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**The
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World?**

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The Dilemma of US Leadership

David Erkomaishvili

When Barack Obama came to power in 2009 he was quick to define the focal point of his first presidency — global denuclearisation. It wasn't too long before Obama and his newly elected Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev met in Prague to ink the New START Treaty. Everything seemed to be moving in the right direction.

The tone set by current US President Donald Trump could not be more different. Unlike his predecessor, Trump has prioritised domestic issues over foreign policy. Yet, despite the desire to focus on fixing internal cracks such as illegal migration the Trump administration has confronted a long list of global challenges. April's air strike on the Shayrat military base in Syria was the first unscheduled departure from Trump's vision for US foreign policy. Washington's response to Assad's deployment of chemical weapons also run counter to Obama's infamous 'red lines' policy. From there, US relations with Turkey – both bilaterally and within NATO frameworks – have been strained by Washington's support for Kurdish militias in Syria fighting Islamic State. A very similar pattern is observable in relations with Russia with Trump forced to extend sanctions against Moscow and downplay his ambitions of reaching a deal with Vladimir Putin on improving US-Russian relations.

In July, North Korea tested an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching US territory. Pyongyang followed this in September by detonating its largest nuclear device to date. In doing so, the debate surrounding North Korea's nuclear program has shifted from assessing capabilities to calculating intentions.

What hasn't changed is the logic behind Pyongyang's efforts to develop nuclear weapons and its hawkish stance vis-à-vis its neighbours. Aggressive behaviour is a long-term survival strategy that provides the hermit kingdom with internal legitimisation and a bargaining position when dealing with the international community. An offensive nuclear capability would allow the regime to leverage greater benefits in return for cooperation while also significantly reducing the chances of external intervention.

Only three powers are capable of preventing North Korea from following this path — the US, China and Russia. Of the three, Washington has the highest chance of forcing change, given its regional alliance network and close ties with South Korea. That said, any action against Pyongyang will require the prior approval of the United Nations, with Moscow and Beijing unlikely to side with Trump in the absence of a crisis that effects their strategic interests.

This presents a dilemma for Trump whereby his actions (or inaction) could have direct consequences for the US' global standing. The price of inaction would be a further withering away of US credibility in the eyes of its allies and a sign for other states with nuclear ambitions — all of whom have strained relations with Washington — to press on with weapons programs. On the other hand, military intervention — including support for Seoul if it decides to preemptively dismantle Pyongyang's nuclear program — would push the region into strategic mayhem.

South Korea would undoubtedly approach the military option with fear and trepidation. Not only does Seoul prefer a diplomatic solution, it also lacks the capacity to conduct a full-scale and independent military operation against its neighbour. Moreover, South Korea has faced episodic outbursts of hostile behaviour by the North for more than sixty years. Washington is well aware that any military scenario will mean destabilisation not only for the North but also the South.

It is also widely assumed that the deterrent value of nuclear weapons is far greater than their use against adversaries. Yet, while there are plenty of examples of overthrown dictatorships over the past two decades, there's never been an international effort to topple a nuclear regime. Consequently, the Trump administration might refuse to pursue 'strategic patience' on the Korean Peninsula — the approach of his predecessor rather than his own foreign policy outlook. Choosing to act will fly in the face of his electoral promises to reduce US global leadership and responsibilities.

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From the End of History to the Post-American World

Global Politics, Economy and Security
at the Turn of the Epoch

Miloš Balabán

The author analyses a number of major works by American scholars (Fukuyama, Huntington, Zakaria, Nye, Haass, Mearsheimer, Brzezinski, Jentleson, Wright, Ikenberry, Jones) that examine the global power shifts, especially with regard to the changing position and role of the US as the leading Western power. The United States is coming to terms with the end of the unipolar moment and adapting to new political, economic and security realities ushered in by the rise of non-Western powers. The above-mentioned scholars agree that, while this adaptation is not a smooth process, America's substantial economic, military and research power still guarantees it a major role in the inevitable transformation of the international order. The article confronts academic concepts with the dynamics of global power shifts and the mistakes of American policy (e.g. in the Middle East) that undermine America's global position. The erosion of American power and the power of the West is also bound to the economic and political problems generated by the US-triggered financial crisis of 2008. The last-mentioned factors help strengthen the role of non-western powers, especially China, in international politics, highlighting the need for a broader dialogue between them and the West about the future world order and forms of global governance.

Keywords: great power, West, United States, China, crisis, influence multipolarity, dominance, global order

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The Dynamics of Power Shifts

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The late 1980s saw the demise of the bipolar system of two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, which had lasted more than forty years. It ended in a collapse, for the project of a new communist society, based mostly on ideological tenets, proved economically unviable, despite the attempts to spread its model worldwide with political, economic and military means.

The end of the bipolar system, the breakup of the USSR and the USSR-controlled Socialist bloc¹ brought new dynamics to the international system and relations. The United States became the sole global superpower. At the turn of the 21st century, the US and the West dominated global affairs, and the Western political and economic model was at the height of its appeal. In the early 1990s, the US journalist Charles Krauthammer coined the term 'unipolar moment' for the new epoch.²

But the international order, the wealth and power of individual nations and their economic and military strength, are all relative things, subject to change, as shown by Paul Kennedy's major book *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*.³ The central claim of this book, published as early as 1987, has held true throughout the three decades following the end of the Cold War.

On the one hand, this period saw the enlargement of the EU and NATO, growing economic prosperity, and major advances in science, research and information technology, all of which strengthened the economic and security position of the West.

On the other hand, the West has gone through several unsuccessful wars and military interventions. The export of democracy and western values to the non-western world has not been very successful, and – paradoxically – many of the exporting countries now face the need to defend the very same values back at home. The situation has been further exacerbated by the economic crisis and rising sovereign debt. Last but not least, the West must come to terms with the strategic challenge represented by the increasing economic and political clout of non-Western actors, with China in the lead. All the above is, moreover, taking place at a historical crossroads: the epoch of Pax Americana, which had long ago succeeded Pax Britannica, is coming to end, and with it several centuries of Anglo-Saxon economic and ideological hegemony.

Is the West ready to face this process? What can it lean on? What are its strengths and weaknesses in the rapidly changing world? What concepts and strategies should be devised and implemented to make sure that the West preserves sufficient influence in global politics and the world economy? These are four basic groups of questions to which answers have recently been sought, most frequently by American scholars.

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Despite the great diversity of arguments and facts presented and despite some differences between the authors' views of the West's present and future role in global politics, economy and security, all the books and studies agree on one thing: the changes in the global power relations are inevitable and the West will have to accommodate to them. The global power shifts are so dynamic and complex a process, however, that many academic concepts and strategies are continually having to be adjusted, revised, or even discarded.

The End of "The End of History"

A case in point is the end-of-history hypothesis, put forward shortly before the definitive end of the Cold War by the Japanese-born US historian Francis Fukuyama, first in a 1989 issue of *The National Interest* and later, in 1992, in his book *The End of History and the Last Man*.⁴

Fukuyama drew on the philosophy of Hegel, who believed that the modern constitutional state with its liberal system based on the principles of the French and American revolutions represented the final stage of history. Inspired by this thought and anticipating the imminent collapse of the Soviet system, Fukuyama proclaimed the final victory of capitalism and liberalism, which was also interpreted as the end of history.

His words were rather strong: 'What we may be witnessing is not just an end of the Cold War (...), but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government'. (...) 'In the universal homogenous state, all prior contradictions are resolved and all human needs are satisfied'. It is no great exaggeration to say that the concept suggested a world in which nothing was left to argue about or struggle for, since the only project on hand was the fine-tuning of liberal democracy. The broad expert debate sparked by Fukuyama's claims eventually came to an almost unanimous con-

clusion: the participants agreed that the dispute over the best form of government had indeed been resolved in favour of the liberal democratic 'civil society'. However, some questioned the claim that its victory was final and unequivocal, and with it they questioned also the whole end-of-history hypothesis.⁵

Fukuyama did not take into account that a number of non-Western actors – China in particular – continued to grow and develop without being greatly affected by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Socialist bloc. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a decade into Chinese economic reforms, the country experienced another period of rapid growth, which would make it a new global power of the 2010s and America's principal challenger.

New economic and political processes were also underway in India and Brazil. Non-western powers wanted to solve their problems independently, and were beginning to assert their national interests more strongly. At the same time, they did not fully accept the principles of western liberal democracy, notwithstanding their economic ties with the West. This aspect is the most marked in China, with the leading role of the Communist Party in politics and the economy.

Fukuyama himself admitted that China was the only country that could prove incorrect his claim about the end of history and the final victory of liberalism. In his view it was the only real alternative to liberal, capitalist democracy – a country that carried out modernization without implementing democracy. He wondered about the reasons for this phenomenon and the degree of stability of the Chinese system, but eventually stated he did not believe that the Chinese model could be successful in the long term.⁶

In this context it is interesting to note the opinion of Lee Kuan Yew, the long-time Prime Minister of Singapore, whose autocratic rule changed what used to be an impoverished naval port into a prosperous metropolis, a feat that won him the admiration and respect of many western political figures. With his indisputably thorough knowledge of Asian and Chinese realities, he questioned the suitability of liberal democracy for China. Its introduction would lead to the country's collapse, he claimed, because without the Communist power monopoly the huge country would disintegrate and plunge into wars similar to those of the 1920s and 1930s.⁷

A fundamental if indirect challenge to Fukuyama's claims was put forward by Samuel Huntington, director of the Institute of Strategic

Studies of Harvard University. His major 1993 article 'The Clash of Civilisations?' was first published in that year's summer issue of *Foreign Affairs* and in 1996 expanded into the book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.⁸

Huntington identifies seven great civilizations: Western, i.e. Euro-Atlantic, with emphasis on Western Europe, the United States and Canada, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox and Latin American. He also tentatively posits the existence of an eighth – African – but leaves the question open. He believes that tensions are most likely to appear along the cultural fault lines separating civilizations and also predicts that the central axis of future world politics is likely to be the conflict between 'the West and the Rest'.

Huntington also discusses both the question of Western dominance and the decline of Western power. As for the Western potential for dominance, in Huntington's eyes the West was, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, at the peak of its power in relation to the other civilizations. In his book, published in the early 1990s, Huntington claimed that the most important global political and security issues were settled by the directorate of the United States, Britain and France, which at the time seemed a simple statement of fact. Economic issues were decided by the same group, with the addition of Germany and Japan. Huntington quotes Jeffrey Barnett, who identified fourteen features that contribute to the dominance of Western nations: they own and operate the international banking system, control all hard currencies, are the world's principal customer, provide the majority of the world's finished goods, dominate international capital markets, exert considerable moral leadership within many societies, are capable of massive military intervention, control the sea lanes, conduct most advanced technical research and development, control leading edge technical education, dominate access to space, dominate the aerospace industry, dominate international communications, and dominate the high-tech weapons industry⁹.

However, Huntington also sees the weaknesses of the West. In his view its situation is that of a civilization on the decline, increasingly preoccupied with its internal problems. He mentions the slow economic growth, the stagnating population numbers, unemployment, large deficits, social disintegration, drugs and crime. We are witnessing the transfer of economic power to East Asia, and with it also military power and the ensuing political influence. The West has to face the

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hostile attitude of other civilizations, unwilling to accept its dictates, while its own self-confidence and will to govern is gradually evaporating. Huntington adds that the influence of the US is also on the wane; the country is in a decline.

Huntington also predicted major changes in the balance of power between civilizations: according to him, the West's position vis-à-vis the other civilizations would steadily weaken until Western dominance would be a thing of the past. The greatest rise would be experienced in Asia, China in particular, which he identified as the main global rival of the West.

In some ways, Huntington's vision of the erosion of western power comes close to Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West* (1918).¹⁰ Spengler concluded that Western civilization, for all the fantastic power and efficiency of its technical advancement, had in fact been declining for centuries and would eventually face extinction, because the natural life cycle – birth, infancy, youth, maturity, old age, death – applied to human societies as well as to individual living creatures.

In Huntington's view, however, the decline of the West may still be a long-term process since 'economic growth and other increases in a country's capabilities often proceed along an S curve: a slow start, then rapid acceleration followed by reduced rates of expansion and levelling off (...) The decline of the West is still in the first slow phase, but at some point it might speed up dramatically'.¹¹ Looking at the accumulation of parallel crises that Europe and the US have had to face in recent years, and considering that many of them entail serious long-term complications for security and economic stability, one may reasonably ask whether this speeding up has not already begun.

Today we can confidently claim that in the Huntington/Fukuyama dispute it was Huntington who was closer to the truth. Liberal democracy is not the world's winning political system; moreover, even in Western countries it is now seriously threatened by growing nationalism and populism. Neither the US nor the EU is a melting pot in which people of other civilizations would automatically 'blend in' and, after two or three generations, become new Americans or Europeans, having learnt to share and respect our values. The 2015-2017 terrorist attacks in Western Europe (France, Germany, United Kingdom) illustrate this; the terrorists – descendants of immigrants from Muslim countries – have lived all their lives in a democracy. Another exam-

ple was the referendum on whether to extend the powers of Turkey's president Erdogan, held in April of 2017. Ethnic Turks who have for several generations been living in European democracies – Germany, France, Austria or Belgium – supported Erdogan much more emphatically than people back in Turkey. This second example also shows that we are, indeed, witnessing a 'clash of civilizations' and the West's key task may be to keep it non-violent and make it follow an evolutionary rather than revolutionary scenario.

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The United States as the First Among Equals

The American political scientist Fareed Zakaria looks at the potential of the West from a different angle. His book *The Post-American World*¹² tries to position itself outside what may be seen as a dichotomous opposition between Fukuyama's end-of-history hypothesis and Huntington's clash of civilizations. It also offers a much more optimistic outlook than Huntington's rather "depressing" book.

Zakaria notes that the West has continually risen since the 15th century. Its development ushered in the modern era with all its characteristics: an increased focus on science and technology, commerce and capitalism, agricultural and industrial revolutions, and also the long-time global political hegemony of the Western nations. From the late 19th century, the ascendancy of the West had been tied with the rising international status of the United States: from 1991, the US, like a modern-era empire, ruled a historically unique unipolar world, with a dramatically expanding and accelerating open global economy.

According to Zakaria, this expansion has contributed to another change, which would eventually lead to a different type of international order. His scenario, however, does not speak of an 'end of the West' or a 'decline of the us', but a 'rise of the Rest' - not just China and India, but also other Asian, South American and African actors, whose economic output and prosperity have been increasing partly because of their exploitation of American know how.

Zakaria thus presents a vision of a 'multispeed, post-American' world where the US remains the sole political and military superpower while in other areas – industry, finance, education, social welfare, culture – American hegemony is coming to an end. However, the United States still retains considerable comparative advantages in the soft

power realm, such as the educational system and demographic aspects. While the US share in world population is mere five per cent, its share of the world's top universities is approximately fifty per cent. This increases America's appeal: thirty per cent of the global number of students who study abroad do so in the US.

Demographic trends, positively influenced by relatively large-scale immigration and the ability to integrate newcomers, also speak in America's favour.¹³ These advantages can be significant in relation to America's potential challenger, China, and to its economic competitors (Europe, South Korea, Japan). The United States thus still seems able to retain its privileged global position even in an increasingly pluralistic international system.

It should be added, however, that Zakaria's optimism does not blind him to America's deficiencies. One year after the publication of *The Post-American World*, he wrote that the US economy was in many aspects still dependent on the achievements of the 1950s and 1960s: free-way construction, the funding system for science and research, the public education system, and immigration policy. He also noted that there was at present little visible innovation drive and impetus to build on these past achievements: the infrastructure was deteriorating (the US infrastructure ranks 23rd in the world, far behind the world's most developed countries), and life expectancy was rather low (the US ranks 27th according to this criterion, but takes the first place worldwide in obesity rate). America also had the highest crime rate of all the developed countries and the largest number of weapons among the population.¹⁴

Zakaria's general conclusions are endorsed and developed by another leading American political scientist, Joseph Nye. In his article "The Future of American Power," published in *Foreign Affairs*¹⁵, the Harvard professor of international relations compares the world to a three-dimensional chessboard. The top chessboard is a military one, where the United States will retain their global pre-eminence for a long time to come: its defence spending equals that of the rest of the world. The middle, or economic, chessboard is already multipolar: there are other major actors apart from the US, namely Europe, Japan and China. The bottom chessboard is the realm of transnational relations, comprising a number of non-state actors such as bankers trading on electronic exchanges, terrorists or hackers, and involving many global challenges, e.g. the fight against climate change or pandemics.

The United States, according to Nye, has several global comparative advantages which are also mentioned by Zakaria. It can take advantage of the dollar's position as the world's principal currency. It invests huge sums into R&D and also wields incomparable soft power, which increases its appeal with the young generation worldwide. Another plus is America's favourable geopolitical location, or its network of allies. Here, Nye makes a strong point by highlighting that two of the actors with comparable economic output – the EU and Japan – are America's allies. From the viewpoint of the traditional realist paradigm based on the balance of power, this increases total American power.

For these and other reasons, Nye rejects the conclusions of those who speak of the decline of us hegemony. He stresses the need to redefine the future of American power, whose decline is far from universal. There is still a relatively high probability that, in the coming decades, the United States will remain the strongest actor in the international system characterized by a diffusion of power.

The diffusion of power and its consequences for the United States have also been discussed by Richard Haass, president of the influential Council on Foreign Relations and former Director of Policy Planning at the US Department of State (2001–2003). Haass puts forward the concept of a 'nonpolar world'.¹⁶

According to him, today's world is dominated neither by one, nor by two or even several powers. Rather, it is shaped by dozens of state and non-state actors pursuing widely different interests. In addition to six great powers – these being, in Haass' view, the United States, the EU, Japan, China, Russia and India – there are a number of regional powers (e.g. Brazil, Mexico, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, South Korea, Indonesia, Australia). A significant role is also played by international organizations: global (United Nations, IMF, World Bank), regional (EU, African Union, ASEAN) or those with a specific agenda (OPEC, IEA, Shanghai Cooperation Organization).

Within some nation states there are also entities that are to some extent autonomous, having considerable economic power and consequently also political influence (California, New York, Shanghai). Other important actors include large international corporations, global media (BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera), military groups (Hamas, Taliban, Hezbollah) or influential global non-governmental organizations (Médecins sans frontières, Greenpeace). Haass does not, however, view this diffusion of power as a positive factor. Rather, he sees it as a drawback both for

the United States and the whole world since it makes collective response to regional and global challenges more difficult and multiplies both US-targeted threats and America's vulnerabilities.

Nevertheless, Haas does agree with Nye and Zakaria that the United States is the strongest economic and military power, with considerable global cultural and informational influence. Still, the relative decline of America's global position should not be overlooked. Haas points to the fact that the US share in global imports has fallen to 15 per cent. While it is true that its share in global GDP is currently about 25 per cent, this figure is bound to decline, given the current and likely future differences between the growth rate of the United States and the growth rates of the Asian giants and many other countries, most of which are growing twice or thrice as fast.

Haas also points to the fiscal and political impact of the Iraq war, citing the 'imperial overstretch' hypothesis put forward by the above-quoted historian Paul Kennedy. The United States might overestimate its strength, just like other great powers (e.g. the USSR in Afghanistan) have done in the past.

The respected economist Linda Bilmes of Harvard analysed both wars in detail, concluding that they would cost the United States four to six trillion dollars in the long term. This figure represents approximately one third of the US debt in 2015. The US has already spent USD 2 trillion; further funds will be needed in the long run for veteran care.¹⁷

Eventually, Haas reaches the surprising conclusion that the nonpolar world has not emerged only due to globalization – which increases the volume, speed and importance of all kinds of cross-border flows, from drugs, emails, greenhouse gases, industrial goods and people to tv/ radio signals, manmade or real viruses, and weapons. The growth of other states and organizations – and also the failures and foolishness of American policy – have been crucial as well.

For these and other reasons, the United States now faces a weakening of its global leadership. Other factors that have contributed to the erosion of US power include insufficient regulation (the chief cause of the financial crisis), an overly aggressive national security policy which disregarded international law, but also domestic incompetence of the US administrations and a dysfunctional political system.¹⁸

The post-Cold War international order, based on the absolute hegemony of the US, is disintegrating under the pressure of three parallel processes: the diffusion of global power among a large number of

actors, a diminishing respect for the American economic and political model, and doubts or outright distrust regarding American policy, especially in the Middle East. The net result, according to Haass, is that American influence has diminished, despite the fact that absolute US strength remains considerable.¹⁹

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Haass' conclusions also suggest that the US hegemony is waning mainly because of two factors: America's exhausted potential for 'leading by example' and its economic problems. These are the main factors that will force the US to give up (even if begrudgingly) its role of the global number one, a step that would, of course, have a strong impact on Europe.

From Global Dominance to a Power Triangle?

A strategy for accommodating to this new reality has been put forward by John Mearsheimer, professor of international relations at the University of Chicago. Mearsheimer, too, speaks about the failures of American policy and even about a decline of America's global position. According to him, it has been caused by an ill-chosen strategy of global dominance: the "imperial" idea born out of post-Cold War euphoria. In his view, the strategy of global dominance was doomed to fail and, what is more, to backfire dangerously if it relied exclusively on military means. The role of a global policeman, provoking both hatred and violent resistance, is extraordinarily exhausting.²⁰

Mearsheimer advocates a strategy of 'offshore balancing'. According to him, the US should focus only on three key areas: Europe, Northeast Asia and the Persian Gulf. In each of these regions, it should use both diplomatic and economic means to support the regional balance of power and make sure no other great power becomes clearly dominant. It must be capable of intervening rapidly and effectively in regional armed conflicts, but only when this is clearly necessary. Only in such a case would the US be able to pursue its interests in the future and cope with threats such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or increasing competition between great powers.

The Obama administration (2009–2017) pursued the strategy advocated by Mearsheimer, but it did not quite work out in practice. This is most visible in the Middle East where, however, the administration's maneuvering space was limited by the grievous strategic mistake of the Bush administration (2001–2009): the ideologically motivated in-

tervention in Iraq (2003), which triggered a wave of regional instability that led to the formation of ISIS and the strengthening of Al-Qaeda.

A further conflict in Syria where the US tried to support the anti-Assad opposition eventually led to the involvement of Russia, clearly motivated by Putin's awareness of America's weakened position and its reluctance to intervene. In consequence, Russia consolidated its position in the Middle East and strengthened its ties with the other regional powers, Turkey and Iran, as the three divided Syria into spheres of influence. The United States was excluded from the process.

As shown by the situation in the Middle East, that neuralgic spot of global security, the United States, with all its military and economic strength, will have to adjust to the changing realities of global power.

The same point has also been made by one of the most influential US political scientists, Zbigniew Brzezinski, former national security adviser to President Carter. In April 2016 *The American Interest* published his analytical article "Toward a Global Realignment,"²¹ which lists five principles that signal the coming of a new global realignment.

According to Brzezinski, the United States remains the world's strongest political, economic and military power, but, given the complex geopolitical shifts in regional balances, it is no longer *the* decisive global power. The same is true for other key world powers, however.

Russia is going through the last stage of imperial devolution, a complex and painful process, which, however, does not preclude it (if it pursues wise policies) from eventually becoming a leading European state (however improbable this prospect seems at present when it is at odds with a number of other post-Soviet states).

China as the assumed future rival of the US is growing steadily, but so far has been careful not to challenge America openly. Nonetheless, it acknowledges the importance of acquiring state-of-the-art weaponry and enhancing its naval power.

Europe is not currently a global power, nor can be expected to become one in the future. Even so, it can play a constructive role in addressing many transnational threats to global wellbeing and survival. Moreover, it is an important ally of the United States.

The last principle listed by Brzezinski is the political awakening in post-colonial Muslim countries – to some extent a belated reaction to their brutal suppression, mostly by European powers.²² This reaction combines a delayed but very strong feeling of injustice with religious motivation, causing large numbers of Muslims to unite against the

outside world. At the same time, however, historical sectarian schisms produce further divisions within Islam, which have nothing to do with the West.

Brzezinski's description of the global power chessboard is followed by an interesting definition of America's role. When faced with eruptions of violence within the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East and former Third World countries, the US must take the lead and act in such a way that the violence is contained without destroying the global order. This task, according to Brzezinski, can only be successfully tackled by a coalition of the US, Russia and China.

At the same time he sees Russia and China as the two countries that could challenge the military superiority of the United States and put an end to its global role, with the consequent risk of global chaos. In its quest for regional and wider global stability, the United States should therefore partner with one of the two countries, thus containing the other likely rival that might try to undermine its position. Nowadays this potentially dangerous rival is more likely to be Russia, but in the long run it might be China.

Like Mearsheimer, Brzezinski, too, relies on a balancing strategy, in his case a global one. Interestingly, Brzezinski claimed as early as 2009 that, despite the competitive nature of the US-China relationship, the extent of their mutual interdependence required that they not only cooperate bilaterally, but also jointly address global issues. He said specifically that China and the US needed to widen and deepen their geostrategic cooperation beyond the immediate need for close collaboration on purely economic issues (such as addressing and eliminating the impacts of the economic crisis). He therefore suggested an informal 'G2' model of US-China cooperation: cooperation much needed in an era when the risk of a massively destructive clash of civilizations is high and the scenario must be avoided. The Sino-American dialogue should therefore include a very broad range of both regional and global issues.²³

Interestingly, Brzezinski's idea has been echoed by the influential Chinese political scientist Yan Xuetong, Director of the Institute of International Studies at Beijing's Tsinghua University. In an article published in late 2011, Yan Xuetong concludes that, as the United States and China are the only countries that can afford to spend over USD 100 billion on their militaries, the world is moving toward a new model of global order, "from one superpower and several strong powers to two

superpowers and several strong powers”, a phrase that found its way into the very title of his article.²⁴

Notwithstanding the above, China’s reaction to the G2 idea seems to have been rather lukewarm if judged by concrete political steps. This may be partly due to the influential legacy of Deng Xiaoping, the father and moving spirit of Chinese reforms, who declared in the 1990s that China should maintain a low profile and be a calm observer of international affairs, never claiming leadership, hiding its capabilities and biding its time.²⁵

While China has already moved toward greater engagement on some global issues, on the whole it still follows Deng Xiaoping’s dictum. One of the reasons may be its still persisting self-perception as a developing state, in other words, one that cannot justly be called upon to assume global responsibilities (at an international conference, the author heard a Chinese academic use an interesting phrase, describing China as ‘the most developed of the developing economies’).

China may wish to continue its long-term trend of confident but cautious foreign policy with emphasis on ‘non-interference in internal affairs’, but, given its rising global status, its leaders can hardly avoid greater engagement in conflict resolution in the near future, including engagement by military means.

The Transformation of Global Order

Brzezinski’s suggestion of the G2 model confirms that the global order is, indeed, changing irreversibly, notwithstanding the still existing dominance of the United States. Professor Bruce W. Jentleson of Johns Hopkins University described the current situation with an interesting simile. According to him, we are seeing the transformation of a Ptolemaic world into a Copernican one: a world in which one planet (the United States) was the centre of the universe and the others revolved around it has been replaced by a world of multiple planets, each following its own trajectory around the Sun. In a Copernican world the United States is not the centre, but has its own orbit, and the same is true for other countries, each of which has its own sources of influence, its own national interests, identity and domestic politics.

It is a world composed of powers rising (China), recovering (Russia), seeking to reinvigorate (European Union) or only just emerging (Brazil, Turkey, South Africa and others) and of powers engendering their

own political revolutions and counter-revolutions (Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, etc.). It is also a world in which globalization has less of a 'Made in the USA' character. It can be characterized more generally as 'less Western'.²⁶

This conclusion is supported by economic data. It is interesting to examine World Bank statistics and look at the speed of changes over the period of approximately thirty-five years – since the beginning of Chinese economic reforms in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

In 1980 there were six countries with a more than 5 per cent share in global GDP. Four Western states and Japan had strategic links to the United States. Ten countries had a more than 2 per cent share of global GDP and only Brazil and what was then the Soviet Union could be regarded as actors outside the western sphere of influence. China was, economically, a negligible quantity, with less than 2 per cent of global GDP (1.7 per cent).

After a relatively short period of thirty-four years, in 2014, the situation was vastly different. Only three countries – the United States, Japan and China and one regional organization – the EU – had a more than 5 per cent share in global GDP. Eleven countries had more than 2 per cent, with four of them being non-Western actors (China, Brazil, India, Russia).

The countries of the West still maintain their dominant position: together with Japan they account for 52 per cent of global GDP. But this figure, in fact, signifies a rapid decline: in 1992 it was 75 per cent (this indicates an annual drop by approximately 1 per cent). Given the expected further growth of non-Western actors, this downward trend may well continue. The United States will retain its economic dominance and thus its key influence in international affairs, but the economic growth of non-Western actors will in turn strengthen their own international standing. A new world thus emerges in which economic differences between Western and non-Western actors will be all but negligible. This will necessarily equalize their respective political positions and lead to changes in the international order. So far, however, the international order is still dominated by the United States as the leading world power. The us-led international order, as described by Thomas Wright, director of the 'International Order and Strategy' project at Brookings Institution²⁷, has several components:

1. A series of defensive alliances ensuring regional security in Europe and East Asia. In the transatlantic space it is NATO as an in-

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stitutionalized multilateral defensive alliance. In East Asia there are several bilateral alliances between the region's states and the us - this has been called a 'hub-and-spoke' model.

2. An open global economy based on liberal trade, the free movement of goods and capital, and foreign direct investment. This model crucially depends on several institutions and platforms – International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), World Trade Organization, and G20 – two of which (IMF and WB) are dominated by the United States.
3. The existence of the UN and international law – while the us does not always abide by UN resolutions or international law, both play an important part in American policy and the worldwide advancement of America's strategic interests.
4. The promotion and strengthening of liberal values such as democracy and human rights, mostly through international institutions and sometimes in "coalitions of the willing".
5. An intensification of bilateral engagement with Russia and China together with strict limitations on security competition with both.

The last conclusion presented by Wright can perhaps be seen as doubtful in the light of Russian and Chinese attempts to create an alternative to the 'us-made' world order and considering the many points of contention that exist between the us and the two powers (Ukraine, the Crimea, Syria, South China Sea etc.).

However, Wright also shows that, despite their frictions with the us, both Russia and China were able to benefit from certain post-war geopolitical changes: Russia from the pacification of Europe and the transformation of Germany, China from a subdued Japan. In the case of China, Wright also mentions the role of the us as the guarantor of open sea lanes, a fact that has substantially facilitated China's economic expansion.

Wright does, nonetheless, acknowledge that the financial crisis that broke out in the us in 2008 discredited the us model of international economic order. In its first year it was worse than the crisis of 1929 in all major economic parameters: industrial production, world trade, and capital markets. For China it became a confirmation of America's decline. With regard to the actual state of American power it can perhaps be more accurately called a symbolic 'beginning of the end' of the unipolar moment.

Another well-known American political scientist, John Ikenberry, presents a yet another hypothesis concerning America's place in the international order. In his view, we may be witnessing merely a crisis of us leadership within the western liberal global order, not a crisis of this order as a whole.²⁸ The liberal economic order – the Liberal Leviathan created after the Second World War and expanded after the end of the Cold War – still exists. It has crystallized around big ideas such as free trade, multilateralism, alliances and partnerships, democratic solidarity or human rights and also around large institutions: the UN, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization, World Bank. This global institutional framework is still in place despite the diminishing strength of the us and the rise of non-Western powers.

Capitalist democracies also hold a majority of global power, and the existing system of rules, institutions and networks can easily accommodate new powers, making itself hard to overturn. The newcomers will also never be able to form a cohesive counter-bloc against the existing hegemonic order, given their different histories, identities and interests. And, let us not forget what Ikenberry sees as perhaps the most important point: all major world powers, established and rising alike, wish to maintain the status quo. The new powers are only mildly revisionist: they do not want to overhaul the existing order but gain greater voice and weight within it.

Ikenberry also believes that the liberal international order still has a future, that there are no big ideological alternatives to the liberal economic order and that the western Anglo-Saxon system will retain its universality.

Ikenberry's conclusions have been endorsed by Bruce Jones of the Brookings Institute, Washington, who makes two points. First, the new powers have no stake in a potential 'global revolution'; they view the existing world order pragmatically, well aware that it gives them good opportunities for pursuing their interests, even if some of its aspects may not be optimal in their eyes. This is also why they do not and will not form any alternative geostrategic blocs to those of the West, i.e. to the EU/NATO/G7.²⁹

The Rise of Non-Western Actors and the Crisis of the West

From the vantage point of the late 2010s, however, it is not irrelevant to ask whether we are not, after all, witnessing some attempts to create

alternative power structures. A closer look at the development trajectory of China and its position on human rights, interventions, sovereignty and trade shows that the country pursues its interests ever more assertively, *inter alia* by establishing new institutions with regional or even global significance. This trend was evident in 2016 with the foundation of the China-led Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank, a project attractive also for many Western countries.

The founding states of AIIB include fourteen EU members (among them the largest EU economies: Germany, France, Italy and the UK), which joined despite the strong statement by Jack Lew, US Treasury Secretary under the second Obama administration, who said that AIIB posed a threat to US credibility and influence.³⁰ The EU members' decision indicates, however, that there was no coordination within the Union itself on this important question. The key US allies in the Asia-Pacific region, Australia (the fourth most important economy of the Asia-Pacific and the sixth largest country in the world) and South Korea acted similarly to the European countries, and both also signed free trade agreements with China. China thus further consolidates its influence in the Asia-Pacific at the expense of the United States.³¹

The establishment of the AIIB also proves China's ability to create a new multilateral institution that would be accepted globally. Among the fifty-eight founding members there are countries of all continents, including both emerging powers – fast-growing and developing economies – and countries of the Euro-Atlantic area, despite the opposition from the US.

In any case, the foundation of AIIB proved China's ability to win the support of a wide range of politically and economically different states, and not only drive a wedge between Western countries, but also, to some extent, discredit and isolate politically its main adversary – the United States. This is a rather significant event in global power politics, which confirms that China is beginning to find effective instruments for revising the existing multilateral system.

While leaning on the newly established institution, China will undoubtedly also strive to gain more voice within the existing multilateral structures under western leadership. Under the active pushing by China and other developing countries, the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which are two major international organisations, have both completed their latest round of governance reform (2015-2016). China has increased its voting power to 4,42 per-

cent in the WB as well as its share in the IMF to 6,39 percent, reaching to the third place in both organisations (in the WB has a first place US with 15,85 percent and second Japan with 6, 84 percent, in the IMF is US leading country again with

17, 4 percent and Japan second with 6, 46 percent). In November 2015, the IMF decided to add the Chinese yuan into its basket of global reserve currencies alongside the US dollar, the euro, the British pound sterling and Japanese yen.

Chinese efforts are supported by other non-Western powers which likewise want to revise the rules of the international order, aligning them more closely with their own interests or cultural, ideological and political preferences. This trend manifests itself not only in BRICS (the grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa founded in 2009), but also in the visible deepening of Eurasian integration, based on the close political, economic and security cooperation of China and Russia. This boosts the influence of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which has become the most influential international forum for security and development issues in continental Asia.

Economically, Eurasian integration is also enhanced by the Chinese Belt and Road strategy, which has become a key Chinese geopolitical project to be implemented over the coming decades. The Belt and Road strategy or, more specifically, the Silk Road Economic Belt as its land-based component, can greatly advance Chinese interests by creating a huge integrated Eurasian territory with strong economic links to China where China can also exert political influence. But the initiative also has a significant strategic dimension: China is doing away with its former heavy dependence on maritime transport of goods and raw materials. With the sea lanes controlled by the US Navy, such dependence might prove a major disadvantage in case of a serious crisis in Sino-American relations.

The new Chinese strategy has been commented on by Francis Fukuyama. In analysing it, Fukuyama once again mentions 'the Chinese model' as the only alternative to liberal capitalist democracy. Fukuyama sees the Belt and Road initiative through the prism of a competition between the Chinese development model and the Western one. According to him, the Chinese model is based on massive, government-driven investment in infrastructure facilitating economic development: roads, ports, power plant networks, railways, airports. In contrast, the development strategies of Europe and America have in

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recent years focused on large-scale investment in public health, support of global civil society and anti-corruption measures.

The West's approach is commendable, Fukuyama says, but no country has ever become rich solely by investing in these sectors. In contrast, the Chinese strategy based on infrastructure is remarkably successful in China itself and has also been a major component of strategies adopted by other East Asian countries, from Japan to South Korea and Singapore. The big question of global politics is clear in Fukuyama's view - whose model will win?

Fukuyama himself gives an answer: if the Belt and Road project 'meets Chinese planners' expectations, the whole of Eurasia, from Indonesia to Poland, will be transformed in the coming generation. China's model will blossom outside of China, raising incomes and thus demand for Chinese products to replace stagnating markets in other parts of the world'. (...) 'And China's form of authoritarian government will gain immense prestige, implying a large negative effect on democracy worldwide'.

Fukuyama doubts that the Chinese model can triumph, because the smooth development of infrastructure in China is due to China's controlled political environment. In unstable countries plagued by corruption and conflict such political control will not be possible. Fukuyama also notes that the strategy of massive infrastructure development may have already reached its limits in China and may not work equally well in other countries.

Despite all the above, Fukuyama recognizes that offering developing countries aid in infrastructure development is an important soft power tool that is currently being neglected by the US. And unless the US and other Western countries become more active in this field, the triumph of the Chinese development model in Eurasia will be a very real danger.³²

What has just been mentioned suggests the emergence of a new *ism* – *infrastructuralism*. In a new context, infrastructure development has gained the potential to transform the global system. From a broader perspective it is also evident that, thirty years after the end of the Cold War, the Belt and Road strategy is more than just another qualitative element of Chinese growth. It is also a stepping up of China's ideological challenge to the democratic liberal paradigm. The combination of 'non-liberal capitalism' (the parallel existence of a free market economy and authoritarian political environment) and 'non-liberal sovereign-

ty' (rejecting all interference of the international community in internal affairs) becomes ever more attractive, especially for 'Third World' countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East (but can Europe be confidently excluded from this list, given the autocratic tendencies in Hungarian or Polish politics?). Ikenberry's and Jones' claims that the Western liberal order has, in fact, no alternative and that non-western powers do not form alternative geostrategic blocs thus need no longer be regarded as dogma.

The political and economic rise of non-western powers, which entails proposals for alternative models of organizing international politics, comes at a time when the West is plagued by a growing number of economic and political problems. Europe has to cope simultaneously with the consequences of several crises. In the late 2000s it was mainly the financial crisis. Since 2010, the financial crisis has been joined by the European sovereign debt crisis. In addition, some parts of Europe are going through an economic slump that forces many countries to implement a series of reforms. No less serious is the crisis of trust in European integration and cooperation, strongly linked to the problems of the single European currency.

Since the monetary union was not underpinned by a full integration of economic and fiscal policies, it failed to bring about the expected gradual convergence of the eurozone economies. Instead, it led to their divergence, jeopardising the whole integration project. While the massive financial interventions have helped avert a collapse of the euro and the banking system, not even the large-scale austerity measures undertaken could reduce debt and unemployment and generate really significant economic growth. The future of the eurozone is still uncertain, given the situation in the countries of its southern wing, especially Italy. The position of the EU has also been rocked by the departure of the UK after the June 2016 referendum. The unstable situation in Europe's backyard affects its manoeuvring space. Europe is not enclosed in a circle of stability as was the aim of its earlier strategies, but rather surrounded by conflicts and uncertainty. This in turn breeds conflicts within the Union itself, as was seen in its management of large migration waves.

The rising political and socio-economic tensions within democratic societies are also a serious problem. What is particularly alarming is the growing inequality. The American economist and Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz has remarked that the deepening welfare inequality

undermines economic growth and weakens democracy.³³ It also leads to a crisis of governance and a massive increase of popular support for populist or nationalist parties and politicians. European and American politics is thus becoming increasingly unpredictable.

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In the twentieth century, the United States had to face mainly external threats: during the Second World War it was imperial Japan and Nazi Germany; in the four Cold War decades it was the Soviet Union. These threats were successfully managed mainly thanks to the robust American economy. At present, however, America shows evidence of serious internal problems such as the astronomic rise of public debt. Niall Ferguson pointed out as early as 2010 that, according to Congressional projections, the US debt service would amount to nearly 17 per cent of its budget in the late 2010s. If, to pay off interest on your debt, 'you have to sacrifice one fifth of your income, you are in serious trouble'.³⁴ Such a situation could lead to some drastic cuts in military spending and a scaling down of America's military and political engagements worldwide. Ferguson also noted that an empire's decline is often first signalled by a 'debt explosion'.

The above problem is unlikely to be remedied by the isolationist policies, economic protectionism and the gradual abandonment of free trade principles that have been in evidence since the inauguration of President Trump in January 2017. The most visible step in this respect was the US withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the multi-lateral deal on trade in the Asia-Pacific region.³⁵

The abandoned position of the United States in the fast-growing region, with all the concomitant opportunities for broadening economic cooperation, is likely to be taken up by China. After the announcement of the US decision it openly assumed the role of a new global economic leader, e.g. in a speech made by Chinese president Xi Jinping at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2017.³⁶

This may perhaps be regarded as another symbolic landmark in the development of global affairs. That the future would take an 'Asian' turn was predicted as early as 2004 by Professor Timothy Garton Ash, Director of the Centre of European Studies at St. Anthony's College, Oxford. As he wrote at the time, Europe and America would not be able to formulate their political strategies without regard to the intentions and development of the Asian states. 'The Old Atlantic-centred West, which has been shaping the world since about 1500, probably has no more than 20 years left in which it will still be the main world-shap-

er (...) In a longer historical perspective, this may be our last chance to set the agenda of world politics'.³⁷

This prediction may already be coming true. Because of the three parallel crises mentioned above, which have been triggered by the us financial crisis of 2008-2009 and have since been succinctly described by Timothy Garton Ash as crises of capitalism, democracy, and European integration³⁸, the West may find it difficult to respond adequately to the tectonic changes in global politics and economy.

These changes require that it embark on a broader dialogue with the rising non-Western powers, discussing the future configuration of the world and forms of global governance with due respect to their own views on governance and international order. Such a dialogue can no longer be avoided, lest the West turn into a sealed fortress in a gradually disintegrating ruled-based international system. The alternative is to agree on new principles of cooperation based on consensus and compromise.

With that agreement, there should also come a better understanding of how the China-led non-Western actors build up their power and appeal and what the West can do to not only adjust to the new geopolitical realities, but also benefit from them.



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Notes

- 1 The world Socialist community included the members of the military Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The Warsaw Pact was founded in 1955. Its members were the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and, until 1968, Albania.

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- The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance was founded in 1949 and included the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, East Germany, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania and Vietnam. There were also other Socialist countries standing outside of this alliance framework: the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania, China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.
- 2 Charles Krauthammer (1990), "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, America and the World 1990 Issue, available at: <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1991-02-01/unipolar-moment>> (accessed 05 January 2017).
 - 3 Paul Kennedy (1987), *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, New York: Random House.
 - 4 Francis Fukuyama (1989), "The End of History?," *The National Interest*, Summer.
 - 5 Another scholar to criticize Fukuyama's conclusions was Emmanuel Todd, a well-known French historian and political scientist who, as early as 1976 (*The Final Fall*), predicted the breakup of the USSR. However, Todd also offered some qualified praise: "... one ought to concede that Fukuyama offers a lively and pertinent empirical glance at contemporary history. To claim as early as 1989 that universalization of liberal democracy was becoming a possibility worth examining was certainly a major achievement. European intellectuals, on the whole less in touch with the future movement of history, were at the time interested in putting communism on trial and thus concentrated on analyzing the past. Fukuyama had the bright idea to speculate about the future, a more difficult task but also a more useful one." (Emmanuel Todd (2006), *After the Empire: The Breakdown of the American Order*, Columbia University Press, 2006).
 - 6 Michael Thumann, Thomas Assheuer (2016), "Francis Fukuyama: Demokratie stiftet keine Identität," *Die Zeit online*, 31. March, available at: <<http://www.zeit.de/2016/13/francis-fukuyama-politikwissenschaftler-populismus-usa>> (accessed 05 January 2017).
 - 7 Zdeněk Zecpal (2013), "Lee Kuan Yew pozdní," *Lidové noviny-Orientace*, 13 April.
 - 8 Samuel Huntington (1997), *The Clash of Civilizations*, New York: Touchstone.
 - 9 Jeffrey Barnett (1994) "Exclusion as National Security Policy.," *Parameters*, Spring 1994, available at: <<http://strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/Articles/1994/barnett.htm>> (accessed 07 January 2017). The British historian Niall Ferguson sums up the reasons for western dominance more succinctly in *Civilization: The Six Ways the West Beat the Rest* (Allen Lane, London, 2011). He attributes the West's success in overtaking the rest of the world over the last 500 years to its ability to embrace six key areas: competition, science, private ownership, medicine, consumerism and work ethics.
 - 10 Oswald Spengler (2011), *Zánik Západu*, Praha: Academia.
 - 11 Samuel Huntington (1997), *The Clash of Civilizations*, New York: Touchstone, p. 85, p.86.

- 12 Fareed Zakaria (2008), *The Post-American World*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- 13 Samuel Huntington's view of immigrant integration is much more critical. In his last book, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 2004) he draws attention to the poor integration of Latino immigrants, the discrediting of patriotism and the erosion of the specific American national identity rooted in the Anglo-Protestant culture of the first settlers. Offering a conservative critique of the present day United States, he claims that, apart from conflicts potentially ensuing from the clash of civilizations, another conflict may arise on American soil. The 2016 presidential election has shown that this topic resonates within American society. The current President's strong criticism of Hispanic immigration (mostly illegal and predominantly from Mexico), which he sees as detrimental to the US, has definitely found support among large parts of the electorate.
- 14 Fareed Zakaria (2011), "Are America's Best Days behind Us?," *Time* 03 March, available at: <<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2056723,00.html>> (accessed 08 June 2017).
- 15 Joseph Nye (2010), "The Future of American Power." *Foreign Affairs*, November/December, available at: <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2010-11-01/future-american-power>> (accessed 07 January 2017).
- 16 Richard Haass (2008), "The Age of Nonpolarity," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June, available at: <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2008-05-03/age-nonpolarity>> (accessed 07 January 2017).
- 17 Linda Bilmes (2013), "The Financial Legacy of Iraq and Afghanistan: How Wartime Spending Decisions Will Constrain Future National Security Budgets," *HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series rwp13-006*, March, available at: <<https://research.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/citation.aspx?PubId=8956>> (accessed 08 January 2017).
- 18 The leading U.S. political scientist and former national security advisor to President Carter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, says that the United States has "a political system in which privilege has been melded with opportunism. The Congress is a self-perpetuating body of relatively rich and privileged people who are not above passing legislation or making arrangements that favour them as a group. As a result, it's increasingly difficult for us to intelligently address both domestic and foreign problems" (Zbigniew Brzezinski, Robert W. Merry (2012), U.S. Fate Is in U.S. Hands. *The National Interest*, September - October, available at: <<http://nationalinterest.org/article/interview-us-fate-us-hands-7339?page=show>> (accessed 08 January 2017)).
- 19 Richard Haass (2014), "The Unraveling: How to Respond to a Disordered World," *Foreign Affairs*, November/ December, available at: <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2014-10-20/unraveling>> (accessed 08 January 2017).
- 20 John Mearsheimer (2011), "Imperial by design," *National Interest*, January-February, available at: <<http://nationalinterest.org/print/article/imperial-by-design-4576>> (accessed 10 January 2017).
- 21 Zbigniew Brzezinski (2016) "Toward Global Realignment," *National Interest*,

- 17 April, available at: <<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/04/17/toward-a-global-realignment/>> (accessed 10 January 2017).
- 22 Brzezinski points out, for example, that the colonizers, most of them from Western Europe, engaged in systematic killings that led to a virtual extinction of some colonized nations over the past two centuries. Hundreds of thousands and sometimes millions of people fell victim to such treatment, which Brzezinski compares to the Nazi atrocities during the Second World War.
- 23 Zbigniew Brzezinski (2009), “The Group of Two That Could Change the World.” *Financial Times*, 09 January, available at: <<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d99369b8-e178-11dd-afao-0000779fd2ac.html#axzzZsW3gt9R>> (accessed 11 January 2017).
- 24 Yan Xuetong (2011), ‘国际格局由一超多强转向两超多强’ (From one superpower and several strong powers to two superpowers and several strong powers), *Global Times*, 30 December, available at: (in Chinese) <<http://www.carnegietsinghua.org/2011/12/30/%E5%9B%BD%E9%99%85%E6%A0%BC%E5%B1%80%E7%94%B1%E4%B8%80%E8%B6%85%E5%A4%9A%E5%B-C%BA%E8%BD%AC%E5%90%91%E4%B8%A4%E8%B6%85%E5%A4%9A%E5%BC%BA/ex3w>> (accessed 11 January 2017).
- 25 Miloš Balabán (2014), “The New Age of the US-EU-Chinese Relations and Dilemmas.” *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies*, 3:12-33, available at: <<http://www.cejiss.org/static/data/uploaded/1421787746161647/Article%2001.pdf>> (accessed 11 January 2017).
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- 29 Bruce Jones (2014) *Still Ours to Lead: America, Rising Powers, and the Tension Between Rivalry and Restraint*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press.
- 30 The other founding members from the EU are Austria, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden.
- 31 In this context it is worth pointing out the huge rise of China’s trade with South America: in the past fifteen years it has increased 22 times.
- 32 Francis Fukuyama (2016), “Exporting the Chinese Model.” *Project Syndicate*. 12 January, available at <<https://www.project-syndicate.org/onpoint/chi->

na-one-belt-one-road-strategy-by-francis-fukuyama-2016-01?barrier=accessreg> (accessed 08 June 2017).

- 33 OECD data show that the average income of the 10 per cent of highest earning Americans is 19 times higher than that of the lowest earning 10 per cent. By comparison, in the mid-1980 the ratio was 11:1 and in the mid-1990s 12.5:1. Income poverty affects 18 per cent of the population, i.e. substantially more than the OECD average (11 per cent). (In It Together Why Less Inequality Benefits All ...in the United States, *OECD* [online], 21 May 2015, available at: <<http://www.oecd.org/unitedstates/OECD2015-In-It-Together-Highlights-UnitedStates-Embargo-21May11AMPARISTime.pdf>> (accessed 07 January 2017)).

Joseph Stiglitz notes that the top one percent of Americans receive about a fifth of all income and control more than one third of all wealth. More than 80 per cent of income goes to the highest-earning 20 per cent of the population, while the living standard of the middle classes stagnates. (Joseph Stiglitz (2012), *The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company).

Even the economic engine of the EU, Germany, shows income disparity. The average income of the 10 per cent highest-earning Germans is 6.6 times higher than the income of the lowest-earning 10 per cent. In 2013, nearly 40 per cent of employees did not have standard work contracts and worked part time. (In It Together Why Less Inequality Benefits All ...Deutschland, *OECD* [online], 21 May 2015, available at: <<http://www.oecd.org/germany/OECD2015-In-It-Together-Highlights-Germany.pdf>> (accessed 07 January 2017)). The number of people who consider themselves middle class has fallen by 15 per cent in Germany; this percentage has fallen also in other EU countries. The southern EU states, which have been hit particularly hard by the crisis, have a devastating youth unemployment rate: in Spain and Greece it is close to 50 per cent.

- 34 Daniel Kaiser (2010), "Až Amerika nezvládne dluh, stáhne se" [America will back off when its debt gets unmanageable], interview given by Niall Ferguson, *Lidové noviny* daily, 02 January.
- 35 Trans-Pacific Partnership, TPP, is a multilateral agreement establishing a trade zone between the signatory states. It was drafted after several years of negotiations led by the Obama administration and signed on 4 February 2016. The parties include Japan, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, Chile, Peru and the United States. The aim of the agreement was to promote growth and strengthen economic relations through the lowering of tariff barriers but also to introduce uniform labour standards.
- 36 The leitmotif of Xi Jinping's speech was the defence of globalization. He said: "Some blame economic globalization for the chaos in the world (...) It is true that economic globalization has created new problems, but this is no justification to write economic globalization off completely. Rather, we should adapt to and guide economic globalization, cushion its negative impact, and deliver its benefits to all countries and all nations (...) Whether you like it or not, the global economy is the big ocean that you cannot es-

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cape from (...) We have had our fair share of choking in the water (...) but we have learned how to swim in this process.” Speech available at: <<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/01/full-text-of-xi-jinping-keynote-at-the-world-economic-forum>> (accessed 22 January 2017).

37 Timothy G. Ash (2004), *Free World: America, Europe and the Surprising Future of the West*, New York: Random House.

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38 Timothy G. Ash (2017), “Is Europe Disintegrating?” *The New York Review of Books*. 19 January, available at <<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/01/19/is-europe-disintegrating/>> (accessed 22 January 2017).

The Alawites and the Labyrinthine Routes of Peace in Syria

Michal Prokop

For the past six years, Syria has been trapped in a deep political turmoil, which has had a grave impact on peace and stability in the Middle East. Amid the rising atrocities committed on the Syrian population by the Syrian government, the rebels and the Islamic state, the Russian Federation decided in September 2015 to provide a military solution while supporting one side of the conflict. The increased use of force in Syria by foreign powers like the US, the UK, France and Turkey as well as the influx of material support from major regional actors including Saudi Arabia and Iran, however, cannot be a substitution for a political process based on diplomacy, negotiation and dialogue. Given that the Alawite community represents the backbone of President Bashar al-Assad's popular support inside Syria, this article analyses the Alawite perspective on the Syrian conflict and proposes a strategy of political engagement between the international community and the Syrian minority group. Cooperation with the Alawites could represent a crucial step for building lasting peace in Syria because the Assad's followers might reconsider their support for the regime in Damascus in exchange for future autonomy and military protection.

Keywords: Syria, civil war, Alawites, engagement, peacebuilding

Evasive Peace in Syria

As the civil war in Syria marks its sixth anniversary this year, peace in the Middle Eastern country is nowhere to be found. Starting in March 2011 as a peaceful popular protest of Syrian people, including Sunni,

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Shia and Christians, against the authoritarian system headed by the Assad family, the Syrian uprising eventually transformed into a bloody civil war characterized by sectarian bloodshed, mass atrocities, displacement of civilians and destruction of Syrian cultural heritage. The Syrian conflict has drawn the attention of global and regional powers, which directly or through various proxies compete over influence in the Middle East. Despite several rounds of negotiations in Geneva, Moscow and Astana as well as the admirable efforts of renowned UN diplomats such as Kofi Annan, Lakhdar Brahimi and Staffan de Mistura, it appears Syria has moved, for the time being, beyond the reach of a comprehensive peaceful settlement.¹

For several years, a considerable question has been frequently asked: How is Bashar al-Assad able to maintain his grip on power in Damascus? The political, material, and military backing of the Russian Federation, Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah, the emergence and the territorial gains of the Islamic State (*Daesh*, Arabic: داعش) and Assad's ability vis-à-vis his domestic and international supporters to portray his regime as 'the only alternative to chaos'² can partially, but not exclusively, explain the government's capacity to survive. Another mostly omitted reason behind the government's endurance is the contribution of the prominent Syrian minority group, the Alawites (French: *Alaouites*, Arabic: علوية), who remain loyal to the regime's leadership.³ In contrast to the contemporary deliberation on Syria, which largely focuses on the stunning inability of Washington and Moscow to reach a compromise solution to the Syrian conflict, this paper argues that reaching a sustainable peace in Syria also essentially requires diplomats to acknowledge the key minority groups' interests and their incorporation within the post-war structure of government that respects the principles of secularism, religious tolerance and human rights.

In today's catastrophic turmoil in Syria, political analysts often neglect the important role the Alawites might play in leading the country through the labyrinth of conflicts and diverging interests in Syria. This paper investigates two major issues. Firstly, what the Alawites' perspective on the civil war is and secondly, whether and under what conditions the Alawites' influence could contribute to the peace process in Syria. The article aims to move beyond the conventional and simplistic narrative that depicts the Alawites as 'a dominant minority, which universally supports the Assad regime'⁴ and to provide a deeper understanding of the Syrian Alawite community, which has been the

original determining political and ideological force behind the foundation of the Assad's ruling dynasty. The article departs from the following premises: (1) the Syrian government as one of many participants involved in the conflict is not a unitary actor but rather a mixed coalition of the regime's supporters; (2) the Alawites' interests have been poorly reflected in the political discourse on Syria; (3) the inclusion of the Alawites in the Syrian peace process can be an important factor in achieving and maintaining stability in Syria.

The case study of Alawites was chosen not only because of their political leverage over Damascus, but most importantly they also represent a potential way out of the enormously complicated maze that characterizes the current political situation within Syria. Regardless of the future military outcome on the Syrian battlefield, the Alawites will always represent a vital component and formidable power, both economically and politically, within Syrian society. Additionally, inclusive dialogue between the wider international community and the minority groups is a necessary element in reaching a political settlement within a diverse country such as Syria. The international community, particularly the US, European nations and the Russian Federation as the most potent global actors involved in the Syrian civil war, is obliged to learn from the mistakes of the past. The lesson of Iraq after 2003 clearly demonstrated the crucial necessity of incorporating religious minorities in a process of political transition. The lack of interest with respect to the issue of minorities that were once the backbone of the authoritarian regimes, whether Sunni in Iraq or Shia, Alawites and others in Syria, may have fatal consequences on peace and stability in the Middle East. A similar claim was presented, for example, in the Report of the Iraq Inquiry in July 2016 that examined the UK's involvement in toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein and the subsequent occupation of Iraq.⁵

As this article seeks to shed light on the subject of an important minority group in Syria, the Alawites, in the current civil war, it is organized into four parts and a conclusion. The first section puts the option of diplomatic and material assistance to the Alawite community in Syria within the context of the existing theory of civil wars with a special emphasis on the concepts of veto players in multiparty conflicts. The second part then briefly describes the Alawites' background and analyses their role in the Syrian society and governance prior and after the Arab Revolutions of 2011. Finally, the third and fourth sections ex-

plore challenges the Alawite community currently faces and what can be achieved by the political engagement and Track II diplomacy with the Alawites as a considerable element in a comprehensive solution to the present situation and future social cohesiveness of Syria.

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Multiparty Civil Wars and the Concept of Veto Players

A civil war can be defined as “large scale violence among geographically contiguous people concerned about possibly having to live with one another in the same political unit after the conflict”.⁶ Every civil war generally starts as an internal dyadic process in which an opposition violently challenges the authority of government.⁷ The rate of hostility between the two contested sides rapidly increases when the challenged government is not capable of effectively deterring or quickly suppressing the military opposition.⁸ Civil wars tend not to be usually restricted to the boundaries of a particular state where the conflict originates. As in the cases of the Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Angola or Syria, transnational factors such as instability in neighbouring countries, history of interstate adversarial behaviour, ethnic cross-border relations, and migration increase the risk of wide regional destabilization that incentivizes external actors to consider choosing whether to intervene in the conflict.⁹

Moreover, the expansion of a number of parties being directly or indirectly engaged in the civil war changes the dynamics of a conflict. Academic research conducted by Salehyan, Gleditsch and Cunningham shows that ‘civil wars with outside involvement typically last longer, cause more fatalities, and are more difficult to resolve through negotiations’.¹⁰ This happens because additional participants promote their own specific agenda, influence both the costs of continued fighting and the benefits of reaching a settlement, and attach their national interests to the preferred end-result of the conflict.¹¹ As occurred during the US support for the Contras in Nicaragua in the 1980s or the recent involvement of the Russian Federation, Turkey, Iran and others in Syria, the multiplication of external actors, which support one side of the conflict, logically contributes to the deepening of a civil war.

Besides the number of parties involved in a conflict, another factor that has a great effect on the peace process is the phenomenon of a veto player. Veto players are, according to George Tsebelis, ‘individual or collective actors whose agreement is necessary for a change of the

status quo'.¹² Veto players possess enormous leverage as their consent is a principal condition for reaching peace in civil wars. In order for an internal or external participant to be a veto player, it must fulfil three particular conditions: (1) having a specific unshared preferences for the result of the war, (2) maintaining a cohesive organization that guarantees the support of the player's constituencies, and (3) possessing the ability to continue the war unilaterally even if the other parties decide to reach an accord and end the conflict. The theory states that if there are many veto players in a civil war, then the duration of the war is longer and a successful solution is more difficult to find because veto players use their capabilities on the battlefield and at the negotiation table to obtain get the best deal possible for their own self-interests.¹³

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Due to the complexity of the crisis in Syria and multiparty character of the conflict, many actors could be considered as veto players. For the purposes of this paper, however, it is necessary to primarily clarify whether or not the Assad regime has the veto power capacity. The decision of the Russian Federation and Iran to financially and militarily back the government in Damascus is often cast by conservative commentators in the us like Jay Sekulow as a proof of "unholy alliance"¹⁴ between Moscow, Tehran and Damascus that seeks to become the hegemonic power in the Middle East. Unfortunately, such derogatory labels do not provide any explanation of perspectives and policies behind the military interventions that occurred in Syria. Despite the fact that Russian Federation and Iran most likely prevented the downfall of Assad, the three allies are motivated by a different set of goals and none of them share the same vision of how Syria should be governed in the future. In reality, the regime in Damascus is not a pawn in a larger game of great powers. Assad qualifies to be a veto player because he follows his own ambition, which is to achieve victory for his own army of followers and become once again the sole leader of Syria. For instance, Assad himself stated in the recent interviews that his forces will continue fighting until 'every inch of the Syrian land'¹⁵ is liberated from the hands of the so-called terrorists.

On the other hand, the actions of Russian Federation and Iran in Syria are motivated by strategic objectives. For Iran, the Assad regime represents an important regional ally. Yet the relationship between Iran and Syria was once described as a 'marriage of convenience with little substance'¹⁶ that is based on pragmatism and geopolitical circumstances rather than ideological or religious considerations. Iran actual-

ly praised protesters in Syria back in March 2011 and advised Assad to extend an olive branch to the opposition. Soon after the war broke out, Iran realized that the new Sunni majority government in Syria would probably join ranks with Iran's major adversaries (Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States) thus putting Iran in an unfavourable position in the Middle East's political matrix. Toppling Assad would also impede the support that Tehran provides to Hezbollah, the organization through which Iran extends its own influence into Lebanon. Because Iran witnessed many foreign attempts to interfere with its internal politics in its past, for example the overthrow of Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in 1953, material assistance and intelligence given to Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq war or the threat of Israel to launch a military attack against Iran's nuclear installations, the political establishment in Tehran understands that it cannot afford to spare the few allies it has in the region for the sake of its own national security and independence.¹⁷

Furthermore, the Russian Federation with much more robust military deployment in Syria than Iran primarily wants to preserve the patron-client relationship between Moscow and Damascus that has endured for decades. This partnership is strongly embedded in Russian foreign policy makers' strategic thinking. Having the Assad regime as a partner is a relevant diplomatic and political asset for the Russian Federation since the Syrian government is still recognized *de jure* by many countries as a legitimate authority in Syria. On the other side, the fragmented opposition does not provide the same sense of reliability. The possible fall of the government in Damascus would seriously impact the Russian political influence and military capabilities in the Middle East. The Russian Federation also realizes that the potential victory of the Islamists in Syria could as well inspire insurgents in the Northern Caucasus to start a military uprising.¹⁸

As the Russian Federation attempts to organize peace talks between the Assad regime and some of the rebel groups, Moscow is in principle not opposed to substantial constitutional reforms in Syria that would provide the opposition with the power sharing institutional mechanisms.¹⁹ Even though the Russian air force contributed to the tipping of the balance in Assad's favour, the Russian Federation does not have the resources to rebuild Syria and it is certainly not willing to be dragged into Assad's endless quest for total victory. Nonetheless, the possible scaling down of Russian military personnel in Syria surely

will not discourage Assad from continuing the fight in order to re-establish his former rule over the whole country. The Syrian army and its estimated strength of 25 000 soldiers, a small fraction of its former strength but still considerable fighting force, combined with the numerous armed militia clearly grant Assad a veto player status in Syria.²⁰

The end of violence in Syria requires the government in Damascus and Assad's opponents to adopt a compromise peace agreement. The prospect of finding the common ground between the Assad regime and the opposition is, however, very much unlikely, because the Assad regime will never consent to the opposition's fundamental demand, which is the departure of Assad's ruling elite from Syrian politics.²¹ If a military intervention against Assad is currently out of the question, then the only possible way of compelling the Syrian government to change its reckless behaviour is to disrupt Assad's internal structure of power and to engage with those who support the Syrian regime. In the next three chapters, such strategy is presented with a particular focus on the Alawite community and its role in the past and contemporary Syria.

Alawites in the Syrian Society and Governance

Syria is the home of many cultures, communities and religious groups. According to the pre-war statistics, Syria as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious heterogeneous society consists of Sunni-Arabs (65 percent), Arab-Alawites, Ismailia and Shia (13 percent), Kurds and non-Arab Sunnis (15 percent), Orthodox-Armenian Christians (nine percent) and Arab-Druze (three percent).²² The historical origin of Alawites, also known as *Nusairis*, a name derived from their religious leader Muhammad Ibn Nusayr, can be traced back to the 10th century AD. This religious sect is seen by the mainstream Sunni as "heretics"²³ (*kafer*) due to their eclectic acceptance of Neo-Platonism, Shia, Judaism and Christian practices and beliefs such as the worship of Ali, prophet Muhammad's proper successor as Caliph, pilgrimages to tombs (*ziyarat*), baptismal rituals near water and ceremonial use of wine.²⁴ The Alawites themselves, however, consider their identity to be based on specific cultural and social behaviours rather than religious adherence.²⁵ However, unlike Sunni, Shia and Abadism, the last one of which exists mostly in Oman, Alawism is not clearly delineated in contrast to other schools of Islam. No Alawite clergy have issued opinions (*fatwas*) con-

cerning the Amman Message of 2005 and consequently they are not perceived as an independent branch of Islam.²⁶ As of 2002, there are approximately two and half million Alawites in the Middle East, out of which the great majority lives in Syria mainly in the coastal region of Latakia and the city of Homs.²⁷

Furthermore, throughout history the Alawites had been regarded as a separate community because of their complex spiritual system and also their autonomous way of life in the An-Nusayriyah *Mountains* (*Jabal Ansariyya*). Based on the principle divide and rule, the French imperial occupation of Syria legally provided the Alawites in 1924 with their own autonomous status and the opportunity to form the core of the French auxiliary forces in Syria.²⁸ The short-lived Alawite State (French: *État des Alaouites*) was in 1936 incorporated back into Syria, but this short episode of relative independence strongly influenced the Alawite tribes in their desire to promote their own interests in the mainstream Syrian politics.²⁹ This culminated in the 1970 coup d'état and subsequently elevated Hafez al-Assad to the position of total control of Syria through the ideology of Arab nationalism and Ba'athism on one hand and through the system of autocratic "repu-monarchism" (*jamlaka*) as well as the increased Alawite control over security and intelligence apparatus (*mukhabarat*) on the other hand.³⁰ While constituting a relatively small minority group, the Alawites reached an unprecedented level of influence as Hafez al-Assad positioned his fellow Alawites in key places within the Ba'ath party and the Syrian army.³¹

The emergence of Alawites from the mountains of Latakia and their incorporation into al-Assad's structures of power created a mutually beneficent relationship. The Syrian regime enjoyed the loyal support of a significant portion of the Syrian population while the minority group entrusted Hafez al-Assad to protect them from the reprisal of extremist Sunni groups. Additionally, this close bond between the Alawites and the state institutions has been also characterized by the system of corruption and economic privileges. Some of the Alawite families managed to build massive fortune thanks to their association with the Assad regime. Among the largest recipients of financial benefits has been, for example, the Makhoulouf family. Rami Makhoulouf, Bashar al-Assad's cousin and owner the Syrian communications firm Syriatel, is considered the wealthiest businessman in Syria with control of up to 60 percent of the pre-war Syrian economy.³² Other families, notably the Mualla, Kherbek and Mohanna, all of whom come from Hafez

al-Assad's birthplace Qardaha, were granted similar privileges in the country's public sector. Not surprisingly, those Alawites, who have decided not to enter the nepotistic structures of power, were left behind in the Jableh and Tartus regions without basic services or infrastructure. Suffering from extreme poverty, joining the Syrian army meant for many Alawites the only way how to escape economic hardship and political exclusion.³³

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Shortly after Bashar al-Assad, Hafez al-Assad' son, was inaugurated as President of Syria in 2000, Mordechai Nisan, an Israeli scholar and the author of the *Minorities in the Middle East: A History of Struggle and Self-Expression*, wrote that 'it may be that the Alawites engineered an encompassing and evolving Syrian nationality in which they are its architects without becoming its victims. Time will tell'.³⁴ Looking at today's atrocious conditions in Syria, it is evident that the Alawite attempt to guide the destiny of Syria has obviously failed and whatever 'goodwill many in the broad mass of the Syrian public may have still felt for Assad as an individual melted away'.³⁵ But the Alawites have continued supporting Assad. Why is that? When the Arab revolution erupted in Syria in 2011, the obsession with the threat of a Sunni-led Islamic government has led the Alawites to believe the 'gory stories about the inevitability of destruction, ruin and even civil war in the event of any significant protest'.³⁶

Unfortunately, the government's brutal suppression of non-violent demonstrations resulted in the radicalization of Syrian society. In the wake of the armed struggle in Syria, Assad brilliantly managed to present the democratic uprising as a sectarian conflict, thus preventing the Alawites from joining the Sunni democratic opposition. As the Syrian army was able to "protect" the Alawites in 1982 following the brutal suppression of Muslim Brotherhood's revolt in Hama, the contemporary Alawite community pragmatically has calculated that the government have kept them "safe" in the past against the Sunni majority so the government can succeed in the future as well.³⁷ With the constant fear of the possible Sunni reprisals, as proposed by Sunni radicals like Adnan al-Aroor, who openly calls for 'extermination of minorities'³⁸ supporting the Syrian regime, the Alawites have bound their existence in Syria to the corrupt Assad regime.³⁹

The current situation in Syria offers nothing but sorrow and distress whilst the future is equally bleak. The years of fighting have turned most of Syria into a pile of rubble and the end of suffering is anywhere

but near. The Alawites remain deeply entrapped between the sides of the conflict. On one hand, Assad, the man who is originally responsible for bringing Syria into chaos, still represent them as their leader. On the other hand, the Syrian opposition has never offered the Alawites any political concessions in exchange for support. Despite having prominent Alawites among their ranks such as Monzer Makhous, a former representative of the Syrian National Coalition in France and the High Negotiations Committee spokesperson, the Syrian opposition did not present any concrete scheme of future coexistence between various centres of political power within Syria. With the growing frustration within the Alawite community, the greatest challenge the Alawites are facing today is whether or not they are able to make an attempt to separate themselves from Assad's regime and promote their own interests.⁴⁰

The Vested Stakes in Syria's Alawites

The War in Syria is one of the most complex and severe crises today and will remain so in the distant future. In the last six years, the war has not only shattered the lives and decent existence of millions of Syrians, but the violence has proliferated into neighbouring regions as far as Libya, Afghanistan and Europe. The Syrian crisis has also principally contributed to the massive refugee crisis and rise of terror attacks in France, Lebanon, Turkey and elsewhere. The necessity of a successful resolution of the Syrian conflict therefore requires a very careful act of balancing the political interests of the local, regional and international actors, as well as a creative mixture of double track diplomacy. In combination with the top-down approach of UN-mediated negotiations about Syria in Vienna in 2015 and Geneva in 2014 and 2016, lasting peace in the country can be reached indirectly through the bottom-up method of organized grassroots movements that would include Syrian minorities. This would involve political engagement with the Syrian minorities, particularly the Alawites, who represent a large segment of Syria's population and also a relevant part of the remaining internal popular support of the Assad regime. As the Alawites and other minorities have been engaged in the fierce civil war in Syria, they are a considerable part of the conflict's solution as well as future stability in the country. In the spirit of Dag Hammarskjöld's innovative concept of

preventive diplomacy, it is essential to agree on peace now but also to think of forestalling the emergence of future conflicts in Syria.

Looking at the contemporary political map of Syria, one is not surprised that four years of sporadic negotiations, which were diligently brokered by the UN, have not led anywhere close to the establishment of lasting peace in Syria. Besides the reluctance of the Syrian government and the Syrian opposition to form a government of national unity, the country's gradual fragmentation is another obstacle for pragmatic negotiations. As of 2017, Syria is practically divided among four warring parties – the Syrian government in Damascus, the Kurdish forces, the Islamic State and the Syrian opposition, which consists of approximately 7000 armed factions.⁴¹ The Syrian rebels, both moderate and radical, might have a common interest to topple Assad, but the ideological and political differences prevent them from forming a cohesive organized unit, not to mention the fact that groups such as Jabhat Ansar al-Din, Ghuraba al-Shamand and Jabhat al-Nusra openly associate themselves with jihadist organizations like Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State.

Despite the adoption of the Terms for a Cessation of Hostilities in Syria on 27 February 2016 in Geneva, Syria remains trapped in an unending war as the intense fighting in Aleppo, Idlib and the Wadi Barrada areas has demonstrated in the past year.⁴² The international community has also not been particularly successful in guaranteeing the protection of Syrian minorities. During the international peace conference for Syria in June 2012, the participants adopted the Geneva Communiqué, the six point plan that was laid down as a road map for political transition in Syria. The road map for Syria also counts on the establishment of a transitional governing body, which can create a neutral environment for the transition to take place. Although the Geneva Communiqué recognizes that 'there is no room for sectarianism or discrimination on ethnic, religious, linguistic or any other grounds'⁴³ in the Syrian peace process, the document does not propose any specific mechanism that would aim to protect the pro-government minorities from acts of revenge. Nor does the Geneva Communiqué persuade the parties to the conflict to guarantee the safety of areas in Syria where the minorities are concentrated.

Moreover, the protection of Syrian minorities is an issue that should not be underestimated. There are serious indications that the Alaw-

ites and other minorities might face possible reprisals by the Sunni extremists, who have repeatedly called for an extermination of Alawites and Shia in Syria. In November 2015, the sectarian acts of revenge already occurred in suburbs of Damascus against the Alawites living there. In order to stop the shelling by the government forces, the Army of Islam (*Jaysh al-Islam*), the dominant rebel group in the region, captured the Alawite army officers and their families and used them as living shields. The captives were put in dozens of cages and paraded in the streets throughout the rebel-controlled territory, so they could ‘taste the misery’⁴⁴ of their captives. These prisoners were subsequently displaced in the square with the intention of stopping the aerial bombardment. Similar acts, which are considered under international law as war crimes, also occurred in the city of Doume in Eastern Ghouta, where Alawite civilians were abducted by Syrian rebel commanders like Abu Muhammad al-Julani, and Zahran Alloush, and employed as human shields to deflect Russian airstrikes.⁴⁵

Due to various historical and cultural reasons, many Alawites believe that the fall of Assad’s dynasty will lead to their downfall. Yet, the Alawites might be the key to solving the conundrum of the Syrian peace process that is the role of Assad in the future Syrian politics. Although the Alawite community is deeply entrenched in the mountains of Western Syria, six years of civil war have taken its toll on the Syrian minority. Most of the villages in Latakia are already decorated with the pictures of killed Alawite soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the Syrian regime. Notwithstanding that Damascus does not provide any official list of casualties, it is estimated that up to 90 000 Alawite combatants or more have died while fighting on behalf of Assad. Taking into consideration the Alawite population in Syria reaches slightly over 2 million people, the scale of human losses is absolutely devastating.⁴⁶ Naturally, there is a growing frustration among the Alawite population due to its role in the war and what its position would be in post-conflict Syrian society. This element of constructive outrage can be effectively utilized to encourage the peace process and stabilization in Syria.

The increasing dissatisfaction with the Syrian regime has already generated the first public expression of the Alawite religious identity and political self-awareness independent from Assad’s regime. In April 2016, religious Alawite leaders published through a prominent European media outlet a document called the Declaration of an Identity

Reform. In its preamble, it stated: 'whereas we, the Alawites, furthermore concede that we have been, for far too long, defined with the words of others rather than our own'. Many international observers have concluded that the document asserts that the Alawites are ready and willing to make political choices without Assad's approval. Not only did the Alawites disassociate themselves from the regime in Damascus by declaring 'the ruling political power, whoever embodies it, does not represent us nor does it shape our identity or preserves our safety and reputation...nor do we, the Alawites, substantiate it or generate its power', but their description of "Alawism as a third model of and within Islam" other than Sunni and Shia also challenges Assad's credibility among his closest allies, namely Lebanon's Hezbollah and Iran.⁴⁷ By declaring that the Alawites are a 'third model', they make a political statement that they are not clients of foreign powers, henceforth cracking the image of the Assad regime as one of the closest allies of Tehran in the Middle East.

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Additionally, the Declaration of an Identity Reform can also be considered as an open invitation for dialogue and reconciliation between the Alawites and the Sunni majority. The document rejects Assad's brutal methods of silencing the political opponents and asserts that 'political command shall not, and under no circumstances, exert oppression out of fear of losing power or legitimacy'.⁴⁸ With the hope of avoiding further bloodshed, the document declares that 'for the sake of peaceful and prosperous coexistence, we want to embrace a New Era of the Alawites...in a religiously diverse society such as Syria our faith shall imbue our daily life with decency and morality...we shall not use our own beliefs to dictate the way of life or others'.⁴⁹ However, it is unknown from where the document originated and who exactly the authors were. The declaration was most probably written by the Alawite community members who have connections outside Syria, and they also constitute the core of Alawite opposition movement. Yet it is difficult for now to assess how much influence the Alawite dissent currently possesses or to what degree the declaration actually resonated among the majority of Alawites and overall within Syria. Nevertheless, if the document is authentic and expresses the sincere desire to promote changes for the Alawites, it could have far-reaching effects on the Syrian political landscape for many years to come.⁵⁰

From a historical perspective, the publication of the Declaration of an Identity Reform is a remarkable event for the Alawites, but it is

not the first time the Alawite community actually formulated its own policies. When in 1936 the short-lived Alawite state was supposed to be absorbed by Syria, the Alawite leaders at that time sent several letters to the French Prime Minister Léon Blum and requested France to grant them freedom and independence. The authors of the letter, for example Sulayman al-Assad (Bashar al-Assad's grandfather) stated that 'Alawites refuse to be joined to Syria, for it is a Sunni state and Sunnis consider them unbelievers; ending the mandate would expose the Alawites to mortal danger'.⁵¹ Three months later, in September more than four hundred and fifty thousand Alawites as well as many Druze and Christians signed a petition asking France to protect them from the Alawites' 'traditional and hereditary enemies'.⁵² The expressions of political consciousness like the petition of 1936 or the declaration of 2016 showed that the Alawites have been capable of making decisions collectively and they are willing, if necessary, to cooperate with anyone who can help them to secure their own self-rule and religious rights.

The willingness of the Alawite community to decide their own future should be of concern for the international community. The frequent talks on Syria between the US, the Russia Federation, Europe and the Middle Eastern countries still represents an excellent opportunity to mitigate this shortcoming in relation to Syrian minorities. The double-track diplomacy in Syria can be divided into two phases. Firstly, it is essential for the future stability in Syria to recognize the necessity of addressing the issue of minorities in Syria as a vital competent of the transitional process. In these present negotiations, the formal assurance of respecting minorities' rights and a promise of restraining possible reprisals against them is not a major waiver for the Syrian opposition or any other party to the conflict. Thus, a clause can be easily inserted in the Geneva Communiqué, which states that 'all parties that are committed to the sovereignty, independence, national unity and territorial integrity of Syria will abstain from the use of violence or any kind form of discrimination against any ethnic or religious community, notably the Alawites, Druze, Shia and Christians, that might have directly or indirectly supported the Assad regime'. Secondly, even though this diplomatic statement cannot realistically guarantee the safety of the above mentioned segments of population, it can be used as political leverage during the direct UN political engagement with the Alawite community. Based on the UN-brokered commitment to protect the minorities, the Alawites might be incentivized to stop col-

laborating with the regime in Damascus in exchange for future autonomous status within Syria that is comparable to Iraqi Kurdistan.

The Political Engagement with the Alawite Community

*Routes of
Peace
in Syria*

Even though the focus of the international community has temporally shifted to containing the Islamic State and its barbaric activities in Syria and Iraq and also preventing the Russian air force from targeting Assad's moderate opponents, the international community continues neglecting the possibility of direct diplomatic engagement with the Alawite community in Latakia. Because of the lack of external incentive for the Alawites to reconsider their support for Damascus, Assad at this moment is not pressured to negotiate even with the moderate opposition and continues to blame the war on "foreign agents" and "terrorists."³³ Indeed, the Russian direct military intervention in Syria might have enabled Assad to shift the balance in his favour or at least to give him time to wait for more a favourable position in future negotiations. Currently, the Syrian opposition is unable to win militarily against Assad and his Russian and Iranian allies. However, there is another way of pushing the Syrian government to the negotiation table or even of neutralising Assad's ruling circle. The possible establishment of a communication channel between the international community and the Alawite tribes followed then by the successful promotion of policy based on incentives might result in turning the tide away from Damascus.

Contrary to widespread belief, the Alawites are not a monolithic political group that unanimously supports the government in Damascus. The reason why the Alawites support Assad historically originates from political pragmatism and the fear of government dominated by the Sunni extremists. Inside today's Syria, many political dissidents and military opponents of the Assad regime appear among the four Alawite tribes, namely Kalbiyya, Khaiyatin, Haddadin, and Matawirah. The defections of high ranking officers such as Major General Mohammed Khallouf, Colonel Zubayda Almiqi and many others, who claimed that Assad has been deliberately provoking an Alawite-Sunni sectarian war, illustrate that a real Alawite opposition against the Assad political establishment truly exists. Also, the Free Alawite Front (*Jabhat al-'Alawiyin al-Ahrar*) has been formed in 2012 and at this moment individual soldiers operate sporadically as part of the Syrian Free Army. Among

the Alawite opposition, distinguished figures such as Mazen Darwish, former director of the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression who spent more than three years in prison, and Abdel-Aziz Al Khayyer, a centrist politician who has advocated peaceful transition to democratic rule, stand out. Undoubtedly, these individuals can serve as intermediaries between the international community and the local Alawite leaders, who would like to make an attempt to distance themselves from the government and openly convey their own commitment to peace and democratic reforms in Syria.⁵⁴

Moreover, if the biggest concern of the Alawite community is the reprisals from the Sunni majority rule, then an appropriate offer by the international community to Alawites could be a creation of the Alawite autonomous territory in Latakia. This modern Alawite autonomous region, which existed once for a short period of time 90 years ago, could be relatively easily protected by UN peacekeeping forces due to the mountainous terrain and the access to the sea. The peacekeepers would also make sure no ethnic cleansing takes place against Sunni areas in Latakia. The benefit of the autonomous status within Syria for the Alawites under the aegis of the international community might not only prevent possible atrocities on the Syrian minority group, which could reach such an extent like those in Rwanda in 1994, but also the elimination of Assad's internal centre of support could disrupt his confidence in staying in Damascus. Although currently there is no demand for creation of an independent state, Alawites have always desired to run their own affairs. As such, the international community should explore whether or not in the midst of increasing casualties in the Alawite sect one of the four Alawite tribes can now produce a movement for Alawite semi-autonomy within the future Syrian constitutional arrangement.⁵⁵

Another argument for the establishment of the Alawite autonomy is Damascus' constant refusal to share more power with the Alawites, who are well aware that Assad's survival depends on the cohesion and sacrifices of the Syrian people. Even if the Syrian government will be able to secure some sort of victory over the opposition, there is no guarantee that the regime will eventually reward the loyal Alawites and other Syrians for their support. Unlike Hafez al-Assad, who was well-known as a shrewd leader and a cunning political strategist, his son did not inherit the father's Machiavellian qualities and remains

more rigid in response to the new circumstances.⁵⁶ Assad and his circle of trusted advisers have not only managed to survive largely thanks to the muscle of the Syrian army and the Russian air force, but also because of the cohesion and dedication of the fellow Alawite community, whose members disproportionately serve in the Syrian security apparatus. Being shaken by the mounting war losses and irritated with the president's policies and authoritarian style of government, many have begun to express their rightful demand for more power, wealth and opportunities. The failure to provide the Alawites with sufficient compensation might be a cause of a new conflict in Syria, but this time between the Alawites and whoever holds the power in Damascus.⁵⁷

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Last but not least, it is in the interest of the Alawite community in Latakia and Tartus to reconsider backing the Syrian leadership. If a new strong opposition movement emerges among such crucial supporters such as the Alawite tribes in Latakia and Tartus, Assad will not be able to crush it with force and the government will be obliged to make substantial concessions to its followers as well as to the rest of Syrian society. The absence of Assad as a veto player could encourage the Syrian moderate opposition to make up their mind and in the spirit of the 2012 Geneva Communiqué start considering peace with Damascus and the Alawites as an option.⁵⁸ That is when the real democratic transition in Syria can begin.

Conclusion

As the Russian Federation directly stepped into the conflict in September 2015 in order to support the Syrian government's crumbling military, Syria has witnessed more violence suffered by its already decimated population. Like in the cases of the US involvement in Vietnam (1965-73), the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979-89), the US war in Iraq (2003-11) and the European intervention in Libya (2011), the incursions of Russian troops into Syria will inevitably hinder a political resolution to the civil war. The airstrikes conducted by the nations operating on the Syrian battlefield will without doubt fail to produce any tangible result. Even if the Syrian regime manages to get the upper hand vis-à-vis the numerous opposition, the peace will not last due to the rigidity of the political system that governed in Damascus for almost a half a century. On the other hand, Assad's opponents currently

do not have the capacity to achieve victory, nor the ability to present a viable political alternative acceptable to all segments of the Syrian population.

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If the application of military force is not a solution, then how to deal with the Assad regime, which acts as a veto player in the Syrian civil war and continues its policy of violence and destruction? By focusing on the Alawite minority, the article proposes that the international community should utilize its diplomatic resources and skills in order to establish dialogue with this prominent minority group in the Latakia region, which represents the core of Assad's internal popular support in Syria. Although the engagement with the Alawite community does not provide a comprehensive and immediate solution to the situation in Syria, it can have a long-term positive effect on the political environment in the country.

The proper use of incentives like a promise of future autonomy in Syria and the protection against the potential violence from the Sunni majority might be a convincing argument for the Alawites to stop supporting Assad's strategy of defeating the opposition by any means including chemical weapons, aerial attacks on civilians, cluster bombs, incendiary weapons and Scud missiles. The international community must finally assume its moral duty and devise an intelligent strategy to the problem of instabilities both in Syria and Iraq. The indifference and the avoidance of responsibility to act will only prolong the humanitarian catastrophe. At the same time, ignorance and simplistic solutions that are not backed by the deep knowledge of the Middle East failed so many times in the past. The question remains whether or not in Washington, Paris or Berlin there is enough political will to start bringing concrete pragmatic political proposals, which might finally break the endless status quo in Syria and also reinforce the prospects of long-lasting peace in a war-torn country.



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Features, Aims and Limits of Turkey's Humanitarian Diplomacy

Federico Donelli

Several scholars agree that Turkey applied humanitarian diplomacy as part of its global opening, a consequence of which is that it has become a medium-sized global player. However, it is still not clear what Turkey's experience teaches us regarding humanitarian diplomacy. Additionally, what is unique in Turkey's application? In order to provide an empirically-backed response to such research questions, this paper initially studies what Turkey did with humanitarian diplomacy, what Turkey's objectives were in utilizing it, and how Turkey utilized it. The article concludes by moving to debate on the implications of such an application for humanitarian diplomacy literature.

Keywords: Humanitarian diplomacy, Foreign Policy, humanitarianism, track-two, Turkey

During the last fifteen years, after decades of status-quo oriented agenda, Turkey's status and role in the international political system has risen toward a medium-sized global player or multi-regional actor. Behind Turkey's role, there is an increased use of soft power. Turkish soft power has gained importance owing to the involvement of new institutions, state and non-state actors (*agents*), and the adoption of novel frameworks and policy narratives (*behaviour*). In order to better understand Turkey's growing role, one should consider new analytical approaches and concepts. Among these notions, this study chooses humanitarian diplomacy because it is one of the less known features of Turkish foreign policy.

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Drawing on the conceptualisation of humanitarian diplomacy given by the limited literature on the subject, this paper addresses the Turkish understanding of it - its narrative and its practical consequences - and tries to analyse its nature and features. It juxtaposes the core tenets of Turkey's humanitarian oriented policy with the general outlook and practices. This research's aim is to lay bare humanitarian diplomacy, a less well-known but nevertheless increasingly vital aspect of the current Turkish foreign policy. The article assumes that Turkey has used humanitarian diplomacy as a tool to increase its political influence and presence by using persuasion and co-optive power. In other words, humanitarian diplomacy has become part of Turkey's soft power toolkit and diplomatic activities. The empirical analysis of case studies shows how the humanitarian-oriented agenda adopted by Turkey is a diplomatic strategy that allowed it to earn trust and increase its reputation in the field, as well as inside international fora. Moreover, it is useful in developing post-conflict mediation and reconstruction. The research aims to improve the literature regarding humanitarian diplomacy, which is still underdeveloped, and to provide the humanitarian actors with a theoretical and operational tool box.

Considering the rising saliency of humanitarian diplomacy in Turkish foreign policy agenda, there is a need for greater attention from scholars on a few pertinent questions regarding the humanitarian diplomacy concept - what does Turkey's experience teach us regarding humanitarian diplomacy?

In order to answer to these research questions, this article presents its arguments in four sections. The next section gives an overview of the humanitarian diplomacy literature and its increasing presence in the international political system. This section also presents humanitarian diplomacy according to different schools of thought and academic sub-fields of the wider discipline of International Relations. In the second section, the research debates humanitarian activities, their political relevance and nexus with foreign policy, whilst introducing the concept of Track Two diplomacy. In the third section, by taking Turkey's Foreign Policy (TFP) as a case study, the paper analyzes the Turkish understanding of humanitarian diplomacy. The analysis is integrated into a wider framework of the TFP novel approach, which was outlined by former Prime Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu who also developed his own conceptualisation of humanitarian diplomacy. Fi-

nally, the fourth section is an empirical analysis of how Turkey has practically translated its humanitarian-oriented approach into an institutionalized inter-agency coordination policy in the field.

Theoretical and Analytic Framework

The conceptual framework for the following insight into TFP deals with one of the less used and debatable concepts of Political Science and International Relations (IR): humanitarian diplomacy. Although an empirical analysis of the interface between humanitarian aid and politics is not new, recent studies have outlined different aspects following different IR perspectives: 1) realists/neorealists pertain to the 'strategic guide policy'; 2) constructivists to the 'norm-guided behaviour'; 3) liberal internationalists to the 'cooperative guide policy'; and 4), finally, scholars of International Political Economy refer to the policy relying on global economic context and domestic coalition preferences. Without adopting a single paradigm, this work aims to analyze the Turkish humanitarian oriented foreign policy by using a holistic approach to humanitarian diplomacy, bringing together some of the diverse works and views from leading scholars on mediation and peacebuilding studies.

Even if this academic sub-field is still evolving, humanitarian diplomacy is rooted in the history of humanitarian action going back to the nineteenth century. Humanitarian assistance has always been a highly political activity, and has never been disbursed solely on the basis of need. Nonetheless, the relationship between humanitarian aid and politics has changed extensively during the last decades. Nowadays, humanitarian aid is an integral part of a donor's comprehensive strategy to transform conflicts, decrease violence and set the stage for liberal development. According to Devon Curtis,¹ this changing role is called 'the new humanitarianism', and is an example of the closer integration of the humanitarian perspective and political objectives.

Humanitarian diplomacy is an emerging and deeply contested term. Its definition does not completely match with that of conventional diplomacy, whose objective is to manage the international relations of states through negotiation. Instead, humanitarian diplomacy focuses on maximizing support for operations and programs, and building the partnerships necessary if humanitarian objectives are to be achieved.

Some organizations and scholars use other terms that are very similar, such as ‘intervention diplomacy’,² ‘disaster diplomacy’³ or ‘human rights diplomacy’.⁴

The recent theoretical impetus for humanitarian diplomacy came from IR sub-fields such as security studies, peace and conflict studies, and humanitarian affairs. However, there is as of yet no body of literature or specific manual dedicated to humanitarian diplomacy.⁵ A first book was devoted to the subject in 2007, *Humanitarian diplomacy: Practitioners and their craft*, edited by Larry Minear and Hazel Smith, and the expression has since been used with growing frequency by a number of humanitarian agencies. In their edited book on humanitarian diplomacy, the two authors conceptualise humanitarian diplomacy as:

the activities carried out by humanitarian organizations to obtain the space from political and military authorities within which to function with integrity. These activities comprise such efforts as arranging for the presence of humanitarian organizations in a given country, negotiating access to civilian populations in need of assistance and protection, monitoring assistance programs, promoting respect for international law and norms, supporting indigenous individuals and institutions, and engaging in advocacy at a variety of levels in support of humanitarian objectives.⁶

Humanitarian diplomacy is not yet a solidly established concept generally recognized by the international community; there is a big difference between conceiving the idea, using the term itself, and arriving at international recognition for its definition and agreement on how it should be conducted.⁷ In 2009 the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) established a new division in charge of promoting humanitarian diplomacy in which they described it as “persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles.”⁸ In an attempt to define the strategic concept of humanitarian diplomacy, the IFRC found that there were eighty-nine different definitions among the relevant agencies and in the grey and scientific literature.

Several humanitarian agencies and states interpret the concept differently. These have developed their own definition of humanitarian diplomacy, which reflects their specific mandate, their diplomatic

practices, and their aims. An example is offered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), whose definition of humanitarian diplomacy is narrower and consists chiefly in:

making the voices of the victims of armed conflicts and disturbances heard, in negotiating humanitarian agreements with international or national players, in acting as a neutral intermediary between them and in helping to prepare and ensure respect for humanitarian law.⁹

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According to Veuthey, whereby humanitarian diplomacy is primarily a form of dialogue (private or public), it aims, through the representatives of governments, international organizations, humanitarian organizations, as well as NGOs and actors within civil society, to defend human life and dignity in those places where it is under greatest threat.¹⁰

Different organizations have identified distinct priorities for humanitarian diplomacy, and in very different socio-cultural contexts, depending on the geographical location of the crises. At the ICRC, for example, humanitarian diplomacy has precise objectives: providing protection and emergency relief (health and sanitation, food security, shelter, etc.), offering assistance to detainees searching for the missing to re-establish family links, and ensuring the safety of its own staff.¹¹ Even if, as part of its Strategy 2020 stated at the end of 2009, the IFRC identified twelve priority areas of action for humanitarian diplomacy, this remains a delicate and controversial matter. As argued by Holzgrefe and Keohane, humanitarian diplomacy also includes an advocacy and persuasion campaign, as carried out, for example, by Médecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) on humanitarian interventions.¹²

Humanitarian actions are characterized by a multiplicity of principles, but three are judged as fundamental: *impartiality* (assistance according to the severity of need), *neutrality* (activities without political or other extraneous agendas) and *independence* (the obligation to resist interference with key principles).¹³ According to Régnier, humanitarian diplomacy is 'a multi-level process' because there are several levels of contact and intermediation: internationally, nationally, sub-nationally, locally and on the field.¹⁴ As a matter of principle, humanitarian diplomats do not carry any national political messages and do not promote a particular model of society. Nevertheless, some organizations (especially faith-based ones) have their own specific values and/or a diffuse wish for change, which compounds the already exogenous nature of

international humanitarian work carried out by foreigners. This tendency increases the risk of this form of diplomacy being manipulated by certain actors who are pursuing their interests, and of institutional interests coming before the actual interests of the victims of humanitarian crises. Furthermore, even if ‘the principle of neutrality does not necessarily translate into political inaction, some humanitarian aid agencies do not fully subscribe to it.’¹⁵

The Nexus between Humanitarian Actions and Diplomacy

The end of the Cold War, was followed by the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the financial crisis of 2008, giving rise to the birth of a new age of international uncertainty. By then, diplomacy had also changed. Hedley Bull, a theorist of IR, provides a conceptualisation of the institution of diplomacy that “is the conduct of relations between states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means.”¹⁶ Therefore, Bull includes both ideas: actors, who ‘do’ diplomacy, and behavior, how and why it is done. Recently, James Der Derian provided a broader definition of diplomacy as the ‘mediation of mutual estrangement between individuals, groups or entities,’¹⁷ allowing the overcoming of the traditional state-centrist conception. In a more polity-oriented conceptualisation of diplomacy, linked with IR theory, Jönsson and Hall argued that ‘communication, representation, and the reproduction of international society constitute the central functions (or purpose) of diplomacy.’¹⁸ Even if, for the authors, each of these concepts will be applied to the actors and processes of diplomacy, communication is a function also to be spotted into humanitarian negotiation or diplomacy.

With the accelerating pace of globalization, a multiplicity of new areas of global diplomatic activity, relating to such issues as climate change, the environment, access to water, culture, health, and knowledge, has developed alongside classic national diplomacy. Nowadays, diplomacy is becoming increasingly fragmented: it is no longer primarily bilateral but also multilateral, no longer simply intergovernmental but also multi-institutional and multi-functional. As a result, humanitarian efforts have been included into a wider idea of diplomatic activity. However, state humanitarian diplomacy differs from humanitarian diplomacy as conducted by humanitarian aid agencies in the way it becomes subordinate to political and security interests that may run

contrary to the fundamental respect for the life and rights of victims.¹⁹ This assumption opens a debate about humanitarian activity and its correlation with diplomacy and political relevance. Often humanitarian aid as an element of states' foreign policy is one instrument among many for working towards peace, mediation and promoting human rights. Minear and Smith explained the nexus between humanitarian action and diplomacy by the introduction of a distinction between 'capital *D*' Diplomacy and 'small *D*' diplomacy. According to the authors, the former involves high-level and professional diplomats, while 'small *D*' diplomacy is 'more terrestrial' and 'it covers a host of humanitarian functions of a more day-to-day sort'.²⁰ They also argued that in the current era of uncertainty and an increased number of crisis, 'small *D*' diplomacy may overlap with Diplomacy, when 'humanitarian practitioners themselves play a role in negotiating the terms of engagement in hot war and post conflict situations'.²¹

Previously it had been Daniel Toole who put emphasis on the significance of 'humanitarian negotiations' or 'humanitarian access negotiation'. Toole argues that 'humanitarian negotiations have been characterized as a process' (rather than outcome-driven processes), 'demanding ongoing communication with local power-brokers, encouraging the building of a long-term relationship that will remain at the core of the implementation of the agreements'.²² Before Toole, other scholars argued that international actors create new forms of networks of influence and fora to engage in informal discussions and consultation processes (third party).²³ The so-called third-party intervention is a process designed to encourage the development of mutual understanding of differing perceptions and needs, the creation of new ideas, and strong problem-solving relationships through the use of informal intermediaries.²⁴ Thus, humanitarian access negotiations can be considered diplomatic activity carried out by informal intermediaries, or unofficial people who work outside official negotiation, mediation, or so-called track one processes.

Third-party actors initiate or facilitate discussions among non-official representatives of the conflicting parties in order to stimulate progress in official negotiation and assist in resolving crisis situations. The involvement is designed to promote relationship and trust-building across people, develop lines of communication, and explore options that could meet both sides' interests and needs.²⁵ The intermediaries' role described above originated with the development of track Two

interventions. Track Two interventions bring together non-official, but influential members of the parties for direct, private interaction with joint analysis of the conflict and joint problem-solving.²⁶ Consequently, contemporary terms such as Track Two diplomacy, citizen diplomacy, multi-track diplomacy, supplemental diplomacy, pre-negotiation, consultation, interactive conflict resolution, back-channel diplomacy, NGOs diplomacy are common among practitioners and in IR vocabulary.²⁷ According to Joseph Montville, who coined the term Track Two, this kind of diplomacy is defined as:

an unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aims to develop strategies, influence public opinion, and organize human and material resources in ways that might help to resolve their conflict. ... [It] is a process designed to assist official leaders to resolve or, in the first instance, to manage conflicts by exploring possible solutions out of public view and without the requirements to formally negotiate or bargain for advantage.²⁸

The last twenty years have seen Track Two actors (nongovernmental and unofficial groups and individuals) play a wide variety of roles vis-à-vis armed groups and peacemaking. Specific activities of Track Two diplomacy may vary from a one-step action to long-term projects, and include observation, riot control conciliation and negotiation, joint reexamination of historical events, ecumenical prayers, establishing interfaith peace centers, rebuilding clinics, and creating new school curricula on ethnic tolerance or aid distribution, depending on the needs of the specific place, time, and cultural impact. According to Fisher and Keashly, the intermediaries are typically knowledgeable and skilled scholar/practitioners who are impartial and whose training and expertise enable them to facilitate productive dialogue and problem-solving between the parties.²⁹ Among them are also placed a multiplicity of humanitarian actors.³⁰

Because official contacts among the conflicting parties are often tense, 'un-official policy dialogue' or Track Two diplomacy has gained currency in conflict resolution and security policy circles. Scholars in the field of post-conflict studies point to additional limitations of traditional diplomacy that informal intermediaries are particularly well suited to address. For instance, the humanitarian actors – NGOs, foun-

dations and members of civil society - have greater freedom than the states to approach non-state actors, because governments often fear that any opening towards non-recognized groups will confer legitimacy on them.³¹ Hundreds of unofficial policy dialogues have taken place, focused on a variety of regional security issues. Track two actors, including humanitarian ones, are less threatening to armed groups, and find it easier to work flexibly, unofficially, and off-the-record, and have less to be concerned about in terms of conveying official/legal recognition. Many unofficial dialogues are either bilateral or multilateral attempts to address or simply to define regional and local problems. The main goal of such efforts is usually not formal conflict resolution through contributions to peace settlements, but rather conflict management, tension reduction, confidence-building, and the formation of regional or sub-regional identities that allow actors to frame and approach problems in similar and preferably cooperative ways. Normally, informal intermediaries are non-governmental actors, such as religious institutions, academics, former government officials, NGOs, humanitarian organizations, and think tanks, among others. In some cases, such as Turkey's, however, governments or government officials can act together as informal intermediaries.

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To sum up, what emerges in the existing literature is that humanitarian diplomacy represents a growing field in diplomacy and it is, as a rule, considered part of wider state public diplomacy. The term is used not only by humanitarian organizations, but also by national co-operation agencies and ministries (foreign affairs, defence, development, civil protection) comprising humanitarian aid departments in order to respond to domestic and international emergencies. Humanitarian agencies have a genuine interest in participating in Track Two diplomacy, which enables them to shape opinions on humanitarian matters before official negotiations take place. Informal diplomacy supplements rather than replaces intergovernmental fora, and helps humanitarian agencies facilitate contact and dialogue that might be extremely difficult to establish otherwise. In other words, humanitarian diplomacy does not reject traditional bilateral or multilateral diplomacy. On the contrary, to be as efficient as possible, it has to be coordinated with conventional diplomacy in capital cities and in the field, without thereby becoming subordinate to the latter.

Turkey's Humanitarian Oriented FP after the Arab Upheavals

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Turkey's discourse on humanitarian diplomacy emerged at a time when its 'zero-problems with neighbors' policy came under severe criticism. The events of 2011 and the drama of the Syrian civil war have increased the debate surrounding Turkey's foreign policy, in particular on the validity of the zero problems policy.³² Several scholars have judged the 'zero problems' as a failed strategy, defining it as obsolete and unable to deal with the changes and challenges that emerged from the Arab upheavals.³³ Although the term 'zero problems' appears abused and has been inappropriately used to summarize the whole TFP, it represents only one of the principles that form Ahmet Davutoğlu's wider geopolitical doctrine defined as 'central country' or 'central power'. The central country concept is used by the former Prime Minister to explain Turkey's international positioning in his academic writings. Davutoğlu believes that Turkey's unique geographic and geo-cultural position gives it a special central-country (*merkez ülke*) role, and therefore Turkey cannot define itself in a defensive manner. This approach imagines a wider territorial base than the nation-state, a transnational identity that revolves around Turkey.

Turkey is still currently redefining its international identity from being a passive regional state to a constructive global actor. Turkey is identified both geographically and historically with more than one region and one culture, enabling the country to have a central role and maneuver in several regions simultaneously.³⁴ Davutoğlu stated that Turkey possesses a 'strategic' depth and it should act as a 'central country' and break away from a static and single-parameter policy.³⁵ The multi-directionality of its foreign policy has made Turkey a hub of a wider region defined as 'Afro-Eurasia', stretching from Central Asia to the Caucasus and sub-Saharan Africa via the Middle East.³⁶ Kardaş argues that while the 'zero problems' policy has drawn wide scholarly attention and media coverage, the 'central country' concept is more important to understand Turkey's foreign policy before and after the Arab turmoil.³⁷

The post-Arab uprisings environment has partly invalidated Turkey's ambitious policy, forcing Ankara to review and adapt its assertive approach. Following the 2011 events, TFP has been modified in its content, instruments and mechanism, but the 'central country' doc-

trine remains the main framework. In light of the post 2011 events, TFP agenda has assumed a more liberal, value-based approach due to a new space of opportunity to get in direct contact with people. As a result, there has been an increase in Turkey's civilian capacity through the involvement of non-state actors in the policy-making process, and in its use of new soft power tools in cultural and public diplomacy.³⁸ At the same time, the growing number of non-state actors activities beyond the border has led Turkey's policy-makers to attach greater importance to the humanitarian discourse in some crisis countries, such as Afghanistan, Myanmar and Somalia.³⁹ Thus, TFP has adopted the approach of humanitarian diplomacy to tackle both regional crises and issues, and challenges in the wider framework.⁴⁰ This is because, as Davutoğlu said, Turkey's influence is felt in a wide geographical area (Afro-Eurasia), 'not only symbolizing its power but also symbolizing its conscience,'⁴¹ and "Turkish foreign policy is based on securing and nurturing a peaceful, stable, prosperous and cooperative regional and international environment that is conducive to human development".⁴² In other words, after the Arab upheavals, humanitarian action became an important tool for promoting particular aspects of Turkey's identity and values and in so doing projecting a particular image of Turkey as a global actor. Therefore, as Akpınar highlighted, Turkish discourse on humanitarian diplomacy emerged as 'a result of an ongoing recalibration process of its own foreign policy agenda'.⁴³

The aftermaths of this shift toward a more 'humanitarian' oriented foreign policy has been seen clearly in the growth of Turkey's official development assistance (ODA) since 2011. Turkey, a founding member of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), is also an observer to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC). However, when compared to the 28 OECD-DAC donor countries, Turkey has provided more assistance than traditional donors such as Italy. The 2017 Global Humanitarian Assistance report highlighted that Turkey expenditure on humanitarian aid in 2016 comes only second after the U.S., which spent \$6.3 billion.⁴⁴ Indeed, as illustrated in Table 1, Turkish ODA reached \$6 billion in 2016, and in terms of the ratio of ODA to Gross National Income (GNI), Turkey emerged as the most generous donor with a figure of 0.75 percent. Turkey provided the largest share of its bilateral development co-operation to Syria, Somalia, Kyrgyzstan, Albania and Afghanistan. The main sectors for Tur-

key's bilateral development co-operation were humanitarian aid and refugee support, governance and civil society, and education, health and population.

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Turkish Conceptualisation of Humanitarian Diplomacy: Principles and Aims

A feature relevance of Turkish humanitarian diplomacy is the discourse and the use of highly popular-yet often misconstrued-concepts that impart meaning to its practical efforts. New concepts and rhetoric all founded and promulgated by Ahmet Davutoğlu, the chief architect of the Turkish international agenda. Although Davutoğlu left the political set in May 2016, his resonance is still prevalent, especially on Turkish foreign policy-makers and academia outlook. According to him, Turkey's approach to humanitarian diplomacy emerges from its determination to become a regional and global actor within 'the rapid stream of history'.⁴⁵ In the face of history's inflow, there are three positions that can be taken: resist change; float in this flux as far as possible; and take an active stance. In the last few years, Turkey's preference has been for the third position, moving as an actor who can change the course of history, rather than be an ordinary and passive component of it. As evidence of these changes, humanitarian diplomacy was the main theme of the Fifth Annual Ambassadors' Conference held in Ankara and Izmir between 2 and 7 January 2013. Even if Turkey's humanitarian policy was designed before the Arab upheavals,⁴⁶ Davutoğlu posed a new notion of humanitarian diplomacy to explain and legitimize Ankara's involvement in different regions affected by crisis and political instability. As pointed out by Akpınar, the discourse on humanitarian diplomacy emerged as a result of Turkey's recalibration process, in particular to explain the widening of focus and scale of its foreign policy, which went beyond the immediate borders toward distant regions such as Africa, Latin America and East Asia.

As shown in the first section, there is no single definition of humanitarian diplomacy in the literature. Currently there are almost 89 different definitions,⁴⁷ but none of these are completely suitable to the Turkish understanding.⁴⁸ This point makes Turkish conceptualisation particularly interesting for the theoretical study of the topic. Turkey's definition of humanitarian diplomacy resonates with Reigner's definition that the term [humanitarian diplomacy] is used not only by hu-

manitarian organizations, but also by national co-operation agencies and ministries (foreign affairs, defense, development, civil protection) comprising humanitarian aid departments to respond to domestic or international emergencies.⁴⁹ Indeed, Turkey emphasizes the role of state as a humanitarian actor, highlighting a type of diplomacy that is multi-track in nature. In this perspective, Turkey's view underpins both the role of the state and the non-state actors in humanitarian diplomacy.

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In Davutoğlu's perspective, humanitarian diplomacy or the rise of a human-oriented diplomacy represents the beginning of a more enlightened foreign policy. Davutoğlu believes that a new international system requires an approach based on a 'critical equilibrium between conscience and power,' and Turkey is determined to be a leader in establishing such an understanding on a global scale.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the former Prime Minister believes that Turkey should be a compassionate (soft power) and powerful (hard power) state. According to him, one will be compassionate 'if one's conscience dictates where one should go and to whom one should reach' and, at the same time, one will need to have power, 'so that one has the ability to reach where needed'.⁵¹ This approach, which can help move beyond the hard-power versus soft-power dichotomy, requires that NGOs and state apparatus act in coordination as 'a combination of power and compassion' because 'if either of them is missing, the result will be either cruelty or weakness'.⁵² Davutoğlu's holistic meaning of humanitarianism is multi-faceted and multi-channeled. The multi-channeled or multi-levels idea has been operationalized by Turkey in the field within an inter-agency coordinated policy useful in the management of crisis situations.

Operationalize Turkey's Inter-Agency Policy

During the last ten years, the Turkish government has welcomed being called an 'emerging donor'⁵³ because the status of 'emerging', and thus increasingly significant and influential, plays a decisive role in Turkey's identity as a self-confident international actor.⁵⁴ Indeed, in a global context, Turkey's humanitarian-oriented approach is used as a way to live up to the expectations of international solidarity and problem solving initiatives that come with the status of being a 'rising power'. As a result, Turkey's humanitarian engagement has grown and its reputation as a 'humanitarian state' rings louder over all Afro-Eurasia.

Offering assistance in the wake of humanitarian crisis provides important opportunities to demonstrate solidarity and to demonstrate material resources. This is particularly important both in regions where Turkey was negatively perceived, such as the Middle East and the Balkans, as well as where it had almost no presence such as Sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, Turkish efforts in the humanitarian field resonates its image as a 'humanitarian state'. According to Keyman and Sazak, the phrase 'humanitarian state' signifies a distinctive attribute of the Turkish aid model from that of both established and emerging donors. The concept of humanitarian state is not just a matter of semantics; it is rather a strategically crafted idea that demarcates state building and nation building, and it reverses the former over the latter.⁵⁵ However, following the realists' approach to humanitarian diplomacy, normative discourses such as that on humanitarianism may act as tools for legitimizing strategic state interests in regions beyond their sovereign borders. The case of Turkey's humanitarian diplomacy has showed how Turkish humanitarian efforts have been used to expand its ideational power and to acquire more leverage in some regions. Indeed, humanitarian initiatives provide important opportunities to Turkey for strengthening bilateral relations, increasing political weight and building up a new reputation. As noted by Gilley 'the so-called emerging powers', like Turkey, 'make humanitarian assistance a priority because it fits well with their active diplomatic agendas that seek to increase influence through such good international citizenship'.⁵⁶

Following Davutoğlu' conceptualisation, Turkish humanitarian diplomacy has three dimensions, or refer to Régnier work, three levels of action: the first level concerns the citizens of the Turkish Republic; the second dimension concerns a Turkish human-oriented attitude in crisis zones; and the third sphere concerns an inclusive humanitarian perspective at the global level, most importantly in the UN system.⁵⁷ These three levels of action are linked to the main goals of the Turkish humanitarian diplomacy framework: 1) improving peoples' lives; 2) action in crisis regions; 3) and cultivating humanitarian sensibilities within the UN system.⁵⁸ In the Turkish understanding of humanitarian diplomacy, three levels of action are not conceived of as separate parts, but as interrelated pieces of an inclusive and comprehensive strategy. This multidimensional model offers a holistic approach to humanitarian diplomacy, suggesting the importance of mobilization

on multiple levels and the promotion of this understanding on multiple platforms.⁵⁹

An important trait of Turkish humanitarian diplomacy is civilian capacity building. The term civilian capacity in this context refers to ‘non-uniformed civilian individuals or groups deployed overseas to crisis or post-conflict settings by (or coordinated through) their respective governments.’⁶⁰ The term includes personnel from the public sector or private sector, including civil society organizations that are in some way coordinated under government aegis.⁶¹ Turkey’s multifaceted and multi-channeled understanding of humanitarian diplomacy means that “there have been contributions from several of Turkey’s public institutions and NGOs, ranging from Turkish Airlines, to TİKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Coordination Agency), Kızılay (Turkish Red Crescent), and TOKİ (Housing Development Administration of Turkey).”⁶² Since the early 2000s, Turkish commitment to post-conflict scenarios seems to have shifted from military missions to civilian capacity assistance and management of sporadic armed conflict, and also to conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding.

The involvement of NGOs and civil society organizations in the field boosts the quality and quantity of Turkish humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, in order to allow the quickest and most effective action, Turkey’s holistic approach requires coordination between various public and private institutions, and civil society organizations. Several studies highlight that coordination emerges as a fundamental problem for both traditional and emerging donors.⁶³ Indeed, the mobilization of resources is frequently laid down in precise national security and emergency management plans, which include established procedures for mobilizing resources and defining areas of responsibility for delivering relief supplies.

Turkish humanitarian diplomacy tries to go beyond this problem through a coordination of state and non-state actors in conflict-affected and disaster-stricken situations. In practice, this inter-agency coordinated policy is provided with an institutional framework, at the top of which are various state institutions from the Prime Minister’s Office (The Disaster and Management Presidency, AFAD) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Development. As evidenced by several crisis situations in which Turkey is involved, domestic crises (refugees from Syria) and international crises (Somalia, Afghani-

stan, Myanmar), a key factor in ensuring the effectiveness of Turkish humanitarian diplomacy is the coordination of activities and actors on the ground. The Turkish humanitarian effort brings together key agents of Turkish bureaucracy (AFAD, TIKA, Directorate of Religious Affairs) with influential NGOs (İHH, Yeryüzü Doktorları, Dost Eli Foundation, Türkiye Dyanet Foundation, Deniz Feneri, Sema Foundation, Cansuyu).⁶⁴

Therefore, we can see how Turkish humanitarian commitments reflect Davutoğlu's understanding of humanitarianism and underpin both the role of state institutions and civil society organizations as actors in humanitarian diplomacy within an inter-agency coordinated policy. This interagency cooperation is linked with the multi-dimensionality or multi-track approach⁶⁵ which corresponds to the ability of operating on different levels and on different fronts - from 'official' diplomatic relations, within international and regional organizations, to trans-national relations or 'people to people', developed by non-state actors, such as NGOs, charities and business associations. Moreover, if we consider, as argued by Règnier, humanitarian diplomacy as multi-functional due to the fact that it is used by different type of actors, whether official or not, we could argue that Turkish humanitarian diplomacy expresses that character through an institutionalized inter-agency coordination policy. As enlightened by Özkan, from Turkey's experience in Somalia, its own 'policy makers have learned that regularly held coordination meetings are not enough. A maximized level of coordination and a well-planned vision are essential requirements for a successful enterprise'.⁶⁶

Moreover, Turkish development and humanitarian aid efforts are considered as functional conflict resolution, or conflict sensitive development responses.⁶⁷ Turkey's practices as a humanitarian state and its humanitarian diplomatic strategy allow it to overcome one of the main problems encountered by humanitarian aid and assistance in the field: establishing relations of trust and reputation between donor and recipient. In some situations, humanitarian efforts 'are perceived as external intervention by national and international stakeholders'.⁶⁸ Few studies have shown how this fear is harmful for both the donor and the recipient country; trust and reputation are conducive to successful operations, and most importantly, may also save the lives of the aid workers. This *impasse* could be overcome through a bottom-up humanitarian diplomacy, which means an inclusive approach of all

the indigenous components of the recipient country, such as national NGOs, social networks, local communities, and the private sector. The ongoing experience in Somalia shows that Turkish policy seeks to involve local actors. Indeed, unlike the approaches often taken by Western and non-Western countries and organizations, Turkey's initiatives involve local people in their activities with long-term projects.⁶⁹

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Within Turkey, a strong humanitarian rhetoric helps to mobilize and sensitize Turkish public feelings, as ensuring public support is essential for an assertive foreign policy. Until ten years ago, Turkey's humanitarianism aimed to restore the bond between Turkey and Muslim countries, and it was articulated in relation to a Turkish perceived responsibility toward Muslim communities outside of its borders (the *ummah*). In recent years this *ummah focus* has been replaced by an Islamic internationalism that suggests having cross-border humanitarian engagement as a holder of Islamic religious identity,⁷⁰ without distinguishing between Muslim and non-Muslim communities.⁷¹ Even though Turkish NGOs do not discriminate on the basis of religion and ethnic origin in their aid activities, a strong Islamic identity shapes their approach. Indeed, NGOs autonomy is limited by the bond of conditional donations imposed by private donors, particularly sensitive toward Muslim communities. Conditional donations mean that donors can choose where, and in some case also how, their money will be spent. Therefore, as pointed out by Çelik and İşeri, 'NGOs are totally dependent on donations, rather than financial support by the state, conditional donations limit their areas of activity'.⁷² Together with the value-based and humanitarian political narrative that has an Islamic tone, it can be argued that Turkey has been able to improve the trust-building process in different crisis situations. Therefore, Turkey feeds its own soft power through the use of new instruments such as humanitarian diplomacy.

Limits and Dilemmas

The rising role of Turkey as a humanitarian actor has been accompanied by scrutiny of Turkey's humanitarian practices from other actors and from the international community. For instance, a particularity of Turkey's humanitarian assistance is its strong bilateral rather than multilateral asset when it comes to its development co-operation agenda. Indeed, between 2011-16 Turkish multilateral contributions were

considerably smaller (around 2 percent of its total ODA) compared to a DAC average of 30 percent. This means that Turkey has allocated its ODA to specific countries rather than to multilateral organizations, following a specific agenda and a wider foreign policy strategy. The incorporation of humanitarian diplomacy into a state's foreign policy can generate ambiguity and doubts, such as the question of the actual political neutrality. Therefore, Turkish humanitarian efforts rather than being considered as an expression of humanitarian diplomacy, which according to Régnier should be 'politically-neutral' and 'value-free' in order to be classified as such, more likely risks being considered a kind of humanitarianism or humanitarian oriented foreign policy, as a mechanism to protect and promote state's interests.⁷³ Furthermore, it should be considered that the increase in Turkey's ODA is mostly related to Turkish response to the refugee crisis in its neighboring country, Syria.⁷⁴ Indeed, the unusual rise of Turkish ODA between 2015 and 2016 (+63.8 percent) is connected to the domestic refugee crisis. In order to face the emergency, Turkey allocates around 65 percent of ODA to Syrians. However, as pointed out by Parlar Dal, owing to these efforts or the so-called 'refugee effect', Turkey has earned a great deal in terms of international reputation.⁷⁵

At the discursive level, the Turkish model of humanitarian diplomacy points to an idealized form of diplomacy that exists holistically for the sake of human beings. A clear limit related to Turkey's recent internal swings is a mismatch between rhetoric and reality. Indeed, from one hand for a decade Turkey has tried to carve out an image of itself as a moral state or a state of conscience, representing global values. However, on the other hand, following the elections of June 2015 all these efforts have been jeopardized by the drift from democratic standards toward a more autocratic regime. The significant restriction of freedoms and rights have relentlessly damaged Turkey's image outside, increasing the doubts on the effectiveness of its policies. Therefore there are notable limits to Turkey's idealized discourse about humanitarian diplomacy, especially at a practical level. As Pinar Akpınar underlined, 'humanitarian diplomacy is an idealized conception of peace-building,' but in addition to humanitarian intentions, 'Turkey's policy also has dimensions of interest and power'.⁷⁶ Therefore, Turkish efforts should be evaluated in light of the fact that Turkish policy presents several limits. The first limit is ascribable to the so-called relative material capabilities, which means how Turkey is able to handle its ma-

terial resources allocated to the humanitarian agenda. The main risk of Turkey's policy is the danger of overstretch. The current internal political and economic turmoil and security risks as well as the regional developments tied to Syria might lead to a diversion of resources and attention away from humanitarian scenarios. This is something that has already happened in Afghanistan but also in Myanmar, both countries in which Turkey has invested heavily in economic and credibility terms. Moreover, in light of the recent domestic developments and growing autocracy threats to the rule of law a dilemma remains about the real autonomy of Turkish civil society. The main risk is the shift of several non-state actors, mainly humanitarian oriented NGOs, under the tutelage of the state. A development that may threaten NGOs' independence from governments is becoming more an Islamic model of⁷⁷ government-organized NGOs (GONGOS). As Bülent Aras and Pınar Akpınar also rightly pointed out, 'at times, they [NGOs] become subsumed by the discourse, priorities and policies of the government and develop an interest in shaping official policies which carry the risk of politicizing aid'.⁷⁸ Another critique to Turkey's humanitarianism revolves around the low level of professionalism and knowledge of Turkish practices. As Akpınar has noted, despite the political pay-offs, the effort has been constrained by Turkey's lack of capacity and expertise. In addition, the fact that the Turkish humanitarian agenda has been set up by the Prime Minister's office (AFAD) rather than by an autonomous and professionalized agency, together with the lack of any institutionalized status, makes Turkey's humanitarian assistance too personalistic.⁷⁹

Finally, among the limits we have to consider the clash between the Turkish government, specifically the ruling party AKP and the Gülen movement, currently labeled as FETÖ (Fethullah Terror Organization). During the last decade Turkish businessmen and NGOs affiliated either with the Gülen movement or close to the AKP government have subsequently become the leading implementers of Turkey's public diplomacy. Indeed, the movement, accused by the Turkish government of being responsible for the failed coup attempt of July 2016, has worked in the field of humanitarian diplomacy since the beginning of the new millennium in different sectors. For all these reasons, nowadays the consequences of the domestic political warfare between the ruling party and the Gülen movement have affected Turkey's image abroad and the effectiveness of its humanitarian efforts.

Conclusion

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The humanitarian approach is used by the Turkish government to present its efforts to the eyes of the local people as genuine and detached. Turkey has worked to gain the confidence of all the actors by having the humanitarianism's creed of neutrality as a core principle.⁸⁰ Humanitarian discourse has been used to legitimize Turkey's engagement. At the same time, providing comprehensive humanitarian aid creates an umbrella on the ground under which Turkish assistance can appear transparent and neutral. In the Somali multifaceted scenario, the role of civil society organizations has become crucial for their ability to create links through visible assistance which facilitates trust winning. The presence of non-state actors (NGOs, charities and businesses), in coordination with official diplomacy (ministries and state institutions), fosters interpersonal dialogue and engagement with local actors. In other words, inter-agency cooperation simplifies the access negotiation, useful for the role of mediator assumed by Turkey.⁸¹

In Turkish mediation efforts, non-state actors help foster the inclusiveness of all conflict parties and increase mutual trust, which are central aspects of Turkey's conflict sensitive method. The activities of civil society organizations allow the access to local channels and agents that the State officials cannot or do not want to reach. The NGOs' ability to build mutual trust and dialogue leads to the inclusive approach of all factions during talks and negotiations. Furthermore, this approach provides Turkish donors with access to the areas that are off limits to traditional donors.⁸² Consequentially, during the mediation process Turkey's officials are then able to use links and credibility gained by its own non-state actors, which help to pursue the commitments made at the negotiating table. These dynamics developed by Turkish non state actors are good examples of humanitarian access negotiation as well as Track Two diplomacy.

As shown, Turkey's humanitarian oriented policy emerged after the Arab uprisings (2011-12), at a time when its previous foreign policy was no longer able to meet the requirements of regional and global developments. Therefore, such discourse and in a wider perspective the Turkish idea of humanitarian diplomacy has been stressed so as to overcome its foreign policy quagmire as well as a tool for legitimizing Turkey's efforts to build a new regional and global order. Theoretically, the case of Turkey's humanitarian diplomacy and assistance con-

tributes to a rethink of the nature of humanitarianism, emphasizing the centrality of the state and its role of coordinator of private and public non-state actors on the ground. Turkish humanitarian oriented foreign policy has good odds of being an example of niche diplomacy useful to increase Turkey's popularity and activism at the global level. However, in order to achieve this, Turkey needs to get back its democratic performance, revitalizing the liberal nature of its institutions.

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Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and post-Soviet Central Asia

New Multilateral Bank Formation in the Context of China's Economic Interaction with post-Soviet Central Asian Countries

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This paper analyses what consequences the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank's (AIIB) formation brings to partnerships between the People's Republic of China and the post-Soviet states of Central Asia—the Republics of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. Given that Beijing initiated this new multilateral bank's formation and controls its activity to a great extent, the AIIB's concept and activity are examined in the context of China's global and regional objectives. According to this paper's conclusions, AIIB has become a new tool for China to promote initiatives that serve its national interests. The post-Soviet Central Asian states have joined the bank and therefore accepted its principles. Using AIIB for investment projects in Central Asia will bring China considerable benefits. Indeed, the bank's launch correlates with the first agreements on shifting part of China's industrial facilities to Central Asian countries. In any event, through AIIB, Beijing is able to control the regional influence of its geopolitical rivals—Russia, the United States of America, Japan, India and the European Union, and of regional institutions they dominate in. Generally, AIIB's formation shapes China's economic policy in Central Asia, making it more structural, active and unilateral, entirely serving Beijing's economic interests.



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The formation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, initiated by the People's Republic of China in 2015, has become an important event both for the system of international relations in the Asia-Pacific region and for the global economic environment on the whole. The bank's activity involves conducting investment projects in Central and East Asia. This article aims to define this new factor's impact on China's economic partnership with post-Soviet countries of the Central Asian region. Therefore, this article analyses the following aspects: the AIIB organisational framework and its initial activity, experts' views on it, how and when Central Asian states joined the bank, a short background on China's policy for it, and consequences for bilateral and multilateral interaction between China and other countries of the region.

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AIIB as an International Relations Actor: Basic Concepts

AIIB is an international intergovernmental organisation, officially institutionalised in 2015, by multilateral agreement.¹ The idea of organising a new multilateral bank was first put forward by China in 2013,² and in 2014, the major part of organisational work had been accomplished.³ In January 2016, the opening session was held in Beijing. The bank's co-founders included 57 member states from Central Asia, East Asia, Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Oceania. Later, in 2016, Canada announced its decision to join,⁴ and some African and Latin American countries are to join in the near future, as reported by Chinese media.⁵ Additionally, China, India, Russia and the Republic of Korea made the largest contributions to AIIB's stock capital.⁶

Signed on 28 June 2015, the original multilateral agreement basically outlines the AIIB framework. The document is voluminous and detailed, and according to it, the bank's purposes include assistance to sustainable development, prosperity and development of infrastructure in Asia, as well as development of regional cooperation in bilateral and multilateral frameworks (see Article 1). The organisation is to facilitate both state and private investment (see Article 2). AIIB is an open

organisation, but the proportion of Asian and non-Asian member states, defined by the agreement, remains permanent. On the Board of Governors, all member states are represented equally, while on the Board of Directors, the number of Asian member states' representatives triples those of other countries (see Article 25). In any condition, regional members' share in capital stock cannot be lower than 75 per cent (see Article 5). The agreement also permits access to AIIB membership for non-sovereign members (see Article 3). The bank's operational currency is the United States dollar (see Article 4), but in many of the agreement's articles, the possibility of using other currencies is mentioned. According to Article 18, the Board of Governors defines profit allocation. Any member, entity operating in a member's territory or international agency can request financing (see Article 11). AIIB activity's special aspects, such as guaranteed pricing, public information policy or the code of conduct for board officials, are regulated by related legal frameworks, available at the bank's official website; however, these are not multilateral agreements, but documents issued by AIIB organs.

As the bank's initiator and main founder, China reserved certain privileges in its operation. Before the bank's official opening, the Chinese government was marked as 'Trustee' of AIIB (see Article 6). The bank president is the former Chinese deputy Minister of Finance Jin Liqun. AIIB top officials claimed that the bank would renew its top managerial staff regularly, to correspond to the organisation's global nature,⁷ but the cohort of already designated officials does not represent all co-founding states. Five vice-presidents represent Great Britain, France, India, Germany and Indonesia, while, for example, Russia and Central Asian states have no high-ranking representatives.⁸ According to Chinese media, however, in principle, the number of member states to choose high-ranking managers was defined immediately after the bank's official opening session.⁹ The bank headquarters will be located in Beijing, close to the famous Olympic stadium 'Bird's Nest'.¹⁰

Beijing's exclusive rights are not limited with the location of headquarters and the fact that the head of AIIB is from China – an even more significant aspect is that Beijing secured its central place and the largest share of AIIB stock capital. Beijing had earlier claimed that the total stock capital should not exceed USD 100 billion,¹¹ so, as the bank was launched, in fact, no single country could surpass China's contribution of USD 50 billion. Indeed, Beijing has enough de-facto authority to block decisions, even though they are formally made by consensus.¹²

Therefore, AIIB is an international intergovernmental financial organisation with open membership, in which China, as its founder, was provided with the above-mentioned advantages fixed by multilateral agreement.

AIIB Activity: Views and Approaches

At the inaugural ceremony on 16 January 2016, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced AIIB formation's main goals, according to Beijing's view. As he claimed, AIIB 'will effectively boost investment to support infrastructure development in Asia. It will serve to channel more resources, particularly private investment, into infrastructure projects to promote regional connectivity and economic integration.' Moreover, 'the founding and opening of AIIB also means a great deal to the reform of the global economic governance system'.¹³

AIIB began its work in a rather special international situation for China, as Beijing is now focused on financing its Silk Road Economic Belt project, a globally directed initiative and the bank will assist, according to Chinese financial integration expert Zhao Honghui. In addition, AIIB is essential for yuan internationalisation.¹⁴ AIIB's focus on infrastructural projects also fully answers China's interests, as infrastructure construction, along with tied loans for it, can be characterised as Beijing's foreign investment priority. Profit that the Chinese side can receive in such projects is multiple: firstly, by providing jobs for its people; secondly, by providing international orders for Chinese companies; thirdly, by interest rates on loans and finally, by payment for goods and services from the same loans. Although China rejects such comparisons, Western analysts compare the Silk Road Economic Belt project, accompanied by large-scale infrastructure construction and credit activity, with the Marshall Plan.¹⁵ AIIB assistance to the Silk Road Economic Belt project can be characterised as strengthening Beijing's investment cooperation with developing countries in a way mostly beneficial for Chinese industrial and financial companies. Moreover, Beijing believes that AIIB can invest in infrastructure and side projects more effectively than the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).¹⁶ The WB and the ADB, as well as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), claimed that they welcomed the new organisation and would cooperate with it.¹⁷ In China, however, AIIB is regarded as a counterbalance and an alternative to the influence of

the United States- and Japan-controlled ADB. Beijing views the two approaches towards development of Asia and the international situation as differing on the whole. That is, AIIB is expected to be more objective in its investment planning in Asia and act more in the Asian countries' interests because it is a "more" Eurasian organisation than ADB, with a more diversified membership. The United States and Canada possess 30 percent of ADB stock capital, and its president is Japanese; Asian member states are less represented in governing bodies.¹⁸

In other Chinese views on the AIIB-ADB relationship, Xie Shiqing, a professor at Beijing University, notes that the two organisations will complement each other rather than compete. A sort of 'division of labour' is possible between them, with AIIB focusing on infrastructure projects and ADB, on education, healthcare and agriculture.¹⁹ Additionally, according to Dollar, the former head of WB China and Mongolia Programme, even co-financing certain projects will not prevent AIIB from competition with ADB and WB.²⁰ Furthermore, Orr (the US Ambassador to WB 2010-16) also predicts a 'healthy competition' between AIIB and ADB.²¹

For the United States, AIIB's formation first demonstrates China's growing potential for leadership in international organisations.²² Joining this bank can be regarded as evidence that a particular country's foreign policy is oriented in China's favour. That is why the United States, in its rivalry with Beijing, expressed concern when its allies in the Asia-Pacific region—South Korea and Australia—joined AIIB.²³

Other analysts' views regarding AIIB include some scepticism about the bank's potential and necessity (considering WB and ADB's existence);²⁴ doubts about China's potential to finance AIIB and other initiatives simultaneously;²⁵ concerns about European Union (EU) involvement in AIIB instead of financing its own integration and security needs;²⁶ lack of EU member states' consultations with Brussels on joining AIIB²⁷ and, finally, environmental and transparency concerns.²⁸

AIIB First Results: Loans and Priorities

The first regular annual session of the newly organised bank was held in Beijing on 25 and 26 June 2016. AIIB president Jin Liqun announced approval of the first investment projects: loans for highway construction from the Tajikistani capital Dushanbe to the country's border with Uzbekistan; construction of the Shorkot-Khanewal highway in Paki-

stan; development of an electric power transmission lines system in Bangladesh and modernisation of slum town areas in Indonesia. The total amount of loans was USD 500 million. It was also announced during the session that AIIB plans to provide loans from USD 500 to 1200 million annually.²⁹ The approved projects are to be partly co-financed by WB, ADB and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and in the near perspective, financing one more highway construction in Central Asia was discussed, as reported by Chinese media.³⁰ Jin Liqun also promised that AIIB would give further preference to trans-border infrastructure projects and renewable energy.³¹

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Two more projects were approved in September 2016: a USD 300 million loan for installation of an additional power house at Tarbela hydropower dam in Pakistan and a USD 20 million loan for a combined cycle gas turbine power plant project in Myingyan, Myanmar. The Tarbela project is to be co-financed by WB, while co-financers for the Myingyan project remain as yet undefined.³² One should note two major aspects: the dramatic difference in these loans' volume and that, for the second time in a row, AIIB is supporting a project in Pakistan and not, for example, in India or Russia. Russia applied for AIIB financing for construction of Primorie-1 and Primorie-2 seaport trade corridors in early May 2016. Although Russian Minister for Far Eastern District Development Alexander Galushka personally controlled the application,³³ perhaps China was not satisfied with the terms Russia suggested. By approving loans to Pakistan, China demonstrated its commitment to the bilateral partnership that had earlier reached a very high level.³⁴

Post-Soviet Central Asian States and AIIB

Among post-Soviet Central Asian states, four of five joined the new institution: the Republics of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic. Adhering to its neutrality principle, Turkmenistan³⁵ abstained. The other four countries contributed to AIIB stock capital and received corresponding amounts of shares: 7293 for Kazakhstan, 2198 for Uzbekistan, 309 for Tajikistan and 268 for Kyrgyzstan.³⁶

As witnessed by positions of their political elites in this process, Central Asian countries had great expectations of AIIB. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan participated in AIIB's organisational stage. Kazakhstan hosted a preliminary AIIB summit, and the state Ministry of Economy coordinated this work.³⁷ Uzbekistan did not participate, but Tashkent

emphasised that it was especially important to enter as a founding member. The work was coordinated by the state Ministry of Finance.³⁸ In Kyrgyzstan, the Ministry of Economy initiated joining the new organisation. As the governmental statement indicated, 'Joining AIIB is an important step in the realisation of national sustainable development strategy' and would let the Kyrgyz Republic 'develop its infrastructure and support quick and stable economic development'.³⁹ The state Ministry of Finance expressed its confidence that joining the new bank would help the Kyrgyz Republic to attract more foreign investment as well.⁴⁰ Tajikistan's Ministry of Finance also expressed the country's hopes of positive impact on the national economy by joining AIIB.⁴¹

Historical Context of AIIB Formation in Chinese–Central Asian Ties

During the last decade, China's cooperation with post-Soviet Central Asian states has developed rapidly. To a great extent, Beijing based this cooperation on the westward strategy that involved intensive development of cooperation not only with East Asian neighbours, but also with Central Asia and Eastern Europe, as a response to the American 'pivot to Asia'. Therefore, multilateral initiatives, such as the Silk Road Economic Belt, the Twenty-First Century Maritime Silk Road, the China–Pakistan economic corridor and the Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar economic corridor, became elements of this strategy.⁴²

Chinese trade ties with post-Soviet Central Asian countries had developed gradually by then, beginning with simple fairs and trade in border regions and then involving larger Chinese companies, as the Chinese state supported them in their export-oriented activities. In many ways, Chinese traders acted in Central Asian markets as a corporation.⁴³ Probably the most rapidly developing were Sino–Kyrgyzstan ties, as Bishkek joined the World Trade Organisation and liberalised its trade policy in 1998. To a great extent, ties developed successfully thanks to a solid basis of cooperation between the region's countries and the Chinese Xinjiang–Uighur border district.⁴⁴ Generally, as Karrar indicates and according to Chinese Prime minister Li Peng, development of trans-border trade reflected a long-term Chinese strategy.⁴⁵ The organisational structure of Chinese–Central Asian ties was main-

ly formed thanks to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO),⁴⁶ which created a certain basis as an ‘energy club’. However, this organisation has always lacked unity and also became grounds for Russian–Chinese rivalry.⁴⁷ As a leading Russian SCO expert Lousianin notes, SCO, due to China’s efforts, emphasised Central Asia from the very beginning and can be regarded as an important part of Beijing’s long-term Central Asian strategy.⁴⁸ Another important factor of intensive Chinese–Central Asian ties could become the activity of Chinese diasporas since they are present in the region as well.⁴⁹ At the present stage, a key factor is the broadening of Silk Road-related political discourse, which contributes much to regional interconnectivity.⁵⁰

Throughout the decade, the two largest-scale projects of Chinese–Central Asian interaction were both connected with energy resource exports: the launches of the Kazakhstan–China oil pipeline from Atasu to Alashankou in 2006,⁵¹ and of the Turkmenistan–China gas pipeline in 2009. This gas pipeline originally included only two lines, but in 2014, the two sides reached an agreement on construction of two additional lines.⁵² For China, energy resource supplies from Central Asia are important primarily because they can help diversify import, negotiate cheaper prices with other exporters and eventually secure its energy independence. Thus, China became the leading investor in this area of post-Soviet space, both in production and pipeline facilities.⁵³ Another major motivation was to solve the social unrest in the Xinjiang–Uighur district through intensive external cooperation, economic modernisation and overall improvement of the living standard.⁵⁴

In addition, China gradually increased credit financing in Central Asia. As a rule, loans were tied (but either with no interest or with preferential rates),⁵⁵ which promoted countries’ loyalty to Beijing. This was particularly important for China, considering its growing concerns about the new US policy in Asia, defined by Chinese international studies experts as *zhanlüe fengso* or ‘strategy of encircling China’.⁵⁶ Furthermore, Beijing gradually purchased equities of local enterprises, for example, of oil companies.⁵⁷

In terms of political interaction, China’s partnership with post-Soviet Central Asian countries has been conducted in different ways. On some important occasions, Beijing acted as one side and all countries of the region, together with Russia, as the other side. Thus was the dialogue organised during talks on the 1996 and 1997 border mili-

tary-activity agreements.⁵⁸ The same format is used in regular meetings monitoring fulfilment of those agreements.⁵⁹ However, in economic interaction, dialogues have been organised separately with every country. Moreover, China refused to participate in multilateral talks on important issues such as the use and environmental problems of trans-border rivers.⁶⁰ These negotiation methods can help Beijing promote its interests without much counteraction, by finding a special approach towards each partner and kindling its interest. Generally, post-Soviet states lacked experience in international integration,⁶¹ and this also helped Beijing promote its interests.

Consequences of Joining AIIB for Central Asia

In discussing consequences of joining the new China-led international bank for Central Asian states, we should first note the financial aspect. For them, certain perspectives on increased investment are accompanied by the risk of increased state and corporate debt. China has already become the main creditor and debt holder for the region's countries.⁶² This consequence looks especially challenging, because, as Reinhart indicates, developing countries' debt overburden might cause a new international financial crisis.⁶³

At the same time, what becomes debt for recipients can be used by China as an incentive to motivate its partners. Well planned external credit policy can even be used to change the partner's economic structure. At the 21st century's beginning, this had already taken place during China's interaction with Central Asia when, for example, Beijing provided tied loans and specified investment to Uzbekistan. China recommended Tashkent reconsider the structure of bilateral turnover and develop mining instead of manufacturing. China's motivation was to eliminate regional competition to its car manufacturers and cotton producers.⁶⁴

Another important consequence of AIIB formation for Central Asia is increased competition between regional economic and financial integration projects. China's rivals promote their interests and views of regional cooperation and integration in a rather assertive way: Russia (via EEU and EDB—Eurasian Development Bank), the United States (via WB), Japan (via ADB) and the European Union (via EBRD). These actors have experienced regional competition through financial diplomacy. For example, WB and EBRD offered their assistance to Western com-

panies that initiated economic expansion in Kazakhstan's oil industry in the 1990s.⁶⁵ In 2016, EBRD had already begun financing a large-scale 'Green Energy' project in Tajikistan.⁶⁶ As the bank's president Suma Chakrabarti announced, EBRD is ready to co-finance projects with AIIB and plans to open new local offices in Asia.⁶⁷ Soon after AIIB formation, Japan, in turn, announced plans to increase its investment in Asia, both in bilateral and ADB frameworks, up to USD 1100 million in the near future, primarily in infrastructure projects. A special investment fund with registered capital of USD 100 billion will be formed. In addition, Tokyo especially emphasises its environment-friendly approach to evaluation of every project.⁶⁸ Loans provided by ADB are considerable; for example, in December 2015, ADB loaned USD 60 million to Tajikistan 'for the first stage of private sector development and improvement of investment environment'.⁶⁹

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Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) is also conducting proactive policy in regional competition. In August 2016, Russian media published a detailed outlook on EDB projects. The list for Kazakhstan includes modernisation of the Ekibastuz electric power plant, formation of a united automatic system of railroad logistics management and construction of a wind turbine power plant in Yereimentau; for Kyrgyzstan, aid to Bishkek fossil power plant system of supplies; and for Tajikistan, construction of a clothing factory. The bank has already completed part of these, while 50 projects are currently being carried out in operation.⁷⁰

From the Russian side, several integration projects which involve Central Asian countries are being developed, including the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation. However, these two are of a more political and military origin, while economic integration has been conducted through the Eurasian Economic Community, which was replaced by the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). The EEU Treaty⁷¹ came into force on 01 January 2015. In 2015–16, it was joined by Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. The EEU is introducing new common standards for quality of imported goods and border crossing. This can make it more difficult for China to promote its trade relations interests, so Beijing requires new tools of cooperation, among which financial diplomacy, in the form of AIIB, generally looks rather promising. Therefore, other integration projects developed in Central Asia, by actors other than China and China-led AIIB, are competitive and active. Moreover, although this provides another large topic for research, bilateral frame-

works are also developed by these countries and not only Russia or the United States, but also by Japan⁷², India⁷³ and Iran.⁷⁴ On the whole, such competition meets the interests of Central Asian states, as they will be able to have more choice in investment sources and to realise multi-vector policy. Moreover, the competition sometimes results in such attractive conditions as debt remission. For example, Russia has recently written off the major part of Uzbekistan's state debt.⁷⁵

In this situation of international competition, China first promotes its conception of a free trade zone in the region. Russian experts earlier indicated that Beijing had focused on future unification of integration space in the SCO framework.⁷⁶ At the present stage, this trend in China's policy has restarted. In a 2015 SCO Prime ministers' meeting, Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang openly claimed, 'China insists on establishing a free trade zone in SCO framework', and 'it is necessary to make efforts in order to introduce up to 2020 the free exchange of goods, capital, services and technologies'.⁷⁷ The same views were shared by the Chinese ambassador to Russia, Li Hui.⁷⁸ Russia passively accepted this concept, and in 2016, a task force, headed by SCO member states' Ministers of Economy began elaborating a future SCO-EEU free trade zone agreement.⁷⁹ Moreover, China is trying to accelerate this process: At the beginning of October 2016, it proposed a draft of agreement, while the Russian experts' negotiating team plans to discuss the issue during a period of two to ten years.⁸⁰ These facts demonstrate that China is very assertive in pursuing its aims. Its multilateral initiatives involving post-Soviet countries are also increasingly becoming proactive tools of its foreign policy. Russia's reluctant response can be explained by the fact that for EEU countries' national industries, a free trade zone with China cannot be established without competitive threat from Chinese manufacturers.

Priorities Discrepancy and Outlook

In discussing the AIIB role for Chinese-Central Asian relations, there is significant infrastructure investment, which is the top priority for China and the AIIB. As Nobel Laureate Stiglitz mentions, lack of infrastructure can be termed the main obstacle for developing countries in increasing their international cooperation and attracting foreign investment.⁸¹ In addition, as Dollar indicates, in future Silk Road Economic Belt countries, the demand for infrastructural investment is

especially high.⁸² According to the European Council on Foreign Relations data, 'aside from natural resources, Silk Road-style transit projects are the main area where public resources are invested in Central Asian states', but cooperation in the region is mainly constrained by corruption.⁸³

Infrastructure in Central Asia was built mainly in Soviet times and has been sufficient so far, although in the 1990s, all the region's countries lacked finances for modernisation. Russia also did not invest in this area in bilateral cooperation.⁸⁴ However, experts from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan interviewed for this research⁸⁵ mentioned that infrastructural investment is not their countries' first priority and that they would rather 'refocus' Chinese investors and AIB from infrastructural projects to assistance in 'real production' and construction of manufacturing industry enterprises. Experts from Kyrgyzstan especially emphasised that too active and rapid an infrastructure development in Central Asian states and increased transport accessibility for China could threaten their national security. For example, this is why the Kyrgyz Republic's military circles strongly oppose the construction of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Kazakhstan railroad: It 'will divide Kyrgyzstan into North and South' and, 'thanks to its designed parameters, can be used for transportation of heavy armoured vehicles and military equipment'. Negotiations on this issue have long been conducted,⁸⁶ but so far Kyrgyzstan has not accepted China's proposals.⁸⁷

According to an expert poll among Kazakhstani politicians and businessmen, conducted by the European Council on Foreign Relations, the majority of answers confirmed the need for infrastructural investment, but only in the context of lack of foreign investment on the whole. Furthermore, interviewees noted that China's proactive attitude to investment in Central Asia is based on its own need to develop its western districts and that they would need a more detailed outline of infrastructural projects in the Silk Road Economic Belt framework. Finally, they mentioned that for their business community in the situation of Chinese projects' competition with Russian ones, 'due to the cultural and language differences, the Chinese market is still not considered a priority'.⁸⁸ This partly correlates with the policy of broader image building and nation branding that Kazakhstan has recently chosen and that can position the country differently from 'just a raw materials exporter'.⁸⁹

In addition to infrastructural construction projects, one more priority for Beijing's Central Asian policy, for which AIIB resources will probably be used, is the shift of some Chinese industrial facilities to the region. Several preliminary deals, already agreed upon,⁹⁰ will definitely help China partly revive its environment and simultaneously raise its overall economic influence in Central Asia. The same goals are pursued in its projects of agricultural-land rental in Kazakhstan⁹¹ and Tajikistan.⁹² By establishing an international investment bank, China has created an additional tool to secure resources for such projects.

Results and Discussion

This paper's conclusions on AIIB's role in Chinese-post-Soviet Central Asian interactions include the following:

1. In spite of its multilateral framework, AIIB is aimed at serving primarily the interests of China and its industrial companies. This is the key factor in the bank's policy and in choosing partners and projects to support.
2. The bank is an important tool for increasing China's influence and embodying its economic strategy in Silk Road Economic Belt countries, primarily in Central Asia.
3. For Central Asia, joining AIIB brings a certain increase in investment and, simultaneously, debt overburden that will secure local political elites' loyalty to Beijing and allow it to insist on its priorities and plans for partnership.
4. Large-scale infrastructural construction in Central Asia is beneficial for China, meeting its long-term interests and gaining profit from interest rates and offers for Chinese equipment-producing and construction companies. It is also essential for realizing the Silk Road Economic Belt project.
5. After AIIB's launch, international competition with China for influence in Central Asia is becoming more intense. With a certain parallelism regarding AIIB, other powers, including Russia, the United States, Japan, the European Union and others are conducting proactive policies there through bilateral and multilateral ties (via EEU, EDB, WB, ADB and EBRD). While Central Asian countries can benefit from this situation by having choices for profita-

ble terms, more economic contradictions and conflicts can occur between Russia, China, the United States and other rivals acting in the region.

6. China's central goal in this situation is to establish a free trade zone in Central Asia. Its multilateral initiatives will be used for providing a framework for such a zone and incentives for its future members. For Central Asia, it will not be a promising perspective due to difficulties in competing with Chinese manufacturers.
7. Another current priority for Beijing in its relations with post-Soviet Central Asia is partial shifting of its industrial facilities and renting agricultural lands in the region. Due to its considerable stock capital and China's leading role in governance, AIIB can secure support for such initiatives.
8. In their expectations of AIIB, the priorities of post-Soviet Central Asian states and China differ: Beijing prioritises infrastructural projects, while Central Asian countries prefer a combined need for infrastructural investment and investment in manufacturing.

From the above conclusions, future competition between Russia and China, as well as Russian and Chinese integration projects in Central Asia, will be the most interesting for research, due to their ambiguous bilateral relationship that involves close cooperation and intense competition simultaneously. Russia is promoting its integration policy in the region primarily via EEU and EDB, while China uses SCO and AIIB. Russia is currently paying great attention to strengthening ties with Central Asia. Therefore, while China uses both bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation to increase its influence in the region, competition between the two international relations actors increases.



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The Beijing Consensus

Characteristics of China's Official Development Finance in Ghana, 2000–2013

Iva Sojková

Chinese development financial flows provided to African recipients have gained a lot of attention for their volume and nature representing an alternative approach to development. It is the aim of the article to examine the observance of principles of the Chinese development model, the Beijing Consensus, through Official Development Finance (ODF) delivered to Ghana between 2000 and 2013. Due to the lack of information published on development finance by Chinese government, the author uses AidData's dataset and media reports to verify the nature and amount of finance provided and their allocation in the country. The author came to conclusion that all the principles are observed regarding the purpose of projects delivered. Although it is possible to come across differences in the attention paid to principles, in all cases the projects supporting the principles are traceable. The adherence, however, is significantly undermined by the process of implementation of the projects as well as by some of China's by-product activities in Ghana.

Keywords: China, Africa, development, Beijing Consensus, Ghana

Introduction

China¹ has witnessed unprecedented economic growth within the last 40 years since the adoption of economic reforms. For many contem-

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porary developing countries, its example is perceived as an alternative development approach that is worthy of attention and following, not only for its success but also due to the disappointment arising from the acceptance and implementation of Western development experiments under the Washington Consensus, which led rather to deterioration of economic, social, and political conditions in many developing countries. China's specific development experience triggered a controversial debate concerning the applicability or repeatability of a certain development path and the challenges or threats this model can pose for interests, values, and overall organization of the world system. This debate began in 2004, when Joshua Cooper Ramo published an essay entitled *The Beijing Consensus*,² discussing China's development policies, reforms China has adopted, and the values on which it relies. Clearly, just by using the term, Ramo called attention to the difference of this model from the model of the West (the Washington Consensus), which was formulated by John Williamson in 1989 and subsequently applied to developing countries and countries undergoing economic crisis.

The Beijing Consensus therefore represents an alternative development model that is appealing for developing countries owing to the economic success of China, which has managed to lift hundreds of millions of its inhabitants out of poverty. The model is also appealing for the alternative approach of China to other developing countries. One of these countries where the Chinese presence and interests are the most evident is Ghana, where official development financing reached one of the highest amounts in Africa. It is then the objective of this article to evaluate the possibilities of observance and application of principles of China's model of development – the Beijing Consensus (as introduced by Joshua Cooper Ramo) – within financial flows identified as Chinese Official Development Finance (ODF) provided to Ghana between 2000 and 2013.³ The research question is thus formulated – Are the suggested principles of the Beijing Consensus observed in the case of Ghana during the provision of the Chinese ODF projects?

The Beijing Consensus – Short Discussion and Operationalization of the Concept

The controversial debate about the Chinese model of development began as a response to the publication of Ramo in 2004. He used the

term “Beijing Consensus” to describe the uniqueness of Chinese development approach that differs from the Western –the “Washington Consensus” – presented by John Williamson in 1989. Williamson has created a list of rules of neoliberal policy for economic reform in Latin America, on which, as he expected, Washington institutions and policy makers would have agreed. Individual policies emphasized the role of the market and the limited role of the state and were later presented as universally applicable for developing countries that have faced economic crisis. In case of African states, the loans were provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank when the country acceded to the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs). The impact of SAP imposition on African countries was vast and ubiquitous, as by 1993 virtually all sub-Saharan Africa states had been obliged to implement adjustment programmes. The negative impact of the policies could be witnessed especially on the poverty reduction efforts. Even the case of Ghana, proudly presented as a successful instance, recorded an increase of the poverty rate from 1985 to 1990.⁴ On the population level such poverty expansion was indicated by inaccessible basic public services that became simply unaffordable, due to budget cuts, privatization, lower incomes and higher taxes. The situation resulted in the spread of illiteracy and a deterioration in the quality of lives.⁵ Such a negative experience of many developing countries contributed to the popularity of China’s development approach, which was seen as free from imposed neoliberal development policies and free from the history of adoption of such policies in China.⁶

Ramo assumes that the increasing importance of China not only has changed the international order but also created a new model upon which other states can build their own development. It assumes that the way of Chinese transformation is an attractive one to those states that are trying to 1) figure out the way to develop themselves, and their place in the international system to stay independent and 2) maintain their own way of life and the ability to make their own political decisions. In this regard, Ramo believes that the Beijing Consensus replaces the Washington Consensus as an already discredited “Washington-knows-best approach to telling other nations how to run themselves,” and that Ramo labels as “A hallmark of end of history arrogance.”⁷ According to Ramo, China’s model of development is flexible enough that it can hardly be classified as a doctrine – “It does not believe in uniform solutions for every situation.”⁸ It can be defined

as an effort to innovate and experiment, to maintain national borders and interests, as well as with pragmatism and ideology. It is a model that arose after the reign of Deng Xiaoping and follows the pragmatic ideas of that time in which the best path for modernization can be described as one of “groping for stones to cross the river,” instead of trying to cross the river in one great leap of shock therapy.⁹ Ramo himself points out that China’s development path as well as its path to power cannot be repeated by another nation. However, some elements of China’s rise include the developing world and therefore the Beijing Consensus already represents and gives rise to new ideas that are very different from those of the West. Certainly, the Beijing Consensus, as well as the Washington Consensus before it, includes such notions that concern not only the economic dimension, but also the political one, as well as quality of life and the global balance of power.¹⁰

Ramo explains the Beijing Consensus as three theorems about how to organise the place of a developing country in the world. These are:

1. *Innovation-led development*: The first theorem argues that the Chinese path of development stems from innovations and technological leaps and in this matter, it is the innovation-led growth that was able to keep the Chinese economy growing and helped to offset the disastrous internal imbalances. The innovation and acquisition of new technologies led to rapid change in some sectors, which then solved the problems arising from the reform, and contributes to the creation of a stable environment. This change is based on knowledge, and thus it is necessary for the state to invest in education, both through the construction of educational and research centres, and by attracting experts from abroad. An innovative society creates an environment within which experimentation and failures are acceptable, leading to productive economic dynamics allowing substantial economic sectors to be gradually transformed according to needs and to be able to survive development shocks.¹¹

2. *Sustainable and equitable development environment*: The second theorem argues that China does not focus only on economic growth, but also on a fair distribution of wealth within which benefits are widely shared in society. Ramo points out that for Chinese leaders and local officials sustainable and balanced growth were of major concern. It is believed that an egalitarian environment and emphasis on redistribution of resources in society and improvement of the quality of life of citizens can prevent the society from experiencing the chaos that may

occur as a result of development changes. Likewise, at this point Ramo highlights the efforts to reduce the negative impacts on the environment resulting from economic growth and the importance of creating a stable environment, which is a prerequisite for development.¹²

3. *The right to self-determination of China and other countries in relation to the United States:* This element of the Beijing Consensus refers to the ability to maintain control over own development policies and development paths, as well as to the success of Chinese development, which has become a challenge for the US, both for the growing power of China, and because the model has become attractive to other developing countries. Ramo argues that Beijing did not follow the strict policies of the Washington consensus, but rather implemented reforms that better matched local conditions and circumstances. The developing world sees China as an economic partner and political ally representing an alternative development model, which further contributes to the erosion of the US global dominance.¹³

The introduction of Ramo's Beijing Consensus led to broad critiques from number of scholars. Kennedy (2010)¹⁴ questions the very term of the 'Beijing Consensus', as no one agreed on anything in Beijing, thus he suggests the label 'compromise' between different groups rather than consensus, as 'compromise' more accurately describes the way policies that led to the Chinese development arose. Rebol (2010)¹⁵ then argues that the Beijing Consensus does not aim to be imposed as a development model, thus, it is a passive development model by which policy other states can be inspired voluntarily. This aspect brings the model in opposition to the Western active model that imposes its sets of rules upon developing countries in order to be implemented. Given the Beijing Consensus's passivity, however, it is difficult to implement the model in a different environment.

Moreover, when the two development models are compared point by point, there is little difference between Chinese development experience and the Washington Consensus principles. China, for instance, maintained relative fiscal discipline throughout tax base expansion and public expenditures have been reoriented toward public good. Other similarity is evident in the deregulation of prices and privatisation of its state-owned companies. Property rights were also enhanced and market entry and exit barriers were eased. China also embraced international trade and FDI while maintaining a competitive exchange rate.¹⁶ The very principles of the development model as stated by Ramo

are then denied by the above-mentioned Kennedy, who emphasizes that China did not develop primarily through innovation and thus managed to skip several generations of technology, and China cannot be perceived as a leader in this field, although Kennedy at the same time admits that innovation played a role in its development. With an open-door policy, China was able to attract a number of investors from abroad who brought along with their businesses also new technology into China. In this regard, China did not become an innovator, but rather took advantage of these foreign imported technologies that also brought valuable knowledge and experience. Even today, as Kennedy points out, although China exports the latest technology, it is not manufactured and invented by solely Chinese companies, but rather by companies that are either jointly owned by Chinese and foreign co-owners, or they are merely foreign and they use only beneficial Chinese conditions for the manufacture of their products.¹⁷ However, China is increasingly trying to focus on the area of innovation as the next stage of growth and although some entrepreneurs are dramatically improving in this field, it is still a very difficult step in the development of the country, as it takes place in a very closed system.¹⁸

Kennedy also questions Ramo's theorem about the suggested sustainability of China's development and therefore respect for the environment. China made efforts to minimize the impact of the rapid development of the state on the environment, however, proposals on this issue were never successfully implemented, since China has always given priority to development over environmental considerations. Likewise, the point concerning the equity of growth implying that development brings benefits to the entire population is, according to Kennedy, incorrect as well. Even though China did manage to get hundreds of million people out of poverty, at the same time the rapid development has led to increasing inequality – personal, sectorial, and regional – one cannot therefore think of the reform as being without losers. However, he admits that social justice is one of the future goals of development policy in China.¹⁹ Indeed, as Breslin points out, when Ramo writes about the characteristics of the Beijing Consensus, such as innovation and commitment to equitable growth, they should be seen as something that the government wants its development strategy to achieve in the future, rather than a summary of what has already taken place. Thus, the Beijing Consensus remains in many respects an aspiration rather than today's reality.²⁰

Despite such critiques, the Beijing Consensus concept as presented by Ramo has tapped into the mix of excitement and worries inspired by China's booming economy and its rapidly expanding global economic and political influence. Regardless of the way China managed to develop from an underdeveloped country in a very short time period, this short path to success remains for other developing countries a very attractive example. It should be added that the presentation of the Beijing Consensus as an alternative development model witnessed a large increase in attention in recent years mainly due to the economic crisis, which highlighted the weaknesses of market fundamentalism and conversely stressed the importance of government regulation and a strong state. In this context, it is important to note that Beijing itself is aware of this fact. Although there is a wide debate about whether China has ever perceived and labelled its development experience as a model that could be replicated, and given the fact that the idea of the Beijing Consensus as a development model did not originate in China, some of its steps suggest such awareness. As pointed out by Halper (2010),²¹ in response to the global economic crisis a new ambitious project arose and served to draw attention to the existence and importance of China's alternative model of development and economic success. It is an attempt to create a network of Beijing's foreign offices or branches, which will present the modern face of China, and in every country in the world. The emergence of this project was a response to the global economic crisis and was used as a platform for criticism of capitalism and the presentation of the 'Chinese model' as a counterpart to the Western model that led to the crisis. Through the media, the Chinese government has pointed to the failure of free-market fundamentalism, which only emphasized the superiority of the Chinese way of development bearing the name of *scientific development theory* during the reign of President Hu Jintao. This is the official name for the policy advocated by a ruling party that stressed the promotion of the welfare of the population, which is strictly controlled by the government from the centre, in other words, it represents a policy promoting the idea of state capitalism.

In the literature on the Chinese engagement in Africa, the question of Chinese model and its application in practice is not reflected. Naturally, there are a number of publications dealing with the issue of Chinese development finance in Africa and among the most significant studies are articles and books written by Deborah Bräutigam (see e.g.,

Bräutigam 2008;²² 2010;²³ 2011²⁴). Bräutigam's research can be considered, so far, as the most extensive on the matter of China's development aid, endeavouring to cover the information gap and to question some myths concerning China's involvement in Africa as well as China's specific view on what development aid includes. Other important studies dedicated to Chinese development financing include the collection of articles edited by Christopher M. Dent (2010)²⁵ or publications written by Martyn Davies et al. (2008)²⁶ and Ngaire Woods (2008).²⁷ One of the most recent studies questioning some myths about Chinese ODF flows to Africa is quantitative research conducted by Axel Dreher et al. (2016).²⁸ The literature addressing the Beijing Consensus or China's development model debate concerns the very existence of the model and its features compared to its counterpart, the Washington Consensus, and what its existence could present for the future development of international relations. Although some of the models' features also examined in this work have been addressed within the above mentioned research (e.g., non-interference principle or impact of Chinese engagement on the environment), they were not associated with the debate about China's model of development. In this regard the author endeavours to contribute to the discussion about the Beijing Consensus and the nature of Chinese development financing in Africa by examining its proposed principles observance in practice in the case of Ghana.

Based on Ramo's theorems of the Beijing Consensus, the following principles for the case study observance are introduced:

1. The principle of *innovation-led development* emphasizes the importance of acquisition of technology and transfer of knowledge in development through financial, material, and personnel support in educational and research projects in the country. It is examined if the principle is observed through the projects supporting the principle whether directly by their very purpose or indirectly as a by-product.
2. The principle of *social development*. Within this principle it is examined if the Chinese ODF flows address and support development of social infrastructure in the recipient's country through providing finances into projects within the sector. It is also a concern to find out if this principle is observed during the projects' implementation process thus potentially improving the quality of life of recipients' inhabitants and if the projects implemented are

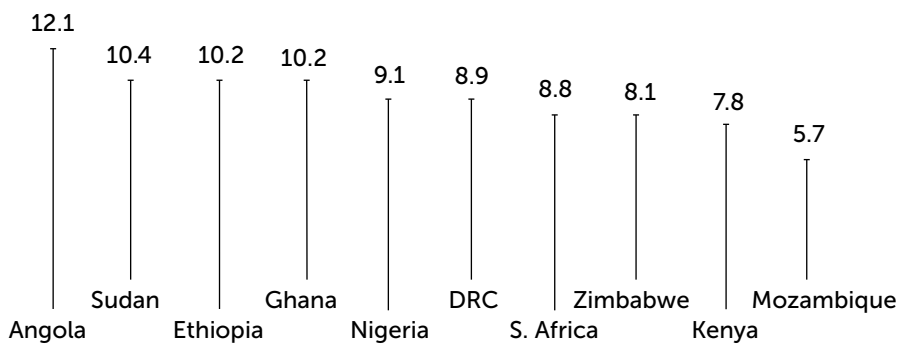
- not concentrated in one area in the country, and are instead allocated equally.
3. The principle of *sustainable development*. Under this principle, attention is paid to the projects that are related to enhancement of the recipient's environment with their very purpose. These projects directly focus on environment protection, renewable sources, and carbon emission reduction. It is also the interest to examine whether during implementation the recipient's environment is not degraded through potentially harmful and locally inappropriate technique used, whether intentionally or unintentionally.
 4. The principle of *non-interference in the internal affairs of another state*. The non-interference principle is a traditional element of Chinese foreign policy and the principle generally means that a country shall not interfere or intervene in other countries' internal affairs, which come under domestic jurisdiction.²⁹ In this regard, it is monitored whether China forces the recipient to adopt political and economic reforms in exchange for China's ODF provision and own interests that would consequently lead to violation of the recipient's sovereignty. It will be therefore monitored whether there are projects whose implementation and existence is conditioned by acceptance of other Chinese interests that force the recipient to implement political and economic reforms and thus creating a favourable environment for their realisation.
 5. The principle of *stability*. Such a principle works on the assumption of stability as a prerequisite for any development to take place and it is assumed that China endeavours to support a stable environment in the country with enhancing state capacity to control the development and, at the same time, to mitigate the negative impact development can bring to a developing country. The observance of the principle is examined through monitoring possible protests concerning the Chinese project implementation and the recipient's capacity to manage its fiscal obligations to international creditors with further debt burden to China. Within this principle, purposes of projects are examined endeavouring to enhance stability and peace in the country. This concerns the cases where China supports implementation of projects that are aimed at strengthening the security and capacity of state institutions in the country.

Methodology

The instrumental case study was used to analyse the Chinese ODF flows through observance of suggested principles of the Beijing Consensus. Conclusions drawn from the concept application are then evaluated in order to understand the extent to which the Beijing Consensus is applied and adhered to in the case of Ghana. The selected method allows us to analyse detail data and information on the project level, and to understand the nature of the delivered projects and China's engagement in Ghana within the framework of the Beijing Consensus concept.

The focus on the region of Africa is given by China's volume of development finances delivered when compared with other regions as also pointed out in the official documents.³⁰ The case of Ghana is then selected based the criteria of press freedom and the overall amount of finance provided by China. According to the Freedom House, Ghana has been ranked among African countries with the freest press in Africa for a long time.³¹ Such a criterion implies availability of the information about the Chinese ODF on the project level necessary to meet the objective of the article. The overall amount of finance delivered by China ranks Ghana at the top of the recipients in the region. With almost 10.2 billion USD provided between 2000 and 2013,³² Ghana became the fourth largest recipient of China's ODF in Africa, topped only by Angola, Sudan and Ethiopia (see Figure 1) (none of whom can be labelled as 'free' concerning press freedom).

Figure 1.³³
Top 10 Recipients of Chinese ODF in Africa
(Billion USD, 2000-13)



The beginning of the timescale is represented by the emergence of the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) founded in 2000.³⁴ The creation of this institution is considered as a milestone in the relations between China and African countries. It is this institutionalization of cooperation that has led to significant increase and regularity in Chinese financial flows to the region. The end of the time range is 2013 which is given by restrictions of the availability of coherent data on China's development finance.

To achieve the article's objective, the information is drawn primarily from newspaper articles dealing with development finance delivered from China. These articles were published in Ghana or in China, however, Chinese media sources are rarely referred to as they are considered less reliable than the Ghanaian ones and are used here just to offer the Chinese stance on particular situations or to confirm the existence of particular projects. Other sources include available government documents of departments and organizations. So far, there is no other option to understand the nature of the projects on their project level than through this media-based approach. The situation is created by the reluctance of Beijing to publish detailed information about its development financial flows. However, in recent years some efforts made to deal with this data gap can be noticed (in this respect, it is referred to the white papers on development aid published in 2011³⁵ and 2014³⁶), yet the provided information remain too vague and only very limited research can be conducted on them. Another problem concerns the PRC's rejection of the international regime for the provision of development finances as defined by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC), which represents an obstacle for the classification of the Chinese financial flows. China argues that South-South cooperation is qualitatively different and should therefore not be determined by traditional principles of finance provision since the principle of transparency should apply only to North-South cooperation.³⁷ Unfortunately, as a result, the lack of transparency in development finance has given rise to undesirable large differences in estimates of the amount of development finances provided by the PRC.³⁸ In addition, the DAC members include different activities in their official development assistance (ODA), as China counts military assistance in this category and, on the contrary, does not include scholarships for students from developing

countries, as well as the assistance to refugees provided within its state territory.³⁹

Some efforts have been made to address this data gap. The most ambitious project was launched in 2013 by the AidData organization in cooperation with the Centre for Global Development. AidData responds to the demand for more accurate data on the project level while addressing the issue of data complexity and the possibility to classify Chinese official development finance as defined by the OECD. With respect to the OECD's classification of ODF⁴⁰ AidData recognizes several classes into which the official finances are split – “ODA-like,” “OOF-like,” and as the third recognizes a class labelled “Vague Official Finances” including finance impossible to precisely identify due to a lack of information about their development potential.⁴¹ In this article, classification and calculations related to the projects are based on data collected and published under the AidData initiative.⁴²

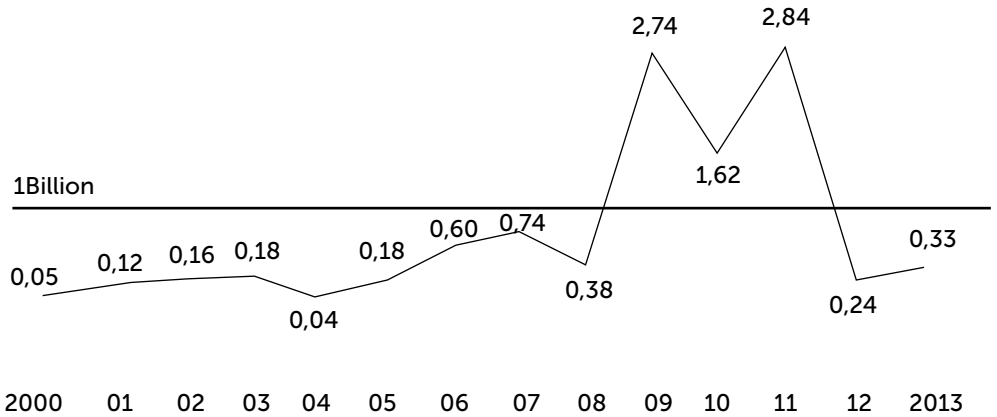
The Case Study of Ghana

Relations between China and Ghana started, as with many other African states, during the 1960s after the period following decolonisation. Although China cannot be perceived as a newcomer in this relationship and has always provided financial assistance, the financial flows have never come even close to the billions of dollars that are provided to Ghana today.

In the 1960s, the government of the first postcolonial president of the state, Kwame Nkrumah, maintained very close ties between the states and it was during this period that China started building military training camps in Ghana for potential fighters in the struggle for independence in other countries in Africa. Nkrumah also supported the PRC as a legitimate member of the international community. After 1966, however, these close ties weakened after the fall of Nkrumah's government, followed by a period of severe economic and political instability. Improvement of mutual relations between the countries was witnessed during the 1980s under Jerry Rawlings' government. It was also during this time Rawlings implemented what has been described as one of Africa's most far-reaching structural adjustment reforms that began in 1983 in order to resolve the worsening economic situation that had persisted in Ghana basically since the 1960s. The SAPS adopted by Ghana are perceived, like in many other African instances, as

devastating for their microeconomic level impact.⁴³ By the end of the 1980s Ghana, together with many other developing countries, supported China after the events in Tiananmen Square. In the 1990s, further financial support from the PRC was provided to Ghana, the highest amount (18 million USD) of which went to support joint trading.⁴⁴ After 2000, along with FOCAC establishment, development financial flows from China to Ghana started increasing by their volume and the number of projects. Between 2000-13, the overall amount of the official development finance provided by China surpassed 10 billion USD⁴⁵ (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.⁴⁶
ODF Provided
by China to
Ghana
(Billion USD,
2000-13)



Innovation-led Development

With regard to the first principle followed, there are many projects within which the transfer of knowledge can be identified as their purpose. There are projects which concerned provision of thousands of scholarships granted to Ghanaian students to study in China⁴⁷ or financial support of the construction of schools, libraries, and community centres.^{48 49} Thus, for instance, in 2013 the construction of the medical university in Ho started, financed by a Chinese grant.⁵⁰ In 2009 the University of Ghana received reading books in English and Chinese, and other learning materials from the Embassy of China

in Ghana. The embassy also provided the University of Ghana with instructors and volunteers to help teach the language. Some volunteers were also sent to the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi to teach Chinese.⁵¹ In 2013 the Confucius Institute was established at the University of Ghana, to further foster interest in the language and culture.⁵² Another project, the establishment of a campus of the China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), gained international attention, as the MBA programme became one of the first offered in sub-Saharan Africa.⁵³ The most significant projects implemented within the sector of education concerned the above-mentioned University of Ghana. In 2004 the institution obtained equipment for its computer labs from the Chinese Embassy.⁵⁴ Another project included an ambitious ICT development project at the university that commenced in 2009 and its second phase was completed in 2015.⁵⁵ It was aimed at delivering the education even to remote districts, thus required the establishment of several well-equipped learning centres across the country.⁵⁶

The transfer of knowledge and technologies can be also noticed in the Ghanaian health sector. With regard to principle observance, it is possible to refer to several projects within which China sent to Ghana its medical experts to improve treatment conditions in the country's medical facilities, as for instance, in 2009 when teams of doctors and researchers were sent to Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital in Accra to support the national malaria prevention programmes. This particular project also included delivery of some anti-malaria laboratory equipment and drugs.⁵⁷ In 2013, a team of medical experts was sent to the hospital for the third time.⁵⁸

Other projects can be monitored within the sector of communication, where, besides the distance education project at the University of Ghana mentioned above, there are several more projects of note. Cooperation in this sector started in 2003 by the signing of an agreement between Ghana Telecom and Alcatel Shanghai Bell and China provided loans totalling 100 million USD including transfer of equipment and experts.⁵⁹ Other similar projects followed in the upcoming years. In 2006, the Fiber Backbone Project was designed to enhance rural telephony and Internet services.⁴⁸ Another project implemented addressed the improvement of the security and emergency agencies information system in 2007.⁶⁰ Fishery and agriculture is one more sector within which it is possible to observe some projects support-

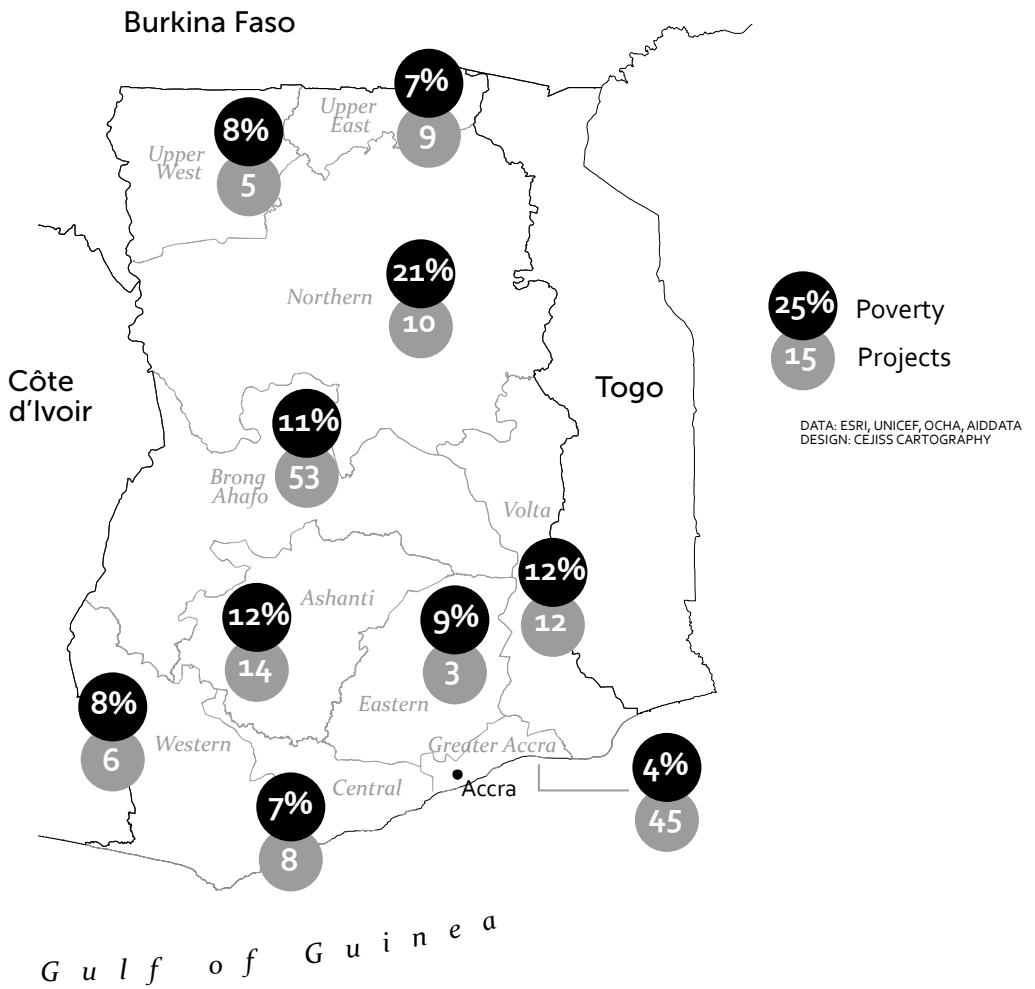
ing the observance of principle. In 2008 Ghana signed a contract to get a 40 million USD loan for a fish farming project in the Western Ghana region. Apart from the equipment provision, the project also included education and training for the farmers to start their own projects in the future.⁶¹ In 2012 China and Ghana signed a contract for the construction of fishing ports and landing sites in coastal areas. This project also included technology transfer to increase the production of fishermen.⁶² In 2010 China participated in the funding of the 25 million USD palm oil refinery and processing factory. Within the project, farmers and agriculture students were trained to grow better quality oil palm seedlings.⁶³ Agriculture projects dominate the production sector the by the amount of finance dedicated to them. Such attention underlines the sector's importance for Ghana's economy, especially when it is believed that the majority of its population is employed in this sector.⁶⁴ It can be expected that agriculture will gain more attention in the future, as in 2013 a Chinese delegation in Ghana urged the Ghanaian Minister of Agriculture to consider technological transfer to boost agricultural development to make the country self-sufficient in food production.^{65 66}

The above mentioned sectors can be considered as the most significant ones with regard to principle observance as they are focused either entirely or at least partially on transfer of knowledge and technology. In other sectors, however, such transfers become quite limited. This situation is due to the fact that the vast majority of projects are implemented by Chinese companies, thus, Ghanaian firms are not involved, which limits the transfer.⁶⁷ In the case of Ghana, for the financially most demanding infrastructure contracts approved in 2011, sixty percent of the finances provided were required to go to Chinese contractors in order to implement the projects.⁶⁸ Moreover, although Chinese companies do employ Ghanaians during the project implementation, such participation brings serious limitations to the transfer knowledge dimension of the completion process. The workers from Ghana are usually the lowest paid, the least qualified, and mostly illiterate workforce on the projects. More qualified and better paid positions are usually reserved for workers coming from China.⁶⁹ Thus, many projects in other sectors have only limited contribution as they do not include a more qualified workforce and no training is offered. Consequently, the most expensive projects in economic infrastructure bear the least potential for the coveted knowledge and technology transfer.

Social Development

Chinese ODF projects are allocated all over the country reaching to the poorest regions in the north. However, as evident from Figure 3, there is a higher concentration of the projects in the southern area of the country with the highest density of population, implying unequal projects distribution implemented by China.

Figure 3: Allocation of the ODF Projects in Ghana by Poverty in Regions (2000-13)^{70,71}



The potential of the projects to develop the most remote regions can be traceable in several cases as, for instance, in the above-mentioned ICT project of the University of Ghana endeavouring to improve the access to education, or projects aimed at supplying electricity to the rural north as well as improving government efficiency all over the country within the Fibre Backbone Project. Many projects bring as their by-product a long-term positive impact on the social development across the country, including the ones delivered in economic infrastructure sector with their focus on road and railway construction. Thus, in 2004 an ambitious railway rehabilitation project commenced in order to address the issue of growing demand for transportation and increasing traffic on the Ghanaian roads.⁷² In 2012, the project of roads construction in the eastern regions of Ghana was completed, thus connecting the remoted north-eastern areas with the southern part.⁷³ One of the most recent projects then included Volta Lake where several landing spots were built to connect small communities living at the lake, and new roads were built to improve the market accessibility for the farmers living in the hinterlands.⁷⁴ A portion of the billion USD loans backed by oil export also was earmarked for road and railway construction,⁷⁵ however, the implementation of number of projects failed due to government disputes and it is not clear how many of them will be completed and by which contractors (a significant part of the loan was cancelled).

Apart from the projects in the sector of education, several hospitals were established, including Korle-Bu hospital and Teshie General Hospital, which focused mainly on improving malaria treatment conditions⁷⁶ and the district hospital in Ada.⁷⁷ The projects implemented as part of the Burma Hall Complex construction grant are another example of initiatives focused on social development, as it also involved the completion of the 37th Military Hospital or the Accra Forces Mechanical Transport School,⁷⁸ or the Kpong Water Project completed in 2014 addressing water coverage problems in the Greater Accra Region.⁷⁹ In 2004 China funded construction of a Youth Centre in Kumasi to provide counselling services and training to young people.⁸⁰ The National Theatre was renovated under a Chinese grant as well.⁸¹

Chinese support of sport infrastructure development through several projects must be also emphasized as the finances delivered to the sector are considerable. In this regard, it is mainly the Chinese 'stadium diplomacy'⁸² in Ghana to which the most attention is paid for the

number of projects funded under this strategy. China has provided to Ghana several grants and loans for stadium constructions and reconstructions. In 2006 Chinese companies built two stadiums and two others were renovated at a cost of nearly 100 million USD.⁸³ In 2012, construction of a multi-purpose stadium commenced in Cape Coast to mark 50 years of Ghana-China diplomatic relations.⁸⁴

The obstacle for the observance of this principle again became the process of project implementation, which undermines the overall potential of Chinese ODF projects to support social development in Ghana. There are several instances that highlight the problem of working conditions, in this context several protests and large criticism can be noticed accompanying project implementation. In 2010, such a case concerned the construction of a road where the contract was entrusted to Chinese company and there were complaints from workers regarding low wages, unwarranted dismissals of workers, poor security of the building site, and non-payment of compensation to workers who were injured during the implementation, or compensation to the families of workers who lost their lives while carrying out their work.⁸⁵ Similar complaints then also concerned the construction of Essipon Stadium.⁸⁶ Perhaps the most publicised case related to the poor working conditions at Chinese companies' construction sites concerned one of the most significant and expensive projects so far implemented in Ghana – The Bui Dam Hydroelectric Power Project. Since 2008, there were complaints from workers about low wages, extra and forced working hours, unfair dismissals, and the unwillingness of the Chinese enterprise Sinohydro Corporation to provide employment contracts.⁸⁷ The labour-related disputes became frequent and threatened to overshadow the economic significance of the project. The problems were resolved through the Construction and Building Metal Workers Union (CBMWU) of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) although the Chinese company was allegedly discouraging and even intimidating workers from joining the union. Nevertheless, despite all obstacles it was CBMWU that put pressure on the Chinese company and managed to improve conditions on the construction site considerably. Thus, by 2013, all the mentioned deficits previously criticized were solved and so were the relations among local Ghanaian workers and the Chinese leadership of the company.⁸⁸ In this respect, it is worth pointing out the initial aversion of the Chinese company and even local authorities to the union formation. The union was formed

and the negotiations began after the workers stopped working or were even resigning in large numbers due to conditions in the workplace and therefore there were serious concerns about the unplanned extension of the construction period. The strikes and mass resignations were preceded by a request to the owner of the project, The Bui Power Authority, which in response to the possible union formation had supported the Chinese company, arguing that it was “interfering in the affairs of the Chinese,”⁸⁹ although the right to form a union is guaranteed by Ghana’s constitution. After the deterioration of the working environment, The Bui Power Authority was forced to change its attitude and to seek a solution.

Sustainable Development

The adherence of this principle is difficult to measure due to the low number of projects. One of note was a training session on solar energy technology that 18 trainees from ten countries including Ghana participated in.⁹⁰ However, it is possible to notice higher attention paid by China to the environmental issues during the period after the timescale followed in this article. In 2015 a solar power plant project started⁹¹ and another project commenced the same year addressing the issue of renewable energy, coordinated by the UNDP.⁹²

With regard to the Chinese ODF projects implemented in Ghana, the prime example is the aforementioned Bui Dam construction. The debate concerned its possible impacts on a national park and activities of the farmers living nearby the dam. However, these concerns were not directed at the Chinese company, but rather at The Bui Power Authority, which became the owner of the dam and all the potential impacts of the construction were solved by this state organization, as it decided to whom it provided authorization and controlled the adherence to environmental standards during the implementation.⁹³

The largest attention paid to the environmental impact of Chinese activities only partially concerned its development finance provided, and it can be perceived rather as an unwanted by-product of Chinese interest in the country per se. With the increasing Chinese engagement in Ghana also the growth of Chinese migration can be witnessed and the most serious consequence of it is seen in the increase of illegal small-scale mining activities called “galamsey.” Such an activity had a devastating impact on the environment and population’s health as

Ghana have lost large amounts of its forest resources, moreover, mining in and around rivers and dumping of used chemicals have contributed to the pollution of water bodies which consequently led to poisoning of people and animals.⁹⁴ With relation to these activities up to 4 thousand Chinese have been deported from Ghana for not having valid visas and because the small-scale mining activity is exclusively limited to the native Ghanaians, it is illegal for foreigners.⁹⁵ The illegal mines and their impact are 'only' a by-product of the overall Chinese interests in Ghana, however, a possible connection can be found between the Ghanaian government's reaction to the problem and the provision of finance by the PRC.

Non-Interference

No case suggesting that China would clearly question the political situation in Ghana and would relate its finances to the political development in the country can be found, nevertheless, this does not mean that Chinese loans have not influenced Ghanaian politics. Given their amount, reaching one of the highest levels in Africa, the question concerning the influence of such possible debt to China caused a controversial discussion among Ghanaian politicians and it also became an issue in election campaigns where the loans were referred to as a dangerous step demonstrating harmful Chinese activities in the country and arguing that the loan violated agreements signed between Ghana and the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.⁹⁶

As already underlined, the increase in financial flows to Ghana after 2009 was related to China's interest in the development of the Ghanaian oil industry. The aforementioned controversial loans were partially repaid in oil, based on the agreement between both sides. However, the steep fall of oil prices on the international market pressured the price of the value of oil agreed between the governments. Originally, China required 13 thousand barrels from Ghana a day; in 2014 an additional two thousand barrels of crude oil a day were required. Moreover, the situation was also worsened by the increasing criticism of delays in disbursement of the bulk of the loan as there were only two out of the 12 projects funded from it. In this matter the Chinese argued had they wanted to make sure that the money would be well used by the Ghanaians.⁹⁷ During this time, another complication arose from aforementioned illegal mining when after protests, violent attacks from

both sides and followed by a large deportation of the Chinese illegals, the relationship between the countries deteriorated significantly.⁹⁸ For the massive deportations and violent nature of the dispute, protests in China originated in the region where the illegal miners were originally from, as their relatives were concerned about their security, demanding aid from Chinese authorities.⁹⁹ The Chinese Foreign Ministry and the Chinese Embassy in Ghana paid heightened attention to the case and demanded that the Ghanaian government investigate crimes against the Chinese citizens, punish the offenders, and compensate the victims.¹⁰⁰ These demands were not officially listed as conditions related to potential finance provision, however, there were some doubts about consequences of the whole situation negatively influencing the aforementioned loan disbursement complications. In this matter Afua Hirsch¹⁰¹ referred to the claims of the Minister of Land and Mines of Ghana, Alhaji Inusah Fuseini, who believed that Beijing could have retaliated and damaged relations between the two countries. Fuseini pointed out tightening of the visa regime at the for Ghanaians as a response to the massive deportations of the illegal Chinese. Ghana's government also claimed that the delayed 3 billion USD loan might be connected to these disputes. However, all the allegations were denied by Beijing,¹⁰² as China has never officially confirmed that the loan delays and visa provision obstacles served as leverage to resolve the illegal Chinese miner situation.

Stability

Chinese interest in preserving stability in Ghana can be witnessed through some projects supporting the principle with addressing Ghana's government efficiency through equipment donations,¹⁰³ as well as construction or reconstruction of government buildings.¹⁰⁴¹⁰⁵ The most significant project aimed mainly at enhancing the efficiency of the Ghanaian government was the Fibre Backbone Project, which is expected to improve communications links for central and regional administration offices. The project involves computerization of the entire government system by extending the national ICT backbone infrastructure to all districts in the country and establishing a national data centre to manage its operations remotely from a central point. Another part of the project involves the establishment of a secondary data centre specifically for disaster recovery capability.¹⁰⁶ In

2013, extension of the Dedicated Security Information System started with the purpose of improving government administrative and service delivery.¹⁰⁷

Despite the interest in stability, it cannot be said that Chinese presence in the country is contributing to it. Numerous protests against Chinese activities in the country have sprung up. Some of them were related to the illegal migrants mining activities which, in addition, brought another possibly destabilizing problem to Ghana – the spread of illegal weapons.¹⁰⁸ There were also protests against Chinese imports composed of cheap products, resulting in damaging the traditional textile industry. Some of these protests became a response to a situation when some migrants became petty-traders and were involved in activities reserved by law exclusively to the Ghanaians.¹⁰⁹

This rather worsening perception is then also supported by the Pew Research Center data. With reference to this organisation, in 2007 seventy five percent of inhabitants of the country viewed China favourably, in 2013 it was sixty seven percent of the population. Although it does not seem to be such a significant decline, it must be added that the fall of eight percent is the third worst score out of 38 states researched (after Japan and Canada). The majority of Ghanaians then also expressed disfavour over Chinese customs and ideas.¹¹⁰ However, the majority of Ghanaians still express an admiration for Chinese technologies and view the Chinese impact on the country's economy positively. Moreover, seventy percent of the Ghanaians still viewed China as a partner and only eleven percent labelled it as an enemy.¹¹¹ Otoo et al. (2013)¹¹² then pointed out that conflicts between the Chinese migrants and the Ghanaians remained relatively small in scale and primarily concerned the local level. So far, despite all the disputes between the countries, the cooperation continues and it is possible to notice further projects delivered in Ghana.

Apart from the protests as a possible risk to the country's stability, there is also the economic dimension of Chinese influence on the stable environment in Ghana. Due to the loans backed by oil production, Ghana just reinforced its position on the list of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC).¹¹³ The entire situation was exacerbated by its reliance on its oil revenues which significantly fell once oil market prices plunged. Although China cancelled some of Ghana's debts amounting to almost 400 million USD,¹¹⁴ newly signed loans from China deepened the worries that the progress which had been made under the HIPC in-

initiative could be eroded. The International Monetary Fund found the loans as ‘contravening debt conditions contingent within their support’¹¹⁵ and perceived further indebtedness as harmful for the Ghanaian economy. Due to its recently discovered oil sources, the Ghanaian government saw its cooperation with China as a possible way to deal with such debts, and especially to develop underdeveloped infrastructure from the loans. Regardless of such reservations about further borrowing, the IMF agreed to the loan acceptance as the projects financed from the loans would earn enough revenue in the future.¹¹⁶ Thus, despite all controversies the loan was approved by Parliament in 2011.¹¹⁷

In 2015, however, after an economic crisis hit the country, former President Mahama agreed to seek support from the unpopular IMF once again, ‘because there was the need for policy credibility and confidence from the international financial institutions to restore economic stability and growth.’¹¹⁸ Under the new loan conditions, Ghana once again had to agree to the IMF’s loan terms requiring the government to cut back on spending. It is not clear why Ghana did not turn to China for assistance but it can be surmised by its already huge debts to China and disputes over the loan disbursement, or by Beijing’s unwillingness to deliver finance in the form of budget support in general¹¹⁹ as it rather prefers participating on the specific project implementations.

Conclusion

The aim of this article was to examine the observance of the Beijing Consensus’ principles through the ODF flows delivered to Ghana between 2000 and 2013. All the principles are adhered to with regard to the purpose of the projects implemented in the country. Although one can come across considerable differences in the attention paid to particular principles within the projects delivered, in all cases the projects supporting the principles are traceable. However, at the same time, it must be pointed out that the adherence is undermined by the process of implementation as well as by some Chinese by-product activities.

Such undercutting engagement concerned to some extent all the principles examined. Thus, in case of the first principle, *innovation-led development*, it was undermined by lack of knowledge transfer element in Chinese development initiatives unless these initiatives were focused on the support of this area directly. The *social development* principle was then undermined by the working conditions prevailing dur-

ing the implementation process as demonstrated in several instances. In the case of the principle of *sustainable development*, moreover, only one project can be considered as supporting it with its very purpose. In addition, the adherence was considerably undermined by Chinese illegal migrants' activities in Ghana. The principle of *non-interference* also faced questioning as some steps of Chinese government were perceived as possible interference into the inner affairs of the recipient country. Likewise, the last principle examined in this case, *stability*, was challenged by controversies including Ghana's debt sustainability and protests of the Ghanaians against various Chinese activities which were perceived as harmful and possibly endangering peaceful development in Ghana.

For Ghana, it also became evident that Chinese financial flows can be seen in many ways as significant, especially for their focus on the infrastructure (economic or social). At the same time, these flows and projects delivered bore a lot of risk for the recipient. With the growing volume of the finance also grew the overall engagement in the country, which can be considered in many ways as harmful for creating a destabilizing environment. For Ghana such relation has proven to be challenging as it shows the weaknesses and possible disadvantages of these ties with China and the unpreparedness of recipient's government to all kinds of possible complications. At the same time, the new source of finance and qualitatively different approach towards the recipient offered by the emerging power represents for the Ghanaian part an opportunity to negotiate more convenient conditions of the contracts. However, because of the lack of information about the content of the agreements, it remains unclear to what extent the Ghanaian government can negotiate better conditions and pursue their own development interests and needs in relations with their Chinese counterpart.

The application of the principles in the case of Ghana also pointed out the weaknesses of the model. With all possible advantages the model can offer to a developing country (e.g., implementation of financially demanding projects in the economic infrastructure sector, availability of other sources of development finance, and a non-interference policy), at the same time it also brings negative features of Chinese development experience that might range from lack of transparency to the use of inappropriate and environmentally harmful techniques and violation of workers' rights. Regarding the broader discussion on the principles of the Beijing Consensus, the principles application in the case

of Ghana showed that some of its features suggested by Ramo (e.g., sustainable development) are really, as pointed out by Breslin, a matter of the future rather than the present and are still strongly neglected in the ODF flows. For a better understanding of the true alternative of the Chinese model through its ODF flows to Africa, more cases and their comparison to traditional donors' development financing are needed to make any conclusion on that matter.



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Notes

- 1 In the article, when China is referred to it is meant the People's Republic of China (PRC).
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Between Survivability and Crime

The Nature of Informal Practices in post-Communist Societies

Reviewed by Ostap Kushnir

Abel Polese's *Limits of a Post-Soviet State* provides an interesting insight into the nature and mechanisms of informal practices in the post-Soviet space. At its core, the book is an amalgamation of real life stories, individual reflections, and a very refined analysis; academic theorizing is usually expanded with an illustrative reportage, and vice versa. Some of the book chapters constitute reprints of articles or parts of articles published by Polese in different peer reviewed journals.

Limits of a Post-Soviet State includes a significant amount of case studies, and this should be specifically highlighted. For instance, Polese describes and explains trans-boundary trade arrangements – some sort of a smuggling – in Transistria where a *de facto* state does not exist, or outlines the informal economic component of Ukraine's systems of higher education and healthcare, or scrutinizes grassroots provision of welfare in the Chernobyl area where the state's presence is minimal, or portrays indigenous mechanisms of ensuring supply and demand equilibrium in Odessa bazars, or assesses economic constituents of the hospitality rituals and food consumption in Batumi - the list may be continued. All of these case studies, though, are regarded through the prism of roles performed by three actors: 1) individuals who seek certain services or goods; 2) individuals who provide these services and goods; and 3) the state which constitutes the framework

for cooperation between individuals or, in particular, employs individuals to administer the state's provision of certain services and goods. To put it directly, the nature and mechanisms of informal practices, as well as the overall logic of the post-Soviet informality, are presented and assessed through various types of spatial interactions among the above mentioned three actors.

Polese draws a distinguishing line between informal practices and illegal activities. In some respect, however, he justifies the state- or individual-harming informal practices portraying them as means of survival. As he puts it: 'Organically speaking, informality is the (survival) instinct of a society, it is the intuition of a musician, the creativity of the educated artist' (p. 37) The difference between illegal activities and justified informal practices resides in social interpretation of available opportunities. In other words, the 'organic' survival incentive does not envisage exploiting the state or social misconducts exclusively for enrichment of an individual. That said, Polese stresses that the difference between what is lawful and what is not depends on circumstances and should not be axiomatized.

Outlining the niche for informal practices to emerge, Polese writes the following: 'If state salaries are too low to secure the survival of public workers, they will look for an alternative source of income and this will most likely be in conflict with what the state rules, although it is generated by the fact that the state itself is unable to regulate such situations' (p. 77) In other words, individuals expect the state to perform functions it is prescribed to perform. 'A state, to be respected, must not only be a state but also act as a state' (p. 76). Otherwise, individuals will find themselves engaged in practices the state condemns. Developing these arguments further, Polese introduces the cubic watermelon phenomenon. Society, as a planted watermelon, will develop – or grow – in any case. However, if one hopes to grow a cubic watermelon, a proper framework should be applied; i.e. state should wisely regulate social processes. This being said, if the framework is too strict, the watermelon will not grow. If it is too loose, the watermelon will not become cubic (p. 35). In this light, informal practices constitute a social response to inappropriate (too strict or too loose) state regulatory attempts.

Speaking of the legal nature of informal practices, two types of these should be distinguished: those which harm fellow citizens, and those which harm the state. According to Polese, in the post-Soviet environ-

ment with its huge amount of under- and over-regulations, harm to the state becomes an acceptable lesser evil. For example, cross-border cigarette smuggling is socially tolerated while selling drugs on the street is not (p. 112). Another example is a personal interaction between the state administrator and individual in the event the latter requires a service which is impossible to obtain legally within the needed time-frame or scope; apparently, this kind of interaction leads to violation of official procedures, but ensures the achievement of mutually beneficial outcomes and, again, is socially tolerated (p. 115).

Polese specifically introduces the concept of a *brift* which stands for a very “grey” intermediary between bribe and gift in the post-Soviet space (p. 111). The *brift* is, for instance, an individual monetized gratitude to doctors for providing life-saving services which should be, theoretically, secured by the state on a free of charge basis. Having received the *brift*, doctors neither inform hospital administrators about it, nor about provided services (p. 127). Polese concludes here that the degree of individual access to state resources and services predefines the degree of social compliance to legal ways of benefiting from these resources or services.

Apart from this, Polese stresses the link between informal practices and commonly accepted patterns of moral behavior. In conditions of dysfunctional state and necessity to take desperate actions, individuals still align to certain moral standards. For instance, as Polese observes, female cigarette smugglers tend to condemn prostitution regardless of its higher profitability (p. 84).

To conclude, *Limits of a post-Soviet state* provides a very multi-layered perspective on informal practices. This is the perspective of a curious Western traveler, who is at the same time an unbiased social anthropologist and meticulous economist. Polese claims not to apply Western concepts to explain the variety of informal practices; however, this is not exactly the case. The social paradoxes he observes in the post-Soviet space are portrayed as paradoxes simply because they are different from what the Western scholar used to see. The economic pragmatism makes Polese seek “irreplaceable” supply and demand forces behind every interaction in an environment of faulty institutions and developed interpersonal relations. At the very end Polese highlights that informal practices are far from being fully researched; moreover, there does not exist a fully explanatory methodological model for researching informality in the post-Soviet space.

Managing the Undesirables

Refugee Camps and Humanitarian Government

Reviewed by Wendy Booth

According to a 2012 report by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 'an average of 3000 people per day became refugees in 2012, five times more than in 2010.' The number of refugees, worldwide, now stands at approximately 15.4 million. These figures are startling. Discovering effective ways to assist refugees, whatever the humanitarian crisis, is a matter of urgency. As the author of *Managing the Undesirables*, Agier's aim is to describe and create an understanding of humanitarian governance.

Agier is an anthropologist, and his work is essentially an ethnographic account of his visits to refugee camps, mainly in central and western Africa, during the period 2000 until 2007. It provides an account of people's lives in the camps, including a number of interviews, and the difficulties faced by the stateless, particularly in regard to the power exerted over their lives by the UNHCR and the NGOs which provide humanitarian assistance. Agier states that his main aim is to open up further paths for ethnographic inquiry 'in one of these new imagined spaces which a few decades ago no one would have imagined could figure among the legitimate terrains of anthropology' (p.134). His affiliation with *Medecins Sans Frontieres* (Doctors without Borders) enabled Agiers to access to the camps and closely examine the situation of the refugees located within their territory.

The work tackles the complexities associated with displaced persons and provides a raw account of the issues faced on the ground. It

is particularly useful, from an anthropological perspective, including with regard to human rights. Problems that arise from the absence of recognition and lack of citizenship also make the book useful to those interested in the politics of identity and recognition. The book provides a straightforward account that brings the central problems to the fore in an easily understandable manner, with a focus on the day to day problems faced, such as the apathy that results from being dependent on humanitarian aid, with Agiers describing refugee camps as 'waiting rooms' (p. 72); a state that the majority of refugees find themselves in sometimes for months but more often for years.

The power that humanitarian organisations wield over displaced persons is clearly described, from the labelling that occurs on entering the camps, 'a hierarchy of misfortune' (p. 213), to decisions about who exactly should receive plastic sheeting, and the distribution of food packages. This information meets the objectives that Agiers set out to achieve at the start and provides interesting reading and a thorough insight. However, it does, at times, seem overly descriptive, as well as short on solutions and more in-depth theoretical arguments.

It is inevitable that the provision of aid and what form this should take will be contested and face criticism. One of the most poignant points that Agiers makes is regarding the politics within the camps, and perhaps more importantly outside the camps, by the UNHCR and NGOs, with the camps described as places of 'extra territoriality' (p. 71) and '(z)ones of exceptional rights and power, where everything seems possible for those in control' (p. 82). There is a striking contrast between the public perception of humanitarian aid and the impunity which organisations have, for example with regard to the forced return of displaced persons now urbanised after war and sometimes decades away from their homeland, yet expected to go back to their original lives as farmers (p. 120).

The book is essential in the context of the current debate on refugees. Perhaps the most worrying factor flagged up is 'the impunity of those in charge' (p. 155), and the way that privatisation is entering the field of humanitarianism. Moreover, the post 9/11 era 'strangely resembles science fiction, but permits the effective global application of an imperial police force, with humanitarianism as its left hand' (p. 206). These issues are mentioned in the latter half of the book, and result in a desire for further elaboration. While Agiers describes instances where refugees themselves have carried out protests or elected leaders

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from among themselves as representatives within the camp, it is ultimately these powerful exterior forces which will determine the future of refugee camps and the status of displaced persons; as Agiers coins it 'managing the undesirable' and controlling the fate of those who 'are viewed, simultaneously or alternatively, as vulnerable and undesirable, victims and dangerous' (p. 201). *Managing the Undesirables* provides a good starting point for these issues, which is the main objective of Agiers, yet the issues at play need to be delved into more deeply, for example the idea of integrating displaced persons into existing towns and cities, which is usually more cost effective; or indeed, deciding what to do when long term refugee camps evolve into townships—a point made in the book. In addition, further ethnographic research is required, as his research terminated in 2007 and is largely centered on Africa. In sum, the book is a highly commendable ethnographic account that is easy to follow and provides a significant contribution to the current crises of the humanitarian movement.

This book review first appeared in issue 4, 2015.

The Hybridity of Terrorism

Reviewed by Michael Becker

In recent decades, as the incidence and deadliness of terrorism have grown, so too has the academic literature on the causes, nature, and consequences of the phenomenon. In *The Hybridity of Terrorism*, Sebastian Wojciechowski proposes a new lens through which to understand terrorism. Breaking it down into several constituent parts (subject, actors, forms, causes, spaces, and features), each of which is the subject of one chapter, Wojciechowski argues persuasively that terrorism cannot be explained or understood—and therefore combated—without appreciating its complexity, and the extent to which it is driven by interactions between diverse forces, milieus and actors.

Wojciechowski's work draws significantly on that of other authors who have remarked that one-dimensional analyses of terrorism—including terrorist actor "profiles," mono-causal theories of the roots of terrorism, and even the various proposed definitions of terrorism—fail individually to cover more than a fraction of its actual incidence. Martha Crenshaw, Audrey Cronin, Bruce Hoffman, and David Rapoport, among others, have made arguments to this effect. However, while these authors tended to emphasise the complexity of one aspect of terrorism in particular—its causes, say—Wojciechowski sets himself a much more ambitious task. He aims to elucidate the complexity of terrorism along a whole multitude of dimensions, a task manifestly too big for one book. Take two chapters as an illustration. Chapter 11 represents terrorism as a manifestation of relations between actors and their environment, and proposes chaos theory, decision theory, spatial competition theory, salience theory, exchange theory, black box theory, theory of disaster, expected utility theory, and topology methods,

among others, as possible methods of understanding these relations (pp. 75-81). Chapter vi, by contrast, considers terrorism as a series of “features” that can exhibit positive and negative traits, horizontal and vertical dimensions, calculated and spontaneous aspects, broad and narrow features, and an evolutionary as well as a constant character (pp. 153-156).

The reader cannot help but wonder how these rather disparate ideas are connected. In total throughout the six chapters (plus an introduction and a conclusion) the author proposes dozens of ways of interpreting, classifying and understanding terrorism, without developing clear links between them, or explaining when, or if, the theories he outlines obtain empirically. As a result, the overly ambitious scope of the project generates confusion and a lack of clarity with respect to the most salient aspects of terrorism as a research subject. It is uncertain whether, and in what ways, the various schemas proposed throughout the seven chapters relate to each other.

This lack of clarity, fortunately, does not negate the book’s many positive aspects. One of the book’s most important contributions is its excellent compilation of the literature in each domain of the study of terrorism, from the nature of its practitioners, to its historical evolution, to its very definition. The author provides in each chapter a quite thorough review of the relevant literature, including useful perspectives other than those written by the usual British and American suspects (though he does not neglect the latter). Another positive feature of Wojciechowski’s work is his ability to see innovative possibilities for future research projects, such as exploring the distinct integrational and disintegrational aspects of terrorism (p. 158).

In general, this book is most valuable when read as a roadmap for the study of terrorism. It provides a meticulous treatment of the main theories and methodologies used in terrorism studies, and proposes novel ways of bringing together approaches, including some from other disciplines, in order to generate (future) insights about the phenomenon. Yet despite claiming to make progress toward a better understanding of what terrorism is and what drives it, the author largely leaves this task to others. Perhaps as a consequence of the enormity of the project he takes on, Wojciechowski’s book largely consists of summations of past research, peppered with interesting ideas for future research, but

few original substantive conclusions. Nevertheless, a broad audience, including laypersons as well as policymakers and scholars, will find Wojciechowski's book useful both as a primer on the topic of terrorism, and as a source of promising ideas for future research projects.

Book Reviews

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