or cases belonging to the previous stage (Hair et al. 2009).

Because of the exploratory nature of this study and because there is not a priori establishment of potential causal relationships and, consequently, of the number of clusters, the seven hierarchical clustering methods, with and without normalization by the Z score, were tested to verify which would best separate the countries analyzed. It was determined that the Euclidean distance measure would be used to infer the (dis)similarities between the variables, as it is one of the most widely used in cluster analysis (Malhotra 2012). *Listwise* deletion was adopted to avoid bias in the results. SPSS software, version 22, was used in the analyses.

Results

Ward's hierarchical method with the interval determined from the squared Euclidean distance and variables normalized by the Z score per case showed the best separation of the variables. The cluster analysis' dendrogram solution indicates the existence of four distinct clusters (Figure 4; Table 2). In the schematic composition added to the dendrogram each color illustrates a *cluster*. Countries in gray are those whose data were not available for analysis. Countries of the same color are those belonging to the same *cluster*.

The first *cluster* is composed by Chile, Peru, Argentina, and Bolivia. Considering the set of variables analyzed, these countries are the most similar, but not homogeneously so. In this *cluster*, Chile, Peru and Argentina are the closest countries, and there is a proximity in the second stage between Bolivia

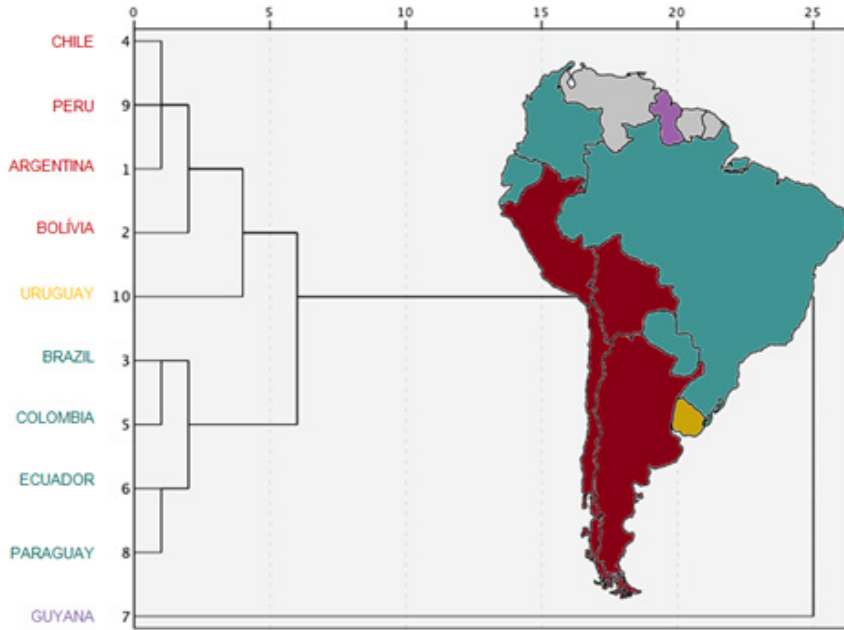
specifically with Argentina.

In the second *cluster*, we find two pairs of closer countries: Brazil and Colombia; and Ecuador and Paraguay. In the second stage of this cluster, Brazil and Ecuador are the closest countries. In these clusters, the proximity of the countries is even greater than in the first *cluster*.

Table 2 – Clustering Patterns

Stage	Combination		Clustering coefficient	Next Stage
	Variable	Variable		
1	4	9	0.57	3
2	3	5	1.41	6
3	1	4	2.81	5
4	6	8	4.69	6
5	1	2	7.55	7
6	3	6	10.60	8
7	1	10	17.37	8
8	1	3	28.65	9
9	1	7	75.09	0

Figure 4: South American Countries with Schematic Composition



Source: World Bank and author's calculation

Finally, the third and fourth *clusters* are made up of two isolated countries: Guyana and Uruguay.

Discussion

The present research aimed to identify those countries in South America that are most similar to each other (which would form *clusters*) and how they differ from the others (dissimilarities), considering defense macroeconomic data and defense strategic resource data available from the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI) and *Military Balance*, through a multifactor analysis, exploratory in essence.

The data points out that Guyana would be a country isolated from the others. Despite sharing territorial tensions with Colombia over Venezuelan migration and sharing the problems of transnational illegalities in the Amazon

region with the Pan-Amazon countries (Costa Vaz 2017), this is a new country, independent only in 1966 from the United Kingdom, with originally Dutch colonization. Besides this cultural difference, unlike the other countries in the region, it is experiencing an economic “boom” with the recent discovery of oil deposits on its coast, with growth estimated at 85% by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the year 2020 (Guyana, 2020), which could allow it to no longer be the second poorest country in South America. Its recent structuring as an independent country and its peculiar economic situation allow us to understand Guyana’s unique position on the continent, evidenced in the results.

The cluster formed by Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay is the one that has established closer relationships, with two pairs of countries very close — Brazil and Colombia; Ecuador and Paraguay. Despite being countries from different “geographical blocks”, Ecuador is an Andean country and Paraguay is a Southern Cone country, Ecuador and Paraguay have similarities in relation to their low territorial size — that could lead to a misinterpretation that the investment demands could be less in defense resources to safeguard their security and sovereignty. But, Ecuador has a history of past interstate conflicts and some issues still existing — which in turn, require permanent investment in quantity and quality of strategic defense resources (Villa 2018). And Paraguay, in turn, uses its Armed Forces also in public security actions, especially in combating criminal groups and factions linked to illicit activities, when combating the Paraguayan People’s Army (EPP).

Brazil and Colombia, in turn, are the two great powers of the region, both Pan-Amazonian countries. These two are responsible for the largest defense expenditure share in the region, with the largest amount of strategic defense resources. The two countries have been acting jointly in the surveillance of the Amazonian borders and share very similar public security issues, with the authority of the State threatened in the face of drug trafficking. In 2019, Brazil had a \$450 million increase in its defense expenditure, followed by Colombia with an increase close to \$300 million. Brazil is one of the most capable countries in the region, but Colombia has had an important improvement in its strategic defense resources, keeping its expenditure stable with an upward trend (IISS 2020). Even though they have a good portion of their defense resources committed to personnel payments, since these countries historically have higher defense expenditures in the region, they are significantly closer to each other than the others.

Still in this *cluster*, Ecuador is also close to Brazil — less so than Colombia, but still relevantly so. The countries deal with very different demands in terms of defense: while Ecuador deals with external threats, Brazil

has the issues of internal violence, with areas where the State's monopoly on violence is called into question, as in the communities of Rio de Janeiro and on national borders regarding the issue of illicit activities. Ecuador had a special increase in the 1990s with the Cenepa War (1995), with the country receiving a considerably higher defense budget than the current one for its maintenance and technological updating. "Due to changes in the international arena, in a relatively short period of time, States rapidly changed their behavior in relation to their military spending" (HEYE 2015, 125). It also has different behaviors in terms of investments: Ecuador is in the direction of increasing defense investments, cutting personnel expenses and keeping constant the percentage of GDP applied, even though there is a real decrease in the amount invested. Brazil commits a large part of its defense expenditure to personnel, imports and exports arms in a very different way from Ecuador, increasing in recent years the percentage of GDP and the actual amount allocated to the defense expenditure. So, how to explain the similarities identified?

A common point between Paraguay, Ecuador, Brazil and Colombia is the use of their Armed Forces in public security actions, especially in the fight against illegal acts and international criminal factions. The origins, the historical trajectories of the origins, the fields of action and the war capabilities of drug cartels, criminal factions, narco-guerrillas and other non-state violent actors are different in each country, but are not investigated in this text⁸. This perception does not end the need for more detailed studies comparing the countries within the cluster that the study identified.

In the other *cluster*, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina are very close to each other. In addition to being Andean countries, they share border tensions, which leads them to seek to match their strategic defense capabilities (Gutierrez 2007). Since the loss of access to the sea in the Pacific War in the 19th century, Bolivia has had a historical demand for part of the Chilean territory. The abrupt increase of % of GDP allocated to defense, in the acquisition of arms promoted by Chile in the first decade of the twenty-first century may explain this similarity identified in these countries, in a wave of response to the Chilean movement for greater armament. As Chile has applied resources to acquiring better and larger quantities of strategic defense capabilities, there has been a response from its neighbors Peru and Argentina (to a lesser degree), countries with which it has historical disputes (Franchi, Migon and Jimenez 2017), and this is an expected move from the perspective of defense economics (Leske 2018). Chile and Argentina have built a defense cooperation agenda, with emphasis on the creation of the *Cruz del Sur* Combined Peacekeeping Force, which helps create a bi-national defense

8 For further information, please read: Ferreira; Framento, 2020. Valera, 2018.

identity, requiring applied resources from both countries (Aita 2020).

Unlike Chile, the Argentine Armed Forces suffer from gradual deterioration since the defeat in the Falklands War (1982), and like Bolivia, they have been receiving less and less defense resources and have deteriorated equipment and facilities (IISS 2020). With these partial arguments, we can observe that this cluster has in common dormant border rivalries, with origins dating back to the 19th and 20th centuries, and that, with the exception of Chile, the three countries faced military defeats and territorial losses. We understand that this scenario is responsible for pointing out the similarity only between these two countries in this *cluster*. If the defense expenditure and defense spending are indeed a reflection of a country's defense needs and strategies, this *cluster* identifies this fact well.

Finally, Uruguay stands out in isolation from the other countries. A small country, it has kept the % of GDP devoted to defense relatively stable, but with a continuous decrease in the amount of defense expenditure since 2014. This data puts it close to several countries, but Uruguay really seems to be a case apart in South America:

Uruguay has only 3.4 million inhabitants, but is among the top ten troop contributors to the UN PKO (Peacekeeping Operations) and is the top contributor *per capita*. In 2002 and 2003, it was the seventh largest contributor of troops to the UN, and by the end of 2005 it was eighth in the UN ranking. Uruguay has never had any imminent external threat to its security after its independence in 1828, and has not had any internal threat since the end of the urban guerrilla actions in the 1970s. The country has no defense industry, and has always had an entirely voluntary military service, which currently involves almost 1% of the total population and about 2% of the workforce [...]. Uruguayan defense spending was influenced mainly by internal factors, mostly of an economic nature (Pelaéz 2007, 281).

With these characteristics, it is possible to ratify the distinctive position of Uruguay in relation to the other South American countries, in terms of strategic defense resources, which are much more focused on internal problems, and on actions in peace missions, far away from the continent.

Final Remarks

Using data from the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI) and *Military Balance*, we analyze a set of recent macro-economic dataset and identify that it is possible, from this perspective, to understand that South American countries can be organized into four *clusters*, reflecting not only their similarities in macroeconomic terms of the defense expenditure, but also over time, regarding their acquisition of strategic defense resources.

Despite its contribution to the understanding of the dynamics in South America from an economic perspective, the research is limited by the absence of data from Venezuela, Suriname, and French Guyana (a French overseas territory) — which falls under the French defense expenditure. Future research can use other databases in order to fill this gap.

Likewise, they can explore comparisons between countries in each cluster of other aspects such as the history of foreign military missions, evolution of military doctrines, notions of threats in the national defense documents of each country; development of each country's defense industrial base, as well as other issues.

The value of this research lies in the use of statistical analysis to analyze macroeconomic data and determine approximations – clusters – that are apparently unnatural, when we think of countries only through theoretical lenses such as regional security complexes.

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ABSTRACT

We take into account that interpretations of security complexes, traditions of long peace, and violent peace do not fully explain how South American countries are organized regarding Defense. Given those, we ran a cluster analysis with data from the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI) and *Military Balance* report with economic defense expenditure and capabilities investment from South American countries to identify how they are organized, determining those that are most similar to each other (which would form complexes) and how they differ from the others (dissimilarities). The results showed four different clusters: the first formed by Chile, Peru, Argentina, and Bolivia; the second by Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Paraguay; the third only by the Guyana; and the fourth, formed only by Uruguay. We interpreted these clusters considering the history of conflicts, current countries threats and treaties.

KEYWORDS

Defense Economics; South America; Defense Capabilities; Defense Expenditure.

Received on August 31, 2021

Approved on December 07, 2021

GLOBALIZATION AND THE CHANGING CONCEPT OF NATO

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Introduction

*"It has been said that arguing against globalization is
like arguing against the laws of gravity."*

Kofi Annan, 2021

Indeed, globalization has revolutionized the entire existence of the human species. From person to person contact to nations coming together under banner of common and shared interests, the phenomenon has impacted the core pillars of life in current times. Though it has evolved with expansion of regionalism, the latter has ceased to exist in isolation. Nevertheless, the clash of interests among nations does keep them divided but these divisions too, ultimately serve the same phenomenon of globalization by bringing along nations with common enemies and friends at other times.

Globalization has increased the interconnectedness so significantly that the physical distance is no longer a barrier in the movement and exchange of goods, people, ideas, culture, technology, and awareness. It is integrating the world and growing the linkages which have been made possible because of the developed transportation and communication means. In the ancient times it took months for people to travel from one state to another and travelling was not even that common. However, ever since globalization happened travelling has become one of the easiest things to do. All what is required is a plane ticket and a few hours of load off.

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All the economic, social, political, and cultural activities and processes that were limited to a smaller scale can now be experienced at a larger scale because of the development brought by globalization. Endorsing globalization does not necessarily mean that everything is happening at a global scale, or all the global processes are undergoing the same experience, but it does mean that the outlook on the international affairs and activities and the way they are examined and promoted is now very diverse.

One such outcome of globalization is the changing nature of NATO. On July 4th, 2012, the vision for NATO in the ever-globalizing world was addressed by Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and he proclaimed, “A NATO that derives its strength and vitality from engaging with partners. An alliance situated at the center of a wide-ranging security network, detecting risks and threats early on, and being capable of fighting these challenges cooperatively. To accomplish these goals, NATO has to work toward interoperability with partners, be they countries or institutions” (NATO 2012).

NATO has always been working in partnerships and it has been at the top of the agenda lately. This is because NATO partnerships in the past two decades have proven to be of a great utility in achieving its goals. However, as the world globalized NATO also transformed and so did its partnerships. Initially, NATO was more inclined towards a political role to enhance the prospects of a “Europe whole, free and at peace” (Mattelear 2017) nevertheless, with the change in dynamics NATO began to foster stability outside Europe. Its choices led to options where it could participate in burden sharing and sustain strategic reach.

Today, with the ease in interconnectedness NATO has created partnerships around the globe. This has enhanced the security for the North Atlantic Area and opened ways to ponder upon the issues faced in today’s globalized security environment. One such issue is the ever-growing trend of the phenomenon of “populism” in the Western nations. Ever since its emergence the idea has greatly impacted the nations that fall under NATO. However, perhaps this is leading member states to lack focus and purpose, running the risk of becoming a costly end in itself. Consequently, this might result in turning NATO from a security into a service provider.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an international organization, to be specific an intergovernmental military alliance between thirty European and North Atlantic states conjointly signed on 4th April 1949. It was formed back in 20th century to provide collective security against the threat posed by the Soviet Union. It has two official languages: English and French. NATO’s purpose is to guarantee freedom and security of its members through political and military means as security in our daily lives is a key to

well-being. NATO's headquarters are located in Brussels, Belgium, while the headquarters of Allied Command Operations is near Mons, Belgium. NATO always had certain aims and goals upon which it operated (NATO 2021). They are as follows,

1. Political and Military Alliance
 - Politically: NATO promotes democratic values and enables members to cooperate and consult on defence and security-related issues as to effectively and efficiently solve problems, build trust and, in the long run, prevent conflict.
 - Militarily: NATO is committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes via diplomacy however in case of deteriorating situations they have the authority to go for military undertake crisis-management carried out under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, by a mandate provided by the UN, alone, or in cooperation with other states.
2. Collective Defence: This is the core motive, goal, or aim of NATO. It is a commitment of a block to protect their fellow state from an aggressive attack. It is like all for one and one for all. Collective defense is primarily a military related agreement or a set of actions between / by nations on mutually agreed terms. Collective defense is a phenomenon of strategic studies which surfaced in twentieth century as mankind suffered immense losses in absence of a system that could have guarded against the same. Millions perished, states were reduced to rubble and states had to either surrender or be reduced to ashes as no strong allies were there to ensure their defense against military might of aggressors. Hence, collective defense emerged as a concept that has already yielded phenomenal results. It ensures that all the member states / signatories of the pact of NATO are bound to fight for other members which may be threatened. Although theoretically collective defense was perceived as an action that shall be triggered once a threat starts to manifest itself, but its implications have been different too. Preemption being a war tool has led to the annihilation of basic structures as we have seen in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan where aggressors are using offensive for a defense supported by their own reasoning. This principle enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty has been invoked once, in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001. The attack of 9/11 was on the US, and it occurred on US' soil but the latter invasion of Afghanistan that took place involved all the signatory states of NATO. This is so because the attack on

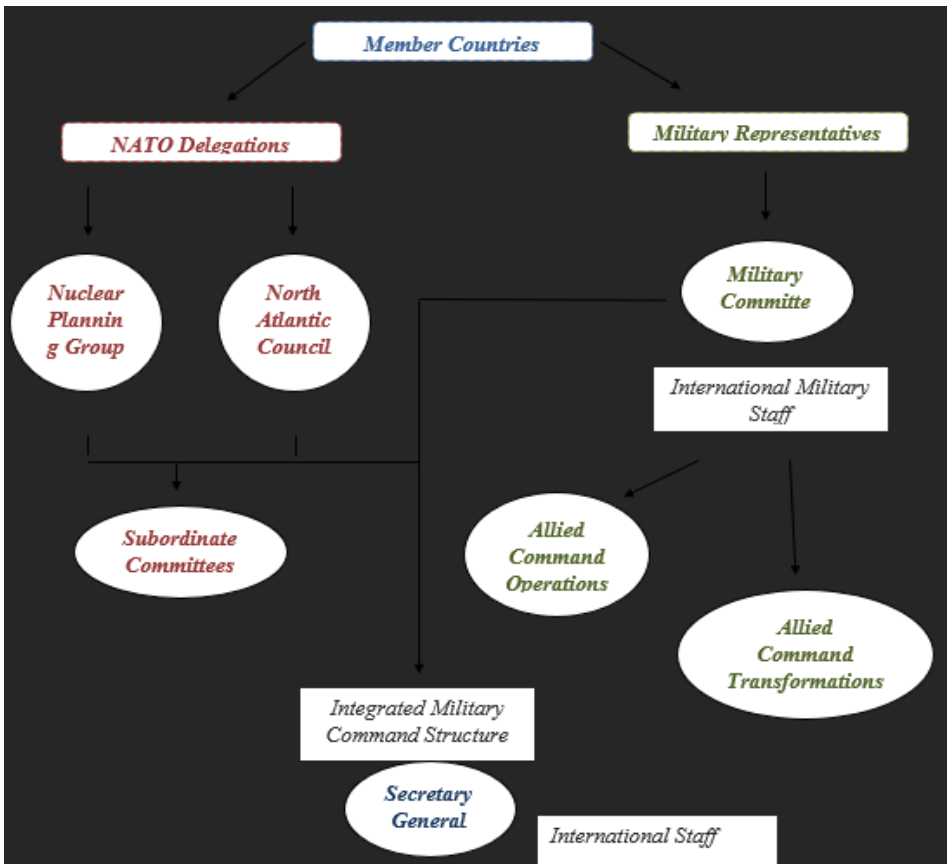
the US meant an attack on all the states who have bonded together for collectively defending each other under the umbrella of NATO.

3. Formation and Maintenance of the Transatlantic Link: NATO is an alliance of countries from Europe and North America providing a uniquely exclusive link between the two continents. This enables consultation and cooperation between them in various fields i.e., defence, security, multinational crisis-management, and operations.
4. Strategic Concepts: Provision of a framework of core tasks, principles, values and evolution of the security environment amongst the alliance members i.e., collective defence, crisis-management and cooperative security.

NATO membership is open to, “Any other European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area.” (NATO 2021)

It also has what it calls the ‘*Membership Action Plan*’ which intends to help aspiring members prepare for membership by meeting key requirements via providing practical advice and targeted assistance. Since its founding, the admission of new member states has increased the alliance from being 12 to 30 states. The most recent member state to be added to NATO was North Macedonia on 27th March 2020 (NATO 2020). NATO currently recognizes Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Ukraine as aspiring members (NATO News 2020). An additional 20 states participate in NATO’s Partnership for Peace program, with 15 others involved in Institutionalized Dialogue Programs. The reported joint military spending of all NATO members constitutes over 70% of the global total. The members agreed to reach their aim or maintain the target defence spending of at least 2% of GDP by 2024 (The Economist 2019).

Working Structure



NATO was initially conceived as a deterrent to the rising power of the USSR and as a contentious opponent to the Warsaw Pact. Therefore, no military operations were conducted by NATO during the Cold War because it had to act as a powerful deterrent against military aggression. However, after the termination of Cold War, the first operations, *Anchor Guard* in 1990 and *Ace Guard* in 1991, were prompted by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Airborne early warning aircraft were sent to provide coverage of south-eastern Turkey, and later a quick-reaction force was deployed to the area (NATO 2005).

Since then, it has played a significant part in the Bosnia and Herzegovina intervention, Kosovo intervention, war in Afghanistan, Iraq training mission, Gulf of Aden anti-piracy, Libya intervention and much more. Recently it held the biggest cyber defence exercise virtually due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Began on November 16th, 2020, the Cyber Coalition exercise aimed to train cyber defenders in their ability to defend

NATO and national networks and will test decision making processes and procedures (NATO News 2020).

Nevertheless, in leading times NATO's power and influence have been brought into question due to its turbulent relations with Turkey. The peculiar question of uncertainty of its ally Turkey arose due to Turkey's tempestuous relations with its NATO allies who Greece and France, mainly. Turkey and Greece had strained relations and they are deteriorating due to Aegean dispute which caused a surge in controversies between the two states. Since both the states claim the region of Aegean Sea so it is a matter of right of sovereignty (Ortolland 2009).

Nonetheless, the clash between Turkey and France is the most recent case of infighting among NATO allies. This started off with NATO ordering to inspect the suspicious cargo ship where Turkish sailors could be seen in combat positions and at a certain point one of the Turkish frigates flashed its radar lights onto the French vessel three times, effectively threatening to shoot which led to retaliation. However, the authenticity of this argument could be challenged because it is proposed by France and Turkey says otherwise. This also led to miscommunication and escalation of rivalry between the two states (Politico 2020).

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in a two-day visit to Turkey and Greece on 5th October 2020 emphasised on Turkey being a valued ally of NATO. The Secretary General praised Turkey's contributions to NATO missions, including in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo, and its support to other Allies and partners during the pandemic. Mr Stoltenberg also highlighted NATO's strong commitment to Turkey's security by augmenting its air defence against missile attacks from Syria, and by increasing the Alliance's air and naval presence (Independent Balkan News Agency 2020).

The recent shift in power from Trump to Biden is also a shift of populism to multilateralism, apparently. It has also shown a shift in NATO-US partnership which even though threatened to impact relations in the North Atlantic region. Biden's pre-election rhetoric about U.S. trading of armaments with Russia perhaps will meddle with the association with Turkey. However, there is a possibility that to maintain stability in NATO Biden may try to be more interconnected with Turkey.

New Challenges to NATO

Ever since World War One and World War Two, U.S. has been crossing Atlantic in order to help liberate Europe and even rebuild it. This pretty much

proves that the security of U.S. and Europe is indivisible. Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen said in a speech,

“Instability and insecurity on one side of the Atlantic will inevitably affect the other side of the ‘big pond’.” (NATO 2010).

The attack on one as an attack on all pretty much portrays the basic concept of globalization, integration. This organization is a transatlantic security cooperation and under its security umbrella they work on Europe integration because the US believes that if they can transform from a breeding ground of nationalism, war and rivalries to pluralism, democracy, and peace then so can their partnership through NATO.

However, the threshold has changed, and a new era has emerged. Globalization has a pretty side as well as a dark side. Moreover, although attack on one is an attack on all exists under article 5 but there is also an article 4 which talks about an informal consultation among the allies about their territorial integrity, political independence, and most of all their security (Kitchen 2014) before a joint and collective response is initiated. This is where the dark side of globalization intervenes, and populism is one of it.

The perfect quintessential of it is the Trump’s administration. Although the US by far has been the most devoted NATO ally but ever since Trump came into office it has marked a tumultuous time for the organization. During his campaign, Trump said,

“We will no longer surrender this country or its people to the false song of globalism. The nation-state remains the true foundation for happiness and harmony. I am skeptical of international unions that tie us up and bring America down.” (Hirsch 2016).

Moreover, Trump considered NATO an irrelevant organization and even called it ‘obsolete’ (Kirby 2017). He often berated other leaders for not spending enough budget on defense. Not only that but he also scrapped the Trans-Pacific partnership, criticized the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), and pulled out of most of the US bilateral and security agreements that the other NATO allies considered important for their security for example Iran Nuclear Deal, and Open Skies aerial Surveillance pact.

Trump’s populist approach was so much so that the former presidential candidate of Netherlands, Geeret Wilders aimed to liberate Netherlands from NATO (Wilders 2016). The French President Emmanuel Macron also claimed that ‘NATO was suffering from “brain death” (AP News 2020) because of the lack of leadership from the part of the US. Furthermore, Germany also opposed the Trump’s Afghan troop withdrawal because they claim that the

US appears to have forgotten about the “in together, out together” motto of NATO in its mission in Afghanistan (Werkhäuser and Petersmann 2020).

Although the current Biden administration aims to opt for a more multilateral approach which portrays the positive side of globalization however, the damage caused during the Trump’s administration had led each ally to think of its own security and their issues first which was not the case before the era of populism. Ever since the Trump’s era, generally the role of the US as a global policeman is decreasing and Americans are also more tilted towards, “Make America Great Again” even if it’s for the sake of “Dump Trump”.

Furthermore, Southern European Countries and the Mediterranean perceive threat from the Middle East and North African countries especially due to the high influx of migrants and refugees. On the other hand, Eastern European countries view Russia’s resurgence as a threat (Galeotti 2017).

Russia’s resurgence is itself a big challenge to NATO. For some globalization is not a uniform phenomenon rather it is an opportunity for the developed to develop even more however, it also depends on the states who make the most of it and Russia is one of them. Although crumbled after the disintegration but Russia managed to reassert itself again especially militarily. NATO’s supreme allied commander for Europe, U.S. General Curtis Scaparrotti specially mentioned about the modernizing of NATO, he said,

“I certainly have concerns with respect to Russia. I think that, as an alliance, we are dominant. There are domains within this that were challenged. I think cyber is one of those. They are very competent in that,” he said, referring to Russia. “There are others where because of the modernization you noted, while we are dominant, we will not be in five years per se if we aren’t adapting like this to include our structure but also within the nations, our capabilities, across the military functional areas as well as our domains.” (Jozwiak 2018)

NATO’s constitution is because of former USSR or to contain it. Although after the cold war ended, the role organization played changed into a different scenario like fighting ethnic conflicts or anchoring new democracies. However, now that Russia is resurging this leaves NATO with a strategic quandary of returning to its roots for the old time’s sake. Perhaps that may not be possible because the state NATO contained was USSR and the state that is a challenge today is not USSR but Russia.

The state of Russia has now gotten its claws into some European countries for instance making Germany and Italy dependent on it for oil and gas (Cladi 2021). The world order has changed and previously it just used to

be military superiority, but now military power has to collide with economy as well. As the Joseph Nye's concept of complex interdependence explains it, states are economically interdependent on each other so complexly, that it is hard to initiate a war.

Therefore, Putin's Russia is a threat to the bond of NATO. Not only that but Putin's intentions to strategically strengthen itself in the immediate neighborhood and beyond with this modernized military will, if nothing more, intimidate the neighbors and weaken NATO's solidarity (Daalder 2017).

On the other hand, China is on a rise. It is an example of the promotion of geo-economics from internal to external. It began its journey around 1960's and till 9/11 China was only a threat to NATO members. However, 2010 onwards China started to make alliances and trade deals with the Southeast Asian countries and that is how China firmed its roots in the region. Recently, NATO declared China as a global security challenge (DAWN News 2021). The members refrained from calling her a rival but China's increasing vertical proliferation, her assertive behavior, coercive policies, and debatable goals are worrying NATO.

Unlike the US's manifest destiny China has a shared destiny (Beeson 2020) where in global governance they are building themselves as well as investing elsewhere like Africa and Latin America. It is a clear demonstration of interconnectedness under the phenomenon of globalization. They promote soft power unlike the US, and this helps them to maintain international relations. For example, China is taking zinc from Cambodia and in return gives them train infrastructure resulting in Cambodia supporting China on the platform of ASEAN (Haider 2021). Another example is the RCEP and the fact that the US was not even a part of it speaks volumes. The US-China-Huawei collaboration is another representation of complex interdependence.

China is expanding through String of Pearls and the One Belt, One Road (OBOR) (Ashraf 2021), and even got European countries hooked to it. This is to counter the US policy of containing China and reasserting itself seeking influence by avoiding chances of blockade being planned by the US and India. China needed material and labor for accumulation of surplus, so it underwent a domestic policy change. Now China is increasingly becoming a visible security actor in the European periphery. It views NATO as a US-centric organization that may be used to contain it. Therefore, China has attempted to sway individual NATO member's decisions in order to undermine the alliance's cohesiveness.

NATO members have been concerned about close connections between China and Russia, particularly in the sphere of security and military. Apart from the joint exercises held between Chinese and Russian navies in

the Baltic and Mediterranean seas, there exists a potential for the two sides to further coordinate or align their behavior on issues collectively important to both of them, such as hybrid warfare and cyber espionage, arms control, and their approach to Arctic governance, among other things (Wilson Center 2021).

China made use of the dialectical globalization process the most. Deng Xiaoping coined the term 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics' (Wilson Center 2021) under which there is a total control for the communist party in a capitalist economy. China knew that the world is globalized so it built its own type of economy. This is being done through OBOR and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and China's discourses are changed in Southeast Asia, South Asia, African countries, and Europe. It has infrastructure plans which increases connectivity and enhances trade and economic ties.

China is making all the states utilize the perks of globalization because they claim that everyone has the right to improve however, China will still have dominance. So, it provides platforms of diplomatic initiatives and comprehensive economic cooperation in the form of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Indian Ocean, and Pacific Ocean etc. China's collaborative yet authoritative behavior is complicated for NATO to contemplate. She has her own terms of governance on its own vocabulary. China joins the WTO and then violates the rule, when U.S. challenges they bring in their jurisdiction and constitution into the equation claiming that they are following their own rules (New Learning Online 2021).

China is slowly and steadily inserting itself. They plan out the whole infrastructure and along with it provide a bank in the shape of AIIB. It does joint investment projects with the World Bank so if AIIB faces a loss so will the World Bank since they both are together (Dollar 2015). In Chinese theory, the basic level of analysis is the family and in western it is the State, so their epistemologies differ making it even more challenging for NATO to find out a way to contain China. Although their theory is not a new concept, but their governance is as old as 2100 B.C.

They use the term "Tianxia" or "All under heaven" which simply means 'Earth, People's heart and a world institution' (Por 2020). In China, the points of the compass are always listed in the order east-south-west-north so basically they are building facts on the ground on the roof of the world. It is complicated to understand China because they have a grand bargain with the world – "we'll make the stuff for cheap – you buy it for cheap" or how U.S. puts it 'dumping' (Marshall 2015).

NATO's alliance is also threatened because where at one hand Russia

and China are rising then on the other EU is facing multiple domestic crisis. One of them is BREXIT and the other is Europe's demographic situation. NATO is ring-fenced from the impact of it. UK wants to remain involved in the European initiatives but Europe on the other than considers it to be an obstacle in the union's decision-making autonomy. Moreover, Trump rhetorically supported BREXIT which caused a discord especially in the transatlantic relationship which is never helpful.

Meanwhile, the United Kingdom is no longer able to serve as a transatlantic bridge between the United States and the European Union, risking significant divergence in the coming years. The threat of a British exit has prompted the EU to seek for 'strategic autonomy,' resulting in a slew of new projects, including the European Defense Fund (EDF), Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), and a shared headquarters for EU military deployments (Martill 2019).

Moreover, ever since BREXIT started happening the cooperation between NATO and the European Union began to deepen. This is resulting in a shift of key players to those with influence in both the parties while UK is losing its significance in collaborative decisions. EU also iterated a global strategy emphasizing that NATO will remain at the center of Euro-Atlantic relationship. The increasing removal of UK from the decision-making process will have an impact on the security issues that are tied with Europe.

Although the UK introduced the initiative of 'Global Britain' (GOV. UK 2021) in the shifting global context and a new relationship with Europe, it seems delusional. Be it the Russian threat, international terrorism or illegal migrations, the EU's decision is in tune with its institutional framework, and it will have a strong influence on the UK especially when the UK is not going to have an autonomous part in it. Furthermore, it will not be able to play an effective role in the collective security agenda of NATO as well (McAllister 2021).

The EU is also focusing on deepening the alliance with NATO after BREXIT because they lost a significant military support that was given by the UK. However, the non-EU members of NATO especially US, Canada, Norway, and Iceland also have valuable capabilities and locations ranging from intelligence gathering to the Arctic circle access. So, although the UK does not act anymore as a bridge between Europe and the US, the EU is finding alternatives to maintain the alliance. Moreover, after BREXIT these non-EU members of NATO will become responsible for around 80% (CNBC 2019) of the defense spending therefore, both the organizations are focusing on cooperation especially in areas related to cyber security and maritime capabilities.

Due to the increasingly transnational and fast developing nature of global threats like hybrid warfare, the EU's choice to emphasize security and defense should be considered as a valuable complement to NATO. The EU and NATO should pool their resources to handle such concerns, and each should establish a presence in areas where the other cannot. Furthermore, several EU Member States anticipated that an increase in defense spending will help them reach NATO's 2% defense expenditure goal, strengthening NATO and reducing the US accusations of unequal burden sharing (Gocek 2019).

The second domestic issue is of Europe's declining demography. NATO was designed according to the Cold War era population, but the member states need to realize that as the world is globalizing Europe is also ageing. In the 1950's the Atlantic alliance had a population of 13.7% of the world's total population. However, it started declining and in 2015 accounted for 12.5% of the world total and as per predictions the quota is set to fall around 10.3% in 2050. Back in the 1950's NATO members were the most populated with France holding the 12th place. Until 2050 Europe's population will continue to decline (Ceccorulli, Fassi and Lucarelli 2017).

NATO's share of global GDP is bound to follow a similar trajectory, falling from roughly 60% in 1950 to 50% in 2000 and finally 38% now. This loss of relative weight, on the other hand, is not necessarily a direct danger to the NATO's security, but rather a background condition that may affect other challenges. Moreover, immigration and declining birth rates has become a characteristic of modern societies especially inspired by U.S. globalization trend consequently resulting in whole villages hollowing out with only pensioners left behind (Lane 2019).

The ever-declining population means that economically the growth required for expansive labor force will be hindered. Militarily, member states who will have a small Armed forces effective cannot prove to be an efficient NATO ally. And politically, it promotes and energizes populism probably the reason why BREXIT enjoyed most of its support from areas rapidly declining in demography.

NATO's political cohesion is being challenged by the internal as well as external actors. Another most pronounced case of this political fracture is Turkey's role in NATO. Turkey is not the same country as it was during the Cold War era, and this is probably the reason why their relations are straining. NATO claims that President Erdogan's policies are turning their back on democracy, press freedom, and civic society in Turkey. Many NATO members claim that Turkey has been keeping NATO agenda hostage to its domestic concerns and repeatedly played unilateral incursions in Northern Syria.

However, many southern flank allies as well as Turkey argue that NATO has never acknowledged or addressed Turkey's legitimate security concerns in the ever increasing globalization (Aybet 2020). Turkey is one of the countries that suffered the most from terrorism particularly from DAESH (Islamic State) attacks and Turkey is also one of those countries that more than any other ally did its best to eliminate the threat without any external help. Turkey does not have a contention with the concept of alliance in NATO but some of the member states policies are troublesome as the environment is changing and the neighborhood is tough. There have been times when Turkey was left on its own by NATO to fend for itself that is when Turkey learned to become a self-help state. It was not out of choice but rather necessity. So, the changing nature of Turkey might be threatening some of the NATO members especially EU states however part of it is the intention to isolate Turkey too.

Recently, in NATO, mutual distrust has been at its peak, with many allies doubting if Turkey still shares NATO's interests and values while on the other hand Turkey was failing to understand the benefits of NATO membership or a resurrected EU accession process. Both parties appear to have forgotten the historical links and common goals that drove Turkey to join NATO in 1952, including opposing the former Soviet Union (now Russia) dominance in Central Asia and the Middle East and sustaining Middle Eastern stability.

Nevertheless, Turkey's geopolitical position is still an attraction to NATO as it is at a crossroad of Europe, Asia, and Africa (Ellehuus 2019). NATO needs this position for political and operational reach. Therefore, in order to acquire that, in return NATO's allows Turkey to be able to benefit from the military power of NATO. Therefore, NATO and the EU collectively should take measures to recognize Turkey's active role and significance before exploiters like Russia take advantage of the fissures between Turkey and NATO.

Furthermore, Turkey has offered to secure the Hamid Karzai Airport of Kabul after the withdrawal of the NATO forces from Afghanistan. The President of Turkey and the new US premier had agreed on this plan, but details are yet to be followed. Ankara already has its military personnel in Afghanistan under the umbrella of NATO but wants financial and logistic support from the NATO members to take the important responsibility of securing the airport. Turkey has also asked the support from Pakistan and Hungary for this mission, but, so far, both had not yet agreed. This renewed cooperation between Turkey and NATO could pave the way for important NATO members to rethink their strained relations with Turkey.

The latest meeting of NATO in Brussels in June 2021 had tried to address the new challenges including the hybrid threats emanating from

different state and non-state actors. The role of Russia has been criticized at different instances by the US for using the cyber-attacks to undermine the sovereignty of the US as Russia intervened in the elections of US. The new Biden administration, though wants to reassert the American role in the world, still shares bitter memories with Russia's Putin, as Biden himself called Putin a "killer" in one of his interviews. Russia, on the other hand, is all set to challenge the US hegemony in international politics so, this surely is posing a serious clash of interests and will likely harm the NATO's efficiency. The alliance also has a covert feeling for Iran and North Korea to use nuclear weapons for undermining global security.

The joint statement at the end of the meeting further pronounced Chinese military rise as a "systematic challenge" to the alliance (BBC 2021). China in its response has made it clear that the peaceful development of China is being perceived in a wrong way. Anyhow, the heads of the member states of NATO alliance asserted that they don't want a cold war with the China though the acts of America in recent years like increasing trade tariffs, diplomatic stiff on COVID and blaming China as the country responsible for the pandemic is not helping NATO's rhetoric of avoiding a new Cold War with the rising global power.

The comprehensive communique has mentioned various steps to be taken for the effectiveness of the alliance in the coming future but still, we consider few recommendations to be included at the end of the paper for the purpose of opening further options to the researchers.

Recommendations

1. Biden administration must work on building trust with its European partners as the strong bridge between the US and Europe, i.e., UK is out of the EU.
2. The US must focus on leading the alliance if it must contain the increasing influence of China and Russia globally.
3. The EU should pool in 2% of their GDP to NATO by 2024 as being agreed upon so that the dependence of NATO on the US decreases.
4. NATO must resolve the conflict between its member states like that of Turkey, Greece, France, and the Netherlands.
5. NATO member states must focus on Cyber security as it poses a serious challenge to their institutions and security by both rogue states and non-state actors.

6. What remains a confrontational point between different member states of NATO is the Migration Crisis. The EU must share the burden of the refugees and the alliance should help weaker states in Middle East and Europe to be politically stable so that the migration crisis does not get worse.
7. The threats from China, Iran, Russia, and North Korea are recognized but a comprehensive plan should be implemented to deal with new challenges.
8. The populist wave across the continents is one of the core challenges that is disturbing the globalization project. The alliance and specifically the US and the EU must focus on exporting the democratic values across the globe or else the populist regimes may lead member states to take a solo flight.
9. The withdrawal from Afghanistan should be a joint decision of all the NATO members and its timing is what matters the most. The possible civil war in Afghanistan will directly influence the NATO's morale and reputation as a successful military alliance.
10. The 2030 agenda should be implemented with full force or NATO will be short of achieving its goals at the end of this decade.

Final Remarks

NATO is an important alliance of thirty nations and will continue to contribute to shaping the global political and security environment. The damage done to the alliance by the last US administration is on reverse and the Biden administration wants to take the lead to make the alliance more effective in coming time. The new challenges posed to the alliance like China's rise, Russia's resurgence in global politics, growing populism, migration issues, cyber-security and rifts between different member states are well recognized by the member states and if NATO's 2030 plan is implemented in its letter and spirit, the alliance will surely be more strengthened at the end of the following decade. Member states need to cooperate with each other and specifically the contributions of individual states are to be recognized as of Turkey if the alliance is avoiding becoming obsolete in the coming future.

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ABSTRACT

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been the most important and successful multilateral military political organization, pursuing the agenda of exporting democracy globally and ensuring the mutual defense of its allies. Historically, NATO was formed against the threat of communism emanating from USSR (Russia). The alliance did not use military option till the end of the cold war between the west and USSR, but post-cold war, it transformed and operated in Balkans, South Asia, Horn of Africa, and Middle East. The 9/11 incident further enhanced the military role of the organization and gave it ample reason to act internationally for ensuring the global security. America, being the leader of the alliance used it for fighting the so-called global war on terrorism and its adventures in Middle East. Nevertheless, in the last two decades the organization went through various changes and is now continuously in the state of transformation. The wave of populism which had influenced the very concept of globalization has posed serious challenges for the alliance. The Trump rhetoric of “America first”, BREXIT, challenges of migration, changing demography of Europe, assertion of Russia in global politics, confrontation between the NATO allies like Turkey and France, and rise of China are few factors which may affect the future of the so-called intergovernmental military alliance. This article concurrently discusses the new challenges for the NATO and sheds light on the possible options to the strategy of Biden administration to reverse the policies of its predecessor which have influenced the cooperation of different allies of NATO. In the end, the researcher has tried to put forth few recommendations which may help the policy makers to cope with the challenges NATO is facing. The study is qualitative and analytical in nature whereas primary as well as secondary sources are used for data collection.

KEYWORDS

NATO; Globalization; Populism; New Challenges.

Received on August 18, 2021

Approved on November 10, 2021

FAILED STRATEGY? THE LEGACY OF BARACK OBAMA'S PRESIDENCY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

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Introduction

The President of the United States of America is a politician whose actions are not only closely observed by decision-makers and the public around the world, but also provoke real consequences that often lead to the evolution of the global order. The actions taken by American presidents (and their failure to act) in relation to specific geopolitical regions are the subject of analyses whose accuracy depends on the current problems on the international stage, e.g. Bill Clinton's decision to initiate a NATO military operation in Yugoslavia, or the restoration of diplomatic relations with Cuba, achieved during Barack Obama's second term as the 44th U.S. President). Among all the geopolitical regions that can be distinguished, it is possible to indicate one region that has been playing a key role in the global security system for more than a century, and thus constitutes a major challenge for American foreign policy and those responsible for it. It is, beyond doubt, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Owing to the strategic location of the region at the intersection of transport routes and, consequently, the overlapping of interests of various actors on the global political stage, political and economic domination in the Middle East and North Africa is of crucial importance for American leadership and Washington's superpower status in the world arena (Zajac

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2005, 137–138). Although consecutive American administrations have adopted different (sometimes fundamentally different) strategies toward the MENA region, the awareness of the region's significance and the necessity to maintain U.S. influence in it are self-evident to American decision-makers. What is debatable is the form of this activity and its scope, closely linked to the possible involvement (political, economic, military, social or cultural) of other actors, both regional and those whose ambitions extend far beyond the region.

The above mechanisms can be clearly observed in the three most recent U.S. presidencies: of George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and of Donald Trump which ended in 2020. Each of these politicians was forced to adjust the original framework of U.S. foreign policy toward the MENA region, which is best exemplified by George W. Bush's need to respond to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (Pastusiak 2018, 361–374). Since Donald Trump had just finished his term in office, it is too early to evaluate his policy toward the Middle East and North Africa even though one can already attempt to draw some conclusions. In the case of Barack Obama, however, it is only right to evaluate his achievements. Even a superficial analysis of the Obama's legacy in the Middle East reveals the occurrence of descriptions such as “failed strategy” or “disappointment” (Sullivan 2016). It is a fact that the MENA region changed beyond recognition during his presidency. Given the complexity of the issues analyzed, formulating an unequivocal assessment of Obama's achievements requires taking several factors into account.

Objectives and area of research, methodology

This article attempts to answer the following research problems:

- Was the foreign policy of Obama's administration characterized by reduced involvement in relations with MENA countries in favor of intensified relations with other geopolitical regions?
- Did Obama's foreign policy toward the MENA region fail to bring the desired outcomes, and did it suffer a clear defeat?

Recognizing that the geopolitics of the MENA region and U.S. foreign policy are extremely complex and multi-faceted problems, the Authors' intention is not a detailed analysis and description of all aspects of Obama's strategy in relation to the region under study. They rather seek to list and

describe a few factors in order to answer the research problems formulated above.

In order to address the research problems as thoroughly as possible, the Authors divided the paper into three parts, devoted to the following: an analysis of the place of the MENA region in U.S. political manifestos; the significance of the region for U.S. diplomacy; initiatives undertaken in relation to President Obama's administration. The research presented in the first and second part is mostly of a quantitative character and seeks to answer the first research problem. The second research problem is addressed in the third part, based on qualitative research.

The spatial criteria established for the needs of the article encompass states forming the geopolitical region known as "the Middle East and North Africa." Given the difficulty in establishing the boundaries of the region, the Authors decided to apply the most frequently used geographical limits encompassing the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Libya. This spatial framework of the Middle East and North Africa take into account the unique characteristics of the region that is an arena of interactions of the states listed above as well as external players influencing the shape of the global order. Content analysis is the research method used in the study. It enables an accurate verification of the claims in the political manifestos outlining U.S. foreign policy as well as a precise analysis of acts of law and reports from press conferences of entities responsible for U.S. diplomacy. Content measurement and analysis of diplomatic documents and reports are techniques that supplement content analysis.

The MENA Region as the Subject of Political Manifestos

In the first part of this study, the Authors analyze the State of the Union addresses (SOTU) delivered by Barack Obama during his first term as U.S. President (2009–2012)³. The goal of the analysis is to calculate how much space in his annual addresses delivered to a Joint session of the U.S. Congress was devoted by the 44th President to international affairs, including relations with partners in the MENA region, and to indicate issues identified by Obama as key to U.S. policy toward the MENA region. In order to address the

³ Annual addresses delivered by U.S. Presidents are an opportunity to indicate the country's most important problems and present the administration's plan for the coming months. Given their official character, the State of the Union addresses can be regarded as manifestos of Washington's foreign policy (Dahl 2019, 99–100).

research problems, it needs to be determined whether the analyzed region was neglected by the Obama administration in favor of intensified relations with other geopolitical regions. The answers are provided in the table presenting percentage data for three geopolitical regions, i.e., Asia-Pacific, Europe as well as the Middle East and North Africa⁴ in State of the Union addresses in the years 2005–2012. A comparison of the corresponding indicators for the second term of George W. Bush as U.S. President (2005–2008) and the first term of his successor (2009–2012) will enable a fuller assessment of the first research problem.

In his first State of the Union Address, given on February 24, 2009, Barack Obama focused on the need to bring the American economy out of the then ongoing financial crisis, and devoted relatively little attention to issues associated with foreign policy (only 10.2 percent of the length of his speech, see Table 1). Alongside general remarks (that can be expected from every newly sworn in administration) concerning the vision of the role of the U.S. in the international arena, Obama referred to the financial aspects of the U.S. military operations conducted in Iraq and Afghanistan (El-Khawas 2012, 127–128). He also pointed out the need to intensify efforts aimed at reaching lasting peace in the relations between Israel and her neighbors (SOTU 2009), and the need to fight extremism and terrorism.

4 These regions were selected according to the following principle: the subject of research (Middle East and North Africa), the main focus of diplomatic involvement declared by the administration (Asia-Pacific) and the traditional ally (Europe).

Table 1. Selected geopolitical regions in State of the Union Addresses in the years 2005–2012

President, year	Length of the address (number of words)	Content related to foreign policy (%)				
		Percentage of the address devoted to foreign policy	Foreign policy toward three regions under study	including relations with Asia-Pacific countries	including relations with European countries	including relations with MENA region countries
Barack Obama, 2012	6979	15.6	11.2	37.2	2.8	60
Barack Obama, 2011	6789	18.9	10.2	59	7.2	33.8
Barack Obama, 2010	7303	14	7.2	25.7	12.7	61.6
Barack Obama, 2009	5914	10.2	3.5	21.3	–	78.7
George W. Bush, 2008	5708	48.3	39.4	17	6.9	76.1
George W. Bush, 2007	5550	45.8	27.3	8.5	6.3	85.2
George W. Bush, 2006	5299	44.8	20.2	11.2	9.3	79.5
George W. Bush, 2005	5031	35.6	28.3	5.8	6.3	87.9

Slightly more attention was devoted to international affairs in the State of the Union Address in 2010 (14 percent). Speaking to a joint session of the Congress, the President repeatedly stressed the need for the United States to adapt to the changing conditions on the world political and economic stage, citing the successes of China, Germany and India in this respect. He also emphasized the need to establish new partnerships while promoting values (“We’ve prohibited torture and strengthened partnerships from the Pacific to South Asia to the Arabian Peninsula”; SOTU 2010), speaking most extensively on the question of delivering on one of the key election promises, i.e., withdrawing American troops from Iraq:

As we take the fight to al Qaeda, we are responsibly leaving Iraq to its people. As a candidate, I promised that I would end this war, and that is what I am doing as President. We will have all of our combat troops out of Iraq by the end of this August. We will support the Iraqi government -- we will support the Iraqi government as they hold elections, and we will continue to partner with the Iraqi people to promote regional peace and prosperity. But make no mistake: This war is ending, and all of our troops are coming home (SOTU 2010).

More than 10 percent of the length of the 44th President's speech in 2011 concerned international affairs. Besides the references, also made in previous State of the Union addresses, to the necessity of continuing the fight against extremism and al Qaeda that was planning further terrorist attacks, two issues were of crucial importance for the analysis of the foreign policy of Obama's administration toward the MENA region, namely the announcement of U.S. troops leaving Iraq as victors and handing over power to the Iraqi government ("America's commitment has been kept; the Iraq War is coming to an end"; SOTU 2011) as well as the unequivocal support of the movement for social and political change that was developing at the time of the speech and came to be known as the Arab Spring ("the United States of America stands with the people of Tunisia, and supports the democratic aspirations of all people"; SOTU 2011).

The U.S. President also spoke, though very briefly, about the role of diplomacy in putting pressure on Iran ("Because of a diplomatic effort to insist that Iran meet its obligations, the Iranian government now faces tougher and tighter sanctions than ever before"; SOTU 2011), and Washington's involvement in carrying out the independence referendum in South Sudan, presenting it as a confirmation of the existence of a purpose in U.S. actions, which stands in opposition to the concept of using force as an end unto itself ("Recent events have shown us that what sets us apart must not just be our power – it must be the purpose behind it. In South Sudan – with our assistance – the people were finally able to vote for independence after years of war"; SOTU 2011). On the other hand, it must be noted that the bulk of Obama's speech on foreign affairs concerned political and economic relations with countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S. President emphasized the role of China and India as increasingly important partners for the U.S., and contrasted the ability of these economies to adapt with the American economy that required further reform ("Meanwhile, nations like China and India realized that with some changes of their own, they could compete in this new world"; SOTU 2011). He also spoke proudly of the successes of his administration in trade relations with the Asian countries ("Recently,

we signed agreements with India and China that will support more than 250,000 jobs in the United States” (SOTU 2011), which is a clear reflection of the priorities of Washington's foreign policy in that period (Cohen 2013, 339).

The State of the Union Address in 2012 was the most “international” speech of this kind given by Barack Obama during his first term as U.S. President (index of 11.2 percent). Among the three geopolitical regions analyzed, the most attention was devoted to the Middle East and North Africa region. Describing the transformations in this region, Obama stressed the role that, in his opinion, U.S. diplomacy should continue to play and the values that it should uphold:

As the tide of war recedes, a wave of change has washed across the Middle East and North Africa, from Tunis to Cairo; from Sana'a to Tripoli. A year ago, Gaddafi was one of the world's longest-serving dictators, a murderer with American blood on his hands. Today, he is gone. And in Syria, I have no doubt that the Assad regime will soon discover that the forces of change can't be reversed, and that human dignity can't be denied. How this incredible transformation will end remains uncertain. But we have a huge stake in the outcome. And while it is ultimately up to the people of the region to decide their fate, we will advocate for those values that have served our own country so well. We will stand against violence and intimidation. We will stand for the rights and dignity of all human beings; men and women; Christians, Muslims, and Jews. We will support policies that lead to strong and stable democracies and open markets, because tyranny is no match for liberty (SOTU 2012).

Summing up his first term that was drawing to an end, Obama expressly responded to the re-evaluation of the priorities of U.S. foreign policy that he was often accused of (and still is), that is, giving priority to relations with countries of the Asia and Pacific region at the expense of U.S. involvement in the Middle East and Europe, among others (“Pivot to Asia”; Grabowski 2012, 107–111). Obama rejected those accusations unequivocally: “The renewal of American leadership can be felt across the globe. Our oldest alliances in Europe and Asia are stronger than ever. [...] America is back” (SOTU 2012).

While it is difficult to judge Obama's assertion about the United States return to the “global game” (for the very reason that it would require proving that the U.S. had been excluded from that “game” at a certain point), it is possible to analyze the data collected in Table 2 in order to verify the first research problem (“Was the foreign policy of Obama's administration characterized by reduced involvement in relations with MENA countries in

favor of intensified relations with other geopolitical regions?”).

The first dimension of analysis is a comparison of the percentage distribution of content in the consecutive addresses with regard to U.S. foreign policy toward countries of the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the MENA region. In three State of the Union addresses given by Barack Obama (2009, 2010 and 2012), the most attention was devoted to relations with countries in the MENA region (78.7, 61.6 and 50 percent respectively), except for the year 2011 when the President focused more on relations with APAC countries (59 percent) at the expense of the MENA region, which took up 33.8 percent of the part of Obama's address devoted to the regions analyzed. Although the Asia-Pacific region was not a priority region to Obama (at least at the level of declarations), its growing importance should be noted (21.3, 25.7, 59 and 37.2 percent in the consecutive years under study). The growing significance of relations with APAC countries was accompanied by the declining intensity of contacts with European partners (starting with the lack of any mention about the character of mutual relations in 2009, to 12.7 percent in 2010, 7.2 percent in 2011 and as little as 2.8 in 2012).

Another dimension of analysis is a comparison of the above data with analogous indicators for the second term of George W. Bush (2005–2008). As data in Table 1 indicate, in all State of the Union addresses delivered by George W. Bush in the years 2005–2008, the most attention was devoted to relations with the MENA countries (from 76.1 percent in 2008 to 87.9 percent in 2005). This was largely connected with the American military presence in Iraq, thus described by President Bush:

Our generational commitment to the advance of freedom, especially in the Middle East, is now being tested and honored in Iraq. [...] And the victory of freedom in Iraq will strengthen a new ally in the war on terror, inspire democratic reformers from Damascus to Tehran [...] (SOTU 2005).

During the first address in the period analyzed, George W. Bush devoted more attention to relations with European countries than Asian countries (6.3 and 5.8 percent respectively), but this proportion changed in the following years, the biggest difference occurring in the last year of presidency (6.9 versus 17 percent respectively). It is also worth noting that, despite the considerably shorter addresses of the 43rd President of the United States (his longest speech was shorter from the shortest speech given by Obama in the period under study: 5708 versus 5914 words, respectively), he devoted much more time to foreign policy issues than his successor (Frankowski 2006, 126–136).

Leaving aside the 2008 State of the Union Address, which had to have “international” overtones as it was the last SOTU of his presidency, it can be observed that Bush discussed international affairs on average three times as often as his successor. The fact that his addresses were, on average, by about 15 percent shorter than those given by Obama seems to enhance the differences between the priorities set by the two consecutive administrations. On the other hand, it is worth noting that, despite Obama's initial attempts to distance himself from active foreign policy (as reflected in the small, just above 10 percent, proportion of the 2009 State of the Union Address devoted to foreign policy), the fast-changing international situation forced the 44th President of the United States to be more active than he had planned (18.9 percent in 2011 and 15.6 percent in 2012).

United States Diplomacy Toward the Middle East and North Africa

The President of the United States of America is most often regarded as the entity responsible for conducting U.S. foreign policy (Dahl 2019). Although both the American constitution and the practice of the political system in the United States provide for a whole range of bodies having powers to influence U.S. foreign policy⁵, the character of this study does not allow the Authors to describe them all. Owing to the spatial limitations in this part of the study, only one indicator of Washington's diplomatic involvement in relations with international partners could be presented, namely an analysis of the destinations of the trips made by U.S. presidents. Similarly, to the first part of the study, it aimed to compare data concerning the indicators relevant to the second term of George W. Bush (2005–2008) and the first term of Barack Obama (2009–2012). The analysis addressed the research problems, the first problem in particular.

⁵ In the case of certain bodies, e.g., the Congress, Department of State or Supreme Court, these powers are quite significant (Duncan and Goddard 2003; Grant 2004; Wordliczek 2005).

Table 2: Trips of U.S. Presidents to the selected geopolitical regions in the years 2005–2012

President, year	Number of trips	Trips to Asia-Pacific countries (% of all trips)	Trips to European countries (% of all trips)	Trips to MENA countries (% of all trips)
Barack Obama, 2012	7	5 (71.4%)	–	–
Barack Obama, 2011	10	2 (20%)	5 (50%)	–
Barack Obama, 2010	9	6 (66.7%)	2 (22.2%)	–
Barack Obama, 2009	25	4 (16%)	11 (44%)	4 (16%)
Obama total for 2009–2012	51	17 (33.3%)	18 (35.3%)	4 (7.8%)
George W. Bush, 2008	32	5 (15.6%)	9 (28.1%)	11 (34.4%)
George W. Bush, 2007	15	1 (6.7%)	7 (46.7%)	1 (6.7%)
George W. Bush, 2006	17	6 (35.3%)	6 (35.3%)	2 (11.8%)
George W. Bush, 2005	18	4 (22.2%)	9 (50%)	–
Bush total for 2005–2008	82	16 (19.5%)	31 (37.8%)	14 (17.1%)

Source: own work based on data published on the official website of the U.S. State Department

The data in Table 2 clearly show that the Middle East was not the most important destination in the diplomacy of Obama's administration. In the years 2009–2012, the 44th President of the United States visited only Turkey, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt (all these trips took place in 2009, shortly after he took office), which constitutes only a small portion of his diplomatic activity (four out of 51 foreign visits, i.e., 7.8 percent). During most of his trips (18), Obama visited the European partners; these destinations accounted for, respectively, 44, 22.2 and 55 percent of all trips in the years 2009–2011. It is worth stressing the considerable number of trips to APAC countries (17 visits, 33.3 percent) that Obama visited in each of the four years of his first term, i.e., 4, 6, 2 and 5 times in each consecutive year (16, 66.7, 20 and 71.4 percent of all international trips respectively) from 2009 to 2012.

Different proportions can be observed in the diplomatic activity of George W. Bush in the years 2005–2008. The total number of international

trips of the 43rd U.S. President was much higher in the period analyzed (82 versus 51 trips of his successor). While the importance of European partners in Bush's international agenda was similar (31 trips, 37.8 percent), it is worth noting Washington's distinctly greater diplomatic involvement in the relations with the MENA countries (14 trips, 17.1 percent). Although this involvement was considerable, it was not at the same level throughout his presidency: in 2006, Bush visited Jordan and Iraq, and a year later, he went to Iraq again. In 2008, his last year in office, Bush went on 32 international trips, most of which (11) were to the Middle East and North Africa. During that year the U.S. President visited Israel (twice), the Palestinian Autonomy, Kuwait, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Egypt (twice to both countries), and Iraq. The Asia-Pacific region was an important destination in the diplomacy of the George W. Bush administration (although not as important as for his successor): Bush went on 16 trips there (19.5 percent) in the years 2005–2008.

The analysis of data collected in Table 2 seems to confirm the thesis about the considerably reduced diplomatic involvement in relations with the MENA countries during the first term of Barack Obama (decline from 17.1 to 7.8 percent), accompanied by the prioritization of Asian destinations (increase from 19.5 to 33.3 percent). The fact the intensity of relations with European partners was maintained by the Obama administration (35.3 versus 37.8 percent) only seems to confirm the thesis about the marginalization of the Middle East in foreign policy during Obama's first term (although Europe was not officially declared as a priority, the level of diplomatic activity was maintained).

Initiatives of the First Obama Administration Toward the MENA Region

Barack Obama's Middle East and North Africa strategy was clearly different from George W. Bush's strategy toward the region. Already during the presidential campaign in 2007–2008, Obama stressed the need to return to a "realistic" policy toward the region, citing the examples of a few of his predecessors, e.g., George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton. A detailed strategy toward the MENA region can be found in the speech given by Obama at Cairo University on June 4, 2009. The address, entitled "A New Beginning" and lasting nearly one hour, is still regarded as Obama's manifesto concerning the region and, more broadly, the entire Arab-Muslim world (Dahl 2019, 80).

Barack Obama began his speech by honoring the civilization of Islam

and went on to review the relations of the United States with the countries in the region so far, indicating the visible difficulties and challenges. He made it clear that his administration's intention was not to interfere with the internal affairs of the individual states, but rather to build cooperation based on partnership, which was in accordance with his concept of "rationalizing American involvement in the region." As he assured:

I have come here to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world; one based upon mutual interest and mutual respect; and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive, and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles – principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings (Obama 2019).

Barack Obama mentioned the following issues among the most important challenges to foreign policy toward the MENA region in the years to come:

- combating all forms of extremism, i.e., continuing the fight against al Qaeda, continuing U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan, providing development aid to Afghanistan and Pakistan, withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq;
- working for the resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict: using diplomatic tools to enforce the implementation of the already negotiated agreements, making Arab countries aware of the necessity to actively participate in the resolution of the conflict, which was, in fact, the only issue with regard to which the President announced a definite intensification of diplomatic efforts (Jervis 2017, 32),
- international control over the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: actions aimed at preventing the nuclear arms race in the Middle East, introducing control over Iran's access to nuclear technologies;
- promoting democracy (but not imposing it by force);
- guaranteeing religious freedom;
- striving for the equality of women and men;
- working for economic development and ensuring equal opportunities (President Obama's Speech...).

Although the above speech is viewed as an example of Obama's oratory skills (Brookings Institute Experts 2009), it did not quite translate to subsequent American initiatives in the region, as evidenced, for example, by the absence of the President's trips to the MENA region in the years 2010–2012. Initially, the Washington administration focused on two key priorities, in accordance with previous announcements, i.e., Iraq and Israel, hailing the withdrawal of troops from Iraq as the first success. The question of working toward an Israeli–Palestinian deal was a different matter. Despite the efforts of the new administration, including President Obama himself, the actions undertaken resulted in the deterioration of U.S. relations with the parties concerned and did not bring any new arrangements. David Jervis rightly observed that

the U.S. had trouble getting the parties to talk with each other, much less engage in the serious discussions that might lead to peace. In both of the sustained efforts, the U.S. pressed Israel to make concessions, specifically halting construction of settlements on the West Bank, actions the U.S. had long viewed as impediments to peace, and in both, the American effort failed. As a result, U.S.-Israeli relations deteriorated (Jervis 2017, 36).

The dynamically changing international situation, including the transformations occurring in the Middle East and North Africa, forced Barack Obama to adjust his foreign policy priorities. A turning point occurred in 2011 when Washington's diplomatic involvement in the region increased⁶ with the intensification of actions linked with the Arab Spring, including the overthrowing of dictators in Egypt and Libya (Górak-Sosnowska 2016). In many cases, however, the more careful observation of the situation in the region by American decision-makers did not translate into effective action. At the end of Obama's presidency, the region was an arena of conflicts, including proxy wars (Syria, Yemen), the so-called Islamic State carried out successive executions and expanded its scope of impact, repeated acts of violence occurred in Afghanistan, the situation in Iraq was becoming less and less stable, while fundamentalist groups were taking power in Libya and Egypt (Crandall 2014, 442–456).

Despite the well-received speech from the beginning of his presidency, Obama did not manage to fulfill one of his most important promises: to

⁶ This is reflected in the data presented in Table 1, concerning the percentage distribution of the content of State of the Union addresses devoted to international affairs, where initially, the MENA region was losing its significance (60 percent in 2009 and 33.8 in 2010), but then started to regain it (61.6 in 2011 and 78.7 in 2012).

improve America's image in the Middle East. It is estimated that in the years 2014–2015, only 14 percent of Egyptians and Jordanians as well as 39 percent of Libyans expressed a favorable view of the United States, compared with 27, 25 and 55 percent respectively in 2009 (Jervis 2017, 46).

What should also be mentioned, however, is the agreement on the Iranian nuclear program, known as the Iran deal and regarded as one of two major successes of the Obama administration in the Middle East (alongside the withdrawal of troops from Iraq). The agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, was signed in Vienna on July 14, 2015 by representatives of Iran, United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, China, Germany, and the European Union. This agreement granted UN inspectors access to Iranian military installations (each time with Tehran's consent), and contributed to the immediate fall of oil prices. When signing the deal (from which the United States has withdrawn pursuant to Donald Trump's decision), Barack Obama expressed his hope that Iran, bound by this international agreement, would cease to pose a threat to the American vision of regional order. As indicated above, these threats were quite numerous at the end of Obama's presidency, for which the 44th President has been criticized until today.

Final Remarks

Donald Trump's style of running foreign policy is considerably different from his predecessor. Since the day he took office, on January 20, 2017, the actions of the 45th U.S. President have led to the undoing of Barack Obama's legacy in the policy toward the MENA region, as demonstrated by the withdrawal of the United States from the nuclear deal with Iran (Friedman 2017). The evaluation of President Obama's achievements in the Middle East policy is open to debate, and the Authors of this paper have attempted such an evaluation based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis.

The thesis, formulated based on the first research problem ("the foreign policy of Obama's administration is characterized by reduced involvement in relations with MENA countries in favor of intensified relations with other geopolitical regions"), has been corroborated by the research. Based on the selected political manifestos and actions in the sphere of diplomacy, it has been proven that the Middle East and North Africa was not a priority to the decision-makers in Washington in the years 2009–2012, unlike in the years 2005–2008. The smaller importance attached to the MENA region was accompanied by the increased diplomatic activity of the United States

toward the Asia-Pacific region, which should not come as a surprise in the context of the declared "pivot to Asia policy" (Grabowski 2012). At the level of declarations, the above trend was impeded by the need for Barack Obama to respond to the Arab Spring events even though it did not translate into greater diplomatic involvement in the region. The comparison of data illustrating the first term of President Obama with the second term of his predecessor George W. Bush seems to highlight the conclusions presented above.

The thesis formulated based on the second research problem ("Obama's foreign policy toward the MENA region failed to bring the desired outcomes, and thus suffered an unequivocal defeat") has not been upheld by the research. Although President Obama did not manage to implement most of his original plans (e.g., making considerable progress toward the resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, or improving the image of the United States in the region), he achieved a few significant successes, the most notable of which is the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and the conclusion of the nuclear deal with Iran. Similarly, to many previous politicians holding the office of U.S. President, e.g., Bill Clinton, Barack Obama was forced to confront his plans (rationalizing American involvement in the region) with reality as a result of the events of the Arab Spring.

Summing up, is "a failed strategy", a phrase commonly used in the literature, an adequate description of Obama's legacy in the MENA region? It is not, in the opinion of the authors of this paper, because it does not reflect the complexity of the problems analyzed. This complex subject matter requires taking account of a whole range of factors. One should go beyond the declarations (e.g., data published in Table 1) and, most importantly, examine the facts, i.e., the diplomatic involvement and the actions undertaken in various dimensions. Taking into consideration the above elements, supplemented with a comparison of Obama's actions with the initiatives of his predecessors, enables to view Barack Obama as a leader who committed mistakes, like his predecessors, but also achieved significant success; he did not manage to implement his entire agenda adopted at the outset of his presidency, but he did not avoid responding to the current crises.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to verify whether “a failed strategy”, a phrase commonly used in the literature, is an adequate description of Barack Obama’s legacy in the Middle East and North Africa. Based on the selected political manifestos and actions in the sphere of diplomacy, it has been proven that the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region was not a priority to the decision-makers in Washington in the years 2009–2012, as opposite to 2005–2008 years. Although President Obama did not manage to implement most of his original plans, he achieved a few significant successes, the most notable of which is the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and the conclusion of the nuclear deal with Iran. Authors seek to contextualize and explain Obama’s failures and successes, arguing that the usage of the phrase “a failed strategy” does not reflect the complexity of the problems analyzed..

KEYWORDS

U.S. Foreign Policy; MENA; Barack Obama; George W. Bush.

Received on November 04, 2020

Approved on September 09, 2021

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES: ORIGINS, DEVELOPMENT AND CONTENDING APPROACHES

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Introduction

Security Studies, also known as International Security Studies (IIS), is an academic sub-field within the wider discipline of International Relations that studies organized violence, military conflict and national security. Stephen Walt (1991) points out that the intellectual field's boundaries are flexible and hence any attempt to draw and define the precise field of study is arbitrary. However, the basic aim of Security Studies remains simple to define: 'it is the phenomena of war' as security studies assert that conflict between governments is always possible and that the use of force has far-reaching consequences for states and societies. Thus, Security Studies can basically be characterized as 'the study the threat, use and control of military force' (Nye and Lynn Jones 1988).

Security Studies as a sub-field within International Relations emerged following the end of World War II, notably in the 1950s, with the onset of the Cold War between the Eastern and Western blocs. Security was inextricably linked to the military aspect, as most countries strive to maximize their military strength in order to ensure their security and survival against all intended threats, including attempts to subjugate their existence to another state, terrorist organization, or other armed group. As with IR, this sub-field of study is primarily a Western subject—mostly conducted in North America, Europe, and Australia, with all of the associated Western-centrisms. There

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is a pre-World War II literature that can be broadly classified as war studies, military and grand strategy, and geopolitics. 'Security' became its watchword (Yergin 1978), both defining it and setting it apart from older disciplines such as War Studies and Military History. Security evolved as a unifying notion for an increasingly diverse range of research programs.

Since the end of World War II, four central questions have guided debates in the field of Security Studies (see Buzan and Hansen 2009, 10-13). The first issue is whether to elevate the state to the status of 'referent object.' Security is about establishing anything that requires protection: a nation, a state, an individual, an ethnic group, the environment, or the planet itself. Whether as 'national security' or subsequently as traditionalist 'international security,' the nation/state served as the analytical and normative reference point. International security was not intended to supplant state security with the security of humanity, or of individuals or minorities within or across state borders. Securing the state was viewed as the most effective method of protecting other referent objects instrumentally. 'National security' should have been renamed 'state security,' but what the Cold War idea of 'national security' actually involved was a fusion of state and country security: the nation backed a strong state, which in turn reciprocated by loyally preserving its society's values and interests.

The second point to consider is whether to include both internal and external threats. Because security is inextricably linked to state discourse, it is also about situating threats in relation to territorial borders. Wolfers characterized 'national security' as an 'ambiguous symbol' and compared the post-1945 political atmosphere to the interwar American economic slump, arguing that the 'shift from a welfare to a security interpretation of the symbol "national interest" is reasonable. Wolfers remarked at the start of the Cold War, 'Today, rather than depression and social reform, we are living under the influence of Cold War and external aggression' (Wolfers 1952, 482). 'National security' has evolved away from internal economic concerns and toward exterior challenges posed by ideologically opposing, and so presumed hostile, states (Neocleous 2006). As this transition became institutionalized, the concept of 'international security' began to coexist with, but not replace, the concept of 'national security,' and eventually played a larger role in naming the subject, thus International rather than National Security Studies.

Thirdly, should security be expanded beyond the military sector and the use of force? Because 'Security Studies' was developed during the Cold War, and the Cold War was so predominately about the military capabilities of adversaries, friends, and Self, the term 'national security' became practically synonymous with military security. This is not to say that other capacities were

overlooked, such as the requirement to combine economic vitality, political stability, energy supplies, research and technology, as well as food and natural resources. These were to be incorporated because they had an effect on ‘the use, threat, and control of force,’ and hence on military security, rather than because they were to be deemed separate security concerns (International Security 1976, 2).

Fourthly, is security irrevocably linked to a dynamic of risks, dangers, and urgency? ‘National security’ evolved amid a political atmosphere in which the US, and the West more broadly, perceived themselves as threatened by an adversarial adversary. As Herz (1950) defined the security dilemma, ‘security’ referred to attacks, enslavement, domination, and – when taken to its logical conclusion - annihilation. This would encourage groups to develop further capabilities, so making their adversary insecure and driving both parties to participate in a ‘vicious spiral of security and power build-up’ (Herz 1950, 157). Security was concerned with the extreme and extraordinary, with those situations that would not only cause annoyance, but would also threaten to destroy one’s society (Williams 2003). This appeared quite plain sense to the mainstream of Security Studies during the Cold War: the Soviet Union posed a clear threat, and nuclear weapons were justified to dissuade the Soviet Union from initiating a first attack.

The Cold War: The Dominance of Realism/Neo-Realism

Since the beginning of the Cold War realist approaches to security have dominated Security Studies. Much of the thinking and writing on the subject is based on a limited definition of ‘security.’ As with hanging, practical considerations of imminent risk naturally focused the attention of security experts and decision makers on physical survival threats. Interstate conflict was a focal point of energy, particularly the East-West rivalry and the US-Soviet nuclear balance. These worries were later expanded to the developing countries as part of the superpower struggle’s continuation (Kolodziej 1992).

As the Cold War matured, the gradual ascendancy of realist approaches to international relations over previous idealist and legal conceptions of international security, which were particularly strong in the US, provided a normative justification for a state-centric approach to international policies and security (Morgenthau 1985). With Europe as the central objective, the East-West conflict was seen simply as a continuation of millennia of state competition for regional and global control. This state-centric perspective on war was then further limited in the 1960s, as analysts shifted away from what Hans Morgenthau termed *Politics among Nations* and toward assessments of

deterrence as the central strategic idea justifying the Cold War and regional wars (Schelling 1963). Using microeconomics, systems analysis, and game theory as a starting point, deterrence was examined as a strategic notion that lends itself to rigorous, logical study (Kolodziej 1992).

The most salient elements of the Cold War agenda were gradually characterized as a special problem in deterrence (Kolodziej 1992, 1). The East-West conflict and its complex and widely divergent regional stakes have frequently been reduced to competitors' and allies' commitment tactics and to studies of nuclear and conventional stability (Freedman 1990). The state-as-actor morphed into the state-as-unitary actor, whose behaviour was thought to be guided by power maximization considerations. A strategy was developed in conjunction with the use of threats to sway rivals' behaviour in desired directions. Extensive arguments between different schools of nuclear deterrence and esoteric conversations between experts over the relative benefits of various nuclear weapons systems in maintaining the balance of terror dominated strategic research and policymaking. Of course, conventional deterrence and the balance of power in regional confrontations remained critical issues. The avalanche of literature about the center front's stability in Europe is instructive (Butterworth 1989). What is significant for this perspective is that threat manipulation and force projection have become the major, virtually exclusive, concerns of security studies. While the topic was undoubtedly urgent and extensive, the issues highlighted were necessarily constrained, technical, and managerial in nature (Chimbala 1991).

The late 1970s rise of neo-realism further narrowed the intellectual and normative viewpoint of Security Studies (Waltz 1991). The broad normative concerns of conventional realist thought were downplayed in an attempt to establish a scientific foundation for the realism worldview (Waltz 1979). By design, Security studies shifted away from an explanation of what states really did in the name of security and toward a study of their behaviour that, based on deductive reasoning, professed to be consistently relevant across time and historical context. Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes all expressed their rich and historically informed realism in proto-scientific propositional language. A lean set of assumptions now established the security dilemma: nation-states inhabiting an anarchic environment, each seeking survival, and guided by a structure defined by the distribution of military capabilities across units (Waltz 1979).

The theory was intrinsically provable, as its assumptions could always be proved through selective observations that corresponded to its predicted state behaviour. Deviations from expected norms - for example, democratic restraints on state power maximization or bandwagoning and concert

formations rather than balancing - were not so much denied as disregarded as of minor or irrelevant theoretical interest. Subtle changes were made to the delicate causal and sequential relationship between theory and observation. Rather than the converse, theory validated observation (Kolodziej 1992).

In short, throughout the Cold War, realist/neo-realist approaches to security dominated Security Studies. However, with the end of the Cold War, the landscape of international political environment changed dramatically, and the realists' dominance in this field of study began to be questioned. Some scholars have also interrogated even the fundamental concept of 'security,' while others have questioned the realist dominance in Security Studies and offered alternative perspectives.

The Post Cold War: Traditionalists vs. Wideners-Deepeners

The end of the Cold War is normally considered as the start of a fundamentally new political environment in world politics both in a real as well as in a theoretical sense. This has been particularly acute within Security Studies, where demand to redefine its central concept, 'security,' has become a preoccupation during that time. As a result, several academics have reconsidered what is, and what *should* be, included within this concept and whether a broader definition constitutes a more accurate depiction of reality (Tarry 1999).

The primary source of contention was the growing movement among scholars to broaden the definition of Security Studies beyond 'the study of the threat, use, and control of military force' (Walt 1991, 212). Realists strongly maintained that the security landscape had not changed sufficiently to require an adjustment to Waltz's definition, and thus argued for continuing to approach security through the lens of the nation-state and interstate war, ostensibly for the sake of conceptual clarity and theoretical parsimony (Mearsheimer 1995). However, the wideners have augmented the military threats that dominated classical studies in this topic with economic, societal, political, and environmental risks (Buzan 1991). The deepeners, frequently the same individuals as the wideners, are concerned with expanding the traditional state-centric view of security by explicitly introducing the concept of five levels of depth: international systems, international subsystems, units, subunits, and individuals (Buzan et al. 1998).

To those attempting to broaden the definition of security, the military state-centric agenda presented analytical, political, and normative difficulties. The peaceful end of the Cold War, the increase in intra-state conflict, Western

cultures' dread of immigration, the deteriorating environment, and the escalation of the HIV/AIDS epidemic all indicated that traditionalism was incapable of meeting the post-Cold War. Wideners and deepeners contended that the 1990s lacked a defining military event or defining Great Power conflict that traditionalists could say should take center stage. Thus, the post-Cold War landscape was defined by discussion not only between traditionalists and the widening-deepening division, but also within the widening-deepening camp (Buzan and Hansen 2009, 187).

In essence, widener-deepeners argued for broadening the referent object beyond the state, expanding the idea of security beyond the military, emphasizing both internal and transnational concerns, and allowing for a modification of the Realist logic of international security. While they were unified in their opposition to military state-centrism, the widening-deepening stance was comprised of such disparate methods that nearly as much time was spent debating disagreements within the widening-deepening position as on the traditionalist-expansionist divide. Thus, a significant feature of intra-widening debates in the 1990s and 2000s was the rapid growth of labels indicating a distinct widening-deepening perspective: Constructivism, Human Security, Postcolonialism, Critical Security Studies, and the Copenhagen School are added to post-structuralism and Feminism (see Buzan and Hansen 2009, 187).

In terms of driving forces, widening-deepening debates were influenced by great power politics inasmuch as the Cold War's demise altered both the security agenda and the actors who could engage in it, allowing for a longer list of events to have an impact on Security Studies debates. When it comes to methods, technology played a large role in some, such as Poststructuralism's preoccupation with the impact of new media technology but played a lesser role in others. Internal intellectual arguments had the most influence. This impulse had a number of effects, not the least of which was that it made the discussion of schools and labels, rather than events or technologies, the organizing dynamic (see Buzan and Hansen 2009, 188).

These school conversations were influenced in three ways by internal academic debate dynamics (Buzan and Hansen 2009, 188). Firstly, they were affected by intellectual and methodological conflicts in international relations, as was the convergence of negative peace researchers and strategists. Secondly, there was a significant difference in the extent to which specific broadening-deepening approaches emerged from the Peace Research agenda of the 1970s and 1980s or were introduced to 'Security Studies' via IR debates or social and political theory. Thirdly, there was a distinction in the degree to which they emphasized and discussed the concept of security.

These strategies incorporated both broadening and deepening. That segment of the expanding debate comprised the mostly empirical recommendations for tackling economic and, particularly, environmental challenges as part of international security in the 1970s and 1980s.

Since the late 1980s, broadening and deepening have been entwined in the explicit arguments concerning the notion of security that have become popular within Security Studies, paving the way for a far more in-depth discussion of this term than occurred during the Cold War. The manner in which schools broadened and widened security—or did not—introduced a broader agenda centered on economic, environmental, sociological, and regional security, as well as a deepening of the referent object outside the state. While there was an earlier literature on environmental security, for example, there was no such thing as an environmental security school; rather, there were numerous ways in which environmental security was included into or excluded from various methods. Regarding broadening, it is worth noting that broadening security requires considering distinct non-military sectoral dynamics as phenomena. Economic issues, energy supply, food and natural resources all have an effect on the military force, which widens the list (Buzan and Hansen 2009, 189).

As a leading scholar in Security Studies and proponent of deepener-widener, Buzan (1983; 1991) in *People, States, and Fear*, has also examined the meaning of security by focusing on the question of how states and societies pursue freedom from threat in the context of competitive relations across the political, economic, military, societal, and environmental landscapes. He focuses the analysis on the interplay of threats and vulnerabilities, the policy consequences of overemphasizing one or the other, and the existence of contradictions within and between ideas about security. Buzan strongly argues that ‘the national security problem cannot be understood without reference to factors at all three levels of analysis—individual level, state level, and international level.’ Although the term ‘national security’ suggests a phenomenon on level 2 (state level), the connections between that level and levels 1 (individual level) and 3 (international level) are too numerous and too strong to deny. The concept of security binds together individuals, states and the international system so closely that it demands to be treated in a holistic perspective. His thought-provoking book was clearly a solid challenge to the dominance of realism and provoke the rise of alternative approaches to Security Studies.

Constructivist Perspective

Social Constructivism as an approach to international relations encompasses a diverse spectrum of ideas. However, conventional constructivism provides analysis that essentially criticizes traditional Security Studies, most notably Neorealism, at a number of grounds. One collection of publications examined international norms, focusing on those that appear to contradict Neorealism and Neoliberalism's idea that states are rational, self-help players in an anarchic environment. These studies were frequently framed around a Realist conundrum: why do nations accept limits on their ability to conduct warfare, such as providing help to the wounded in accordance with the Geneva Conventions (Finnemore 1996)? Why are chemical weapons rarely employed, despite the fact that they are potentially effective, and militaries are willing to use them (Price 1995)? Or why is assassination of political and military leaders seen inappropriate, despite the fact that it may be more effective, simple to carry out, and morally preferable than waging war against an entire army or populace (Thomas 2000)? These concerns cannot be addressed by Realist materialist explanations, but only through an ideational investigation of the origins and growth of standards. Richard Price (1995) contends that the prohibition of chemical weapons during the Second World War was linked to a constitution distinguishing between 'civilized' and 'uncivilized' states. Whereas the 'civilised' found chemical weapons morally repugnant, it was their own (manufactured) 'civility' that permitted them to deploy chemical weapons against 'non-civilised' peoples.

A second body of constructivist work advanced from the level of the international system to the level of nations or institutions' foreign policies. Additionally, these studies identify events that cannot be described by Neorealist theories at the level of the international structure, suggesting that they require an explanation at the level of foreign policy and the inclusion of an ideational component. For instance, analysis of French military doctrine, the choice between offensive and defensive doctrines can be explained only by a mix of civilian worries about the military's power and the military culture itself (Kier 1995, 68). Using constructivist perspective on the study of Japan foreign policy, Katzenstein and Okawara (1993) also argue that because the international framework has changed, but Japan's perception of security has not, domestic considerations must be considered (Berger 1993; 1996). Turning from states to international organizations, Risse-Kappen (1996) also powerfully argues that neorealism's failure to account for NATO's post-Cold War survival is due to the theory's omission of ideational factors such as values and identity. Rather than being built in response to an external threat and

hence doomed to disintegrate when the threat faded, NATO was founded on a set of democratic, liberal values that would ensure the institution's longevity.

Thirdly, Critical Constructivism emerged in the latter half of the 1990s, distinguishing itself from Conventional Constructivism by focusing on discourses and the connections between the historical and discursive construction of identities on the one hand, and security measures on the other (Katzenstein et al. 1998, 677). According to Critical Constructivists, Conventional Constructivism still reified the state as the object of analysis, implying a normative preference for the state as the preferred referent object for security (Zehfuss 2001). Critical Constructivists resisted Conventional Constructivism's growing embrace of positivism epistemologically (Laffey and Weldes 1997).

The Constructivists did not expressly call for an expansion of the referent object outside the state or for a theory that transcended the military-political sphere. This is not to argue that Constructivism cannot be critical: demonstrating the capacity to transcend the Realist vision of security politics and interstate relations is at the heart of the Security Studies field's fundamental normative arguments. However, Constructivism's scope is narrower than other theories that expressly address the issue of security. This section discusses the latter, particularly those that argued for a need to expand the referent outside the (Western) state: postcolonial approaches (to which some Critical Constructivists contributed), Human Security, Critical Security Studies, and Feminism. This expansion of the referent object resulted in an expansion of the sectors or areas to which security analysis should be applied, including development, the environment, economics, and social-welfare concerns.

Post-Colonialism

Since the 1970s, 'Security Studies' has focused on the status of the [Western] state. Mohamed Ayoob (1984) emphasized the Third World's particularities while emphasizing the importance of a strong state and retaining it as the referent object. Critical Peace Researchers, on the other hand, applied Marxist and *dependencia* ideas to their examination of the Liberal international order's economic, political, and cultural exploitation. In the 1990s, calls for a critical examination of the Western-centric view of the state at the heart of 'Security Studies' increased in frequency, and an explicit Post-colonial 'Security Studies' perspective crystallised. This was partly as a result of the emergence and growth of post-colonialism in the social sciences and humanities more broadly (Said 1978; Spivak 1999), and partly as a result

of the overlap between post-colonialism and other broadening approaches that drew on one another to generate critical momentum.

Post-colonial theory encompasses a diverse range of perspectives (Grovgui 2007), and one body of Post-colonial Security Studies drew parallels with social theory and historical sociology, and thus with Critical Constructivism, in emphasizing the importance of Third World-specific security conceptualisations. Krause (1996), for example, that the state-centric definition of security supported by orthodox Realist methods was founded on a specific European history of state development. The European state was founded on an external threat-oriented understanding of security and based on a 'strong identification of the state's security with the security of its citizens (Krause 1996, 320). This view of security indicates that state-centric conceptions of security do not provide an analytical or normative framework for identifying the hazards that regimes may pose to their own citizens.

Post-colonialism maintains that the non-Western state has taken a different path but rejects the label of 'failed' or 'underdeveloped'. The 'failed' state as being deficient in several areas in comparison to the West and hence in need of 'catching up'. Post-colonialists claim that these 'failures' are the 'after-effects of the unequal encounter with Western colonialism' (Barkawi and Laffey, 2006) and that the West and the rest of the world have a repeating economic, social, and military imbalance. This branch of Postcolonial Security Studies emphasizes 'the material and ideological conflicts of historically placed agents in a neoliberal international system' (Agathangelou and Ling 2004, 518), which is consistent with both critical IPE and Marxist Peace Researchers' perspectives.

Human Security

Post-colonial perspectives emphasize the peculiarities of the non-Western state, global economic structures, and thus development difficulties. The United Nations Development Programme's notion of 'Human Security' (1994) provided a more straightforward enlargement of security to incorporate development. Human Security, like Common Security in the early 1980s, benefits from a strong institutional foundation and integrates political-activist and scholarly aims. The original UNDP model favored a multidimensional approach to security. Beyond territorial defense, national interests, and nuclear deterrence, the 'logic of security' should encompass 'universal concerns and conflict prevention, but most importantly, a concerted global effort to alleviate poverty and underdevelopment (UNDP 1994, 22).

For the sake of human security, the referent object must be shifted away from nation-states and toward ‘people.’ To be ‘people-centred’ was to be ‘interested with how people live and breathe in a society, how freely they exercise their numerous options, how much market and social opportunity they have – and whether they live in conflict or peace’ (UNDP 1994, 23). This entailed a dramatic expansion of the types of risks and sectors to which security applied, including food, health, the environment, population growth, gaps in economic opportunity, migration, drug trafficking, and terrorism.

Human Security as conceptualized by the UNDP is perhaps the most expansive enlargement of the notion since Galtung began structural violence, as it attempted to incorporate development and North–South issues. Human Security, regrettably, has also been criticized for being so wide that it becomes intellectually and politically meaningless (Special Section of Security Dialogue 2004). As Roland Paris rightly puts it, ‘if human security means almost anything, it means virtually nothing’ (2001, 93). Other critics dispute the idea of adding ‘security’ to what they believe is basically a human rights agenda (Buzan 2004) and point out how easily regimes adopt Human Security rhetoric without changing their behaviour (Booth 2007, 321–7).

Critical Security Studies

Human Security was also adopted by Critical Security Studies, which shared the former’s emphasis on ‘people’ rather than states and envisioned a more just and peaceful world order. Although statistically small, Critical Security Studies has achieved a surprising degree of institutionalization within the European Security Studies community. Critical Security Studies is sometimes defined as the work of Booth and Wyn Jones and their Aberystwyth students and colleagues that is inspired by the Frankfurt School (Booth 1991; 2007). Critical Security Studies has had a considerable impact on the expanding debates because it was the perspective that most openly embraced the Frankfurt School legacy of Critical Theory that was a part of Peace Research in the 1970s. This occurred, however, not as a result of a deliberate engagement with the latter literature, but rather as a result of a reading of the Frankfurt School.

Critical Security Studies maintained that ‘individual humans are the ultimate referent for security,’ because states are unreliable providers of security and too heterogeneous to support a ‘complete theory of security’ (Booth 1991, 319–20). According to Wyn Jones (1995, 309), Critical Security Studies entails ‘centering our agenda on the experience of those men and women and communities for whom the current world system is a source

of insecurity rather than security.’ Additionally, Critical Security Studies ‘vocal advocacy for an individual referent object is connected to an empirical–political assessment of interstate war as far less real and threatening than ‘environmental security, food security, and economic security,’ and to a view of the majority of states as generating insecurity rather than stability and prosperity (Wyn Jones 1995, 310).

Feminist Perspective

Feminist Security Studies is subdivided into sub-approaches that employ a variety of referent objects, epistemologies, and techniques. With the exception of typical military-state-centric methods that ignore gender and security, Feminist Security Studies can be viewed as a microcosm of Security Studies itself. The most pressing issues on the post-Cold War Feminist Security Studies agenda included the following: first, how to further develop the standpoint Feminist approach associated with J. Ann Tickner and Cynthia Enloe, particularly how to address issues surrounding its epistemology of experience; second, how to integrate a new set of events; and third, how to respond to Constructivism and quantitative Feminism.

In terms of whatever conceptualization of security is used and how it is introduced in most textbooks, the Tickner method has been the most common within Feminist Security Studies (Pettman 2005). This approach shares significant similarities with Critical Security Studies and Human Security in that it advocates for expanding the referent object to include ‘women’ and nonmilitary security sectors (Hoogensen and Rottem 2004). According to Tickner, feminists use a ‘multidimensional, multilevel approach’ committed to ‘emancipatory conceptions of security’ that strive to ‘understand how violence, both physical and systemic, undermines the security of individuals and groups at all levels (Tickner 2001, 48). As a result, feminist analysis has ‘usually followed a bottom-up approach, studying the microlevel impact of conflict’ (Tickner 2001, 48), expanded the referent object and the sectors to which security applies.

The appeal of an experience-based epistemology for Feminist Security Studies is that it includes subjects who have been marginalized by state-centric – and other collective – notions of security, such as victims of wartime rape or sex trafficking (Jackson 2006). However, the shortcoming of an experiential epistemology is that it is founded on perspective feminism’s idea of women as constituting a distinct subject from ‘men’. As a result, numerous feminists developed diversity feminism, which views identity as shaped not only by gender but also by ethnicity, class, and race (Dietz 2003, 408). This increased

the diversity of gendered referent objects and experiences available, but also raised the challenge of uniting a feminist movement and consciousness across diverse experiences. The issue was that ‘Feminist epistemology in the sphere of international security must either decide to exclude all “women’s experiences” or acknowledge, as other fields have, that judgment and selection are necessary, even within the feminist perspective’ (Grant 1992, 95).

The Copenhagen School: Securitization

Jahn et al. (1987) note that Barry Buzan and Ole Waever’s work on regional security complex theory, European security, and the relationship between regions and global security are at the heart of the Copenhagen School. In terms of the expanding–deepening debate, most distinctive contributions of this school have been the ideas of ‘societal security’ and ‘securitisation.’ In keeping with the gap between the US and Europe in terms of the degree to which the issue of security is overtly addressed, the Copenhagen School has received far greater attention in Europe than in the US, despite the fact that it is increasingly being applied to non-Western countries (Jackson 2006).

In addition, the notion of ‘societal security’ was introduced in *Identity, Migration, and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (Waever et al. 1993) and was initially conceived in reaction to a series of national crises, most notably in Yugoslavia, but also in Transylvania and the former Soviet Union (Roe 2005). It added a distinct sectoral dimension to the earlier broadening literatures of the 1980s, which were primarily concerned with economic and environmental issues. Increased integration inside the EU posed a challenge to national constituencies fearful of losing political sovereignty as well as cultural autonomy in Western Europe, and immigration was also portrayed as a threat to national identity.

‘Social security’ was described as ‘a society’s capacity to retain its core character in the face of changing circumstances and potential or real dangers’ (Waever et al. 1993, 23). While the state was the reference point for political, military, environmental, and economic security, the reference point for societal security was ‘society’ (Waever et al. 1993, 26). This paved the way for the study of ‘identity security,’ highlighting instances in which the state and society diverged, such as when national minorities faced challenges from ‘their’ state, or when the state or other political actors mobilized society to combat internal or external threats.

The Copenhagen School clearly defined this as a position in the midst between conventional state-centrism on the one hand and similarly traditional appeals for ‘individual’ or ‘global’ security on the other. The term ‘societal

security' constrained the conceivable referent object to two collective units, the state and society, while excluding the individual and the globe. According to Waeber, 'it appears sensible to remain conservative along this [referent object] axis, recognizing that "security" is significantly influenced by person and system dynamics, but not by propagating ambiguous concepts such as individual and global security' (Waeber 1995, 49).

Security 'contextualizes the issue as a distinct type of politics or as something above politics' and thus a spectrum of public issues can be defined, ranging from non-politicised ('the state does not deal with it and it is not made a subject of public debate and decision') to politicized ('the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance') to securitised ('the issue is no longer debated as a political question, but is dealt with as a security issue') (Buzan et al. 1998, 23). Securitising actors are described as 'actors who securitize matters by proclaiming something – a referent object – existentially threatened', while referent objects are defined as 'things that are perceived to be existentially threatened and have a genuine claim to survival' (Buzan et al. 1998, 36).

This appears to be a highly open conception of security, but the Copenhagen School deliberately positioned securitisation as a means of containing excessive security broadening, thus responding to a critical conservative critique of the wideners (Buzan et al. 1998, 1–5). While securitisation theory was theoretically available to anybody, in practice the most common securitising actors are 'political leaders, bureaucrats, governments, lobbyists, and pressure organizations,' with referent objects typically middle-range collectivities (Buzan et al. 1998, 40–41). Recently, the School has extended its thinking beyond the middle-range referent object to macro-securitisations, which seek to structure world politics on a broader scale (Buzan and Waeber 2009).

At least in Europe, 'securitisation' has been a fairly effective idea. As a result, it has drawn criticism, particularly from those who urge a more radical broadening of the concept of security. Critical Security Studies has been one of the most significant challengers, arguing that the Copenhagen School does not go far enough in the direction of 'real people in real places,' that it conflates security and survival, and that it is state-centric, elite-centric, discourse-dominated, conservative, politically passive, and neither progressive nor radical (Booth 2005, 271). Because the Copenhagen School is a constitutive, non-causal theory, criticism has focused on the school's analytical, political, and normative implications rather than on its ability to explain phenomena in a positivist (American) social science sense.

Poststructuralism

During the Cold War, poststructuralism was already a unique position in Security Studies. Poststructuralism was harsh on Security Studies for adopting a state-centric military notion of security without questioning its historical, normative, and political implications. Yet, like Realism, Poststructuralists saw themselves as owed to the Classical Realist heritage and claimed that state sovereignty and security were not easily transformable.

Due to the connections between Poststructuralism and Realism, whilst Constructivists arrived to security mostly through general international relations debates, Poststructuralists have been active in peace and security debates since the early 1980s. Although it was critical of Western security policy, Cold War Poststructuralism always retained the potential of rethinking security, and hence was not confronted with the crisis of traditional approaches following the Cold War's end. However, if not a 'meta-event,' the Cold War's conclusion was a constitutive event that called into question some of its key analytical assumptions.

The primary issue that Poststructuralism tackled following the Cold War was whether nations required adversaries. Campbell's analysis of American discourses of danger from 'its' discovery through the conclusion of the Cold War served as the major book in this argument. Campbell's 1992 book *Writing Security* explicitly emphasized the importance of the Other – that is, the construction of states, groups, and other non-Selves – arguing that, while state identity could theoretically be constituted through relations of difference, the pressure to transform difference into radical, threatening Otherness was overwhelming in practice (Connolly 1991, 64–65; 209–210).

Campbell's idea (1992) had the flaw of reifying state identity ('the state need enemies') and effectively adopting Realism's view of the state ('the state is surrounded by prospective adversaries'). Both approaches presupposed an ontological inseparability of states and adversaries, as well as a monolithic and frightening Other (Hansen 2006, 38–39). The methodological difficulty with assuming state identity as radical Otherness was that if this were assumed to be the only possible form of identity for states, this would be what was identified in empirical studies, despite the possibility of less radical forms of identity, such as being 'Nordic' (Hansen 2006, 38–41). Because the Poststructuralist conception of security is contingent on the production of identity, once identity is established, security is established as well, and Poststructuralism is unable to escape Realist security.

Final Remarks

This article has explored the rise and development of Security Studies from its inception until the end of the Cold War. Security Studies developed out of post-World War II arguments about how to defend the state from external and internal threats. This article has shown that, as a subfield of international relations, Security Studies was dominated by realist paradigm throughout the Cold War. By the Cold War's end, the concept of 'security' had become a source of disagreement between traditionalist versus 'wideners' and 'deepeners.' Not only has the fundamental concept of 'security' been questioned, but a variety of alternative theoretical approaches, including as constructivism, critical theory, feminism, human security, and postcolonialism, have also arisen to challenge the dominant (realist/liberal) paradigm. Finally, it also has shown that significant differences existed in how those alternative approaches defined referent objects, the sectors to which security can be applied, and their epistemological foundations. The basic idea of this paper is mainly derived from Buzan and Hansen (2009) in *The Evolution of International Security Studies*

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine the history and development of Security Studies from its inception through the end of the Cold War. Security Studies developed out of post-1945 arguments about how to protect the state from external and internal threats. Throughout the Cold War, Security Studies as a subfield of international affairs was dominated by a realist perspective. By the end of the Cold War, the fundamental concept of 'security' had become a point of disagreement between traditionalists versus 'wideners' and 'deepeners'. Not only has the core concept of 'security' been contested, but a range of other perspectives, including constructivism, critical theory, feminism, human security, and postcolonialism, have developed to critically challenge (realist/liberal) paradigm. There were major distinctions in how the contesting perspectives defined referent objects, the sectors to which security can be applied, and the epistemological foundations of their respective perspectives. The basic idea of this paper is mainly derived from Buzan and Hansen (2009) in *The Evolution of International Security Studies*.

KEY WORDS

Security; Security Studies; Cold War; post-Cold War; Contending Approaches.

Received on August 1st, 2021

Approved on November 09, 2021

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COUNTER TERRORISM STRATEGY IN WEST AFRICA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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Introduction

The 9/11, 2001 terrorists attack on the World Trade Centre (WTC) marked a watershed in threats emanating from terrorism and its global network. The sophistication of the attacks and their coordination were legendary in evading global intelligence and security services. These opened up several interpretations regarding this new threat to global security and possible containments methods. The unilateral declaration of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) by President Bush administration and the following invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003 yielded minimum results and regime changes. They also generated narratives of a renewed Western imperialism and the clash of civilizations. Similarly, Chechnya's rebellion and agitation for independence and its brutal suppression by Russia amongst others increased the discourse on the universal definition of terrorism and corresponding guidelines on preventing and containing its threats and spread (Balci and Mis 2008; Baev 2018; Williams, Okon and Onibasa 2018). Consequently, on September 20, 2006, the United Nations General Assembly adopted its Resolution 60/288 entitled "The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (Strategy)" as a framework for prevention and containment of global terrorism. This strategy defined four pillars of UN Counterterrorism such as: measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; measures to prevent and combat terrorism; measures

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to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard; and measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism (UNGA 2006, 1). The strategy has a clause which encourages member states, and regional/subregional organizations to observe the implementation of these pillars and ensures biennial reviews of such implementation processes (UNGA 2006, 3).

In relation to Africa, the implementation of the strategy has been hampered by several factors which are peculiar to the continent. The issues and challenges inherent in the implementation of the strategy in West Africa are the focus of this study which seeks to answer the following question: What are the issues and challenges in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counterterrorism Strategy in West Africa? The article is divided into five sections after the introduction. Section two reviews the relevant literature about these issues, section three highlights the methodology of study, section four discusses the issues and challenges in the implementation of the strategy in West Africa and section five closes the study with some recommendations.

Literature Review

Counter-Terrorism (CT) as a concept and a policy gained prominence in global discourses after the end of the Cold War and the resurgence of specific socio-political and religious identities and turmoil across the globe. The rise of Al-Qaeda in 1990s and the attack of 9/11/2001 led to the birth of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) as the CT strategy of President George W. Bush administration. The emphasis of this policy was on regime change as evidenced in Afghanistan and Iraq, in 2001 and 2003 respectively, and it was heavily criticized for its unilateral approach and disregard for the international rule of law on state sovereignty as well as the blatant abuse of human right by US forces (Cetin 2013; Monaco 2017). Similarly, Russia's brutal suppression of Chechnya's agitation for independence escalated into hyper terrorism in 2004 with terrorists' siege and hostage in a North Ossetia school, in which about 330 persons were held hostage and about 180 children were killed. The period also witnessed the assassination of Chechnya President, Akhmad Kadyrov and the rise of insurgent movements in the Kabardino-Balkaria region. Russia's carrot and stick measures have been relatively effective in the management of these terrorist threats but the toll of several casualties and the abuse of human rights in the process were widely criticized (Baev 2018; Carpenter 2016; Clarke 2017; Williams 2015).

Therefore, the need to promote a linkage of national and regional

policies on CT led the UN to adopt Resolution 60/288 on September 20, 2006. This was necessary given the transnational nature of global terrorism which requires corresponding transnational collective measures, and an overall policy uniformity; without disrespecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states. Besides, the strategy also captured the concern of world leaders during the 2005 World Summit Outcome, where participants reiterate their beliefs on the right to sovereign equality of all states and the respect for the fundamental rights and freedom of all people irrespective of race, religion, gender and language; as well as the need for peaceful conduct of transaction and resolution of conflicts between states in manners consistent with the Charter of the United Nations, even in CT operations (UNGA 2006; Akinboye and Attah 2005). Prominent in the preamble of 'the strategy' is the 'strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, whoever and for whatever purposes, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security (UNGA 2006, 1).

The strategy is anchored on four pillars, as previously mentioned and once more stated here: measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, measures to prevent and combat terrorism, measures to build states capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard; and measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism (UNGA 2006, 4-9). These action plans of the strategy were expected to be observed and internalized by regional groupings and national governments. To this end, the UN created the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) to increase the knowledge and enhance the implementation of 'the strategy' across the globe (CTITF 2011). Similarly, the UN Security Council (UNSC) established Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) to oversee its CT policy and activities (UN 2017).

After six biennial reviews of the strategy by the UN General Assembly in 2016, Secretary General, Antonio Guterres reorganized the implementation structure of the strategy. Consequently, the office of CTITF and the United Nations Counter Terrorism Centre (UNCTC), as well as other related entities and their staff, were removed from the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) of the UN and placed under a new office: the Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT) with an Under-Secretary, who reports to the UNGA through the Secretary General. The new office has no mandate over the CTED and other entities under the UNSC, as the later continues to function and reports to the Security Council (UNOCT 2017).

The mandate of the OCT as presently constituted is to: provide

leadership on CT to the Secretary General, enhance coordination and coherence across the 38 CTITF entities. This is envisaged to facilitate effective implementation of the strategy; strengthen the delivery of the UN CT capacity building assistance to member states; improve visibility, advocacy and mobilization of the needed resources for the UN CT activities and ensure the prioritization of CT within the UN system. This mandate guides the OCT in reinforcing its strategic partnership with member states in implementing the strategy and is also consistent with the objectives of the organization's reform, which include greater efficiency, simplification, coordination, and coherence (UNOCT 2017, 2).

CTED on the other is responsible for evaluating CT measures by member states. This mandate requires periodic visits of CTED to member states with several security related entities. The goal is to enhance neutrality and to promote the elaboration of reports regarding its findings to the UNSC CT committee. Besides, CTED also acts as an early warning mechanism to the council by alerting it on emergency threats and attacks through its analysis of reports and data from over 70 research institutions which constitute its Global Research Network (UNOCT 2017). Evidently, the United Nations has a robust CT framework which could be adopted by regions and states (UNGA 2006).

Similar to the UN Strategy is the European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2005) ratified in 2006. It arose from the 9/11 attacks on the US, the Madrid attacks of March 23, 2004 and the London attacks in July 2005. The framework has four pillars: prevent, protect, pursue and response (Monar 2007). To this end, the EU is strategically committed to prevent its citizens and others from turning to terrorism, by containing those factors considered as the root cause(s) of radicalization and recruitment into terrorist organizations; it is also strategically committed to protect its citizens and infrastructure by providing effective security for its borders, transport system and critical infrastructure, thereby reducing the vulnerability of the EU to terrorists attacks. Other strategic commitments are the resolute to pursue and investigate terrorists worldwide, as well as destroying any terrorist network, cutting their sources of finance, travelling itinerary, and bringing them to justice, and to prepare for a robust response to terrorist attacks, which would reduce the impact of such incidence on victims, through improved capabilities and coordination (EU 2005). However, the document clearly stated that it is the primary responsibility of member states to fight against terrorism, even though the EU is expected to add value to their efforts in four major ways, namely: by strengthening national capabilities by enforcing good practices and sharing knowledge and experiences to boost the four pillars

of the EU strategy; by promoting European cooperation through the sharing of information between institutions within the Union involved in counter-terrorism operations; by developing the EU collective capability and policy to response effectively to terrorist threats through Europol, Frontex and Eurojurist, amongst other related institutions; and by promoting international partnership with the UN and other relevant actors in the international system to deepen consensus, build capacity and strengthen cooperation in CT. (Ejikman and Schuurman 2011; Oldrich 2006; Rennard 2012; Vries 2005; Monar 2007).

Similarly, the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published its new strategic framework for countering terrorism and targeted violence in September, 2019. The document acknowledges that terrorism and targeted violence overlaps, intersect and interact as problems, and that they need a shared set of solutions. According to the framework, targeted violence are attacks on schools, houses of worship, public spaces and transportation systems, and other forms of racially, ethnically, and religiously motivated violence that can overlap and intersect with terrorism (Fein, Vossekuil and Holden 1995). Terrorism is defined as any unlawful act that is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive to critical infrastructure or key resources and that has the intention to intimidate and coerce a civilian population, to influence government policy by intimidation or coercion, or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping (DHS 2019).

The two concepts have a common denominator, namely: the violent destruction of lives and property of civilian population in a horrific manner, which leads to despair, trauma, and a sense of insecurity. However, while targeted violence may be an end in itself, terrorism has the objective of influencing governmental policy in a particular direction (Schinkel 2009; Sandler 2014).

The 2019 US strategic framework has four integrated goals with five missions. The goals are to understand evolving terrorism and targeted violence threats in the environment, and support partners in the homeland security enterprise through this specialized knowledge; prevent terrorists and other hostile actors from entering the United States, and deny them the opportunity to exploit the 'Nations' trade, immigration and domestic and international travel systems, prevent terrorism and targeted violence and enhance infrastructure protections and community preparedness. These goals are expected to be achieved through the utilization of 22 core capabilities that cover five missions – prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery (DHS 2019, 3). Indeed, the Strategic framework is comprehensive,

since it is built by incorporating previous lessons and experiences of the US CT operations over the years, as it is grounded on four complimentary organizational concepts: intelligence, border security, domestic prevention, and preparedness. Authentic intelligence enhances pragmatic prevention and mitigation of threats, and prepare communities to respond to threats in orderly manner and recover faster from the anticipated attack, border security checks the entrance of foreign terrorist and other hostile elements from entering the country; domestic prevention involves multidisciplinary and enhanced whole-of-society partnership; preparedness demands working in collaboration with governmental and private partners to effectively protect infrastructure against any attack and ensure effective containment of impact of such attacks on individuals and groups, as well as support the victims of such attacks to quickly recover (DHS 2019, 6).

On the other hand, Russia is heavily criticized for the lack of a strategic framework for CT. Rather Moscow is accused of reliance on brutal force (*zachistkas*) or cleansing operations in CT as illustrated in Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushhetia, North Ossetia, and Kabardino Balkaria (Williams 2015; Clarke 2017). This is counter-productive since brutal force and widespread human rights abuses by Russian troops led to further radicalization by the family members of subject victims. Besides, Russia's support for Assad regime in the brutal civil war in Syria through its indiscriminate airstrike in Aleppo and other opposition controlled areas had burdened Syrian cities with enormous civilian casualties. Similarly, the 2016 Yarovaya law – an amended Russian CT legislation provides for mass surveillance through preservation of telecommunication data for six months by service providers and forbids preaching or praying outside designated religious institutions as well as participation in mass protest across the country. Moreso, Russia partnership with Lebanese Hezbollah, Iranian Revolutionary Guards and Syria in the fight against ISIS is seen as supports for terrorist organization. Given these policies by the Russian Federation its CT policy is shadowy, brutal and very difficult to align with the CT framework of Western countries and that of the UN (Carpenter 2016; Baev 2018).

Of all the content and intent of CT strategies, prevention of terrorist attack remains the priority of statesmen, scholars and policy makers, (DHS 2019; EU 2005; Monaco 2017; Rennard 2012). This noble objective requires several measures and tools, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of such tools for data collection and analysis on individuals and group(s) with the potential intent to commit terrorist acts (Cornish 2010). The utility of the technology lies on its efficiency and predictive capacity. According to McKendrick (2019, 2):

AI allows higher volumes of data to be analyzed, and may perceived patterns in those data that would, for reasons of both volume and dimensionality, otherwise be beyond the capacity of human interpretation. The impact of this is that traditional methods of investigation that work outward from known suspects may be supplemented by methods that analyze the activity of a broad section of an entire population to identify previously unknown threats.

However, AI has significant limitations, such as the infringement on the basic rights of the citizens to privacy, since biometrics communications, associations and lifestyles of individuals and groups are placed under surveillance and are constantly monitored, gathered and analyzed electronically by states to generate the required intelligence. The excessive invasion of individuals and groups privacy inherent in AI deployment in CT does not only negates one of the pillars of the UN Strategy on the need to protect the fundamental rights of individuals in CT operations, but also threatens the principles of liberal democracy, which is similar to the intent of terrorists (Richardson 2006; Carpenter 2016; Baevr 2018).

In spite of these shortcomings, predictive AI is effective in preventing terrorist attacks on infrastructure through the application of security checks and the promise of punishment. Moreover, it denies terrorists the capacity to strike by arresting the suspects before they carry out the attack; it also checkmates recruitment and radicalization of potential terrorist and restricts their movement (McKendrick 2019). Thus, it is important to strike a balance between respecting individuals and group(s) privacy and preventing terrorism. While the former enhances citizens' freedom, liberty and integrity, the latter promotes public safety and human security.

Another CT instrument is the reconstruction of divisive narratives and theories which exacerbate binary hierarchical division between groups and civilizations. According to Kose (2009, 78):

The language of interaction at both inter-cultural and inter-civilization level is historically shaped and institutionalized along dialectic lines, where the broader category of the cultural, religious, ethnic and racial "other" becomes systematically de-legitimized for particular material and non-material goals. "Eurocentrism", "Orientalism", "Occidentalism", "Antisemitism", "Islamophobia", "religious intolerance", and "fundamentalism" are just a few of the dialectic discourses that helped to legitimize certain practice of violence and discrimination against the categories of "cultural other".

The assumption of cultural and civilizational hierarchy and supremacy is at the root cause of some conflicts with violent and terror outburst as they

protest against the perceived oppression or impurity of the contesting culture or civilization. Historically, the reformation of the Catholic Church led by Dr. Martin Luther and his protestant elements with the 39th Theses and the counter-reformation by the Catholic Church in the 15th century had a hallmark of terrorism as both parties fought to instill fear in minds of opposing followers with unspeakable inhuman treatment and violence (Schirrmacher 2011; Ng'etich 2016). However, Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" which debuted at the end of the Cold War was prophetic (Wilkinson 2001). While the 'third wave of democracy' was celebrated in the West, some other civilizations recoiled and struck back in protest as illustrated with the emergence of Al Qaeda and its affiliates across the globe (Cetin 2013; Richardson 2006). The desire to resolve intercultural differences and enhance global harmony led to the initiation of the "Dialogue among Civilizations" (DaC) by former Iranian President Mohammed Khatami in 1998. By November 2001, DaC had enjoyed universal acceptance and UN Resolution A/5616 gave it the global backing; but changing global security environment orchestrated by the post 9/11 attack and subsequent upliftment of the GWOT discourse overshadowed DaC and accelerated its demise as a global project (UNAOOC 2009; Balci and Mis 2008).

The brutal and derogatory manner of the US conduct of the GWOT in terms of invasion and regime change in Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003, the treatment of Abu Ghraib prisons as well as the massive human rights abuses by US soldiers in these countries prompted anti-US/Western sentiments in the Muslim world. Similarly, the bombing of Madrid, Istanbul, London and other attacks on Western countries by terrorists raised the level of Islamophobia across Europe and indeed the narrative was almost turned to the clash of Islam and the West (Considine 2017; Kumar 2012; Smith 2013). It was in this charged environment in 2005 that Turkish and Spanish Prime Ministers – Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero initiated the "Alliance of Civilizations" during the 59th General Assembly of the UN, as a platform for intercultural / intercivilizational dialogue, with the aim of containing the prejudice, misunderstanding and hatred heightened in the post – 9/11 era (Kose 2009, 87).

This initiative was recognized by the UN General Assembly in 2009 through its Resolution A/RES164/14 "Alliance of civilization" which appreciate the effort of the forum in promoting intercultural, interreligious, and intercivilizational dialogue and understanding, in order to contain extremism and radicalization of individuals and groups by divisive narratives common in the aftermath of 9/11 attack and subsequent GWOT operations. Its numerous pragmatic projects on dialogue, youth, media, and education have enhanced

cultural and civilizational harmony, thus preventing radicalization and terrorism within the UN system. Consequently, the UN General Assembly affirmed the initiative as an entity within its fold through its Resolution A/RES/69/312 “United Nations Alliance for Civilization” (Balci and Mis 2008; UNAOC 2009; Kose 2009).

In Africa, CT framework and rhetoric preceded the events of 9/11. In 1999, the late Organization for African Unity (OAU) ratified its Convention on the prevention and fight against terrorism. This was further strengthened by other protocols and the AU Action Plan for the Prevention and Fight Against Terrorism in 2002. The Action Plan facilitated the establishment of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism in Algier, Algeria in 2004; the appointment of the AU Special Representative for CT cooperation in 2010; and the development of the African model law on CT in 2011. All these measures were grounded on the desire to promote the regionalization of UN Strategy and other global counter-terrorism frameworks in Africa as well as to promote CT legislations, intelligence gathering and effective coordination of CT policies by African states (Omenma and Onyango 2020; Williams 2017). The commitment towards the implementation of these instruments varied across countries and regions; and it was dependent on the level of integration, the threat of terrorism and the strength of political will in these regions; ECOWAS is rated as the most advanced subregional entity in Africa, with the capability of implementing most of the global and continental CT frameworks in the subregion (Elowson 2010; Ipe, Cockayne and Millar 2013). Indeed, ECOWAS ratified its CT Strategy in 2013 which is similar to the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The ECOWAS Counter-Terrorism Strategy (ECOWAS Strategy) is a continuum of security and conflict prevention protocols ratified by member states over the years. Such protocols include: the ECOWAS protocol on the Fight Against Corruption (2008), the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (2008); the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other related materials (2006); the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (2001), the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (1999), the Convention on Extradition (1994), the ECOWAS Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (1992), the Convention for Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs matters (1982), the Protocol on Mutual Assistance on Defence (1981); the Protocol on Non-Aggression (1978); and Inter-Governmental Action Group against money Laundering (GIABA)

(2000) (ECOWAS 2013, 6-7; Salihu 2015).

The ECOWAS Strategy is an attempt to harmonize the CT policy of the community members in preventing and combating terrorism, as well as providing support to the victims of terrorist attacks in the subregion (ECOWAS 2013). To this end, it has three pillars, namely;- prevent, pursue and reconstruct. The central objective of 'prevent' pillar is the identification of key actions by the signatories to detect and prevent terrorism, and such actions include: total rejection of terrorism, elimination of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, enhance coordination of early warning and operational intelligence, denying terrorist the means, space, and technical capacity to operate, prevention of radicalization and extremism and promotion of democratic practices and the protection of human rights.

Central to 'pursue' pillar is the building of the community members' rapid response/deployment capability to terrorist attack and other measures capable of disrupting the activities of terrorist organizations and their members. This is to be achieved through: effective implementation of regional, continental and international CT instruments; enhance cooperation on criminal justice matter; enhance cooperation on border control and surveillance in every sector, including maritime and aviation; the suppression and criminalization of terrorism financing and associated money laundering; and the protection of critical infrastructure and diplomatic areas and interest; and improving the capacity of community members criminal justice system in terrorism. The "Reconstruct" pillar of the ECOWAS strategy focused on the rebuilding of society and healing of wounds caused by terrorism and CT. This is to be done through the protection of the rights of victims; supporting and reconciliation of communities affected by terrorism; the repair of social contract between the people and state; and the development of CT strategies (ECOWAS 2013; Salihu 2015; Ipe, Cockayne and Millar 2010; UNSC 2014). As pointed out earlier in this review, the ECOWAS Strategy is the regional internalization of the UN Strategy.

Study Methodology

The methodology of this paper is based on a case study design as it probes deeply, intensively, and analyses the interaction between factors involved in the focus of the paper (Idaka and Anagpogu 2012). This has the advantage of identifying issues and challenges in the implementation of United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in West Africa. It also has the advantage of providing a yardstick for similar studies in other regions of the world. This study focuses on West Africa but covers issues of common concern

to all regional groupings pressed by the responsibility of implementing the strategy; especially those in the Global South. It relies on secondary data from the literature such as textbooks, magazines, communiqué, UN resolutions, journals, and the internet. These data were presented qualitatively and content analysis technique was used in the analysis of the research findings.

Regional implementation of 'the UN Strategy' in West Africa: Issues and challenges

Evidently, ECOWAS has taken steps for the implementation of the UN Strategy. These steps are: ECOWAS condemnation of terrorism in all of its forms and manifestation; Nigeria, Niger and Benin Republic membership of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) combating Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region; all member states' signatories to a minimum of seven, out of eighteen universal instruments on CT as required by the Security Council Resolution 1373; and no state party in the subregion should sponsor terrorism (ECOWAS 2013b, 4; Onuoha 2014; Salihu 2015). However, effective implementation of the four pillars of the strategy had been flawed by issues and challenges and they are discussed in this section.

(i) Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism

The main goal of this pillar is to address "prolonged, unresolved conflicts, dehumanization of victims of terrorism, lack of rule of law and violation of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socioeconomic marginalization and lack of governance" (UNGA 2006, 4). Conflicts in most West African countries center on the nature and structure of the colonial states which are not easily subject to effective conflict resolution. For instance, the skewed nature of the Nigerian state and redistribution of national resources have been the major causes of socio-political discontent in the country. These have led to 'national question and the agitation for separate states by the Niger Delta; South West and Middle Belt elements in the country.

Similarly, Cassamance separatists continue to challenge the sovereignty of the Senegalese state which has led to socio-political tension in policy. In the same vein, the Tuaneg in the Northern Mali's quest for greater autonomy from the central government precipitated into violent uprising in 2013 which almost consumed the whole country. The same scenario also

played out in Cote d'Ivoire in the first decade of the new millennium (Chauzal and Damme 2015; Piccolino 2018; Theobald 2015; Tella, Doho and Bapeto 2014). The impact of the colonial states, among others, is the absence of internal cohesion and national consensus on national issues, rather the 'flag sovereignty' is sustained by both internal and external coercive instruments of the states and ex-colonial masters. Indeed, resolving such conflicts may result in the reverse of colonial boundaries and formation of new states which are seen as a zero sum outcome by a couple of elites and their foreign partners who benefit from the internal contradictions within these states. Hence the challenge of building a nation-state capable of mediation in a conflict between individuals and groups from numerous nationalities remain a thorny issue in the implementation of CT strategies in the region (Umoh and Adeyi 2019; Wing 2013).

Also, the promotion of a culture of peace, justice, ethno-national and religious tolerance is difficult in the parochial Global South, where ethnicity and religion have become catalysts for conflicts. Indeed, identity and stigmatization between religions and ethnic nationalities are at the root cause of most conflicts within ECOWAS member states and the culture of tolerance is becoming more difficult, since effective indoctrination by religious sects ensures that their members see others as infidels and abominable who are not worthy of meaningful interaction. This situation is exacerbated by religious leaders who seek uniqueness in their messages and ways of life to command a huge group of followers in backward societies. For instance, it is indeed the radical interpretation of the Quran that led to the foundation of the Boko Haram extremist group among others in Nigeria (Basedau 2017; Basedau and Shaefer-Kehnert 2018; Onuoha 2014; Theobald 2015).

In spite of inter-faith and other forms of dialogues across the subregion, which most of the time are elitist, many followers of different faith and members of ethnic groups lean towards stigmatization and hate speeches as well as the display of stereotypical hatred towards one another through viral messages on social media (Onyekwere and Chukwu 2019; Yakubu 2019). The need to de-emphasized religion and ethnicity in public space as well as regulate the activities of religious leaders and ethnic champions in a manner that basic rights are mutually respected should be added to current dialogues. Community members are also lacking in citizenship education that could have enhanced a State identity, other than the supremacy of other forces such as religious or ethnic, that prevails in domestic politics and are essential elites assets. Hence, divorcing ethnicity and religion from national politics and discourses remains an enormous challenge for the implementation of the 'Strategy' in West Africa (Chauzal and Damme 2015; Basedau and Shaefer-

Kehnert 2018).

Tackling poverty and unemployment in the subregion also remains a challenge to member states. This could be attributed to the nature and structure of the subregional economy. As a region in the Global South, its economy was allocated into the periphery of the global capitalist system; so, it produces primary products with low-aggregated value. Most West Africans are farmers with low incomes. Even the prices of crops produced in the region are sold at prices determined by importers in the Global North, through a complex and manipulated price mechanism which ensure minimum income from the sale of these products (Okon, Ojakorotu and Agi 2019; Spero and Hart 2010). Even oil and minerals producers in the subregion are not immune from general poverty. The revenue from crude oil, diamond, gold and other minerals hardly trickle down to the masses due to acute corruption by section of the elites. This leads to marginalization and socioeconomic exclusion. In some cases, these resources lead to conflict and income from these these resources are used to procure arms which further escalate the conflict and perpetrate poverty, as illustrated by 'blood diamond' in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and crude oil in Niger Delta region.

This cycle validates the 'resource curse' thesis in the region. Again, the absence of production value chain leads to enormous job loss in the region since these products are sent to the Global North for processing. Indeed, the restructuring and transformation of the economy of the subregion from its present rentier and consumption to developmental and productive is central to jobs creation and poverty reduction. This would reduce the population of idle and vulnerable youths available for terrorist recruitment and radicalization (Asanga 2017; Okon, Ojakorotu and Agi 2017; Torres and Seter 2016). Economic transformation of this magnitude implies the breaking away from the exploitative relationship with the ex-colonial masters and indeed the shaking off of the peripheral status in the world economic system. The challenge therefore lies in achieving such transformation without generating the wrath of the Global North which benefits immensely from the present state of West African economy (Rodney 1972; Spero and Hart 2010).

Also challenging is the entrenchment of good governance in the subregion. This is contrary to the expected outcome after the ratification of the supplementary protocol on Democracy and Good Governance by member states in 2001. Beyond periodic elections and reasonable number of electoral turnovers; political participation is very limited in the region and legislators hardly consult their constituencies on national issues. Moreso, Transparency International (TI) has consistently rated Nigeria, Mali and other countries in the subregion within the last 50 in Corruption Perception Index (CPI) in the

past two decades, this corroborates with the Extractive Industries Transparent Initiative (EITI) findings on the disparity between remittance of resource rich countries in the subregion to the states' treasury and the actual worth of the resources sold by governments. Indeed, there is very little transparency and accountability in the running of government across the subregion as government contracts and procurement processes are done in secret.

In many ECOWAS member states, the communication gap between the government and the governed is disastrously wide (Agwor 2015; Bleck, Dembele and Guindo 2016; Wing 2013). Furthermore, extra judicial killings by state security operators are rife in the subregion. Recall that, it was the summary execution of Mohammed Yusuf by the Nigerian Police in 2009 that escalated the Boko Haram insurgency. Similarly, many political activists were imprisoned, and others were tortured to death in The Gambia during Yahya Jammeh dictatorship which ended in 2018; Campaore's regime in Burkina Faso reached a similar hallmark. Evidently, most West African States are run by dictators who abhor respect for human rights and the rule of law, but disguise themselves as democrats. Besides, electoral fraud is common in the subregion and elections themselves become the legitimization of the committed fraud as illustrated in the Nigerian Presidential elections in 2019. These lead to political exclusion of dissent voices and contribute to violent outbursts and terrorism in the subregion (Engels 2015; Onwuama 2018; Sanyang and Camara 2017).

Another burning issue is the contradiction between the women/girls rights as contained in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the prevailing social norms, values and practices in West Africa, especially the Islamic injunctions on adult women and female teenagers and children. Women are still victims of domestic violence and the offenders are hardly prosecuted and brought to justice. Female teenagers and children are denied education and are subjected to underage marriage in Islamic communities in the subregion. Legislations on child's right are not universally passed by states in the subregion. Even where they are approved at national level as done in Nigeria, many component units in federating states have refused to internalize them. The net impact of these process includes the prevailing of child abuse, child labor and lack of a social security net for West African women and children and these make them vulnerable to recruitment and radicalization.

Boys in Islamic regions are exposed to Almajiri culture as in Northern Nigeria where many learn unwholesome habits on the streets in the process of religious tutelage. Similarly, teenage hawkers in other regions are school dropouts who are making living in the streets. They become vulnerable

elements to kidnapper, drugs peddlers, rapists and recruitment into crime syndicates as well as terrorism. Therefore addressing basic rights abuses, as well as the respect for the rule of law are issues and challenges which feed into other deficits of good governance across the subregion and enhance economic and socio-political misgivings and discontentment and eventually radicalization and terrorism (Okoli and Umeche 2018; Amnesty International 2010; Abbo, Zain and Njidda 2017).

(ii) Measures to prevent and combat terrorism

In line with the subregional political declaration and common position against terrorism ratified in Yamoussoukro in February 2013; no ECOWAS member state have sponsored terrorism or deliberately organize, instigate, tolerate, or facilitate terrorism in its domain. However, preventing the use of their territories for terrorist activities is an enormous task due to poor penetration of state power and the abundance of ungoverned spaces across the subregion. West Africa has a number of its members within the Sahel region of Africa which stretches from Mauritania to Eritrea, specifically, Mali, Senegal, Niger, Nigeria and Burkina Faso fall within this region that separates the Sahara desert in the North and Savannah in the South (Raleigh and Dowd 2013, UNSC 2013:2). This harsh terrain is difficult for poor states to secure since it is less inhabitable and very demanding to maintain military and other security forces. Hence, the choice of the Sambisa forest as the operation base by the Boko Haram terrorist group and its prosperity around the Lake Chad region; as well as Al-Queda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Mouvement Pour l'unicite et le jihen Afrique de l'Ouest in Northern Mali preference of their bases in the Sahel. In the same vein, the Gulf of Guinea is a wide maritime territory which stretches from Senegal to Angola and into the Atlantic Ocean with very little state penetration and has become ungoverned space for pirates. The swamps and creeks of this terrain in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria are used by Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) as their base; from where they perform kidnaps and carry out violent attacks on oil installations in Nigeria. One of the challenges for the prevention and the fight against terrorism in West Africa is the effective governance of the ungoverned spaces and territories in the subregion (Taylor 2016; Anyimadu 2013; IPI 2014; UNSC 2013).

In terms of checking illicit arms and drug trafficking, ECOWAS does not possess the tools for the containment of these menaces. For instance in 2006, ECOWAS ratified its convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) their ammunitions and other related materials, and in 2008 it made a

political declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, illicit Drug Trafficking and an organized crime in West Africa. Member states are also signatories to the United Nations Conventions against; these twin evils, yet they continue to prosper in the subregion. The devastating role of SALW and Drug trafficking in terrorist and insurgency operations is globally acknowledged (Caleb and Okafor 2015; Ellis 2009; FATF and GIABA 2013). The subregional vulnerability to these threats is anchored on the implementation of the free movement of goods and services protocol, its location in the south end of the ancient trans-Sahara trade routes, as well as external factors, such as the political development in the Maghreb region and the triangular trade routes of illicit drugs from Latin America through the West African coast through Europe.

While the free movements protocol facilitates the two ways flow of human, illicit arms and drugs from Maghreb to Atlantic coast, the proceeds from illicit drugs are used to purchase these arms for organized crime, terrorism and insurgency in the subregion (GIABA 2013; Csete and Sanchez 2013; Marsh 2017). Unfortunately, some of these illicit activities are linked to highly connected and powerful political exposed persons (PEPs) in the subregion. For instance, Former President of the Gambia, Yahya Jammeh was accused of drug trafficking from South America through the Gambia to Europe; he was also mentioned in arms deals involving Victor Booth of Tajik Arms (Sanyang and Camara 2017, 9). Similarly, a sitting senator in the 7th Senate in Nigeria had a link with an arrested spokesperson of Boko Haram who indicted him and other powerful elements as part of sponsors of the terrorist group. These and other instances illustrate the involvement of Political Exposed Persons (PEPs) in arms/drug trafficking, money laundering and terrorism in West Africa (GIABA 2013, 27). The involvement of PEPs in organized crimes, arms and drug trafficking, money laundering and terrorism weakens the resilience of law enforcement institutions to investigate and prosecute the offenders. Besides, reporting institutions across the subregion lack the capacity to identify suspicious transactions related to terrorist financing, as terrorist organizations utilize the large informal, cash based economy to finance their operations. Moreso, security and surveillance at most of the national borders are ineffective due to numerous illegal border cross point.

This facilitates the infiltration of terrorist elements into member states with illicit SALWs. Again, competition among agencies in member states weakens interagency intelligence/information sharing, cooperation and collaboration and therefore provides the lapses for illicit flow of fund and SALWs across national borders to the terrorists. Again, poor understanding of applicable laws by CT authorities in the subregion impedes effective

combating of terrorist financing and indeed terrorism as a whole. Therefore member states find it difficult to implement the forty recommendations on money laundering and nine special recommendations on terrorist financing of the Financial Action Task Force (GIABA 2013, 7; UNGA 2006; FATF and GIABA 2013).

Also demanding is the capacity of member states to control the internet content in their domain. The revolutions in the information and communication technology and the production of android phones and similar devices have increased internet connectivity. This promotes information dissemination and penetration to communities across the globe in an unprecedented manner. These devices had helped terrorist recruitment, financing and propaganda dissemination at an unprecedented pace. ECOWAS member states lack the technology to filter harmful propaganda penetrating their domain. Similarly, most ECOWAS member states lacks the capacity to use the internet advantageously in countering terrorist narratives, money laundering, recruitment and cyber-attacks; therefore poor cyber security is another difficulty for ECOWAS implementation of the UN strategy (Mahmood and Jetter 2019; Weimann 2006).

Another thorny issue is the challenge of border security in West Africa. Colonial states imposed artificial boundaries across the subregion, therefore people of the same ethnic groups are separated by national boundaries. To the people, such boundaries exist on the paper, as they continue to interact with one another as an entity, due to longstanding socio-cultural and economic ties. Indeed, most population on the borders of West Africa states enjoy dual citizenship of both countries and therefore crisscross the border at will, as experienced in Nigeria/Benin border, where Yorubas on both sides of the border continue with their ancient ties and easily migrate to the country without any restriction. In this scenario, the loyalty of these population lies with the ethnic affinity rather than the superficial state. This is similar to the epicenter of Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeastern Nigeria where Kanuri ethnic group in Borno State spilled over to Chad and Cameroon in the Lake Chad region, thus the fluidity of movement across the borders.

The porous borders in the subregion promote the ease movement of terrorist fighters and logistics to the desired destinations. Indeed, most West African states have no border walls to separate them from their neighbors, and there are several bush tracks for uncontrolled migration and transportation of illicit arms between member states. This is exacerbated by the free movement protocols ratified by member states, which have been thoroughly abused by both ECOWAS citizens, and foreigners, since many travel across the region without valid documents. Moreover, the corrupt nature of border security

officers in the subregion makes it difficult to check the flow of illicit arms and uncontrolled migrations. These factors have negative impact on counter terrorism in the subregion. Indeed, border security into the subregion and within the subregion is an outstanding challenge to the implementation of the strategy in West Africa (Blum 2014; Lamptey 2013; Musah 2009; Opanike, Aduloju and Adenipekun 2015).

Related here is poor and uncoordinated database management system whereby individuals' identities are not easily verified, since most of the citizens in the informal sector of the economy are hardly captured in national identity database. Forensic audit of databank, documents and identities are still at elementary stage due to poor infrastructure and equipment, as well as lack of governments' commitment to such project and the endemic corruption in government circle. The net effect of these amongst others is an incessant impersonation and identity theft at entry points and within the subregion. These actions make it easy for terrorists and their agents to travel into, and through the subregion without detection. Thus, all these issues impede the implementation of the UN Strategy (Atta-Asamoah 2009; Ebem, Onyeagba and Uguonah 2017; Hadayati 2012; World Bank Group 2017).

Also challenging is the security and protection of public places and infrastructural facilities. The sights of equipped security personnel are ubiquitous in the subregion. Most public schools in Nigeria have no perimeter fence. Similarly, many more public buildings and streets have no AI gadgets such as the CCTV cameras which could detect and deter attacks by terrorists. These explain why Chibok and Dapchi secondary school girls were kidnapped with ease and some schools and churches are burnt down without restraint. The challenge therefore includes the re-engineering of the internal security architecture and infrastructure as well as improvement in the quantity and quality of security operators and their equipment in a manner that matches the terrorist threats of the moment. Unfortunately, such massive transformation and orientation are lacking in the subregion (Mekendrick 2019; Bilaminu, Iya and Purokayo 2017; Lebovich 2017).

(iii) Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard

The central focus of this pillar is the UN's recognition that strengthening capacity building in all states is core to the prevention and fight against global terrorism. The pillar emphasizes the need for UN collaboration with states, sub-region and regional entities in order to enhance coordination,

coherence and cooperation in countering terrorism (UNGA 2006, 7). To this end, several measures were outlined to achieve this objective, such measures include: the involvement of private sector in capacity building of ports, maritime and civil aviation security facilities; the sharing of best practices in counterterrorism capacity building through extant subregional, regional and international framework; cooperation on the exchange of information and technical assistance among member states institutions dealing with counterterrorism, as well as the development of states capacities to implement relevant UN Resolutions.

Other measures include: the strengthening of dialogue among stakeholders across relevant regional, subregional and international organizations in order to improve the coherence and efficiency of technical assistance delivery in the field of counterterrorism; the involvement of Bretton Wood Institutions, UNODC and Interpol in containing money laundering and financing of terrorism; strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other relevant institutions' capacity to check terrorist access to nuclear materials, chemical and biological weapons and other WMD. Further measures are: supporting the World Health Organization (WHO) to improve its technical assistance to states' health system as prevention and preparation for possible biological attacks by the terrorists; and the improvement of national, subregional and regional border management by all stakeholders within the UN system, amongst others (UNGA 2016, 8).

All these measures outlined in the strategy are noble but their implementation is demanding. States in West Africa are generally poor and have very low capacity building capabilities. Even the private sectors are highly underdeveloped. In most of these countries, states are the only viable source of funding any capital project compare to western countries where private sector is the major source of funding for building ports, maritime and aviation facilities. Moreso, the UN itself depends on donors for its activities and most of the time the donor determines the aspect of capacity building best fit their interests. Given the peripheral status of ECOWAS in global politics, very low attention is given to the needs of the region in the global strategic security configuration (Congressional Research Service 2020; Okon, Ojajorotu and Agi 2019).

Related here is the low capacity of the UN agencies such as the UNODC and the WHO. The UNODC has been grossly underfunded and this has reduced its capacity to collaborate effectively with member states across the globe. This is exacerbated by the weak capacity of corresponding institutions in the subregion as they are excessively exposed to governmental manipulation and intervention as highlighted in the previous section (Bewley-Taylor and

Trace 2016; Reddy, Mazhar and Lenchuchia 2018; Klantschnig 2016). Credit must given to the IAEA and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical and Biological weapons for their doggedness in ensuring that WMD are not accessible to terrorist organizations and their agents (Pedraza 2012; Ballard and Forman 2017).

This is important as the unfolding pandemic of COVID-19 has shown that the WHO does not have the technical capacity to deal with biological weapons attack by terrorists. Its inconsistency in the diagnosis of the pandemic and drugs prescription to contain it has revealed a huge gap in knowledge and capacity. Given the prevailing scenario in this pandemic, it is obvious that WHO cannot provide the required technical assistance to West Africa Health Organization (WAHO) and ECOWAS member states if similar virus attack is carried out by terrorists in the region. Once more, it should be reminded that the health sector in West Africa is highly underdeveloped due to poor infrastructural facilities and inadequate governmental political will to improve health facilities and medical personnel remunerations. This has led to massive exodus of highly skilled personnel to other parts of the world. Besides, the obsession with medical tourism by West African elites has weakened their resolve to embark on capacity building of the health sector (Khan, Khan, Anim and Chelliah 2020; Nwakaeze and Kandala 2011).

Also worth considering is the impact of French interest in West African countries, specifically the Francophone states. France considers these states as its sphere of influence and has been a major determinant in what happens in these states. For instance, ECOWAS decision to adopt a common currency ECO has been hampered by French intervention and subsequent creation of its version ECO different from what was conceived by the ECOWAS. A common currency and monetary policies has enormous positive domino effects on the integration and economy of the subregion. This threatens French influence and is effectively checked by the Europeans. In addition, it is believed that the French used its influence in the UN to create the misunderstanding between the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS on which institutions should be the legitimate first responder in the Malian crisis of 2013 in order to intervene and expose the weakness of Africans institutions to solve Africans problem and simultaneously made itself the savior of the Malian state. With these realities, it is debatable if much could be done by the UN in terms of capacity building in Francophone ECOWAS member states without the approval of France or in accordance with the French interest (which most of the time are not compatible with the general interest of the subregion) (Melly and Darracq 2013; Yusuf, Ahmad, and Wali 2018).

Another challenge is the significant institutional corruption in most

West African states. Funds budgeted for both soft and hard infrastructural capacity building are sometimes diverted and embezzled. Besides, the trickling capacity building efforts from the UN and other intervention agencies are also seen as bureaucratic decisions and are allocated according to parochial demands without taking into account the overall objective of such interventions. This attitude and other internal dynamics weaken the capacity of CT entities in the subregion, and hamper the efforts of UN entities in the implementation of the strategy in the subregion (Bleck, Dembele and Guindo 2016; Banini 2020; Ogbuehi 2018; Transparency International 2015).

(iv) Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism

This pillar of the strategy focuses on human rights and the rule of law and the conditions for their promotion as the basis for containing terrorism. It therefore recognizes that effective CT measures are not in conflict with the protection of human rights, but they are complementary and mutually reinforcing (UNGA 2006, 9). ECOWAS member states are signatories to major international instruments, such as the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights which established the African Commission for Human Rights ratified in the June 1948 and 1981 respectively. Besides, the subregional organization has established the ECOWAS Court of Justice where human rights abuses by individuals and states are handled (Ebobrah 2012; Alter, Helfer and McAllister 2013; UN 2015). Due to their internalization, the subregional body and its member states have sufficient legal instruments to promote human rights and the rule of law in its CT policies. However, the promotion of socio-economic, environmental and political rights of the citizens remains the best method for tackling terrorism. This is due to its capacity to checkmate the conditions which engenders recruitment, radicalization and terrorist activities as highlighted in this study (Bleck, Dembele and Guindo 2016; Ojo 2020).

On the other hand, there are complex issues relating to the protection of the rights of women and children affected by improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and who are on terrorist mission. The challenge lies on defusing the device without hurting anyone, but it is expedient for a terrorist to be sacrificed in lieu of others. Therefore guaranteeing the rights to life under some circumstance is a zero-sum game. Another problem in CT operations is the nature of the enemies who are non-state actors and hardly subscribed to the universal norms and values of human rights. ISIL brutality as replicated by Boko Haram through beheading and other extra-judicial killings of soldiers

and vulnerable population negates the assumption of Article 1 of UDHR which states that all human beings are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood (UN 2015, 4).

In the theatre of CT operations, it becomes difficult to reciprocate the brutality of terrorists with excessive resort to civilized norms since every man is inherently endowed with a survival instinct and ruled by the tendency to reciprocate similar gesture in the battle for survival and personal security (McMahan 2004). Another burning human rights issue is the use of torture in eliciting information from captured terrorists. Can a hardened terrorist voluntarily confess and give valuable intelligence without torture? Evidence from the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq and in Guantanamo Bay show that torture is useful in getting intelligence from detained terrorists. Similarly, Nigerian Armed Forces have been accused of torture and extrajudicial killings in their CT against Boko Haram by Human Right Watch, without providing alternatives to dealing with the critical issue of personal survival instinct as well as the intelligence gathering through the interrogation of captured terrorists (Bellamy 2006; De Beer 2018; Evans 2007). Therefore, the balancing of human rights protection and the demands of CT operations remains a challenge in the implementation of the UN Strategy in the subregion.

As highlighted earlier in this study, ECOWAS countries are plagued with weak and inept institutions. This includes the criminal justice system. Besides, terrorism is a recent development in the subregion, and the legislation or domestication of anti-terrorism law is slow, so also are their interpretation and application. Consequently, the judicial system lacks enabling laws and experts to fast track and ensures fair trials of terrorism related cases. Moreso, the dearth of universally acceptable definition of terrorism threatens effective adjudication; terrorists may be seen as freedom fighters who engage in insurgency for the freedom of their people (Schinkle 2009; Sigsworth 2019). Also challenging is the issue of rehabilitation and resettlement of victims of terrorists' attacks. The number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) has increased exponentially due to terrorists attack in the subregion as experience in Northeastern Nigeria, Southern Niger, and Northern Mali, yet there are no corresponding accommodation and infrastructural facilities to attend their basic needs.

There is no social security policy in most West African states to deal with the disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. Moreover, where the IDP camps are available, the occupants are exposed to sub-human standard of living, since water, food and other basic needs are not guaranteed. In some places, women are exposed to gender-based violence, such as rape and sex forms of sexual harassment. Also challenging is the absence or the inadequacy

of schools for children in these IDPs camps as well as the lower quality of manpower required for basic education. Among other, the implications, among other, are the deprivation of the women and children rights to basic education and secured environment (Amodu, Richter and Salami 2020; Akuto 2017; World Bank Group 2014).

Furthermore, poor legislations on child rights expose children in the subregion to terrorist recruitment, radicalization and deployment. The Amajiri system in the Islamic Northern Nigeria is an instance where boys do not only beg for food in the streets, but are also expected to beg and support the Islamic teachers. This culture exposes the boys to unwholesome habits on the streets. Besides, most of them grow up without reasonable means of livelihood and are recruited as foot soldiers by terrorist groups. Even Child Rights Act signed into law by the Nigerian government is not domesticated by many states in the Federation due to conservative cultural imperative. Unfortunately, West African states do not have the political will to check these abuses. Thus, checking the cultural imperative of Islamic and others harmful cultural practices in terms of respect and promotion for the rights of women and children are fundamental challenges to the implementation of the UN Strategy in West Africa (Abbo, Zain and Njidda 2017; Amnesty International 2010).

Final Remarks

The response of the UN member states to the resurgence of terrorism in the new millennium was a source of concern for the UN. While the GWOT was unilaterally declared by the US in post 9/11 and its conduct in Afghanistan and Iraq was brutal and could have led to the radicalization of many more Muslims around the world, Russia's suppression of Chechnya insurgency had similar hallmarks and concern. This development led to the adoption of the General Assembly Resolution 60/288 in September 2006 as the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy with universal mandate. Its implementation has met with several challenges and issues in the ECOWAS subregion, and this was the subject of this discourse.

The study observes that ECOWAS does not lack the enabling instruments and institutions for the implementation of the strategy, but is constrained by weak post-colonial states with inherent contradictions; inept and corrupt governmental institutions with low capacity to perform optimally; inadequate political will and funding by the UN to render the required technical assistance to member states; and the complexity in observing the

rule of law and protection of human rights arising from the developmental challenges in the subregion. It is therefore imperative for ECOWAS member states to improve on their state/nation building activities and strengthen governmental institutions. They also need to enhance human security indicators in their countries and embark on massive renewal of infrastructural facilities. Besides, the UN needs to reinvent itself beyond the dominance of the five Super Powers, since the menace of terrorism has a universal reach, and a biological attack in the most remote part of the world may become a global challenge as illustrated by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences 8(9): 537-546. Doi: 10.6007/IJABSS/v8-i9/4636.

ABSTRACT

The paper discusses issues and challenges marring the regional implementation of the United Nations Global Counterterrorism Strategy in West Africa. It highlights economic, technology and socio-political factors that hinders the effective implementation of the strategy in the subregion which has become the hotbed of global terrorism. The study concludes that ECOWAS has the enabling instruments and institutions to implement the strategy. It therefore recommends the strengthening of existing institutions, enhancement of human security indices, and massive investment in infrastructural facilities, as measures to facilitate the implementation of the strategy in the subregion.

KEY WORDS

United Nations Global Counterterrorism; Strategy; West Africa; Implementation.

Received on October 07, 2020

Approved on July 29, 2021

NEW DAWN OR ETERNAL TWILIGHT?¹

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On June 29, 2021, the South African Constitutional Court sentenced the former President of the Republic of South Africa and the ruling party - the African National Congress - Jacob Zuma to 15 months in prison for “contempt of court”, expressed in refusing to testify during the work of the state commission, unauthorized withdrawal from its meeting, and then refusal to participate in her work. This body, which bears the official name “the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture”, was created in early 2018 during the presidency of Zuma himself, although not by his will, but by the order of the Public Protector, as the ombudsman is called in South Africa. Since it is chaired by the Deputy Chief Justice of the South African Supreme Court, Raymond Zondo, it has become commonly referred to by his name.

In accordance with the court’s decision, Zuma was to surrender at the police station in Nkandla in the province of Kwazulu-Natal, where he has an estate, or in central Johannesburg no later than July 4. Zuma’s defence filed an appeal with the Constitutional Court of South Africa for a rescission of the contempt of court order against him, taking into account the health condition of the former President, who has already turned 79 years old, as well as the serious threat of coronavirus, the “third wave” of which has covered South Africa in June 2021. It was considered on July 12, but the decision was reserved. In parallel, Zuma petitioned the South African High Court in the provincial capital of Pietermaritzburg to reject or postpone his imprisonment, but the judgment was also postponed until July 9.

Negative decisions were later issued in both cases, but earlier, since Zuma did not voluntarily enter the police custody on July 4, the police command was obliged to arrest him within three days, that is, until midnight

¹ The article was prepared within the project “Post-crisis world order: challenges and technologies, competition and cooperation” supported by the grant from Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation program for research projects in priority areas of scientific and technological development (Agreement No 075-15-2020-783).

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on July 7, otherwise the South African National Police Commissioner Khehla Sitole and his immediate superior, the Minister of Police Bheki Cele, would face criminal prosecution. Police forces have already begun arriving at Zuma's estate, but even earlier, to prevent his arrest, his supporters gathered there, some with weapons, including members of the so-called "Umkhonto we Sizwe³ Veterans Association" (MKVA). This organisation, however, includes not only veterans of the armed struggle against the apartheid regime, it never was the official structure of the ANC and recently was disbanded in the process of the formation of an united MK veterans body.

As it happened, that night I was staying in South Africa, in Cape Town, and was watching the developments on local TV. The situation was becoming visibly tense, but very close to a midnight a convoy of official cars left the site. Initially it was reported that Zuma remained in his house and the cars carried high government officials who had come earlier but failed to convince him to report to the police. However, in a number of minutes this information was revised: it was former president who left the estate accompanied by his VIP protection unit.

Zuma, accompanied by relatives went to the town of Estcourt, to the newly built "correctional facility" which is considered to be an exemplary one. "I handed myself over to avoid bloodshed", he said later to his supporters (ENCA 2021). It was reported that it was Zuma's ex-wife, Nkosozana Dlamini-Zuma, a minister in the cabinet of Cyril Ramaphosa, who was his main competitor in the ANC presidential elections, was able to persuade Zuma to do this.

It seemed that the worst was avoided, but the next day riots broke out in Zuma's home province of KwaZulu-Natal, and on Sunday, July 11 they spread to the country's central province, Gauteng, where the largest city of South Africa Johannesburg and its administrative capital Tshwane (Pretoria) are located. Besides, there were isolated disturbances of public order in two other provinces, but five of the country's nine provinces were not affected.

It all began with the blocking of the main highways, where supporters of Zuma stopped or even set fire to trucks, and this was quickly followed by pogroms and arsons of shops and warehouses, banks and even schools. Thus, the arrest of Zuma served as a "trigger" and catalyst for unrest, the losses from which, both human and material, were enormous. According to preliminary data, over 350 people died within ten days, many of them in a stampede during the looting of shops, more than two and a half thousand participants in the riots were detained. The South African government claimed that a total

³ Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) was an armed wing of the ANC, it existed in 1961-1993.

of 40,000 businesses were affected, and the losses to the country's economy are estimated at R50 billion (\$ 3.4 billion). Extensive damage has been caused to 161 malls and shopping centres, 11 warehouses, 8 factories and 161 liquor outlets and distributors (South African Government 2021a). 1,400 ATMs and 90 pharmacies were damaged and about 300 banks and post offices were vandalized. In addition, 40,000 businesses and 50,000 traders were affected overall, while stock worth R1.5 billion was lost and 150,000 jobs were stated to be at risk (Van Zyl 2021). Some losses were just unbelievable: 140 schools have been vandalized or burned in the province of Kwazulu-Natal.

Later, President Cyril Ramaphosa admitted that the state had not acted as quickly as it should have, and called the incident a lesson for the future. The police were indeed initially too slow in taking action against the rioters, and there were several reasons for this. First, even previously it had lacked staff and equipment, and in 2021, due to the covid-19 austerity budget, police spending was reduced by 11.8 billion rand (Mayibongwe 2021).

Secondly, there was a lack of proper exchange of information between the police and state security agencies, they even contradicted each other in public statements. Finally, the police may have acted overly cautiously, as they were previously heavily criticized for the deaths of 34 miners during the strike and riots at the Marikana mine in 2012, besides 11 alleged violators of the quarantine regime were killed during the full lockdown in South Africa in the first half of 2020 as a result of the excessive use of force by the army.

Initially the government was reluctant to send troops to the cities, but only after entering the streets to suppress riots on the orders of the President as Commander-in-Chief of the South African National Defence Force, first 2,500 and then 25,000 soldiers and officers were able to stop the tragic course of events. However, it should be noted that in many places local residents cooperated with police and army, stood to protect property from robbers and arsonists, and then are actively involved in cleaning the streets and looted premises.

Julius Malema, the leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), a radical party, criticised Ramaphosa's decision to deploy the military to quell the unrest, and threatened to join in. "No soldiers on our streets! Otherwise, we are joining. All fighters must be ready", he said. However, he did not specify what side he was going to join, and fortunately no actions were taken by his party when the army did go to the streets (News 24 2021).

What caused these events? President Cyril Ramaphosa called them an "attempted insurrection that failed" (SA News 2021). According to him, the riots were planned and coordinated, and their instigators were well organized. Nonetheless the question of who these people were still remains open. It was

reported that 12 people were identified as the instigators of the riots, but only two of them were detained - a former DJ on radio and a candidate for mayor of a small town from the Patriotic Alliance, a newly formed small party. Official sources provided information that among the organizers there were former and even current members of the special services - supporters of Zuma, but no names have yet mentioned.

At the same time, although South Africans are trying not to talk about the ethnic factor in riots, it is hardly accidental that the riots took place mainly in KwaZulu-Natal and in Gauteng, where many Zulu also live. The removal of Zuma, an ethnic Zulu from the presidency, and then his imprisonment, displeased many of his fellow homelander. But, on the other hand, many Zulu participated in the resistance to the rioters, assisting the forces of law and order and it is clear that the thousands of people who participated in the riots were not necessarily supporters of Zuma.

The protestors had no political slogans, and attacks on the offices of the ruling party have not been recorded anywhere in the country. Another peculiar feature of these events is a lack of conflicts between Africans and whites. The only interracial conflict happened in Phoenix, a traditionally Indian township where over 30 persons, both looters and innocent persons were killed by local vigilantes.

The question is legitimate: did the mass riots arise spontaneously, or were there certain forces behind them? It looks like the first actions could have been organized by the lieutenants of Jacob Zuma, who were more worried about their own safety, being suspects in crimes of corruption, and not about the ex-president of South Africa. But the initial plans for a local protest, apparently, failed and it spread into the vastness of the country.

South Africa has undoubted achievements over the years of democracy, in particular in the areas of electrification, education and housing, but although the ruling ANC party is allied by the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the Communist Party, the majority of the people in South Africa still live very poorly; moreover, the gap between the rich and the poor has grown noticeably after 1994.

The unemployment rate is very high, according to official data it has reached the record 34,4% in the second quarter of 2021, and 44,4% according to an expanded definition of unemployment that includes those discouraged from seeking work (Reuters 2021), and it is even worse among the young people. The situation was aggravated by the pandemic, which led to the loss of several million jobs, the closure of enterprises, especially small businesses.

One more cause of dissatisfaction was a low tempo of vaccination and

the renewal of severe restrictions that President Ramaphosa announced on June 27 that again included in particular a complete ban on selling, purchasing and transportation of alcohol. So, it looks like the limit has come to patience of many people and they began to destroy everything in their path.

In the early 1990s in South Africa a popular term, often used in particular by a Nobel Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu, was a “rainbow nation”. However later, when the situation in South Africa became not as bright as many had expected, a bitter joke appeared: “Rainbow is just an optic illusion.” Now similarly a bitter expression appeared: “Is it new dawn or eternal twilight?”.

In any case, as we all know, a dawn cannot be long and a new day comes, be it good or bad. However, it is hard to assess the developments in South Africa during “Ramaphosa’s rule” in these simple terms. Perhaps, it is fair to compare its contradictory nature with a controversial nature of Cyril Ramaphosa’s life story. In the years of apartheid, being the General Secretary of the National Miners’ Union, he openly advocated socialism, but as soon as the Constitutional Assembly completed its work under his chairmanship, he went to business and became one of the richest Africans in the RSA. Ramaphosa’s assessment of himself is telling: “I am a socialist, but I operate in a capitalist world. I am therefore a capitalist with a socialist instinct.” (Ebrahim 2015).

True, under his leadership the ANC initially restored the moral authority and confidence of the people lost during “Zuma’s rule”. In was confirmed by the results of the elections to the national parliament and legislative assemblies of nine provinces of South Africa on May 8, 2019, when ANC received 57,5% of votes, down from 62.15% in the election four years earlier but 3,5 % higher than in local election in November 2017 before Zuma’s resignation.

Cyril Ramaphosa ensured the support of other members of the Tripartite Alliance leaded by the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP) with its quarter of a million members that greatly contributed to the election success of the ANC, and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (COSATU). Nevertheless, while Ramaphosa in power for the fourth year, one can hardly find traces of socialism in his activities.

ANC’s firm control of the central government and of eight provincial governments (one province, Western Cape remains run by the main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance), have not resulted in the economic and political stability in the following years. The GDP experienced ups and downs, unemployment remained very high and “the Ramaphosa effect”, the broad sympathy to a new leader began waning.

A new and heavy blow against the South Africa economy was the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially resolute steps taken by Ramaphosa, a total lockdown, including a ban on alcohol and tobacco, which were welcomed in spite of their severity. However, the continuing aggravation of the economic situation, delays in mass vaccination and especially the disclosure of corruption, connected with purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE) changed the mood. At first the most popular political figure after Ramaphosa was Zweli Mkhize, the Minister of Health, who was regarded by many as his successor (he received the biggest number of votes in the direct election of the ANC NEC members in 2017), so the disappointment was especially deep when he was accused of corruption himself.

Ramaphosa reacted to these developments in a strongly (perhaps, too strongly) worded open letter: "Today, the ANC and its leaders stand accused of corruption. The ANC may not stand alone in the dock, but it does stand as Accused No 1. This is the stark reality that we must now confront. At its last meeting, at the beginning of this month, the ANC national executive committee (NEC) recognised the justifiable public outrage caused by recent reports of corruption. It said these developments cause us collectively to dip our heads in shame and to humble ourselves before the people." (Siviwe 2020).

However, no less damage was caused by political striving and squabbles within the ANC. If after the resignation of Zuma and the 2019 general election it looked united, at least on the surface, later the talk about factions in the ANC became widespread.

The Zondo Commission, mentioned above, started its work in August 2018, and its term was extended several times. Some prominent lawyers believe that the process of the Commission raises serious questions of its fairness. Non-collegiality of its composition, the lack of the witnesses' proper cross-examination, the politicization of its work pose danger to the effective achievement of the officially proclaimed aims and to the positive outcome of this Commission of inquiry (Mezyaev 2021)⁴. Besides, this exercise is rather costly, the money spent is close to 1 billion Rand. However, in any case its activity, especially the statements of the witnesses are the valuable testimony of the political and economic life in South Africa in the last years.

In particular, during the sessions of Zondo commission many facts detrimental to Zuma were revealed, but it brought to light a number of cases

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that harmful to Ramaphosa and his colleagues as well. It was alleged in particular that a number of the ANC leaders received bribes (either by cash or by services) from the Bossasa company that provided services to the party. 500 thousand rand were allocated by this company to the CR 17 campaign aimed to facilitate election of Ramaphosa to the post of the ANC president at its congress in December 2017, moreover he initially made a mistake when said that the money was a payment to his son for the work done for Bossasa. Public Protector Busisiwe Mkhwebane even used this incident to accuse Ramaphosa in violation of the constitution and executive ethics code when he “misled” MPs about a campaign donation from Bossasa (Businessstech 2019). She lost the case in court, but another blow against president was the disclosure by her office the list of donations to CR17, that included large sums from white-owned companies.

Then the evidence given by Sidney Mufamadi, former Minister of Public Security who headed the special commission “on the assessment of the mandate, potential and organizational integrity” of the South Africa’s State Security Agency (SSA) made clear that its report, forwarded to Ramaphosa many months earlier was very critical of the SSA activities under Zuma. Only after this disclosure the presidency made it public: “A key finding of the panel is that there has been political malpurposing and factionalisation of the intelligence community over the past decade or more that has resulted in an almost complete disregard for the Constitution, policy, legislation and other prescripts.” (The Presidency 2021). Nevertheless, most of the recommendations of the commission have not been carried out so far. Arthur Fraser, Director-General of the SSA had to leave his post, but in a very specific way: he was transferred to the same position in in the Department of correctional services. It is only recently the issue of his suspension has been raised.

Ramaphosa himself had to face the Zondo Commission, giving his evidence first as the ANC leader and then as former deputy to Zuma, and as the current head of state. Trying to explain his “inaction”, he said that the best way to fight state capture was from within the government and the governing party, and, therefore, he had served as deputy to Zuma while it raged at its worst. “The final option for me, which is what I chose, was to remain in my position as deputy president; not to resign, not to acquiesce and join in, or not to be confrontational, but to work with others in the executive to resist the abuses and bring about change where we could.” (Ferreira 2021). However, his arguments were not convincing for many South Africans.

Among the decisions taken at the ANC conference in 2017 three were regarded as the most important: on the nationalization of the Reserve

Bank, on the redistribution of land and “a step aside” rule, demanding those charged with corruption to voluntarily step aside and those alleged, reported and accused of corruption to face the ANC Integrity committee. To put it in short, the first two decisions have not been carried out so far: Tito Mboweni, appointed by Ramaphosa as minister of finance, publicly opposed the change of Bank’s ownership⁵; and the process of adopting a new law that allows confiscation of land without compensation is going on, but very slow.

The notion of factions became often used in South Africa, but is it really correct to use it? True, the end of the unrest is viewed in South Africa as a defeat for the so-called “radical economic transformation (RET) faction” in the ANC. Its members used this term, approved by the ANC conference, but they are known not only for “leftist” rhetoric and support for Zuma, but often for participation in corrupt deals. However, it is wrong to speak about Ramaphosa’s faction, because it is not a faction, but a majority, at least so far.

The most famous person in the so called “RET faction” is the ANC Secretary General Elias (“Ace”) Magashule, elected in 2017 with a small margin, just 24 votes, whose membership in this party has been suspended. due to the beginning of the trial on charges of corruption and his refusal to step-aside. He was arrested on November 11, 2020 and charged with 74 counts of corruption, money laundering and fraud related to the asbestos project during his time as premier in the Free State (Liseka 2021) and now on 200-thousand-rand bail.

Magashule and others who have been criminally charged were given 30 days to consult and step aside, but he refused to do it, and he has been suspended by the ANC National Executive Committee. He had appealed the letter of his suspension and went to the court but lost the case. Under these circumstances he, as they say, bet the farm: sent a letter of suspension to the ANC President, claiming that he had done it before his suspension. His action was naturally met with dismay by the ANC leadership, and lost another case in court .

Let us come back now to the destiny of Jacob Zuma. According to the mass-media reports, Zuma has not spent a single night in his prison cell. He was placed in the medical room of that “correction facility”, then transferred to hospitals first inside and then outside prison. His service was interrupted on July 22 when he was temporarily released from prison to attend the funeral of his brother. Then on September 5 Arthur Fraser, mentioned above, granted him a medical parole, though the parole board had not recommended it.

Zuma went to his estate in Nkandla, and from there he addressed

⁵ He left this post in October 2021, when the cabinet was reshuffled.

by video a “Welcome home” party, organized by his supporters in Durban. Typical of him, in his speech he was adamant. Then he left Nkandla with the permission of authorities to meet a group of his supporters including Magashule in an entertainment centre in Durban.

In a previous article published in this journal in 2018 the author predicted, that, taking into account South African legal system, we would probably wait for years to know what would happen with Jacob Zuma. I proved to be right, the first real session of his corruption trial in connection with the arms deal, officially known as the “Strategic Defence Package” should start on April 11, 2022, that is over four years after its formal beginning. Moreover, it still can be further delayed because the court still have to consider one more of Zuma’s appeals.

Meanwhile the main opponent of the ANC, the Democratic Alliance had no less problems. Its leader Mmusi Maimane, former Major of Johannesburg Herman Mashaba and some other prominent Africans left the party. All these developments happened when South Africa was preparing for a municipal election. The Independent Electoral Commission proposed to postpone it to 2022 due to the pandemic, but the Constitutional court rejected its proposal, because it had to take place every five years and it was held on November 1st.

The disillusionment of voters in the major political parties and in the democratic structures resulted in a massive drop in the number of participants in elections, from 57% in 2016 to 45,7%, in and on shift of votes from ANC and DA to smaller parties, some of them recently formed. The ANC’s head of elections Fikile Mbalula called the party’s poor showing in some areas is a “warning shot” for the ANC. Quite candidly he explained: “Those in our base that have not come out to vote, that is what it tells us. We have to deal with grievances raised. We had to deal with issues of electricity, issues of water. How do you tell a person who has been without water for five years, that on the eve of the elections, which let us go and vote (Mahlati 2021). On top of it “load shedding”, a blackout was performed by the state-owned ESCOM company in a number of areas in South Africa on the eve and even on the election day.

South Africans protest on that day took various forms, in some cases quite unusual. 22 voting stations in the province of Eastern Cape. The ANC’s historical stronghold could not open on time after angry communities dug trenches around the centres and, locked gates with their own padlocks.

The results of the local elections were utterly disappointing for the ANC. It received less than 47,9%, that is 6% less than at the previous local election five years earlier (and 9,5% less than at the 2019 national and provincial election). For the first time since the birth of the democratic South

Africa less than a half of the voters supported the ruling party. The DA lost 6.9% down to 20% while the EFF was 2,3% up to 10.6%.

However, despite this evident debacle and sharp criticism of the current ANC government, it is universally recognised in South Africa that so far there is no other real force in South Africa that could rule the country. However, the situation is quite different at a local level. On the eve of elections Ramaphosa expressed his confidence that the ANC would win outright and said that coalitions were not part of it his vocabulary (Sidimba 2021). Alas, the ANC vocabulary had to change pretty soon. The question now is not to go into coalitions or not, but on what conditions to go. Talking coalitions, ANC Deputy Secretary-General Jessie Duarte said that nothing was off the table: “There are many types of coalitions that exist such as transactional coalitions. One thing is for sure is that we are not negotiating from a position of weakness. Coalitions are about compromise” (Pillay 2021).

David Makhura, the ANC provincial chairperson specified: “I want to emphasise that we’re not desperate to be in government in municipalities for its own sake... So, we were approaching everything based on principle, but also based on experience and we don’t want to set up coalitions that will collapse halfway through [the term]. We don’t want to set up coalitions that have a group of people who have not made up their minds what it is they really want to do. So, we are not desperately looking for partners.” He said the voter apathy in Gauteng meant that people were not convinced by the party’s campaign message of renewal. The party now needed to approach the renewal agenda with urgency (Bomgekile 2021).

All in all, of the 213 municipalities contested, the ANC achieved a good majority in 161 municipalities, the DA achieved a majority in 13 municipalities and the IFP in 10 municipalities, 66 municipalities are “hanging”. However, having ensured its control over 75% of the country’s municipalities, the ANC had to really fight for major cities, and with a limited success.

The ANC has won over 50% of seats only in two of eight metropolitan municipalities in South Africa, Mangaung (Bloemfontein) and Buffalo City (East London). It has received more votes than the DA in three hung metropolitan municipalities in the central province of Gauteng, Johannesburg, Tshwane, the administrative capital of South Africa, and Ekurhuleni, but it needs coalition partners to form local governments. It has lost its outright majority in Ethekwini (Durban), shedding 30 seats in the city council and has to look for coalition partners there as well. Almost equal number of votes the two leading partners received in Gqeberha (Port-Elizabeth) with just 2564 votes (0,5%) more for DA. So, a coalition with one of them at the head is also inevitable there. The Democratic Alliance preserved its control over

Cape Town, the parliamentary capital, though with a reduced majority. Hence appears a unique role of smaller parties, which can play a role of kingmakers even with a small number of seats.

Naturally, it will take time to deeply analyse the causes of this dramatic setback, but the coming opinions are quite revealing. According to Dr Blade Nzimande, the ANC NEC member and the SACP General Secretary, who is also minister of higher education, science and technology, “factors contributing to the decline in voter turnout include internal divisions within the ANC, factional conduct, and situations where alliance partners (SACP and COSATU) were marginalised. “[...] we have initial observations to highlight. The results that started emerging were predictable. This is why during the campaign, we sought to turn the tide against or, at least, limit the extent of the decline. There were service delivery problems affecting a number of communities across the country. Problems within our broad movement, such as internal divisions and counter-campaigning of the ANC, factional conduct, and situations where Alliance partners were marginalised, resulting in divided communities and a failure to provide quality services”, Nzimande said.

He further emphasised the ANC needs COSATU and SACP to survive. “Those who think otherwise, those who think that the ANC can survive and do well by abandoning the Alliance, will cause more harm to the ANC and its nature and character. To allow that to take precedence would be tantamount to paving the way for the abandonment of the path of a national democratic revolution and strengthening the counter-revolutionary current, of which some elements are to be found within the ranks of our broad movement.” (Tarryn-Leigh 2021).

The representative of another member of the ANC-led alliance, COSATU’s national spokesperson Sizwe Pamla called the number of voters “disappointing but not shocking. Factionalism, corruption, mismanagement of the economy, SOEs [State owned enterprises], and municipalities. Load shedding and other myriads of reasons have led to voter apathy. Factionalism and infighting are some of the contributing factors” (Tarryn-Leigh 2021).

As distinct from his pre-election statements, President Ramaphosa took a conciliatory tone when he spoke at the presentation of the election results by the IEC. Having reminded that the election “was contested by a record 325 political parties and nearly 95,000 candidates, of whom over 1,500 were independent candidates, he continued: “If we are to make this a new and better era, we as leaders must put aside our differences and work together in a spirit of partnership, of co-operation, of collaboration and common purpose in the interests of the people of SA. At the end of the day, we all want the

same thing: to better the lives of the South African people... Let us turn the promises that we made on the campaign trail into reality. Let us unite for the common purpose of recovery and rebuilding (South African Government 2021b).

The election results were announced by the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa on November 4 in the evening, and it was reported that the ANC National Working Committee would soon convene an extended national working committee, which includes provincial leaders. Then the ruling party is set to hold a National General Council to decide on policy and constitutional matters to be followed by the 55th National elective conference in 2022 year and the 2024 general parliamentary and provincial elections.

The forthcoming period will not be easy for President Ramaphosa. "The ANC needs to start discussion with Cyril to serve one term, in 2024 we need strong leader", such a comment appeared in Internet. Zakhele Ndlovu, South African political analyst said: "The Zuma faction is to try and capitalise on the poor showing in the elections and try to get rid of Ramaphosa." A defeat of "the RET faction" strengthened Ramaphosa's position in the ANC. Besides, after his suspension Magashule is no more able to inflate the number of the party's branches and members in order to ensure more supporters at the forthcoming elective conference. However, Zuma is still popular, especially in KwaZulu Natal, a victim incumbent president and others those in the ANC who are allegedly connected with "the white monopoly capital".

True, so far there is no visible contender for the highest post, but such candidates will appear if Ramaphosa continues losing his initial popularity. The situation in South Africa has definitely stabilized after the tragic events of July 2021 and a proof of it was quiet and peaceful election void of significant incidents. However, some in South Africa believe that the past events are only a "tentative rehearsal" of the future, and in particular, the expected verdict of Zuma in the corruption trial may serve as a new "trigger".

There is a lot of talking about the need for "economic reforms" in South Africa but it is often reduced to further privatisation and "liberalisation" of the labour law. However, it seems that in order to ensure stability and prevent the repetition of such tragic events, along with improving the work of the government safety and other organs, it is necessary to ensure a real rise in the standard of living of the majority of South Africans. Is it possible without abandoning the current economic policy, which in South Africa is called "neoliberal" and strengthening the role of the state in the economy? That is the question.

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ABSTRACT

The article was prepared within the project “Post-crisis world order: challenges and technologies, competition and cooperation” supported by the grant from Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation program for research projects in priority areas of scientific and technological development (Agreement No 075-15-2020-783).

KEY WORDS

South Africa; Presidential Elections; Jacob Zuma.

Received on October 16, 2021

Approved on December 11, 2021

NERINT STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Taliban and Foreign Interference in Afghanistan

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The shocking scenes of thousands of citizens trying to leave Afghanistan through Kabul airport in the last months dominated the media. The collapse of the national government and the (re)take of power by the Taliban were preceded by the withdrawal of US troops after two decades of occupation in the country, leaving behind evidence not only of the costly human tragedy of the “War on Terror”, but, above all, of its more than proven failure, whether in the political, economic or military sphere.

Discussions about the US withdrawal started during the administration of Barack Obama, whose questioning revolved around increasing the number of armed forces and completing objectives on Afghan soil or ending the war for good. Extended to Trump’s republican administration, it was there that negotiations took place directly with the Taliban, initiated in 2018 and concluded with the signing of the Doha Agreement, in February 2020, in Qatar. The agreement did not have the participation of the Afghan government, one of the demands made by the Taliban. The negotiations provided a timetable for the departure of the United States, but there was, on the other hand, no safeguard that the North American demands would be met in the near future. The fact is that the recognition and political legitimacy, so emphasized by the mainstream media after the recent Taliban-China dialogue, was bestowed by Trump on the armed group long before he went to Beijing. Today, Biden just finishes, in a hurry, what was started more than a year ago.

In political and strategic terms, it is necessary to consider the contemporary demands that the situation may impose on the Taliban. Among them is the need to establish a dialogue with the other States, either with the objective of avoiding the isolation of the end of the 20th century, or to ensure the flow of foreign aid, a preponderant factor for the country’s stabilization. In this context, another regional power play arises in Central Asia. With

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a strong role played by China and Russia, followed by the other members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, these countries are in favor of recognizing the new regime and establishing pragmatic relations. China has been carrying out major infrastructure works in Pakistan, Iran and other Asian nations, essentially linked to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), or its New Silk Road, which places it in the position of main power on the Asian continent.

However, beyond the naive predictions of a new moderate Taliban, which now provides a more palatable discourse for external consumption, the truth is that the Afghan domestic reality will possibly follow the same guidelines of the late 1990s, period of the first coming to power by the group. This includes the imposition of Sharia, the Islamic law, on the entire population, with especially harmful effects for women.

As the title of one of the works by Colombian Gabriel García Márquez suggests, “Chronicle of a Death Foretold”, it cannot be said that the result of external interference would be unpredictable in the Afghan case. A highly fragmented country, with local loyalty ties and historically the target of disputes due to its geostrategic position, what can be said is that Afghanistan has never had a centralized and cohesive national State. The country has always been susceptible to the setbacks of its own regional forces and the political interests of those who lead them. Furthermore, all his attempts at modernization were frustrated. From the secular monarchy of Mohammed Zahir Shah, through the period of “New Democracy” and the Republic in 1973, to the Marxist government of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in 1978.

In the latter’s case, the interview given in 1998 by Brzezinski, former National Security Adviser to President Jimmy Carter, made clear the path followed. From the perspective of the Cold War, the objective was, according to him, “to give the Soviet Union its Vietnam”. The conventional narrative of diffusion of democratic ideals falls apart when confronted with the reality of US support given to extremist militants with the intention of provoking Soviet intervention in 1979, which would radicalize the civil war. Support for the mujahideen, then called freedom fighters, began six months before the USSR intervened in the country, when Carter signed the first secret aid directive to opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. That same insurgency would be the basis for the Taliban, now considered a terrorist group, which would rule Afghanistan for the first time between 1996 and 2001, until being deposed by US forces.

After twenty years of conflict and with the Taliban once again taking control of Afghanistan, the failures of the western model and policies of State-building – the attempt to build nation-states from the outside in – are

clear. Especially when the State itself assumes forms of organization that are different from Western models, as it is and always has been the example of Afghanistan, but also in the cases of Iraq, Syria and Libya. The question remains whether the US withdrawal will generate chaos that will negatively affect China or give it the opportunity to create stability in Central Asia.

Kabul Syndrome: The New American Century and Old Geopolitics (2001-2021)

Paulo Fagundes Visentini²

Afghanistan equated Vietnam as a peripheral nation that has defeated three powers. In Vietnamese forests the French, Americans and Chinese were defeated, while in Afghan mountains and deserts the British, Soviets and Americans (with their NATO allies, Australia, New Zealand and others) were defeated. In the early morning hours of July 2nd 2021, American troops withdrew from Afghanistan, without previously communicating the regime they had implanted two decades earlier. The regime ended up falling on August 15th, with the entry of the Taliban in Kabul. And on September 11th, the terrorist attacks to the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington completed twenty years. Despite all the American presidents of the period (Bush, Obama, Trump and Biden) having signaled their desire to withdraw troops, everything happened in an unexpected and unusual way. The outcome of the United States' longest lost war, and the uncertainty that opens up in the region, unfortunately, did not give rise to strategic, prospective, objective or well-founded analysis. After all, what really happened and what are the future perspectives? It is, therefore, necessary to observe the short, medium and long term processes.

How the West politicized Islam against modernization

The Greater Middle East, of which Afghanistan is part, is a region poorly understood by the West. Ideological-cultural and geopolitical issues can only make sense within the socioeconomic evolution context and considering respective local and global power relations. After World War II, the contradiction between the local backwardness and the growing external connection of a region of vital geopolitical and energetic importance (oil)

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generated new forms of conflicts. There were republican, modernizing, secular and developmental revolutions, by political forces such as Nasserism (Egypt, North Yemen, Libya), Baathism (Syria, Iraq) and communism (South Yemen, Afghanistan). In addition, there were the Algerian and Iranian revolutions (religious but republican) and the Palestinian radicalization after the Six-Day War (1967).

In addition to the Anglo-Americans fearing the geopolitical impact of such a phenomenon, which implied the rupture of old alliances and dependencies, within the framework of the Cold War, Arab conservatives panicked. King Faruk of Egypt went into exile, King Fayçal of Iraq was slaughtered by mobs in the streets of Baghdad, and Emir Badr fled North Yemen. The Persian Gulf/Arab absolutist petromonarchies were the most concerned, as was the Kingdom of Jordan, which was vital to Israel's security. However, the country that felt most threatened was Saudi Arabia, an absolutist, patrimonial and theocratic monarchy, where Islam was vital to the regime's legitimacy and control of society. The King was guardian of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina and established an institutionalized political alliance with the fundamentalist Wahhabi (Sunni) sect. These monarchies, sparsely populated and kept in archaic structures by a billionaire elite, feared the unrest of tens of millions of people in the Middle East. The divide between modernization versus conservatism in the Arab world overcame the preponderance of the conflict with Israel, which considered Arab modernization more threatening than the fragile monarchies, also allies of the West.

The Anglo-American and petromonarchy reaction was to use the religious sentiment of the more conservative population for political ends. To this goal, in 1962, the World Islamic Organization was founded in Mecca and, in 1973 (with the vast resources of petrodollars), the Islamic Development Bank, responsible for conservative financial diplomacy. In addition to supporting political groups and armed opposition organizations, there was the promotion of educational-religious policies (construction of Quranic Schools, the Madrasas), social assistance to the Islamic faithful and the hiring of workers and technicians from the Arab world to work in petromonarchies. All of this led to the formation of solid internationalized networks. The Socialist Revolution in Afghanistan, in 1978, and the Iranian Revolution, a year later, served as catalysts for the action of a kind of "Islamic-Sunni International". Even when the Iranian Revolution became Islamic-Shiite, it was republican, enemy of Anglo-Americans and especially of petromonarchies, disputing the Muslim narrative, as others were pro-Western and would have corrupted Islam. Finally, the decline of Nasserist Egypt allowed the Saudis to play the cards at the Arab League, using their financial and "religious" resources.

The First Afghan War: From Socialism to Theocracy (1978-2001)

The social instability of the Greater Middle East resulted from the erosion of traditional power structures in the face of the advance of urbanization and literacy, without any socioeconomic alternatives for the potential emergence of a modern middle class. This was the case with Afghanistan, an archaic but neutralist monarchy, which was the first state to recognize the Soviet Union (1919) and receive technical and economic support from it since 1924. A society based on clans, strongly isolated by the mountainous configuration of the country and, due to the absence of transport infrastructure, it constituted a kind of tribal confederation with a central government limited to the few urban centers. The attempt to modernize the monarchy only produced its downfall in 1973, but the problems only got worse during the government of President Daud (who was a Prince). In addition to its authoritarianism, the growing dependent alliance with the Shah's monarchy in Iran, and its interference in the country, along with the Pakistani projection of General Zia ul-Hak in the region, have exacerbated the crisis.

The small but dynamic People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA, Marxist, founded in 1965), was made up of civil servants, students (who could not find jobs after graduating), school teachers, union members, intellectuals and, last but not least, the military. Although the moderate faction of the PDPA (Parcham) collaborated with the government, it was excluded and, in early 1978, the party began to be persecuted and its leadership killed or imprisoned. Officials linked to the Khalk faction, in collaboration with civilian leaders, then attacked the palace and, after heavy fighting, the president was killed. It was the "Saur Revolution" (of April), which created a PDPA government, in alliance with some opposition groups. Although many soldiers had been trained in the USSR or by Soviet advisers, the coup was an internal reaction, as the arrests would reveal the soldiers linked to the PDPA, who would be purged. According to the specialized bibliography, the Soviet ambassador had only been warned of the improvised action a few hours before, and Moscow had been watching the events with apprehension.

The government was dominated by the Khalk faction (which wanted "Revolution now"), initiating land reform policies, nationalizations, compulsory education, emancipation of women and youth. Although it did not attack religion, rural regions reacted badly, for sociological reasons and because of the reckless and unprepared attitude with which public policies were implemented. The patriarchal family used young men for herding and planting work and women for domestic work, and felt "expropriated" of their power and labor. The agricultural situation demanded a multiple and gradual model, as the situation was different in each region. Over time, village or

religious leaders murdered “atheist” officials sent by Kabul, torched schools, beat women who attended them, and punished teachers.

The regime’s reaction, where the military component was strong, was to react to violence with more violence, as is the logic of vendetta in clan societies. Soon, the gradualists of Parcham, more attentive to Soviet prudential advice, were being removed from important positions, while Pakistan (which had declared itself “Islamic”), began to guide and materially help the rebels and refugees. And the United States, through Pakistan and with its logistical support, began supporting the seven mujahidin (combatant) parties, counting on financial resources from the petromonarchies. In February 1979 the Shah of Iran was overthrown by the Revolution led by Khomeini and the situation got even more complicated. Finally, in the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, Taraki was being supplanted by the most radical, Amin. Extremely concerned about the possibility of another Islamic regime taking root on the borders of the (culturally Muslim) Soviet republics, Moscow tried to support the declining Taraki, who was assassinated by Amin in September, upon returning from a meeting with Brezhnev.

The Soviets saw no alternative but to depose Amin and replace the moderate Karmal of Parcham and intervene to save the regime and rebuild the state, which was about to collapse. The decision to intervene was very difficult and by a narrow margin, as shown by the minutes of the Kremlin meetings, now available. On December 27th, the Soviet army entered the country, eliminating Amin. The American reaction, despite the narrative of outrage, was rather one of elation than one of apprehension, as the bear had come out of the woodwork and “now the Russians would have their Vietnam”, according to Carter’s advisers. China also began to support the guerrillas, both directly and via Pakistan, its ally. There was never an all-out war, as the Soviets and regime forces controlled the cities and highways, leaving the guerrillas at the far end of the country. The mujahidin were legitimized as “Freedom Fighters,” according to Reagan, despite extreme cruelty to prisoners and school-going women. But the diplomatic, military, and financial cost was great, as counterinsurgency was not a Soviet specialty, and the suicidal rivalry between the Khalk and Parcham continued. Finally, Gorbachev insisted on a political solution and, in February 1989, the Soviets withdrew.

Afghanistan was to socialism what the Vendée was to the French Revolution: the poorest and most backward, which would benefit from modernization, but fought against it. However, to everyone’s surprise, the regime held out alone for three years and did not fall until after the USSR did, in April 1992. The seven mujahidin groups then took over Kabul and started a fratricidal war, which destroyed the (until then intact) city and fragmented and razed Afghanistan, which was no longer among US priorities. Faced with

the prevailing chaos, Pakistani intelligence (Inter-Service Intelligence/ISI) prepared the Taliban, a militia of “religion students”, orphans raised in the Madrasas of refugee camps, who entered the country in 1994 and conquered Kabul and 90% of the country in 1996. Finally, an order emerged, initially well received at home and abroad, because transnational corporations needed the new ex-Soviet republics of Central Asia to have access to the sea to export oil. But soon the Taliban showed the hard side of a theocracy, which revealed its sociocultural primitivism and alienation in the face of international reality and political complexity.

In its ranks were thousands of volunteers from Arab fundamentalists, Pakistanis and terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda. Bin Laden, its leader, came from a millionaire Saudi family, had fought the Soviets and began to preach a fight against the West, gaining audience when the US sent troops against the Iraqis in Kuwait: “they are occupying Islamic lands to steal oil”, denounced at the time. After attacks in the region and in East Africa, came the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 in New York and Washington, marking the turn of the century and the millennium. The origins and intricacies of the plot still remain somewhat obscure, but it is undeniable that the powerful symbolic impact of the attacks shook, right at the beginning, the announced “New American Century” that would follow the end of the Cold War. A feeling of insecurity has gripped international society, especially in the North Atlantic world, after a decade of the optimistic panacea of the post-Cold War New World Order. The Taliban’s refusal to hand over Bin Laden allowed the United States to gain broad international legitimacy to intervene in the country and launch the War on Terror.

The Second Afghan War: From Terrorism to “Democracy” (2001-2021)

American intervention to defeat the Taliban required the support of Pakistan (on which enormous pressure was exerted), the Northern Alliance mujahideen, and ground and air access through the ex-Soviet republics of Central Asia for their special forces. Spectacular missile and aviation bombardment against the Taliban militia was associated to the advancing Northern Alliance (fueled with new weapons), air support, and punctual special forces action. The Taliban, a militia, made the mistake of waging a conventional war and lost, but managed to disperse into remote regions and into the Pashtu populated region (the dominant ethnic group in Afghanistan and the Taliban base) in Pakistan. The Bonn Conference sought to establish a new regime, reviving the Loya Jirga Tribal Council as an interim government,

which nominated a compromise candidate, Hamid Karzai (King Zahir, exiled in Italy, declined). Subsequently, elections were held, which confirmed Karzai in the presidency (until 2014) of a regime that the occupier molded as a liberal democracy, in a primitive and completely devastated country.

The deposed Taliban and Al-Qaeda fugitives tried to demonstrate that they still existed, in sporadic actions, but they could do very little. With the situation apparently under control and the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, the US transferred troops to the new front. They made the mistake of fighting two wars simultaneously, as well as trying to promote nation-building in both. The economic, military and political-diplomatic cost proved unbearable in both cases. In Iraq, they put in power Shiites unable to stabilize the country and who, later, became allies of Iran, with the American exit. In Afghanistan, the corruption of the regime and the American tactical-strategic failures in the military field allowed the return of the Taliban insurgency and generated conflicts with Pakistan, when they tried to reach them in its territory (“Drone Wars”).

To exemplify, the supply of military forces (which reached the figure of 140,000 soldiers in 2011) and civilians was basically done by truck convoys across Pakistan, being targets of attacks that caused huge losses and logistical disruptions. To such an extent that they had to request permission from Russia to cross their territory, disembarking in Riga or Vladivostok, covering more than 5,000 km. Another problem is that the aforementioned “surgical attacks” by NATO and allies killed as many civilians as the Taliban, increasingly turning the population against them and in favor of the insurgents. There were also several massacres of Afghan villagers, which undermined the strategy of “winning hearts and minds”. While building the state and the Afghan National Army (training, equipment, and pay), the United States paid local chiefs not to cause trouble, and they accepted as long as they exercised local power. Thus, the emancipation of women remained restricted to large urban centers.

To complicate matters further, the government was extremely authoritarian, corrupt and incompetent, being virtually dominated by the Warlords of the Northern Alliance and characterized by internal struggles for power and resources. The Afghan army was molded in the image of the American, with tactical-strategic conceptions that were not suited to the country, whose people and culture had never been understood. Their numbers were artificially inflated to get US resources, much of which was siphoned off. It is worth watching the North American documentary “Turning Point” (Netflix), which shows the waste of resources by the Afghan State, NGOs, occupation forces and Reconstruction Brigades. Thus, soon the Taliban was no longer seen in the interior as the worst option, also because it protected

the cultivation of poppies for the production and export of opium and heroin (which the US was trying to eliminate), which allowed the survival of the peasants and the partial financing of the Taliban militia (see article by Maria Gabriela Vieira).

Conflicts have become increasingly harsh, with Western forces seeking to transfer the combat mission to the Afghan Army and begin a gradual retreat. The regime became the target of suicide attacks and ambushes, especially against the security forces, as well as national and foreign civil cooperators. NATO and allies had 7,500 dead (half of them were soldiers and the others hired by security companies, mercenaries), the Afghan army had 66,000 dead, the Taliban 51,000 and the civilian population 47,000, in addition to wounded and mutilated. As in the case of Iraq, traumatized American war veterans today pose a political-economic problem similar to those of the Vietnam War. Between \$2 and \$3 trillion USD were spent, according to Brown University. In 2001, seeking to achieve international legitimacy, the Taliban had practically eliminated the production of opium and heroin, but in 2021 the country was responsible for 80% of world production.

Over 20 years of conflict, two very different realities have emerged. A part of the population, especially the urban middle class, worked for NATO (translators, guides, advisors), Non-Governmental Organizations, United Nations and foreign companies, receiving in dollars, in addition to those employed by the State and government. Women in this segment, for example, enjoyed a status similar to that of the West, working, studying and, at least legally, having the same rights as men. The urban poor lived off small services for the elite and the squatters. But there were those who remained subordinate to traditional local pro-government chiefs in rural areas, excluded from economic benefits and legal rights, as, mainly, in the case of women. In addition to them, there were those who lived in areas gradually controlled by the Taliban. Poverty, oppression, war and violence were an incentive to migrate to the cities or abroad, especially those crossing Iran and Turkey on foot to try to enter the European Union as refugees. Living with the occupiers gave them a sense of Western prosperity, their way of thinking and migration policy, as well as at least a rudimentary knowledge of the language.

The “Neotaliban” in the face of the geopolitical dispute in Eurasia

In 2008 the Taliban had severed its ties with Al-Qaeda and in 2011 it was announced that an American Special Force had killed Bin Laden in Pakistan, throwing his ashes into the sea. Meanwhile, Ghani, Karzai's successor since 2014 through a deflated election, deepened the patrimonialist

behavior of the ruling elite, while the occupiers transferred more power and resources to them, preparing to withdraw. This situation spawned a fanciful perception and attitude among the urban elite and middle class: the belief that the United States was their ally and that they were part of the West. But meanwhile, the Trump administration established direct negotiations with the Taliban in 2018, without official government participation. Such contacts would result in the Doha Agreement, in February 2020, where, again without government participation, the American withdrawal and the vague promise of a coalition government by the Taliban and concrete one not to attack the American forces were agreed.

Before completing the 20th anniversary of September 11th, the US withdrew in the early hours of July 2nd, 2021, without even notifying the Afghan government and national army. Taliban members, mostly wearing flip-flops, moved forward quickly without encountering resistance, and on August 15th they occupied Kabul, triggering a rush to the airport, of mostly cadres working for the occupiers and the government. Obtaining US or European citizenship would be the salvation for this group, but their departure will undermine the country's economy, governance and modernity. The president apparently fled carrying government money, and the Americans abandoned large amounts of weapons and equipment. There have been comparisons of the situation with the fall of Saigon and the collapse of the socialist regime in 1992. But then the PDPA regime resisted for three years without Soviet support, because it existed before the intervention, while the regime based on Western democracy was built entirely from scratch by the US and its artificiality was obvious. The army's downfall, on the other hand, has a very simple explanation: the end of American financing and the abandonment of the regime by Washington. Why fight and die for a lost cause?

For many American strategists, the idea was to leave the Afghan problem to China's management, undermining the Belt and Road Initiative. But the Chinese were already negotiating with the Taliban (there was a public meeting in China a few weeks earlier) and the Pakistanis, allies of Beijing, were supporters of the Taliban. Russia and Central Asian countries, which also predicted the fall of the regime established by the West, also had contact with the Taliban, which tried to show itself "mature and moderate". China has promised investments and there are projects to build infrastructure and economic development. An immediate consequence was the elevation of Iran's status from Observer to Full Member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (OCX), which includes China, Russia, four Central Asian states and, since 2017, Pakistan and India. The objective is not to prevent the United States from penetrating Asia, but to ensure the stabilization of Afghanistan, which will not be a simple task.

Undoubtedly, the events reinforce the arguments about the American decline, but the US immediately reinforced actions for the maritime containment of China (UKUSA Agreement). And the sudden resurrection of the Islamic State (ISIS) against the Taliban deserves the attention of analysts. It is paradoxical that Afghanistan, a weak and primitive nation that has always resisted the great powers, continues to play a crucial role in geopolitics not only in Asia, but perhaps in the global balance, where the American-Chinese dispute becomes crucial. While scholars focus on analyzing the great vectors of postmodernity and its cutting-edge technology, actors who seem to be part of an outdated past are still capable of disturbing the Grand Strategy of the 21st century. And, finally, history and the Afghan case demonstrate that without socioeconomic development, conditions for the construction of democracy do not arise.

Opium Production, Livelihood, and Conflict: Where do Taliban Resources Came From?

Maria Gabriela Vieira³

Who finances the Taliban? Since the group took control of Afghanistan after 20 years, such questioning has been recurrent among those seeking to understand the current situation in the country. In addition to international remittances from countries like Saudi Arabia, the Taliban collects resources by taxing a large part of the industries that are in territories under their control, such as the mining and telecommunications industries. But it is in the illicit opium market that the Taliban finds its main source of funds. According to a 2020 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)⁴, Afghanistan was responsible for approximately 84% of the world's illicit opium production in recent years. This data allows us to measure the financial importance of taxing the production and trafficking of the substance for the group.

It was through the involvement of militants with international drug trafficking networks that the group was able to resume the armed struggle for control of the country from 2006 onwards. Participation in the illegal opium economy, however, is not exclusive to the Taliban. There is evidence

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⁴ UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2020. World Drug Report 2020. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Vienne).

that other groups, such as the Northern Alliance (an Islamic political-military organization opposed to the Taliban), and even members of the Afghan government have been involved in the illicit activity. The connections between the illicit opium market and armed groups in conflict, however, did not emerge in the 2000s. Authors such as Cornell (2007)⁵ explore the dynamics of illicit drug production and trade in countries (or regions) in conflict: generally speaking, the outbreak of an armed conflict does not give rise to the illicit drug market, but it quantitatively and qualitatively transforms an already existing crop.

Thus, in the case of Afghanistan, the illegal opium market that has existed since the early 1960s with the promulgation of the 1961 UN Single Convention on Drugs, until the Soviet intervention it was limited to meeting regional demands for the drug. The first expansion in the opium production in Afghanistan, inserted in the dynamics of the Cold War, took place during the Soviet occupation, with the active participation of the US Intelligence Agency, as detailed by Alfred McCoy (2003)⁶. US complicity in the production and trafficking of opium allowed the mujahideen groups to obtain the necessary resources to fight Soviet forces. As a result, the Afghan opium industry has come to meet global demands, especially from European markets.

During the period following the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, until the Taliban took control of the country for the first time in 1996, Afghanistan was gripped by the widespread violence of the civil war and opium production once again flourished, reaching the mark of 3,400 tons in 1994. Although the consumption of intoxicants is prohibited in Islam, poppy cultivation was not and, therefore, production continued to expand, achieving the position of largest illegal producer of opium in the world in 1998, with 4,500 tons produced the following year (UNODC 2005)⁷. When in power, the group opted, at first, to tax the opium trade; however, faced with the difficulty of obtaining international recognition of the regime's legitimacy, the Taliban promoted, in 2000, the most efficient ban on opium – the last effort, for Mansfield (2016)⁸, in the search for legitimizing the regime. The US intervention after September 11th, 2001, and the ensuing armed conflict between NATO and Northern Alliance forces against Taliban forces enabled

5 Cornell, Svante E. 2007. "Narcotics and Armed Conflict: Interaction and Implications." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30 (3): 207-227. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100601148449>.

6 McCoy, Alfred W. 2003. *The Politics of Heroin: CIA complicity in the Global Drug Trade*. 2nd ed. Illinois: Chicago Review Press.

7 Mansfield, David. 2016. *A State Built on Sand: How opium undermined Afghanistan*. London; New York: Oxford University Press.

8 UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2005. *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2005*. United Nations (Vienna).

the resumption of production to pre-prohibition levels.

Even with the momentary withdrawal of the Taliban to Pakistan, the production of opium and its derivatives remained at around 4,000 tons a year. When, in 2006, the Taliban returned to Afghanistan and resumed the armed struggle against the troops of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), it became involved again with drug trafficking. According to Sufizada (2020)⁹, the group charged a 10% tax on each of the links in the opium production chain. Between 2007 and 2009, the average annual production of opium was the equivalent of 7,600 tons, allowing the Taliban and other non-state political-military forces to benefit from the illicit resources. It became increasingly urgent for the intervention forces to stem the source of resources that allowed the insurgents to remain in the conflict.

Thus, if between 1980 and 1990 the illegal opium market was viewed with some tolerance by the US government, as of 2009, the eradication of poppy crops and the ban on people involved in drug production and trafficking became a central component of the Afghanistan strategy – namely, ensuring that the Taliban does not regain control of the already pacified provinces (Afghanistan Study Group 2010; Jalali 2016)¹⁰. According to data from the 2018 UNODC report on opium produced in Afghanistan, farmers reported paying US\$29 million to non-state political-military forces, with the largest portion of this amount paid to the Taliban. It is true that opium production and trafficking contributed to the continuation of the armed conflict, making the connection between illicit activities and insecurity explicit. However, observing such activity only as a source of resources for financing the conflict hides the social and political complexity in which opium is inserted.

The deterioration of the economy in Afghanistan, a direct consequence of more than four decades of conflict, has led the Afghan population to resort to poppy cultivation for the production of opium and its sale on the illicit market as a way to guarantee their livelihood. In the 2019 UNODC¹¹ report it is pointed out that that year more than 190,000 workers were directly

9 Sufizada, Hanif. 2020. “The Taliban are megarich – here’s where they get the money they use to wage war in Afghanistan.” *The Conversation*. Acesso em: 05 set. <http://theconversation.com/the-taliban-are-megarich-heres-where-they-get-the-money-they-use-to-wage-war-in-afghanistan-147411>.

10 UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2019. *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2018: Challenges to sustainable development, peace, and security*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Vienne).

11 Afghanistan Study Group. 2010. A new way forward: Rethinking US Strategy in Afghanistan and Jalali, Ali Ahmad. 2016. *Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces: Mission, challenges, and sustainability*. United States Institute of Peace (Washington D.C.). <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/PW115-Afghanistan-National-Defense-and-Security-Forces-Mission-Challenges-and-Sustainability.pdf>.

employed in planting and harvesting poppies and that the resources obtained were responsible for 44% of farmers' income. Jonathan Goodhand (2005)¹² proposes that the analysis of the production and trafficking of opium in Afghanistan be made from the intersection of the conflict economy, responsible for maintaining the armed struggle; the economy of illicit activities, that is, drug and arms trafficking; and the cooping economy, related to the income of individuals involved in poppy cultivation. This interpretation implies that the elaboration of policies aimed at confronting one of the economies considers the impacts on the other two.

The Taliban, in this context, benefited from involvement in the production and trafficking of opium; Financially it can get the resources needed to finance jihad against the US and politically it can weaken Karzai's government by offering protection against the eradication and combat efforts. Now, however, the militants' goal is to turn Afghanistan into a drug-free country. The announcement was made at a press conference by Zabihullah Mujahid days after the takeover of Kabul. In the statement, the Taliban spokesman admits that international collaboration will be necessary for the opium ban to succeed (CNN 2021)¹³.

Even if the group now has access to the country's legal resources, the general situation of the Afghan economy must be considered, which is based on agricultural activity and highly dependent on international currency (75% of public spending is financed by foreign donations). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the opium economy represents between 8% and 11% of Afghanistan's GDP. In this scenario, the prohibition of opium without economic alternatives that account for the amount generated in the illicit market and without the support of international powers, it seems, will not be sustainable for the Taliban regime.

12 Goodhand, Jonathan. 2005. "Frontiers and Wars: the Opium Economy in Afghanistan." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 5 (2): 191-216. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0366.2005.00099.x>

13 CNN. 2021. "Porta-voz do Talibã diz que 'Afeganistão será livre de drogas'". Access on Set 06. 2021. <https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/internacional/porta-voz-do-taliba-diz-que-afeganistao-sera-livre-de-drogas/>.

AUKUS and Iran's entry into SCO: Asia closer to war or stability?¹⁴

José Miguel Quedi Martins¹⁵

João Gabriel Burmann da Costa¹⁶

This article deals with three relevant events for analyzing the international situation and understanding Asian International Relations. These are: (1) the creation of AUKUS; (2) Iran's entry into SCO; (3) the existence of a confidence channel between the US and China – operated by General Mark Milley and his Chinese counterpart, General Li Zuocheng. Despite the intrinsic value of each of these events, the main purpose of bringing them together is to allow an analysis of the international polarization.

Preliminarily, it should be clarified that AUKUS is a military alliance formed by the USA, UK and Australia. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), initially formed to de-limit borders, ended up being a regional governance forum for issues related to security and infrastructure integration. Finally, confidence channels are contacts established between senior officials to exchange sensitive information without legal or formal authorization from their superiors – the term was popularized by Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet ambassador to the US, to describe this type of exchange maintained with Advisors of National Security or US Secretaries of State¹⁷.

The creation of AUKUS – The question that arises is what changes? After all, these countries were already united by security ties for a long time. It is worth mentioning: (i) The ANZUS Treaty, signed in 1951, as a collective defense agreement in the context of the Cold War. It brought together Australia, New Zealand and the United States. (ii) And the UKUSA, an intelligence cooperation agreement also known as the Five Eyes, originally signed between the United Kingdom and the USA (1946). And which ended up incorporating other Commonwealth countries, namely: Canada (1948), Australia and New Zealand (1956). It is, therefore, 70 years of regular, permanent and institutional cooperation involving the signatories of the current AUKUS. Here we must

¹⁴ The authors are grateful for Igor Estima Sardo, bachelor in International Relations, for his help in translating this article into English

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¹⁷ Dobrynin, Anatoly. 1988. *En Confianza: El embajador de Moscú ante los seis presidentes norteamericanos de la Guerra Fría (1962-1986)*. México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988.

return to the question: what's new?

The answer can be found in the amount of investment and the new capacities planned for Australia. In this year's US budget, \$280 billion has been earmarked to "contain" China. Naturally, the figure covers several agencies and the forecast of assistance to a countless number of countries, among which Australia is included as one more. Even so, the amount – almost a trillion dollars –, greater than the GDP of a considerable number of countries, serves to form an idea of the scale of the effort in global terms.

As far as Australia is concerned, only the business involving the construction of nuclear-powered submarines – an agreement originally signed with France in 2015 – jumped from an amount of to 43 to 66 billion dollars¹⁸. To honor its commitments, the Australian Parliament passed a law providing for the mandatory allocation of \$1.5 billion annually for military acquisitions and modernization.

At first glance it seems to be just another big defense contract – were that the case, still, given its value, it would deserve a place in history. But, it's not just about that. After all, Australia has a profile characterized by the export of primary products and raw materials. With the ban on the Chinese market, the impact will be felt throughout Australian society. The idea seems to be to promote accelerated industrialization, and to replace low-paid and skilled jobs, related to agriculture and the mining sector, by high-paid, skilled jobs, promoting a high degree of social division of labor. Apparently, it is expected that this new middle class, although not very expressive from a numerical point of view, will serve as a basis for sustaining an anti-China sentiment. And, in the name of "nationalism" and the "defence of freedom", manage to convince, intimidate or even coerce those harmed with the diplomatic and economic realignment.

To get an idea of the depth of intended change, one has to bear in mind the vision of the broader "package" of military spending. Nuclear-powered submarines are just one more among the various businesses related to Defense – which, in addition to acquisitions, also involves costing items. It is worth mentioning: (i) The operation of the Helicopter Dock Ships¹⁹. (ii) The acquisition (with partial local production) of fifth-generation F-35 Lightning II fighter jets, worth \$11.5 billion. For now, the country has purchased only the A version, but this type of contract involves additional terms, and it may purchase the B version, with vertical take-off, to equip these dock ships. This

18 Fowdy, Tom. 2021. "The stunning betrayal of France by America over nuclear subs for Australia signals a huge geopolitical shift in US strategy". *RT*. 16 setembro, 2021. <https://www.rt.com/op-ed/534991-geopolitical-shift-france-us-australia/>. Access on Nov 09. 2021.

19 LHD – *Landing Helicopter Dock*.

idea had been raised when the Defense White Paper was drafted in 2015, but was declined to keep the amphibious assault capability intact, since the operation of on-board fixed-wing aircraft would involve the modification of decks used for cargo personnel and equipment. Even so, the possibility of these modifications being carried out in the future to operate with US or UK F-35Bs remains open. In this hypothesis, endowing Australian LHDs with equivalent value to a conventional aircraft carrier. Similarly, the capabilities held by the US Navy (Wasp and America class) when operating with its LHA²⁰. (iii) Acquisition of the F/A-18E SuperHornet and EA-18G Growler, valued at USD 9 billion. (iv) Acquisition of the F/A-18E SuperHornet and EA-18G Growler, valued at USD 9 billion. (v) The acquisition of all-terrain utility vehicles, which provide motor-mechanization components for the Ground Forces; (vi) The acquisition of Loyal Wingman drones worth 115 million dollars. (vii) And most importantly, the acquisition and development of hypersonic cruise missiles.

It is therefore a question of converting Australia not just into a mere US or UK beachhead. But in an authentic industrial hub, producer of high technology, with the capacity to export materials for military use to ASEAN countries and India itself. With this, it is expected to compensate, at least partially, the loss of the Chinese market, making the movement sustainable. Given the characteristics of Australian society, which it is not worth discussing at the moment, it is plausible to believe that the movement will be successful. It matters little that it produces more miserable people than the middle classes. The overall result appears to be viable: Australia should not include the list of countries threatened by upheaval or social chaos.

Capabilities also matter. Nuclear-powered submarines, despite not carrying nuclear weapons, will be able to deliver cruise missiles. These, in turn, able to destroy targets on land. Currently the US Navy operates Tomahawk missiles either on its SSBN²¹ (modified Ohio class) or their SSCN²² (Los Angeles, Seawolf and Virginia classes). Like all cruise missiles, the Tomahawk is subsonic and therefore vulnerable to interception by anti-aircraft defenses when adequate radar coverage is available – the case in China. However, the local development of hypersonic missiles makes credible interdiction attacks, carried out in depth against high-value targets (economic or military) in mainland China. More than that, it makes plausible the deniability of a direct involvement of the US – which have not yet commissioned its hypersonic missiles – making Australia a wild card, which can be launched against China

20 LHA – *Landing Helicopter Assault*.

21 SSBN – Nuclear-powered Ballistic Missile Submarine.

22 SSCN – Nuclear-powered Cruise Missile Submarine.

in retaliation for an eventual forced unification of Taiwan.

However, the most obvious is that all maritime trade and China's maritime lines of communication will become vulnerable. Merchant traffic matters here. China is certainly capable of efficiently and competently moving merchants into its strategic environment. But the high degree of autonomy provided by the nuclear propulsion of Australian submarines will allow the interdiction of Chinese maritime traffic at any point. In this way, it will endow Australia not only with deterrent capacity, but also with some degree of intimidation of China. So, what's new in AUKUS are the new capabilities and the degree of strategic autonomy that is intended to be delegated to Australia.

But, contradictorily, the AUKUS brings with it stabilizing elements. The first is contained in the treaty's name: it limits the anti-China alliance, originally envisioned to encompass all US allies in Asia – even Bangladesh was invited – to three countries, only two of which are genuinely from the Pacific (US and Australia). More than that, the existence of the treaty – which should correspond to some type of organization, whether intergovernmental or supranational – will serve for the US to monitor the movements of the United Kingdom in Asia. Thus, acquiring veto power to initiatives that the US deems more risky or destabilizing – such as the Hong Kong's "Colour Revolution". Furthermore, it keeps France and Germany out of the Pacific. The first, clearly had already profiled itself to join the "NATO of Asia", and now finds itself doubly barred: it lost the deal with Australia, and found itself excluded from the range of military alliances in the Pacific.

There is an additional element, without which nothing can be gauged beyond the immediate appearance: the role of military competition. It lends itself to explaining the paradoxically stabilizing effect of AUKUS. It is about the understanding that the substitute for war (substitute good or succedaneum) is not peace, but military competition. The AUKUS will force China to invest more in Defense, which – due to the "security dilemma"²³ – will horizontally elevate the region's capabilities. Making the deterrence of each of the Units more effective and, thus, the war more costly and reckless. Thus, the net result seems to be closer to strategic stability than to the possibility of conflagration itself – although the latter can never be ruled out.

AUKUS indicates that the US does not intend to wage a Cold War against China on the same terms as that against the USSR. On the contrary, if on the one hand it indicates a clear intention to limit China's movements, on the other hand it signals that this will not be done at any cost. And, most importantly, it presents a credible and sustainable alternative to direct military

23 Herz, John. 1950. "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma". *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (jan. 1950): 157-180. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009187>

confrontation. It uses Australia as a proxy, which has an additional benefit. This time it will be the UK and Australia who will pay for the bill. It will be the Commonwealth countries that will “export” jobs and taxes, which will be used for the reindustrialization of the USA. This is an inversion, from the times of unipolarity and unilateralism, when, to maintain the Qualitative Military Edge (QME)²⁴ and the high-tech demands of the “stealth” fleet in the air and at sea, the US saw itself forced to import high-tech elements from the Commonwealth.

Iran’s entry into SCO – this is an event that, in polarization, has a functionality similar to that of the AUKUS. Apparently, it seems to be an attempt to “interdict” Asia from the US presence. The image grows stronger if compared to the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. In the imagination of some it appears a Moscow-Tehran-Beijing Axis, united and cohesive to act against US interests. The problem with this kind of perception is that the US is more important to each of them individually than the alliance as a whole can offer. In short, this is not an insurmountable front, but arrangements that, ultimately, aim to increase bargaining power with the Americans.

Additionally, by hindering direct military action against the Persian country, it strengthens the US willingness to re-enter the Nuclear Agreement with Iran (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action - JCPOA). This is done by reducing the veto power of Israel, whose bargaining element lies precisely in threatening the US to take direct military action against Iran. At the same time, by inserting Iran into a shared security mechanism, Russia and China acquire some veto power over the foreign and security policy of the ayatollahs. Together, these two elements help the willingness of the new Israeli cabinet, Naftali Bennett, to reduce the pressure against the rapprochement between the US and Iran setting up a rigid framework of alliances, such as that which preceded World War I, in its final outcome paves the way for strategic stability.

Confidence Channel – Finally, the element without which every picture is inconclusive: the channel of confidence between the US and Chinese military. Whatever the personal goals, or internal policy, involving the disclosure of the fact²⁵ the unmistakable truth remains: there is a channel

24 Qualitative Military Edge (QME) – Originally associated with Second Offset Strategy. It is an idea that the US took from the Israeli war experience in the Middle East. About this, see Friedman, Marcela F. 2016. A doutrina da Vantagem Militar Qualitativa (VMQ) e as relações entre Israel e os Estados Unidos. 104 f. TCC (Graduação) - Curso de Relações Internacionais, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul. <https://lume.ufrgs.br/handle/10183/166152>. Access on Nov 09. 2021.

25 Motivations to Publicize the Confidence Channel – There are those who say that Gen. Mark Milley only wanted to preserve his position after the setbacks surrounding the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. Others assert that it is Biden’s move to weaken Trump with the military and make him ineligible – with the accusation that he intended to unleash a nuclear war. In

of confidence between Chinese and American seniors to prevent an accidental confrontation or to regulate the escalation, should it break out²⁶. Given that these are military-to-military contacts, there seem to be more confidence-building measures between China and the US these days than what was seen between the USSR and the US during the Cold War.

How does this relate to the preceding themes? First, they emphasize that the US is more important to China than Russia and Iran. On the other hand, China is also more important to the US than Germany, France or England. After all, if General Mark Milley was willing to warn the Chinese if President Trump were willing to carry out a nuclear strike, it is even more reasonable to assume that the US will warn China of any reckless action by England or from Australia.

Thus, it is clear that the Americans do not seem willing to undertake any kind of adventure involving the “containment” of China. In fact, since the announcement of the pivot for Asia in 2011 there was no benchmark to gauge the extent to which the US willingness to carry out such a policy was going. For the first time, there is an indicator that, despite the resounding rhetoric and the often irresponsible denunciations, there is no willingness to go as far as possible. Thus, although the central war is still within the threshold of the horizon, the transition to strategic stability seems to be more likely.

What is left for Brazil? The perception that the “existence of western civilization” is not at stake. And that, therefore, opens a period of intense competition between the Great Powers, in which Brazil can exercise diplomatic and pragmatic bargains²⁷ in order to achieve its own national policy objectives – fundamentally, reindustrialization.

Will Negotiations in the Korean Peninsula Lose Momentum?

Luana Margarete Geiger²⁸

After recent speculations about his health status, Kim Jong-Un once again draw attention of the international community in 2021, marking his 10th

systemic terms, the motivation does not matter, it is necessary to analyze the consequences.

26 Chappel, Bill. 2021. “Gen. Milley Defends His Call To A Chinese General About Trump’s Rhetoric And The U.S.” *NPR.org*. 15 setembro, 2021. <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/15/1037454733/milley-defends-call-to-chinese-general-about-trump>. Access on Nov 09. 2021.

27 Visentini, Paulo G. F. 1995. *Relações Internacionais e Desenvolvimento*. Petrópolis: Vozes. pp. 33; 63.

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year in power with the resumption of military weapons tests, participating in celebrations and parades in Pyongyang and reaffirming a dynamic, active and healthier-looking personal image. The September 9th parade, held around midnight, marked the 73rd anniversary of the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and featured paratroopers, aircraft overflights, as well as medium-sized weapons and soldiers wearing hazmat suits and gas masks – probably to demonstrate the announced success in the fight against the covid-19 pandemic, since the country has not reported any cases of infection to the World Health Organization (WHO) yet. Also in September, both Koreas conducted ballistic missile tests, in addition to North Korean cruise missiles and a hypersonic missile tests.

North Korea maintains the gradual development of its weapons system amid the stalled negotiations with the United States regarding stabilization in the peninsula. The rounds of dialogue, initiated by former president Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un in 2018, made no progress since 2019 (Shin; Smith 2021)²⁹. Negotiations around, mainly, the North Korean nuclear program, happen recurrently, but hardly advance in a significant way. Among the reasons for this is the centrality of the nuclear program for the North Korean regime – reason why the country has not seriously considered the concessions so far offered in exchange for its dismantling –, in addition to the low practical effectiveness of international sanctions in this case.

South Korean President Moon Jae-In, who has committed his administration to the pursue of reconciliation between the Koreas since he came to power in 2017, once again signaled his willingness to encourage and facilitate the execution of cooperation projects with the North. South Korea has an important role in the negotiation processes involving the North, as well as great interest in the stability of the peninsula. Seoul is responsible, on many occasions, for pushing for dialogue between Washington and Pyongyang. During his tenure, Moon held three inter-Korean summits and helped organize the historic first summit between North Korea and the United States in 2018. After the second Trump-Kim summit, however, negotiations stalled, obtaining – again – minimal results.

During his speech at the UN General Assembly in September, Moon proposed the adoption of a declaration to formally end the Korean War (1950-1953) (The Korea Herald 2021)³⁰ which, to this day, has only obtained an armistice, without the signing of a Peace Treaty. The change in tone is related

29 Shin, Hyonhee; Smith, Josh. 2021. "North and South Korea conduct missile tests as arms race heats up. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/nkorea-fired-unidentified-projectile-yonhap-citing-skorea-military-2021-09-15/>.

30 The Korea Herald. 2021. "Moon calls for co-prosperity with N. Korea after restoration of cross-border hotlines". <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20211005000782>.

to the political calendar in Seoul, which elects a new president in March 2022, exhausting Moon's possibility of leaving a legacy of more consistent inter-Korean engagement. Having invested important efforts of its administration on the normalization of the peninsula, there is hurry in the sense of managing to implement some kind of approximation before the end of his term. Thus, it is speculated that the Winter Olympics to be held in February 2022 in Beijing could be the background for a last attempt at engagement (Herskovitz 2021)³¹.

North Korea sees the upcoming elections as a chance to gain concessions from the South, as well as help in terms of putting pressure on the United States to offer concrete incentives to the country (Kelly 2021)³². The recent tests of military devices, in addition to being an essential part of the development of defense capabilities, are also part of a strategy historically used by Pyongyang to remain relevant on the international agenda and draw attention to the need to resume negotiations, increasing its bargain power.

Originating in the decades following the Korean War, North Korea's nuclear and missile development projects maintains its gradual advance and are a central part of the country's survival strategy. Considering that the dialogue restarted in 2018, after a period of significant development of North Korean nuclear and missile programs – especially in 2016 and 2017 –, it can be presumed that tensions will continue to increase until another gap for dialogue is opened. The tests also represent a response to military exercises carried out jointly by the United States and South Korea, which are seen as acts of hostility in Pyongyang (Pereira; Geiger 2017)³³.

Based on Byungjin policy since 2013, the country pursues the parallel development of the economy and its nuclear program. Due to the pandemic, the suspension of a considerable part of the exchange with China, carried out across the land border between the cities of Dadong (China) and Sinuiju (North Korea) – added to international sanctions and climate problems – the economic advances projected for the period between 2016 and 2021 have not been reached, as stated by Kim Jong-Un at the 8th Party Congress in January 2021. In the same speech, Kim Jong-Un reiterated the need to reinforce self-sufficiency, a concept expressed in the policy that governs the country since

31 Herskovitz, Jon. 2021. "North Korea trades scorn for flattery to win benefits from Moon". *The Japan Times*. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2021/10/05/asia-pacific/north-korea-moon-approach/>.

32 Kelly, Robert E. 2021. "One More Korean Summit Before Moon Jae-In's Term Ends?". *National Interest*. <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/korea-watch/one-more-korean-summit-moon-jae-%E2%80%99s-term-ends-194902>.

33 Pereira, Analúcia D.; Geiger, Luana M. 2017. A Coreia do Norte e o Dilema Securitário do Leste Asiático. *Boletim de Conjuntura NERINT*. p. 9-18. https://www.academia.edu/43409594/A-Coreia_do_Norte_e_o-Dilema_Securit%C3%A1rio_do_Leste_Asi%C3%A1tico.

its founding in 1948, Juche. Since coming to power in 2011, the population's standard of living has been raised with the proliferation of markets and the availability of consumer goods (Smith 2021)³⁴, investment has also been made in modern and futuristic works, such as the planned city of Samjiyon, in the North of the country (BBC 2019)³⁵. The poor economic performance comes after a phase of growth in North Korean GDP, which grew by 3.9% in 2016, despite sanctions (Kim; Chung 2017)³⁶.

Sanctions imposed by the United Nations (UN) have not compromised the country's survival because its economy is not globalized (Visentini; Pereira; Melchiona 2015)³⁷, in addition to not impeding the development of its nuclear program – noting that important advances have been made during periods of famine and extreme economic hardship (Lankov 2016)³⁸. Considering the low practical effectiveness of sanctions in curbing nuclear and missile advances, Pyongyang's bargain in the face of negotiations with Washington is growing.

The images transmitted abroad by the North Korean regime are usually calculated and loaded with symbolic value. After departing from public activities for some periods of time in 2020 and 2021, Kim Jong-Un returns to attending large events looking thinner and wearing light-toned, Western-style suits – with different cuts than the Maoist-inspired tunics. In addition to the idea of a mature, energetic and charismatic leader who resembles his grandfather Kim Il-Sung, the clothing choice seeks to emphasize the image of a leader willing to negotiate, as well as a modern and connected North Korea, in opposition to the notion of a “hermit” often associated with the country in the West.

Despite the increased intensity in military testing, Pyongyang is still complying with its moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile testing established in 2018 - thus keeping the diplomatic track officially open. The absence of a clear and detailed policy towards North Korea from the Biden administration, however, worries both Koreas. The North Koreans are left with following the handbook on hot and cold politics as a way of pressing for

34 Smith, Josh. 2021. “Kim Jong Un's big plan to grow North Korea's economy faces harsh reality”. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-politics-analysis-idUSKBN29Fo4T>.

35 BBC. 2019. “North Korea unveils town hailed as ‘epitome of civilization’”. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-50640033>.

36 Kim, Christine; Chung, Jane. 2017. “North Korea 2016 economic growth at 17-year high despite sanctions: South Korea”. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-economy-gdp-idUSKBN1A607Z>.

37 Visentini, Paulo F.; Pereira, Analúcia D.; Melchionna, Helena H. 2015. *A Revolução Coreana: o desconhecido socialismo Zuche*. São Paulo: Editora Unesp.

38 Lankov, Andrei. 2016. “North Korea has Nothing to Lose”. *Aljazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2016/3/8/now-north-korea-has-nothing-to-lose>.

a definition to the Washington-Pyongyang relationship agenda – especially in the face of increased competition with Beijing – in order to overcome the vague official posture of “open to dialogue” from the White House and obtain concrete offers that will last beyond Moon’s term in South Korea. It is important to note that, in case of a conservative and anti-China victory in South Korea, Biden will no longer feel forced to accommodate Moon’s engagement policies as a way to secure South Korean support for US initiatives in the Indo-Pacific (Khang 2021)³⁹, diminishing negotiation prospects.

Kim Jong-Un’s media appearances and Moon Jae-In’s diplomatic nods indicate both Koreas’ intention to not risk losing momentum and to draw attention to the importance of returning to the negotiating table, especially considering the transitions of power to presidents who are less willing to prioritize engagement with Pyongyang in the United States and, possibly, in South Korea. The rush on Pyongyang’s part is also tied to the need of obtaining immediate concessions, as the country faces climate and energy problems, while a winter of upcoming food shortages approaches. Once again, the effective advancement of new attempts at dialogue depends on concessions that go beyond diplomatic rhetoric or vague expectations of a unilateral denuclearization of North Korea.

Uzbekistan and Its Thirty Years Later: Ruptures or Continuities?⁴⁰

Guilherme Geremias da Conceição⁴¹

Located in the heart of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is the only Central Asian state that shares borders with all other countries in the region, namely Kazakhstan (north), Kyrgyzstan (east), Tajikistan (southeast), Turkmenistan (southwest) and Afghanistan (south). Despite having a small territory, the country has the largest population in Central Asia (with Uzbek ethnic groups also present in the neighboring territories) and, since its independence, it has developed the most professional military force of the region. Even not directly

39 Khang, Vu. 2021. “With Biden’s lukewarm diplomacy, North Korea runs hot and cold”. *Lowy Institute*. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/biden-s-lukewarm-diplomacy-north-korea-runs-hot-and-cold>.

40 The author is grateful for Professor Paulo Fagundes Visentini guidance and João Pedro Mascarello Funck qualified revision and translation of this fragment.

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accessing the seas, we can consider that the “isolationist” character generally attributed to Uzbekistan is actually misleading, as this country is responsible for bringing together all the historical, cultural and political centers of Central Asia. Aside from Tashkent, ancient Silk Road itineraries like Bukhara and Samarkand in the south, Khiva in the West and Khoqand in the East were once capitals of great empires of the past. These characteristics, added to the important regional role of host of Islamic doctrine, of heir to the Central Asian sedentary trajectory and the status of “bridge” between West and East, made Uzbekistan perceive itself as a regional power strongly committed to its national sovereignty.

There are a total of five political parties officially accepted in the country. They are the People’s Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (O’zXDP)⁴², the Justice Social Democratic Party/Adolat (ASDP)⁴³, Uzbekistan Liberal Democratic Party (O’zLiDeP)⁴⁴, Uzbekistan National Revival Democratic Party/Milliy

42 The O’zXDP was one of the first contemporary political organizations in the country, being founded by the former General Secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan and former President, Islam Karimov, after independence in 1991. On the national political spectrum it can be said that the party occupies the left position, in addition to being the second largest party in terms of number of seats in Parliament (Oliy Majlis) and an opposition to the governing bloc in the Legislative Chamber. The O’zXDP defends the consolidation of the State as a robust authority, which guarantees the protection of the most vulnerable strata of society and the development of a regulated and socially oriented market economy.

43 The Justice Social Democratic Party Adolat, which defines itself as a center-left movement, acts in the Oliy Majlis similarly to the O’zXDP as an organized opposition. The party, also founded in the context of independence, defends the creation of a welfare state for all, the consolidation of the principles of freedom and equality and the strengthening of judicial transparency in the country.

44 O’zLiDeP, also created by Karimov after his departure from the O’zXDP, has been the ruling party since 2007, and can be considered a center-right political organization. The priorities of the party, which represents the largest caucus on the Oliy Majlis, include the diversification of the economy, the simplification of procedures and the reduction of prices in the registration of business entities and in customs clearance.

Tiklanish (O'zMTDP)⁴⁵ and the Ecological Party of Uzbekistan (O'zEP)^{46 47}. In the 2021 general elections, held at the end of October, the current president, Shavkat Mirziyoyev (O'zLiDeP), secured re-election with 80.31% of the registered votes. The candidates competing against the representative were Maksuda Vorisova (O'zXDP, 6.65%), Alisher Kadyrov (O'zMTDP, 5.49%), Narzullo Oblomuradov (O'zEP, 4.15%) and Bakhrom Abdukhalimov (ASDP, 3.40%). It is estimated that around 20 million voters participated in what was the sixth presidential election held since the country's independence from the USSR⁴⁸, in August 1991⁴⁹.

Even though allegations of fraud have never gone beyond the aspect of political rhetoric, Uzbekistan's electoral processes are constantly viewed with some suspicion by Western media and organizations⁵⁰. Although for some

45 The O'zMTDP is classified as a right-wing conservative movement. The party, founded in 1995 and whose number of seats in the Legislative Chamber is the second highest, pays special attention to the issue of the Uzbek nationalist renaissance and the strengthening of national identity. In the sociopolitical sphere, it is intended for the preservation and development of the State and public life historically shaped according to the country's moral and family traditions. The Milliy Tiklanish Democratic Party and O'zLiDeP form the Democratic Forces Bloc in the Uzbek parliament.

46 The young Ecologist Party, formed in 2008, but operating in the country since 2019, distinguishes itself from the rest by emphasizing mainly environmental issues and the wider use of renewable energy sources in production. The party recently obtained new seats in the Legislative Chamber.

47 The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the United Nations. 2016. "What ideas do political parties advance?" Available at: <https://www.un.int/uzbekistan/fr/news/what-ideas-do-political-parties-advance>. Access in Nov 11, 2021.

48 Aljazeera. 2021. "Uzbek president secures second term in landslide election victory". Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/25/uzbek-president-secures-second-term-in-landslide-election-victory>. Access in Oct 25, 2021.

49 The first Uzbek presidential elections took place in 1991, when Muhammad Solih, the leader of the Democratic Party/Erk (EDP), lost the race to former Soviet leader Karimov, then president of the O'zXDP, by 12.7% to 87.1% of the votes respectively. The second presidential race, in 2000, also had only two candidates, Karimov (independent) and Abdulkhafiz Jalolov (O'zXDP), with Karimov winning reelection with a percentage of 95.7%. Karimov (O'zLiDeP), who had constitutionally extended his term, won again in 2007, this time against opponent Asliddin Rustamov (O'zXDP), with 90.7% of the votes, and, in 2015, he won in the fourth election against presidential candidate Akmal Saidov (O'zMTDP), with a similar percentage. After being victimized by a cerebrovascular accident (CVA) in 2016, Karimov was succeeded by the country's former Prime Minister Mirziyoyev (O'zLiDeP), later elected to the post with a 90% approval rating in that year's emergency elections.

50 After the 2007 presidential elections, a law established restrictions on party registration, which ended up making not viable the recent presidential candidacies of Jahongir Otajonov (EDP), Khidirnazar Allakulov (Truth and Progress Social Democratic Party/Hakikat va Tarakkiyot - HTSDP) and Mahmud Yuldashev unfeasible (Halq Manfaatlari Party), leaders of independent organizations not recognized by the Electoral Court. On the other hand, the

analysts there is no significant ideological difference between the country's parties to the point of making them "effective oppositions"⁵¹, we must take into account the national political particularities. The fact that Oz'XDP, for example, continued to support some initiatives of former President Islam Karimov (after his departure from the organization), mainly those related to the recrudescence of the State in the social life of the country, does not automatically place it in a position of ally. On the contrary, it reaffirms the impact that temporary political alignments have on the decision-making process. Furthermore, in general, all parties consider Uzbekistan's economic independence to be a priority on their agendas, as well as the technical renewal of production, the development of tourism as a tool for promoting local culture and history, and support to the principles of peaceful cooperation in the external sphere. In this sense, instead of "puppets" used by the Karimov administration to simulate a "multi-party system", it is understood that the common characteristics between these institutions were perceived and gathered in a pragmatic way by the former President and his direct successor, Mirziyoyev.

It is also important to emphasize that the preamble to the Constitution of Uzbekistan affirms its commitment to the ideals of democracy and social justice. Article 7 of the Constitution of the Republic states: "The people are the only source of state power" meanwhile, articles 32 and 117 guarantee the right to vote, equality and freedom of expression⁵². It was with the aim of strengthening these prerogatives that, during the 2019 legislative elections, held under the motto "New Uzbekistan - New elections", the Uzbek State adopted a new Electoral Code, which regulated the procedures related to the preparation and conduct of national elections from the Electoral Management Information System (EMIS) and the Unified Electronic List of Voters (EECI), which ensured the viability of the unified voter title and the "one voter - one vote" principle. In 2021, continuing the process of political liberalization, Uzbek citizens living abroad were included in the voters' list, regardless of being registered in the consulates of diplomatic missions. In order to guarantee the fairness of funds allocated to the campaign, in accordance with the Law on Financing of Political Parties, an audit was carried out by the

regulation of these restrictions prevented the political validation of radical groups operating in the country and guaranteed the secularity of the Uzbek State, which, in its Constitution, prohibits the formation of religiously based parties.

51 OSCE. 2021. "Despite recent reforms Uzbekistan's presidential election lacked genuine competition, international observers say". Available at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/uzbekistan/502206>. Access in Oct 31. 2021.

52 Uzbekistan. 1992. *Uzbekistan Constitution*. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20081205075249/http://www.eicee.org/pix/pdf/uzbekistan.pdf>. Access in Nov 11. 2021.

Accounting Chamber on the activities of the parties involved in the process⁵³.

According to the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), around 1,000 journalists and international observers were present at the October election. As expected, the position papers of the European Parliament - ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, which for the first time established a joint mission to observe the progress of elections in the country, converged with the US statement, identifying violations in the electoral process. However, these statements went against those issued by Sergei Lebedev, head of the monitoring mission of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), who not only did not identify violations in the conduct of the elections, but also praised the Uzbek authorities for the good organization of the election. President of China, Xi Jinping, President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, were among the first world leaders to congratulate Mirziyoyev on his victory. Other names such as Narendra Modi (India), Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (Kazakhstan), Sadyr Japarov (Kyrgyzstan), Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow (Turkmenistan) and Imran Khan (Pakistan) also joined the chorus of greetings to the Uzbek ruler⁵⁴.

The result of this year's presidential elections, therefore, represents the overwhelming popularity of the changes brought about by the Mirziyoyev administration, which, at least from an economic point of view, symbolize a real break with the past of the country, whose average per capita income was once lower to 75 rubles per month. Published in 2017, the 2017-2021 Development Strategy had the objective to "modernize and liberalize all spheres of life". Some of the steps proposed by the Development Strategy included lifting exchange controls, reducing tariffs and liberalizing the visa regime. Through the interaction of fiscal and monetary policies, it was observed that there has also been a dynamic growth of the economy in recent years, which, despite the slowdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic, is recovering its breath. In the first years of independence, the export capacity of the entire industry was only US\$ 7 million, while today the volume of supplies of textile products for the foreign market exceeds US\$ 1 billion. GDP in the first three months of 2021 increased by 3% and the World Bank forecasts that economic growth in

53 Europoter.co. 2021. "Electoral process transformation in Uzbekistan: Achievements and challenges during 30 years of independence". Available at: <https://www.eureporter.co/world/uzbekistan/2021/09/13/electoral-process-transformation-in-uzbekistan-achievements-and-challenges-during-30-years-of-independence/>. Access in Oct 1st. 2021.

54 Belta. 2021. "CIS observers describe Uzbekistan presidential election as competitive, free, open and transparent". Available at: <https://eng.belta.by/politics/view/cis-observers-describe-uzbekistan-presidential-election-as-competitive-free-open-and-transparent-144405-2021/>. Access in Oct 26. 2021.

Uzbekistan in 2021 and 2022 will reach 4.8% and 5.5%, respectively⁵⁵.

It should also be emphasized that, over its thirty years of independence, its self-perception as a regional power and its commitment to its national identity on the external level, strengthened even in the Soviet period and continued by Karimov, guaranteed to the country an autonomous international behavior, in contrast with neighboring states that tended to automatically align with great powers. In terms of foreign policy, Tashkent sought to develop cordial relations with Russia, while it also bet on parallel partnerships, seeking to balance its influence in the region, such as Turkey, India, South Korea, Japan and China. In its strategic environment, the performance of Uzbekistan, conditioned by the notion of vulnerability to external threats⁵⁶, prioritized good bilateral relations with Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, of which the trilateral Kazakh-Turkman-Uzbek agreement in the energy sector stands out, and kept under observation the intention of neighboring Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to build new dams on the rivers on which Uzbekistan depends⁵⁷. Also in the regional context, the situation in Afghanistan, seen as a major threat to its security, led to the support of US military operations there⁵⁸, but, more than that, it stimulated the country to formulate multilateral alternatives to find a solution to the crisis, proposing a 6 + 3 resolution that would involve consultations among all of Afghanistan's neighbors as well as the United States, Russia and NATO. Recently, the country's regional role was reinforced through its performance, previously kept in the background, in the scope of international

55 Word Bank. 2021. "The World Bank in Uzbekistan-Overview". Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/uzbekistan/overview#context>. Access in Nov 12. 2021.

56 The Fergana Valley, situated between eastern Uzbekistan, southern Kyrgyzstan and northern Tajikistan, considered the cradle of Islam in Central Asia, was on high alert as the Tajik Civil War and Taliban control of Afghanistan enabled Islamic radicalism to find a friendly environment for its spread. The Karimov Administration, in this sense, was trapped between a more active model of international insertion and one focused on its domestic security.

57 The so-called "Water War" is one of the most controversial in the region, as Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan depend on the river resources of the Amu and Syr Darya rivers for the irrigation of plantations (both with their sources in neighboring states). Caution towards Tajikistan was even greater especially in the late 1990s, when former President Karimov blamed Islamic extremists based in Tajik territory for explosions at the Uzbek government headquarters in 1999.

58 Although Uzbekistan has supported, albeit pragmatically, American involvement in the Afghanistan issue, the country pursued a policy that maximized its sovereignty through its bargaining power. However, Western criticism of Uzbekistan's internal policies and enthusiasm for regime change in both the Middle East and post-Soviet countries have led to "sour" relations with the West. In 2005, after US government criticism of the conduct of Uzbek domestic policies, Karimov expelled the US military from the Karshi-Khanabad (K2) Air Base, used as a logistical point for operations in the neighboring country.

organizations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), security and economic institutions, respectively, which increasingly reaffirm its global relevance⁵⁹.

We can thus consider that Uzbekistan's stance has been the critical factor in determining Central Asian geopolitics since the independence of the country⁶⁰. Tashkent, under the Karimov and Mirziyoyev governments, resolutely maintained the primacy of its sovereignty and ensured that Central Asia remained an open geopolitical space, preventing the constant influence of foreign powers over the region, just as the country's rigid stance was crucial to denying Islamic radicalism fertile ground in which to flourish. Tashkent assumed the leadership in the formulation of policies that, while they drew criticism for their restrictive nature, helped maintain secular governance and enabled them to address regional security challenges. Thus, the 2021 elections can be understood as a positive signal for the conciliatory global insertion model adopted by Mirziyoyev and for the maintenance and continuity of a national project that started already in the Soviet period. The nod to "reforms", especially in the field of economy and "political transparency", more than just making the country an "attractive" trading partner for the European Union and the United States in light of the growing Sino-Russian presence there, emphasizes the leading role that Uzbekistan's political evolution has for the future of Central Asia.

The End of the Merkel Era and the Future of Germany

Guilherme Thudium⁶¹

Germany's 2021 federal election, held in the last week of September 2021, marked the end of the Merkel Era and the reign of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU). After 16 years in the position of head of government, Merkel became the first chancellor in German political history to not seek re-election. The Social Democratic Party (SPD) emerged as the largest party for

59 Starr, S. Frederick and Cornell, Svante E. 2018. "Uzbekistan's New Face". *American Foreign Policy Council*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.

60 Especially if we consider that, despite its size in territorial extension and the remarkable economic achievements since independence, Kazakhstan, having a relatively small population and a long border with Russia, has a limited capacity to independently define an agenda for the region.

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the first time since 2002, although it did not receive enough votes to form a new government autonomously – which is common in the German electoral system.

Thus began the complex negotiation process for the formation of a governing coalition. In the last federal election, held in 2017, this process lasted about four months. It is in this scenario that smaller but well performing parties, such as The Greens and the Liberal Democratic Party (FDP), acquire relevance. Merkel's party, however, led by Armin Laschet, had its worst performance in the historic series of the CDU/CSU alliance⁶², despite the chancellor's high approval ratings. On December 8, Olaf Scholz was sworn in as the new chancellor in a three-party coalition with the Greens and the Liberals.

Merkel did not elect a successor, but that does not diminish her personal and political legacy. In a polarized and unpredictable international system, Angela Merkel has become synonymous with stability and pragmatism. The Merkel Era is paradigmatic for several reasons, but it is noteworthy that, in addition to becoming the first woman to hold the position of chancellor of Germany, she was also the first East German-raised politician to become head of government after reunification in 1990.

Although she was born in Hamburg, her family moved to the East when she was less than one year old, in 1954. With stints at the University of Leipzig and the GDR Academy of Sciences, both her academic background and the first stages of her political career trace back to the former German Democratic Republic. For this very reason, her rise was determinant in easing inter-German stereotypes, helping to balance asymmetries and inequalities between East and West that have persisted since the fall of the Berlin Wall⁶³. Her political trajectory, for that, had to be conducted with flexibility, a predicate that also marked her foreign policy.

The long Merkel government, especially the second (2009-2013) and third (2013-2017) of her four terms as chancellor, were marked by a multitude of crises in the European Union (EU): in 2009 there was the Euro crisis, in 2015 the European migration crisis, and in 2016 the United Kingdom European Union membership referendum. If the Eurozone crisis also revealed a serious social problem in Europe, and not just of the public debt, the migration crisis had, on the other hand, significant political contours beyond the humanitarian issue, with the rise of populist movements and Eurosceptic forces across the continent.

The crises put additional pressures on the already fragile integration process, making Merkel's Germany its main articulator. The country's

62 According to German Federal Electoral Law, Angela Merkel's party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), competes in all German states except for Bavaria, where its affiliate party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), operates.

63 Ther, Philipp. 2016. *Europe since 1989: a history*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

undisputed economic superiority had to be matched with equivalent political responsibilities, reaffirming its centrality on the European geopolitical chessboard. Apparently hesitant to play a role of greater international responsibility, it is frequently argued that Merkel was forced, more by circumstances than power politics, to take a position of continental leadership – and thus forming an ‘accidental empire’ which overlaps European integration itself⁶⁴.

German leadership within the EU, however, is not merely accidental: it is the result of an evolving process of state capacity and economic expansion since reunification. It is also inserted in the broader context of reconfiguration of the modern world-system: the European crises, while effects of a structural crisis of the world-system, also boosted German tutelage over slow performing countries. Thus, Berlin became the main actor dealing with the recent problems experienced by the EU.

In this sense, it is important to remember that Germany was little affected by the Euro crisis – its economy, on the contrary, was strengthened during the period, largely due to the diversification of its foreign relations with emerging economies distant from the Anglo-American financial matrix that conceived the global financial crisis in 2008. It was in the context of this crisis that Germany became the biggest creditor among the member countries of the Eurozone, a stand that granted Merkel’s administration decision-making capacity over the monetary future of other sovereign but debtor nations.

The political response to the migration phenomenon, in turn, was observed in the rise of far-right parties across Europe, such as the Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland – AfD*), which stood out in the 2016 (state) and 2017 (federal) elections, but dropped from third to fifth largest political force in the country after the 2021 federal election. While heavily criticized, it is argued that Merkel’s open-door policy was the only proactive approach proposed from within the EU towards the crisis, in a context of deficit of regional leaderships and consensus⁶⁵.

If the Euro crisis and the migration crisis elevated the German regional stance, Brexit helped strengthen it. Paradoxically, while it meant an institutional setback to the integration efforts that Berlin seeks to safeguard above all else, the UK’s departure highlighted the importance of an even greater cohesion among the remaining members which, ultimately, enhanced German leadership. In the context of the pandemic – Angela Merkel’s final challenge as ‘crisis manager’ –, the European bloc, headed by Germany, led the diplomatic concert in the scope of the World Health Organization (WHO),

64 “Ulrich Beck: ‘Germany Has Created an Accidental Empire.’” *EUROPP*, April 11, 2013. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/euoppblog/2013/03/25/five-minutes-with-ulrich-beck-germany-has-created-an-accidental-empire/>.

65 Greenstein, Claire, and Brandon Tensley. “The Strongwoman of Europe: Germany’s Principled Leadership.” *Foreign Affairs*, September 24, 2021. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2016-04-06/strongwoman-europe>.

seeking to establish itself as a stabilizing actor in the international system.

Germany's role in international politics has undergone considerable transformation over the past two decades, as former foreign minister and later president Frank-Walter Steinmeier has argued – and it must, therefore, keep pace with the evolution of its regional and global position.⁶⁶ If there is a criticism to be made of the Merkel administration, it would be precisely the fact that it did not take advantage of the acquired political ascendancy to formulate a more assertive and long-term grand strategy, beyond the civil-normative rhetoric⁶⁷.

In a context of multiplication of crises, weary transatlantic relations and the rise of the Indo-Pacific, German diplomacy needs to be equipped with a long-term vision in order to articulate their interests and face the challenges that surround the European integration project – what the German public debate has been calling *Zukunftsfähigkeit*, or the ability to face the future.

Nordic Elections and Social Democracy

Cristina Soreanu Pecequilo⁶⁸

In the last few months, social democrats regain of power in a set of Nordic countries (defined in a comprehensive manner as Scandinavia-Sweden, Norway and Denmark- plus Finland, Iceland and Greenland) is being presented as a victory of social progressive forces, which would signal a profile change of the European electorate as a dismissal of extreme right-wing views. However, the alternance of different power projects and the reframing of party coalitions are a phenomenon that could be associated to any political dynamics.

In this sense, they should not be seen as almost unprecedented moves that overnight will transform the fate of any other nation. These logics, which needed to be seen as “part of the game” are less and less understood, and evaluations regarding electoral results tend to be faced as “all or nothing”. The recent Nordic experience cannot be seen neither as a consolidation of the

66 Steinmeier, Frank-Walter. “Germany’s New Global Role: Berlin Steps Up.” *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 4 (2016): 106–13. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43946937>.

67 Kurbjuweit, Dirk. “A First Look at Angela Merkel’s Legacy: The Era of Missed Opportunities.” *DER SPIEGEL*, September 6, 2021. <https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/a-first-look-at-angela-merkel-s-legacy-the-era-of-missed-opportunities-a-3cdef2e3-e451-4e6b-91b5-c89f97acb9df>.

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far-right in the past or as rebirth of social-democracy. It is an expression of the contemporary volatility, generated by the shock of distinct positions, and that none of them is strong enough to become or to maintain itself as a majority.

As an example, we can remember that even though these nations were never left out in international indexes as the “happiest countries in the world”, or “the best places to live”, and are portrayed as a model of a more sustainable and empathic way of living, as symbolized in the Danish “hygge” concept, they gained relevance for less positive facts: the increase in suicide and alcoholism numbers, attacks against minorities, the spread of xenophobic, misogynist, fundamentalist, and fascist agendas.

In the last two decades, in the real world, these contradictions are electorally expressed precisely in the rise of additional right wing and conservatives groups to power, putting aside social democrat forces. Previously envisioned as one of the last pillars of resistance against the neoliberal project of State in Europe and the World, Nordic nations and their social protection and inclusion mechanisms seemed to collapse whereas facing the conservative wave.

Nevertheless, these new projects were less focused in the general dismantling of the welfare State and more on some key issues linked to identity, nationality, the European Union (EU) and as a reaction to the demands of opening frontiers and including immigrants. The COVID-19 pandemic management, vaccination, the anti-vax movements were added to this agenda. Moreover, some of these countries such as Norway, even though not a member of the EU, gained geopolitical relevance due to their role in the gas and oil energy markets. On the eve of winter, the European continent and the recently departed from the bloc, the United Kingdom, are facing a major energy crisis due to the shortage of resources and their inflated prices. Any abrupt changes tend to generate more fears of unbalance that could lead to new trends of instability. So, it is natural to welcome this fresh political scenario with a certain relief.

The recent path indicates that the instrumentalization of all these themes by the extreme right, added to the fragmentation of the center-left and a part of social democrat forces revolving around the environmental and identity agendas helped an electorate from the center to move towards the right. This is the product of a perfect storm that combined the 9/11 terrorist attacks to the US, the 2008 economic recession in major advanced nations and the refugee crises caused by the Arab Spring from 2011 onwards, which led to a substantial increase of Islamic migration. Episodes such as BREXIT, Donald Trump’s election in the US, the conservative rise in Hungary and Poland, the continuity of the extreme nationalist right influence in France and Germany, portrayed an image of strength for this movement. France, by the

way, will face an election in 2022, which looks uncertain.

But the social democrats coming into power is an exception or a trend? The Nordic experience is not an exception as it reflects the electorate answer to the inefficiency of present coalitions in dealing with the government day-to-day challenges. The right wing wins based on populist promises and the externalization of problems to any group or State, be it the immigrants, China, the EU, and the COVID-19 pandemic are quickly deconstructed as the nature of the crisis is structural and multidimensional: political-strategic, social, and economic. Would it be, then, a trend and a reason for optimism as the German election also validated a moderate agenda with social democratic roots?

Not necessarily, the noisy presence of the extreme right, the difficulties in unifying the fragmented progressive center and extreme left coalition, remains. After all, as the Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen (2019-current) said in a 2017 interview to the Financial Times⁶⁹, “I believe that most important in being a Social Democrat Party is, truthfully, to be relevant. Are we capable to find solutions for the problems that people are facing?”.

Current electoral results that demand comprehensive coalition negotiations to form governments indicate that Frederiksen question has not been properly answered. Therefore, one does not understand that, deeply, the core question that defined the electorate vote is less romantic and more pragmatic: which political party or candidate is fighting for a project that complies with my interests?

69 Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/f73883a6-621e-11e7-91a7-502f7ee26895>. Access on Dec 10, 2021.

PARTNERS

NERINT

The Brazilian Centre for Strategy & International Relations (NERINT) was the first Centre in Southern Brazil to focus its study and research exclusively on the field of International Relations. It was established in 1999 at the Latin American Advanced Studies Institute (ILEA) of the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and is currently part of the university's Centre for International Studies on Government (CEGOV). Its objective has always been the critical and innovative study of the international system's transformations after the end of the Cold War, from the perspective of the developing world. In parallel, NERINT has also sought to contribute to the debate on a national project for Brazil through the understanding of the available strategic options for the autonomous international insertion of the country.

The exploratory studies developed by NERINT on the new emerging countries since the threshold of the 21st century experienced remarkable expansion. Cooperation with state, business, academic and social institutions was intensified, as well as the direct contact with centres in Latin America, Africa and Asia, in addition to the existing ones in Europe and North America. An outcome of the Centre's activity was the creation of an undergraduate course in International Relations (2004) and a Doctoral Program in International Strategic Studies (PPGEEI, 2010). Two journals were also created: the bilingual and biannual *Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations* and the bimonthly journal *Conjuntura Austral*. In addition, since 2016, NERINT offers a bilingual Research Bulletin, published by graduate and undergraduate students and researchers of the Centre. NERINT is also partnered with UFRGS's Doctoral Program in Political Science (PPGPOL), established in 1973. Thus, besides the advanced research and intense editorial activities, NERINT is also the birthplace of innovative undergraduate and graduate programs.

PPGEEI

The Doctoral Program in International Strategic Studies (PPGEEI) started in 2010, offering Master's and Doctorate degrees, both supported by qualified professors and researchers with international experience. It is the result of several developments on research and education at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS).

Its roots can be traced to the Brazilian Centre for Strategy and International Relations (NERINT), established in 1999, established in 1999 and now affiliated with the Centre for International Studies on Government (CEGOV) at UFRGS.

The research tradition that gave rise to PPGEI was based on a prospective analysis of the trends of the 1990s. The remarkable expansion of Brazilian diplomacy and economics from the beginning of the century confirmed the perspective adopted, which allowed the intense cooperation with the diplomatic and international economic organizations in Brazil. The Program is already a reference in the strategic analysis of the integration of emerging powers in international and South-South relations.

The Program's vision emphasizes strategic, theoretical and applied methods, always relying on rigorous scientific and academic principles to do so. For this reason, it has been approached by students from all over Brazil and several other countries, and it has established partnerships in all continents. Thus, PPGEI is a program focused on understanding the rapid changes within the international system. Alongside NERINT, it publishes two journals: *Conjuntura Austral* (bimonthly) and *Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations* (biannual and bilingual). PPGEI has three research lines:

International Political Economy

It focuses on the international insertion of the Brazilian economy and other major developing countries in South America, Asia and Africa; discusses the characteristics and effects of globalization; and develops comparative and sectoral studies concerned with the effects of the internationalization of companies and productive sectors. Special attention is paid to international financial crises and its effects on Brazil and other countries of the South.

International Politics

It emphasizes the analysis of the process of formation, implementation and evaluation of foreign policy. It seeks to confront patterns of international integration of strategic countries in South America, Africa and Asia, considering institutional patterns, trade policy, structures of intermediation of interest, governance, International Law and the role of actors of civil society in the South-South axis of contemporary International Relations.

International Security

It approaches the defense, strategy and security issues in the international

system from a perspective that takes into account the most powerful states at the global level, but systematically introduces the question of the regional balances of power, the South-South axis, the existence of regional security complexes, military issues and the impact of information technology in the Digital Age.

CEGOV

The Centre for International Studies on Government (CEGOV) located at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) develops studies and research projects on governmental affairs from a comparative perspective. The Centre gathers researchers from several departments of the University, such as Political Science, International Relations, Law, Economics, Administration, Education, Urbanism and Computer Science. It encompasses scholars from the most traditional research groups at UFRGS, such as NERINT and CEBRAFRICA, specialised in a broad range of public policy areas.

CEGOV is chaired by a Director, and its policies and priorities are determined by an Advisory Board and a Scientific Board. The activities of the Centre are undertaken by working groups, which take the responsibility for specific projects. Currently, CEGOV has eight fully established and operating working groups. The Centre's researchers work on multidisciplinary projects covering the fields of international politics and governance, monitoring and evaluation of public policies, institutional development, Brazilian and South-American economy, comparative institutional design and decision-making processes, as well as public management, democratic controls and decentralisation of public services.

The Centre is a place for interaction among scholars from UFRGS and other academic institutions, highlighting its multidisciplinary and open nature, as well as its vocation to collaborative applied research. Being a reference for research on comparative governmental studies, CEGOV offers a wide range of extracurricular activities such as extension and specialisation courses, and advisory activities.

CEBRAFRICA

The Brazilian Centre for African Studies (CEBRAFRICA) has its origins in the Center of Studies Brazil-South Africa (CESUL), a program established in 2005 through an association between the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) and the Alexandre de Gusmão Foundation (FUNAG) of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its research activities are developed

in cooperation with the Brazilian Centre for Strategy and International Relations (NERINT).

In March 2012, CESUL was expanded into CEBRAFRICA. At the same time, the South African series, which published five books, was transformed into the African Series, with new titles. The Centre's main objectives remain the same as before: to conduct research, support the development of memoirs, thesis and undergraduate works, congregate research groups on Africa, organize seminars, promote student and professor exchanges with other institutions, establish research networks and joint projects with African and Africanist institutions, publish national and translated works on the field, and expand the specialized library made available by FUNAG.

The numerous research themes seek to increase knowledge of the African continent and its relations with Brazil on the following topics: International Relations, Organizations and Integration, Security and Defense, Political Systems, History, Geography, Economic Development, Social Structures and their Transformations, and Schools of Thought. CEBRAFRICA counts among its partners renowned institutions from Brazil, Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, Canada, South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Senegal, Cape Verde, Egypt, Nigeria, Morocco, Portugal, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Sweden, Russia, India, and China. Current researches focuses on "Brazilian, Chinese, and Indian Presence in Africa", "Africa in South-South Cooperation", "African Conflicts", "Integration and Development in Africa", "African Relations with Great Powers", and "Inter-African Relations".

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