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Military Intervention in Africa: French and US Approaches Compared; Leadership Revised; Rethinking Liberal Democracy; The Crime-Conflict Nexus and the Civil War in Syria; Reversing the Stabilization Paradigm; and Prescription for an Affordable Full Spectrum Defense Policy

The level of interests, level of resources, and strategic culture all factor into explaining the differences and similarities between military operations by France and the United States in Africa, contends Professor Stephen Burgess in "Military Intervention in Africa: French and US Approaches Compared." While both constructivist and realist perspectives are necessary for comparative analysis, the argument in this article is that strategic culture and attitudes towards risk as well as differences in perceived spheres of influence are more insightful than the realist perspective in explaining the different ways that France and the United States chose to intervene in Africa. The Powell Doctrine and casualty and risk aversion explain why the United States is less willing to intervene directly militarily in Africa; however, the relatively lower level of US interests in Africa as compared with Southwest Asia must also be taken into account. In addition, the US military has an organizational culture of winning, while the French military is accustomed to messy outcomes, which also explains the differences in interventionism. Prepositioning of French forces in Northwest Africa increases the likelihood that they will be used in operations. The prepositioning of US forces in Djibouti has not led to direct military intervention in Somalia, even as the capital and country were on the verge of falling to violent extremists. However, the extensive use of US special forces in Somalia and Northwest Africa has begun a process of convergence with the French military posture.

The recent string of existential crises in Europe—the Euro crisis, Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and the refugee crisis of 2015—have resulted in new dynamics within the European Union, posits Wolfang Koeth in "Leadership Revised: How Did the Ukraine Crisis and the Annexation of Crimea Affirm Germany's Leading Role in EU Foreign Policy?" In Brussels, Germany has emerged as the hardly contested nexus of decision making. It was

in particular through the Ukraine crisis and the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 that Germany found itself assuming a leadership role also in the EU's foreign policy, a role it has shunned in the past. However, for Berlin this new role is far from obvious—it is only gradually that Germany grew comfortable with its enhanced role, which is due more to external circumstances than by its own design of its own image abroad and, due to the still prevalent feeling of historical guilt, the fear of being perceived as a dominating power has so far prevented Germany from occupying the forefront of the stage, preferring to pull strings from behind and presenting itself as the EU's "Chief Facilitation Officer." This article analyzes how Germany, in particular through the Ukraine crisis starting in 2014, affirmed itself—albeit reluctantly—as a nexus of decision making in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and became the de facto leading nation for defining the EU's response towards Russia. The article points out the internal and external consequences of this new role and, in particular, its impact on the Baltic States.

In the long course of human evolution and political experimentation, liberal democracy, especially after the events of 1989, has come to be seen as the best political system, asserts Dr. Isabel David in "Rethinking Liberal Democracy: Prelude to totalitarianism." In fact, she pursued, "we seemed to have reached the only system compatible with liberty, after the dreadful experiences of Communist and Nazi totalitarianism, and its twin in the economic realm - capitalism." But is liberalism really conducive to freedom? Or totalitarianism arises from the combination of both the Platonic and Augustinian views: ignorance of values and the pursuit of one's egotistic desires. Evil has an essentially private nature. In this sense, totalitarianism may arise from a utilitarian culture that sees people—or some forms of knowledge—as worthless and disposable objects.

Dr. Christina Steenkamp, in "The Crime-Conflict Nexus and the Civil War in Syria," postulates that there is a strong relationship between organized crime and civil war. This article contributes to the crime-conflict nexus literature by providing a consideration of the role of organized crime in the Syrian conflict. It provides an overview of pre- and post-war organized crime in Syria. The article then builds the argument that war provides opportunities for organized crime through the state's diminished law enforcement ability; the economic hardship which civilians face during war; and the abundance of armed groups who all need to generate revenue. Secondly, the paper argues that organized crime also affects the intensity and duration of war by enabling militants to reproduce themselves materially and to build institutions amongst the communities where they are active. The relationships between armed groups and local populations emerge as a central theme in understanding the crime-conflict nexus.

In "Reversing the Stabilization Paradigm: Towards an Alternative Approach," Mr. Mark Knight examines the dialogue concerning Stabilization that illuminates a paradigm based on the ideas of the so-called 'liberal peace'—defined minimally as democracy and free markets. This model proposes that if the liberal peace is delivered at the sub-national level via Stabilization interventions, then the desired outcome would be 'stability.' However, com-

mentators of Stabilization generally agree that the liberal peace is an unachievable objective that inhibits the desired outcome of 'stability.' This Practice Note contests this analysis and instead argues that 'stability' is an unachievable objective that inhibits the desired outcome of a liberal democratic functioning state. Therefore, Stabilization's desired outcome becomes the protection and enjoyment of human rights, rather than 'stability.' This practice note continues its examination of Stabilization and comes to the conclusion that Stabilization can be understood as political actions in support of an ideological outcome. This understanding of Stabilization is compatible with existing international engagements in support of national transition processes and can be applied across the spectrum from consent to coercion, concludes Mr. Knight.

In his essay "Prescription for an Affordable Full Spectrum Defense Policy," Professor Jan Muczyk affirms that as an indispensable nation the United States needs to pursue a full spectrum defense policy, which happens to be very expensive and in competition with domestic priorities. Therefore, the Defense Department must come up with an affordable strategy for crafting such a defense policy or lose out to high priority domestic exigencies. This undertaking offers proven suggestions based on lessons learned from wars and previous arms races for funding such a policy.

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Military Intervention in Africa

French and US Approaches Compared

Stephen Burgess, PhD*

Recent conflicts in Africa have demonstrated the need for foreign military intervention to prevent violent extremist organizations (VEOs) from expanding their areas of operations and attacking vulnerable states and populations. Since 2013, France has undertaken *direct military intervention*; deploying a force in *Opération Serval* that defeated VEO insurgents in Mali,[1] as well as launching *Opération Barkhane* in the Sahel to monitor and interdict VEOs and armed militants spilling over from Libya's state collapse and Mali's feeble recovery from conflict. In addition, France has trained forces from Chad and other countries that have operated alongside French units in interventions. In contrast, the United States opted for an *indirect military intervention*, establishing the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in Djibouti in 2002 and spending more than a billion dollars training, equipping, deploying and sustaining African intervention forces mainly for peace enforcement in Somalia in Eastern Africa and training and equipping forces in the Sahel region of West Africa to prevent VEO invasions. The United States has also used Special Forces and remotely piloted aircraft (RPAs) to assist in the fight against VEOs without engaging in major combat.

France and the United States have been among the leading countries when it comes to military intervention. This is because of both countries' relatively high level of global interests and high level of military capabilities as well as the willingness of most of their presidents to use military force. However, when context is considered, the nature of French and American military interventions has been

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quite different, which leads to a number of propositions. First of all, French and US interventions have taken place in different countries where their respective interests have been high. Second, *direct interventions with military force* have occurred in those places where those interests have been attacked or have been judged to be under imminent threat of attack by presidents inclined for various reasons to use force. Direct interventions have not occurred where interests may have been high but where the threat of attack on those interests has been moderate or low. The one exception to this proposition is the US humanitarian intervention in Somalia in 1993; however, the United States has not repeated such an intervention after its 1993 "Black Hawk Down" fiasco in which 18 US service personnel were killed in a mission that was not in the US national interest.[2]

Third, once France or the United States has intervened, other capable countries (including the United States and France) have not intervened but instead have lent support. For instance, France has a base in Djibouti from where it assisted the government of Djibouti in combating rebels in 1999-2001; however, it chose not to intervene in the 2000s to assist in the fight against VEOs in Eastern Africa. Instead, it chose the Sahel, because the threat to its interests there escalated in 2013, placing thousands of French nationals in Mali under threat of capture. It did not intervene in Eastern Africa because its interests there were not under imminent threat of attack and because the United States staged an *indirect military intervention* against VEOs there first by establishing CJTF-HOA in 2002. France instead chose to work through the European Union (EU) to aid the African Union (AU), the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the training of the new Somali military.[3]

The United States invested hundreds of millions of dollars in the Pan-Sahel Initiative followed by the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP), including the training and equipping of the security forces of Mali, Niger, and Mauritania.[4] Therefore, it could have been expected that US forces would have intervened in Mali in 2012 or 2013 to assist the beleaguered national military. However, the United States did not intervene in 2012 when jihadists took control of northern Mali and stood by in 2013, while France—which had greater interests that were under attack—intervened. Instead, the United States provided logistical and other support. Evidently, sunk costs were not a great concern in US calculations.

The United States *indirectly intervened militarily* when it established CJTF-HOA in Djibouti at Camp Lemonier—a French military base—in response to the attacks of September 11, 2001 and also because Al Qaeda had attacked US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the USS Cole in Yemen in 2000. The declaration of the "Global War on Terror" led to a surge of military activity and to the US Department of Defense (DOD) and US Central Command

(CENTCOM) deciding to use CJTF-HOA to work against the Al Qaeda threat to Eastern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula and the growing ties among jihadists. The resources committed to Eastern Africa were smaller than those in Afghanistan—where the 9/11 attacks were planned (and Iraq)—from where attacks were "anticipated". Also, the United States was unwilling to intervene directly in Somalia after the 1993 "Black Hawk Down" fiasco. Instead, the United States first worked with Somali warlords from 2001-2006 against Islamists and from 2006 onwards with Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya against the VEO, Al Shabaab. Even when Al Shabaab was on the verge of taking the Somali capital of Mogadishu from 2007 to 2011, the United States continued to rely upon African forces to save the day.

The timing of intervention is also important to consider. In Africa, France and the United States have intervened only after a crisis has occurred and not with *direct military deployment* to prevent a crisis. France could have intervened in 2012 when jihadists took over northern Mali and prevented them from moving towards the more populated half of the country. However, France only did so in 2013 when the jihadists launched an offensive, moving south towards the capital, Bamako, and threatening French nationals. In comparison, the United States *intervened indirectly* in Eastern Africa and Somalia by setting up CJTF-HOA and sending troops to Djibouti after 9/11 when the Bush administration assumed that Al Qaeda was going to launch more attacks in Eastern Africa and Yemen. When the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) took over most of Somalia in 2006 and became more extreme, the United States indirectly intervened by supporting the Ethiopian invasion in December 2006 and the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) from 2007 onwards to counter Al Shabaab. In the Sahel, the United States trained and exercised with regional security forces with the aim of preventing a VEO takeover.

France decided to move from modest action to direct military intervention with Serval and, starting in 2014, sustained military action through Barkhane in spite of limited resources. Evidently, there was a change in the calculation of interests in Paris that led to the escalation of military activity. Prior to 2013, France was trying to extricate itself from the business of direct intervention and nation-building in Africa. It was indicative that in 2011, President Nikolas Sarkozy did little after the air campaign in Libya to rebuild the country. In spite of France's determination to draw down and cut costs, it has continued to get sucked into saving some of its former colonies from collapse, with the intervention in Côte d'Ivoire (2002-2014), Mali (2013-2014) and Central African Republic (2014-2016) and the protracted defense of Chad (*Opération Épervier* 1986-2014). After Serval, France had the chance to resume the process of winding down its military

presence in Africa. However, Paris decided to escalate its military intervention in Northwest Africa.[5] France launched Barkhane, an open-ended counter-terrorism mission that covers much of the vast Sahel and Sahara with only 3,500 French Army soldiers backed by French Air Force assets in Ndjamena, Chad and Niamey, Niger. The reversal seems to have occurred because Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the so-called Islamic State (Daesh) increasingly have posed a danger to French interests and to the countries of the Sahel and Maghreb, especially Libya, Niger and Mali. However, France's ambitious counterterrorism (CT) operation holds the danger of mission creep and raises questions about excessive risk-taking.

The United States has been content to take an indirect military approach in Africa. The United States has far more military resources than France and could have intervened directly in both Somalia and Mali. However, the administration of President George W. Bush decided in 2001 that the epicenter of the struggle against Al Qaeda was in Southwest Asia and not in Africa. The commitment of more than a hundred thousand troops to Afghanistan and Iraq from 2002 to 2014 significantly diminished the ability of the United States to use military force in Africa. Furthermore, VEOs did not appear as a serious threat in Somalia until 2006 and Mali until 2012. US backing for the Ethiopian invasion in December 2006 and AMISOM in 2007 substituted for direct action, especially at the same time as the United States was launching the surge in Iraq. While the United States thinks that Eastern Africa contains greater threats to US national security interests than Northwest Africa, it has not been as important as Afghanistan or Iraq or more recently Syria and Libya with counter Daesh operations. As for Mali and the Sahel, the United States has not deployed forces but has supported operations Serval and Barkhane with logistics and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR). US Africa Command (AFRICOM) is currently focused on attacking Daesh in Libya.

Methodology

This article analyzes why French and US approaches to military intervention in Africa are different and argues that different strategic cultures and interests provide the explanation. The article also appraises similar features in French and US interventions: (1) *direct interventions with military force* occur in places where interests are high and have been attacked or judged to be under imminent threat of attack; they have not occurred where interests may be high but where the threat of attack on those interests has been moderate or low; (2) direct interventions take place after a crisis has occurred and not to prevent one from happening; (3) *indi-*

rect military intervention takes place in locations where interests are moderate and there is a threat of an *eventual* attack; (4) once France or the United States has intervened, that country plays the lead role and other countries cooperate.

There are two theoretical frameworks—realism and constructivism—that are employed in this article to analyze the propositions. First, realism explains direct and indirect military interventions in terms of levels of interest and threats to those interests and the resources available to counteract threats and maintain the status quo. Accordingly, direct military interventions take place where vital interests are under great threat or under attack; and indirect interventions are launched where the threat is not as high and where action is needed to prevent spillover of a conflict.[6]

The realist perspective is that threats to French interests in Northwest Africa are higher than to those of the United States, which explains direct French military intervention there despite fewer military resources. Conversely, threats to US interests in Eastern Africa are higher than those against French interests, which helps to explain indirect US military intervention there. France has had high interests in Northwest Africa since colonial times, which have been under increasing threat of attack from VEOs. While France has comparatively low military resources and is confronting high costs, it has decided to intervene and sustain the intervention because of the level of interests. The realist view is that US indirect intervention in Eastern Africa has occurred because of VEOs in Somali, Yemen and Kenya that threaten US interests.[7] Also, the United States has more military resources to deal with these areas than does France, which has made it possible for US forces to intervene. However, US interests have not been as high as in Southwest Asia and have not been so threatened that it has found it necessary to directly intervene. If US interests in Eastern Africa were higher, it would have been more willing to directly intervene militarily. For example, if bin Laden had stayed in Sudan and had been harbored by the Bashir regime and planned the 9/11 attacks from Sudan, the United States would have attacked Sudan and not Afghanistan. The epicenter of the war on terror would have been in Eastern Africa. As for Northwest Africa, the higher level of resources enabled the United States to expend considerable resources in an area which is not high in the US national interest.

Second, constructivist theory and more specifically strategic culture play a role in explaining the contrast between the tendency of France to directly intervene in Africa with subordinate partners despite a limited budget as opposed to the US pattern of indirectly intervening and seeking partners as surrogates when it has massive military and financial resources. Countries and their leaders hold certain beliefs and assumptions and adhere to a strategic culture in taking military

action. Strategic culture plays a role in determining whether military interventions are direct or indirect.[8]

Both France and the United States have constructed respective self-conceptualizations over the years and have formed two distinct "strategic cultures" that play a role in shaping the nature of their interventions. French strategic culture and past operations explain why and how France has intervened in Northwest Africa. France has chosen "ways" of intervention, which have achieved significant effects by employing relatively small, mobile military forces in actions that have carried a good degree of risk. In contrast, the United States has been more risk averse in its choice of "ways", which can be traced back to the "Vietnam syndrome" and the "Powell doctrine" which advocated the deployment of overwhelming force if the ends to be achieved were considered to be in the US national interest. The strategic culture proposition is that the United States and French militaries will continue past behavior unless compelled by higher authority or an external shock to do otherwise.[9]

Therefore, the level of interests, level of resources, and strategic culture all factor into explaining the differences and similarities between France and the United States. While both perspectives are necessary for comparison, the argument in this article is that the constructivist (strategic culture) perspective and attitude towards risk is more insightful than the realist perspective in explaining the differences between the French and US approaches.

French Military Intervention in Africa

The issue in this section is whether **realism (interests)** or **constructivism (strategic culture)** provides more of the explanation for why France has launched direct military interventions in Northwest Africa and not in Eastern Africa. A related issue is whether an external shock to French interests or a change in leaders' perspectives caused a change in military intervention from 2013 onwards.[10]

Realism (interests): France has been intervening in Africa since 1830 when it invaded and colonized Algeria. By 1900, it had conquered Northwest Africa, defeating a number of militarily proficient kingdoms in the Sahel. The French established colonial military outposts throughout the Sahel and Sahara and used the Foreign Legion and other forces to put down rebellions against its authority. France created the states of Algeria, Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauritania, and Burkina Faso and considered its colonies to be part of the metropole. French nationals ran the administrations, companies and militaries in its colonies, and this pattern carried over into the post-independence era. From 1960 onwards, France maintained its nationals and companies and military outposts in Northwest Africa, and peri-

odic military interventions in the region in support of regimes were one of the indicators of neo-colonialism. Of particular importance were uranium mining operations in Niger and elsewhere that fueled France's extensive nuclear power industry. France considered Northwest Africa to be in its sphere of influence, and as late as 1994, Paris objected to a visit by a US Secretary of State to Mali.[11]

In Eastern Africa, France established a base in Djibouti in 1894 that provided a way station that connected to French Indochina and to its interests in the Middle East. However, France had little interest in Eastern Africa, except to deter a possible Ethiopian takeover of Djibouti in the 1980s and to help the Djiboutian government counteract attacks by local Djiboutian rebels from 1999 to 2001.

In 1991, France supported the Algerian military when it prevented the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) from taking power after elections. This gave rise to civil war and the eventual emergence of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Algerian violent extremists blamed France for the military coup and attempted to attack French cities and citizens. Thus, AQIM and other VEOs continued to attack French interests into this decade, seizing French citizens in Northwest Africa as hostages for ransom and other actions.[12]

Neo-colonialism finally began to fade away in the late 1990s. Threats to interests were not as great with the end of the Cold War and the containment of Colonel Qadhafi of Libya. In *Opération Turquoise* in 1994, French forces intervened to save a regime that had been responsible for genocide in Rwanda, which gave French neo-colonialism a bad name. In 1997, the death of Michel Foccart, the architect of neo-colonialism and the fall of the French-backed Mobutu regime in Zaire opened the way for a less paternalistic and more multilateral approach. The new French government decided to change course and act more in Africa as part of the European Union (EU). Prime Minister Lionel Jospin undertook the process of transforming France's role in Africa to one of leading EU assistance to Africa and launching a French-led peacekeeping training program—RECAMP.

Even as neo-colonialism faded away, France still was concerned about its interests (citizens and companies) and the sunk costs in its former colonies but chose to act in a more modest and even-handed manner. The 2002 French intervention in Cote d'Ivoire, *Opération Licorne,* did not support the regime of President Laurent Gbagbo but separated the government and rebel forces while a political settlement was being reached over eight years. Also, France led interventions to stop Sudan from taking over Chad in a dispute over war and genocide in Darfur. In 2006, Sudan sent an invasion force of Chadian rebels to seize Ndjamena. France increased the size of its force in Chad and helped the Chadian military fend off the rebels. In 2007, France took the lead in authorizing and

leading an EU force (EUROFOR) to provide protection for the regime of President Idriss Déby and tens of thousands of refugees from Darfur.

Strategic culture: While the colonial experience of 1840-1960 helped shape French strategic culture, the Algerian War and massive insurgency of 1954-1962 compelled France to formulate and implement a muscular counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy. COIN operations in Algeria included desert and mountain warfare, which required a strategy of "clear and hold" and light mobile forces with extensive ISR and the ability to establish authority after clearing an area. After giving up Algeria in 1962, the struggle in the French defense establishment became one that pitted the "grand strategists" who wanted to make France a major *player* in the Cold War and the "neo-colonials" who wanted to ensure that French forces were capable of defending interests in Africa. Thanks to Colonel Qadhafi of Libya, France was compelled to shape a strategy to defend its former colonies and interests from both irregular and conventional warfare from the late 1970s until the 1990s. In particular, French interventions in Chad involved a strategy of working with and directing local forces in containing and then rolling back rebel and Libyan invasion forces that operated in some ways like today's VEOs. A series of three operations involved extensive ISR and mobile forces with a large featured role of the French Air Force over a wide desert area, which in many ways laid the groundwork for operations Serval and Barkhane.[13]

In 1978, *Opération Tacaud* was launched with French troops, backed by the French Air Force, supporting the Chadian army and protecting the capital, Ndjamena, from rebel forces. In 1983, France launched its largest intervention since the Algerian war with *Opération Manta* and the dispatch of 3,500 troops to help stop an offensive by forces of an opposition government-in-exile and Libya. French forces imposed a red line which stopped the offensive from advancing beyond the 16th and 15th parallels. In February 1986, Qadhafi launched a new offensive that pushed south of the red line, which led to *Opération Épervier*. The French Air Force attacked the offensive and enemy bases north of the 16th parallel. France sent additional ground forces to create a force of 2,200 that successfully defended Ndjamena and allowed Chadian forces to take back all of its territory, including the Aozou Strip in the far north.[14]

With the end of the Cold War and the fading of the Libyan threat, France decided to maintain the French Air Force base in Ndjamena and a sizable French Army force in Chad. The Ndjamena base became known as its "desert aircraft carrier", and the French Air Force has continued to conduct desert training and exercises from there in cooperation with the French Army and Chadian Army. With the rise of Boko Haram as a threat that was spilling over from Northeastern Nigeria, Ndjamena became a center for the "Lake Chad Initiative" against

the VEO which involved France and the bordering states of Chad, Niger and Cameroon.

The principles of prevention and projection helped to define France's strategic culture after the Cold War; prevention was based on the prepositioning of forces and intelligence about unstable situations on the ground.[15] France has been able to achieve projection with rapid reaction forces of 5,000 troops or less in response to flashpoints in Africa. Prepositioning demonstrated that, even as French interests and threats to those interests faded, France's strategic culture became one of continuing to base its forces in Northwest Africa and using them in operations. Thanks to the wars over Chad, Ndjamena became the primary center of French activity in the Sahel and Sahara with *Opération Épervier* continuing until 2014 and being superseded by Barkhane. Prepositioning forces has provided French presidents with the temptation of using them in interventions in which a force of 5,000 troops or less is deemed sufficient, which has often been the case.[16] Prepositioning enabled the projection of forces in defense of the Déby regime in the face of attacks from rebels from Sudan in 2006 and the launching of Serval and Barkhane. France has prepositioned 1,500 troops in Djibouti from where forces have been deployed outside of Eastern Africa to such places as Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the exception of the COIN operation in Djibouti. In the rest of Eastern Africa and Somalia, in particular, France decided to act via the EU.

France and the United States in Northwest Africa and the "War on Terror": After 9/11, France acquiesced to large-scale US security cooperation programs (PSI and TSCTP) in US security assistance to its former colonies in the Sahel. However, the United States was careful not to tread too heavily in what was considered to be the French sphere of influence. In 2008, President Sarkozy began cutting the defense budget and initiated the process of reducing France's bases in Africa. The plan was to maintain two bases in Dakar, Senegal and Djibouti and to close bases in Ndjamena, Chad and Libreville, Gabon and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. However, these plans stalled because of the 2011 war in Libya and the spillover of the conflict into the Sahel and continuing civil strife in Côte d'Ivoire and Central African Republic. Thus, until recently, France has been torn between cutting its presence in Africa versus defending what it had played a large part in building. However, the spillover from Libya and VEO takeover of most of Mali has led France to reverse its position and launch Serval and Barkhane.[17]

Interests and Timing: France did not intervene in 2012, because there was no imminent threat to French interests in southern Mali. Also President François Hollande was new to office and was weighing options in regard to the use of force. With the VEO offensive in January 2013, President Hollande wanted to lift his

public opinion polls by appearing decisive. The French people have traditionally been willing to let its president use force when they have been convinced that it is necessary. They have not been highly concerned about casualties and have been willing to accept risk if they can be convinced that national interests are at stake. French leaders believed that the VEOs would overrun Bamako, the capital of Mali; take some 5,000 French nationals hostage; and use Mali as a launching ground for attacks against the homeland.[18] Furthermore, France had forces available in its prepositioned sites that could be quickly deployed. The perception of a French sphere of influence backed by military forces is one of the reasons why the United States expected France to intervene in Mali in 2013.[19]

Strategic culture and Barkhane: France's strategic culture has helped to define the operation. France is faced with threats to the homeland and interests in Northwest Africa and wants to contain AQIM and Daesh and interdict them. Barkhane's mission is twofold: support African armed forces in fighting VEOs and help prevent the re-establishment of their sanctuaries and strongholds. French strategy today focuses on counterterrorism with light forces that combine ISR, strike forces and air power. France avoids nation-building, which it leaves to the UN and other entities. Barkhane features the comprehensive approach involving the United Nations (UN), EU and the AU, which are all supporting the French effort and are involved in the security process, with training and peacekeeping missions. France has also worked closely with its G5 Sahel partners (Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso) through its "Enlarged Partnership" process; the G5 is the main body for nations of the Sahel to coordinate their fight against violent extremism. Therefore, French strategic culture is much more multilateral than it was three decades ago, though France still asserts a leading role.[20]

Conclusion: The constructivist perspective explains why France's strategic culture of prevention and projection with prepositioned forces enables it to launch direct military interventions in Northwest Africa when no other country will. France has experience and good ISR in the region and is able to calculate risk and avoid large-scale casualties. In contrast, the realist perspective on French intervention explains *when* France intervenes. The VEO offensive in Mali and threats to French interests led France to launch Serval. The threats to French interests in the Sahel and the homeland caused by state collapse in Libya led France to mount Barkhane. France's strategic culture today is such that Paris is less inclined to intervene than three decades ago and only after threats to its interests have reached the severe level. However, shocks to French interests stemming from the collapse of Libya caused French leaders to reverse course and order a surge of military intervention from 2013 onwards.

US Military Intervention in Africa

This section deals with the extent to which a constructivist perspective on US strategic culture is important in explaining US indirect military intervention in Africa as opposed to a realist approach that focuses on the level of US interests and threats to those interests.

Realism (interests): Threats to US interests since the Cold War rose with the activities of Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda in Sudan from 1991-1996, the 1998 embassy bombings, the 2000 USS Cole bombing and 9/11. As stated earlier, if bin Laden and Al Qaeda had been allowed to stay in Sudan, been harbored by the Bashir regime, and planned the 9/11 attacks from there, the United States would have attacked Sudan and not Afghanistan. The epicenter of threats against US interests and the war on terror would have been in Africa. However, bin Laden and Al Qaeda were forced to move to Afghanistan, and threats to US interests came from Southwest Asia, with Africa as a secondary theater. Since September 11, 2001, defeating Al Qaeda and Daesh and protecting Saudi Arabia and other Middle East allies have been in US interests, which has led the United States to try to contain the spread of VEO activity in Northwest Africa and to neutralize it in Eastern Africa.[21]

US strategic culture over the past three decades has been defined by the "Powell Doctrine", which defined US interventions as requiring overwhelming force when and where the US national interest was under severe threat. The US direct intervention in Somalia in 1993 unfolded with overwhelming force but without compelling interests, and mission creep led to "Black Hawk Down." The fiasco led to even more risk-averse strategic culture, enshrined in Presidential Decision Directive 25, which effectively ended US participation in UN peace operations in Africa. US risk aversion after Somalia led to the failure to respond to genocide in Rwanda in 1994. Subsequently, the United States apologized for not acting and pledged that it would work to stop future genocide. The failure to stop the genocide in Rwanda and PDD 25 led to the US strategy of developing the "African solutions to African problems" approach in which the United States would lead in training African peacekeeping forces and building partnership capacity (BPC) but would not directly intervene militarily.

An external shock (9/11) and US strategic culture of indirect military intervention in Africa led to CJTF-HOA in Eastern Africa and PSI/TSCTP in Northwest Africa. The US has assisted partners in nation-building in Somalia and the Sahel and has trained and equipped African forces to conduct counter-insurgency operations (COIN). 9/11 and the experience in Afghanistan led to the introduction of US special operations forces (SOF). Today the United States

has 700 or so SOF engaged in the struggle against VEOs and building partnerships with African forces.[22] The US has been more willing to use force in Afghanistan from where it was attacked and Iraq from where it assumed that an attack was coming and where forces became embroiled in nation-building. Higher authority in the United States was consumed by the struggle in Southwest Asia and less so in Africa. However, the creation of AFRICOM in 2008 led to a more focused counter-VEO strategy and operations in Africa.

US Strategy and Operations in Eastern Africa: After September 11, 2001, the United States directed more power towards countering VEOs and the ungoverned spaces in and around Somalia. The Bush administration decided that VEOs in Somalia and Eastern Africa posed more of a threat to its interests than did the Sahel and Sahara. The establishment of CJTF-HOA in Djibouti by DOD and CENTCOM enabled US Special Operations Command to undertake operations against Al Qaeda and other extremists in the region. CENTCOM selected Djibouti because of its strategic location between the ungoverned spaces of Somalia and Eastern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Also, Djibouti was chosen because of the receptivity of the government, which had hosted French forces since independence. Before 2002, the United States had never established a base in Africa, which stands in contrast to more than a century of French bases.

Before 2006, the VEO threat in Somalia and Eastern Africa was not as severe as had been anticipated. Thus, CJTF-HOA shifted its approach and adopted a more indirect and bottom-up "hearts and minds" campaign, which centered on the drilling of wells for Somali pastoralists living in areas adjacent to Somalia, especially in Kenya and Ethiopia.[23] The campaign scored some initial successes but experienced serious setbacks in Ethiopia in 2007 and Kenya in 2009. Also, mistakes were made, including drilling boreholes in areas that caused conflict between clans. CJTF-HOA was forced to reformulate the campaign, which became less focused on Somali pastoralists and relatively less effective in helping to achieve US security goals in the ungoverned spaces of Eastern Africa.[24]

In 2004, the United States began to support the "Transitional Federal Government" of Somalia in the hope of reconstituting the Republic of Somalia, which would eventually be able to counter VEOs and reestablish sovereignty and territoriality. In 2005, the new Assistant Secretary of State for Africa assumed a leading role in the Horn of Africa policy, introducing a more robust strategy of combating violent extremism and reestablishing Somali governance by backing the development of the transitional government into a governing and military force. After the surging Islamic Courts Union (ICU) defeated the US-backed warlords and united South-Central Somalia under its rule and began threatening Ethiopia's Ogaden region, the Bush administration acquiesced to the Ethiopian inva-

sion of Somalia in December 2006, and the United States increased military assistance to Ethiopia. The Bush administration also backed the plan of the African Union (AU) to send a peace enforcement force, led by Uganda, to Somalia.

The US Department of State (DOS) led the way in arranging the training and equipping of Ugandan and Burundian African Union forces and the new Somali National Armed Force (SNAF). The DOS Political-Military Affairs office, its Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, and security cooperation officials in embassies in Kampala, Bujumbura, Addis Ababa, and Nairobi engaged with African Union and Somali forces.[25] They organized the training and equipping of Ugandan and Burundian and the SNAF and arranged assistance for their operations in Mogadishu.[26]

The Obama administration continued the peace enforcement and state-building policy for Somalia. By 2011, AMISOM and Somali forces strengthened and scored successes against Al Shabaab. Of particular significance were the August 2011 liberation of Mogadishu and the 2012 Kenyan intervention in Somalia that led to the takeover of the Al Shabaab stronghold of Kismayo and much of the surrounding province of Jubaland.[27] In 2012, the Federal Republic of Somalia was reconstituted.

The United States has spent over a hundred million dollars a year since 2007 on the security enterprise for Somalia and continues to spend over a hundred million dollars each year.[28] Most of the funds have been channeled through the State Department's program for training, equipping and supporting Ugandan and Burundian forces that became the core of AMISOM.[29] The DOD and AFRICOM provided support, with combined exercises and help in training. CJTF-HOA arranged intelligence sharing with AMISOM for defensive purposes. Finally, in April 2013, with the lifting of the arms embargo on Somalia, the United States began arms shipments to the new Somali army.

In sum, the United States and its partners have made considerable progress in rolling back Al Shabaab and securing the ungoverned spaces of Eastern Africa. African Union forces have risen in size from 6,000 in 2010 to over 22,000 today. On a negative note, the Republic of Somalia government of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud started out well, but it soon sank into the same morass of corruption as had previous Somali interim governments. Therefore, the goal of Somali self-sufficiency in security is still years away. Al Shabaab still mounts attacks inside Mogadishu and against AMISOM and Somali forces and is still a major security threat.

US Strategy and Operations in Northwest Africa: In the ungoverned space of the Sahara, US strategy has been more about containing and preventing the southward flow of extremism and has been less coherent and focused than in

Eastern Africa. DOD and United States European Command (EUCOM) devised the Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI) in 2002 in the wake of 9/11 and the Bush administration's concern about ungoverned spaces and weak and failing states and the threats they posed to the United States and its allies in the Global War on Terror.[30] Saharan and Sahelian states were under similar pressures from VEOs as Eastern African states. In particular, the Sahel was vulnerable to militant groups, especially Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

The Bush administration proceeded first with the idea that building military counter-terrorism capacity would be the best places to start in defending the Sahara and Sahel from VEOs; protecting US and EU interests in Algeria, Nigeria and other states; and rolling back militant groups. In the Sahel, it was expected that weak states would be able to develop capabilities to contain threats. Therefore, the United States began funding programs in the Sahel states in 2002 to help build their ability to exercise sovereignty and territoriality and control their borders. From 2002–2004, the US military trained and equipped one rapid-reaction company of about 150 soldiers each, in Mauritania, Mali, Niger, and Chad to enhance border capabilities against arms smuggling, drug trafficking, and the movement of trans-national VEOs. US Special Forces and EUCOM took the lead in training and exercises. In regard to building capacity to establish governance in the Sahara, the strategy was unclear. For example, Toyota Land Cruisers were provided to Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad in the hope that it would strengthen border control in the vast Saharan Desert. However, there was insufficient follow-up to ensure that the aid had been effective.

By 2005, the Bush administration altered the strategy and launched the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP), deciding that building state capacity and government capabilities and winning hearts and minds would be a better way of defending the Sahel from militant groups and preventing the spread of extremism. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the State Department were given the lead, with EUCOM supporting. The United States funded the TSCTP with $500 million from 2005 to 2010, and funding was extended from 2010 onwards.[31] At the same time, EUCOM and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) launched Operation Enduring Freedom-Trans-Sahara (OEF-TS) to train African forces to counter VEOs. EUCOM also continued to mount Operation Flintlock to jointly exercise US forces with regional forces. In 2008, EUCOM passed control of OEF-TS to AFRICOM.

Under the Obama Administration, it was made clear that development and diplomacy were under the purview of the State Department and USAID and that the TSCTP was primarily their program.[32] The program provided regional uni-

versity students with useful work skills to better prepare them for the transition between school and the workplace, as well as provide rehabilitation and training opportunities for disenfranchised youth and vulnerable populations. However, there still was no measure to gauge the reduction of extremism.[33]

In 2011, a USAID-sponsored survey found that USAID-funded TSCTP programs in Chad, Niger and Mauritania had diminished the underlying conditions that were leaving at-risk populations vulnerable to extremism. The programs included youth development, former combatant reintegration, and education, as well as rural radio and media programs, peacebuilding and conflict management, and small-scale infrastructure projects like drilling wells and constructing schools. In particular, USAID civic youth programs and TSCTP "peace and tolerance" radio programs were found to significantly reduce youth extremism.[34] Furthermore, it was found that the programs had built local government capacity and the ability to communicate with the youth of the Sahel and implemented the type of capacity and programs necessary to lessen extremism. It has been noted that the types of programs and projects that have been instituted are not complex and could be sustained once the US footprint is lessened.

While the TSCTP was found to help reduce support for violent extremism among youth in the Sahel, this was not the case in the ungoverned spaces of the Sahara (for example, among the Tuareg). Thus, the partnership can be considered a limited success, especially since most of the population lives in Sahel and not in the Sahara. It could be concluded that the TSCTP helped to prevent the southward spread of extremism and that a firewall had been built against extremism in the most populated areas of Sahel. The problem was in the northern Sahel and southern Sahara and how to change attitudes there and roll back extremism. It was problematic for US programs to reach those ungoverned spaces.

The US strategy produced disappointing results in Mali.[35] The relative success of Tuareg and extremist insurgencies showed that the tens of millions of dollars spent had not helped Mali defend itself and exercise territorial control over its northern spaces. He found that in Niger, VEOs remained a threat. In Nigeria, Boko Haram was continuing to conduct frequent mass attacks, which US programs have done little to help stop. In Mauritania, Burkina Faso, and Chad, US efforts produced greater capabilities; merged US security and development specialties; and enhanced US security interests to some extent.[36] This was partly due to the relative strength of the regimes and professionalism of the security forces.

In sum, the United States and its partners have made mixed progress in the Sahel and not much progress in the Sahara and suffered severe setbacks with the collapse of the Libyan state and the VEO invasion of Mali.[37] The mixed record is due to a combination of ungoverned spaces in the Sahara and effectiveness of

VEOs, as well as Sahelian states' weakness and security forces' limitations. There is a debate over the future of the TSCTP. Some think it should be enhanced with a Joint Task Force-Western Africa. Others think TSCTP should be tightened and more focused on Mali, Niger and Nigeria, especially in countering Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Boko Haram.[38]

Comparing US Strategy in Eastern Africa and Northwest Africa: A more assertive strategy of indirect intervention supporting offensive forces and attacking militant group leaders partially succeeded in securing an ungoverned space and curbing a violent extremist organization in Eastern Africa, in contrast to the partial failure of a containment approach in the Sahara, which focused on counterterrorism training for regional security forces and countering extremist ideology. In the Sahara, the US containment strategy of supporting regional regimes and providing programs for youth led to some progress in curbing extremism in the Sahel but very limited success in countering militant groups and other violent non-state actors in the Sahara and failure in preventing militant groups from taking over northern Mali in 2012. Since then, VEOs have expanded their activities to other parts of the region. The more assertive strategy in Eastern Africa led to the expulsion of Al Shabaab from ungoverned urban and some rural spaces and enabled the formation of a Somali government. Also, US forces launched occasional counterterrorist attacks that degraded Al Shabaab's leadership. Thus, the US strategy of neutralization in Somalia and Eastern Africa has achieved greater results than containment in Northwest Africa.

The US strategy of supporting Uganda and the AMISOM and using US counterterrorism attacks reaped a partial victory but did not neutralize Al Shabaab. While the United States has scored successes in Somalia, the Al Qaeda-linked militant group has not been eliminated; it has merely been curbed. Therefore, the assertive approach had an impact but did not achieve victory. Given the failure of US strategy in both Eastern Africa and Sahara to decisively defeat militant groups, it must be concluded that geopolitics, in the form of ungoverned spaces that cannot be controlled by weak regimes, provides a significant part of the explanation. Neither an assertive nor a containment strategy is likely to bring success in decisively countering violent non-state actors in ungoverned spaces. This fits the pattern established in the war against Al Qaeda Central in Pakistan and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen.

The vast size of the Sahara makes it difficult for all eight regional regimes, backed by the US and France, to control. Therefore, it is questionable if the more assertive strategy applied in Somalia and Eastern Africa could work in Mali and the Sahara. The Sahara is a bigger ungoverned space than Eastern Africa and appears to be a more dangerous place, where VEOs and other violent non-state

actors can sustain themselves and avoid interdiction. However, it is difficult to definitively conclude that the larger and more ungoverned the space where such actors choose to operate, the more sustainable a dangerous place will be and the more difficult it will be to pacify. One can only conclude that ungoverned spaces create an advantageous condition for such actors to make dangerous places.

The level of success in Eastern Africa can be explained by the level of US national interest and weight of effort, as well as the relatively small ungoverned space. The level of threat to US interests against violent extremism was greater in Eastern Africa than in the Sahara and Sahel. Also, the high degree of salience of Ugandan leaders and the capability of Ugandan forces, backed by other Eastern African forces, was greater than leaders and forces from Sahelian and other West African countries.[39] Comparison of US strategy in Eastern Africa and Sahara demonstrate that the United States is more likely to assertively attack militant groups if those actors are committed to attacking US interests, especially in the Arabian Peninsula, and less likely when they might attack the interests of a less important country or region. The more concentrated threat to US interests and absence of a state in Somalia influenced decision-making regarding Eastern Africa, which led to CJTF-HOA and support for AMISOM, while the more dispersed threat and weak states in the Sahara led to a less intensive approach, which resulted in the PSI and then the TSCTP. The United States was unwilling to intervene in Mali in 2012, because the threat to US interests was low and because the Obama administration was less-inclined to use force than the Bush administration had been.

Conclusion: Constructivism and strategic culture (the Powell Doctrine and casualty aversion) have determined how the United States indirectly intervenes militarily (i.e., establishing a well-defended base and building partnership capacity). Realism and interests have determined the scale of intervention. In Eastern Africa, the threat from Al Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya has led to a large US military presence and CJTF-HOA in Djibouti. However, the threat is not so great as to invite direct military intervention. In contrast, the lower level of threat and the French sphere of influence in Northwestern Africa led the United States to launch PSI and TSCTP but no US military bases. Threats to US interests are greater in Somalia which led to efforts to neutralize Al Shabaab, in contrast to efforts in Northwest Africa to merely contain AQIM, Boko Haram and other VEOs.

Conclusion

The level of interests, level of resources, and strategic culture all factor into explaining the differences and similarities between France and the United States. While both constructivist and realist perspectives are necessary for comparative analysis, the argument in this article is that strategic culture and attitudes towards risk are more insightful than the realist perspective in explaining the different ways that France and the United States chose to intervene in Africa. The Powell Doctrine and casualty and risk aversion explain why the United States is less willing to intervene directly militarily in Africa; however, the relatively lower level of US interests in Africa as compared with Southwest Asia must also be taken into account. In addition, the US military has an organizational culture of winning, while the French military is accustomed to messy outcomes, which also explains the differences in interventionism. Prepositioning of French forces in Northwest Africa increases the likelihood that they will be used in operations such as Serval and Barkhane. The prepositioning of US Forces in CJTF-HOA has not led to direct military intervention in Somalia, even as the capital and country were on the verge of falling to Al Shabaab.

In regard to realism, external shocks and spikes in threats to interests determine when both the United States and France intervene. The level of interests explains the similar features in French and US interventions: (1) *direct interventions with military force* occurs in places where interests are high and have been attacked as in the case of French interests in Mali. US interests in Mali were not as high as French interests. US interests and threats to those interests have been higher in Somalia and Libya which has led to indirect military intervention and limited intervention by SOF. (2) Direct interventions take place after attacks on vital interests have occurred and not to prevent one from happening. The French doctrine of prevention and projection and the prepositioning of forces still did not lead to a deployment of forces to Mali, even when VEOs had taken over the northern half of the country. However, Barkhane can be considered both a counterterrorist operation and a preventive one. (3) *Indirect military intervention* takes place in locations where interests are moderate and there is a threat of an *eventual* attack on vital interests; this is the case of US military intervention in Eastern Africa. (4) French intervention in Mali and the Sahel and Sahara was not superseded by US intervention; instead, the United States supported France in Serval and Barkhane. The US intervention in Eastern Africa was followed by France leading in EU assistance to AMISOM and the new Somali government.

External shocks to interests caused changes in French and US military interventionism. The collapse of Libya and the VEO invasion of Mali caused France

to reverse course from winding down its presence in Northwest Africa to mounting Serval and a protracted counterterrorism intervention in the form of Barkhane. Black Hawk Down caused the United States to abandon direct military intervention in Africa, while the Rwandan genocide led to indirect military intervention. Al Qaeda attacks led to CJTF-HOA, while the threat of attacks from Algerian VEOs who allied with Al Qaeda led to TSCTP.

Notes

1. François Heisbourg, "A Surprising Little War: First Lessons of Mali" *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 55, no. 2 (2013): 7-18.

2. A less significant exception was in August 2003, when the United States sent the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit to Liberia for a month in support of the Economic Community of West African States force that was overseeing the removal of Charles Taylor from power.

3. Major General (Ret) Maurice de Langlois, *The comprehensive approach and the European Union: a case study of the Horn of Africa*, Note de recherche stratégique (IRSEM, 2014), 10. See also "EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission," EEAS - European External Action Service, accessed 19 February 2016, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/somalia_en, and "Peace and Security | The Africa-EU Partnership," accessed 19 February 2016, http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/priority-areas/peace-and-security.

4. In contrast to the hundreds of millions of dollars that the United States spent to secure the Sahel, France gave Mali a million dollars to build its police force before 2012.

5. In this article, Northwest Africa refers to an expansive area extending from Central African Republic to Morocco and Libya to Côte d'Ivoire.

6. Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, "Anarchy: Defensive Realism Revisited," *International Security* 25, no. 3 (2001): 128-161.

7. Christopher S. Chivvis, *The French War on Al Qa'ida in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

8. Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998). Christoph O. Meyer, *The Quest for a European Strategic Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). Constructivist theory would explain that France is driven by its civilian and military leadership's self-conceptualization as the guardian of Northwest Africa which is within in its sphere of influence. Strategic culture is defined as the beliefs and assumptions that frame decisions to take military action, as well as preferences for offensive, expansionist or defensive modes of warfare and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable.

9. Jan Bachmann, "'Kick down the Door, Clean up the Mess, and Rebuild the House'—The Africa Command and Transformation of the US Military," *Geopolitics* 15, no. 3 (2010): 564-585. More than $300 million a year has been spent on United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) since it became operational in October 2008 in order to a large extent to focus on combating violent extremists in Eastern Africa. In 2011, AFRICOM generated the first of its campaign plans —the "East Africa Campaign Plan"—to deal with Eastern Africa. A West Africa Campaign Plan emerged soon afterwards and dealt with the Sahel. Also, there are proposals to establish a US Joint

Task Force West Africa, modeled on CJTF-HOA, which is also funded with more than $300 million per year.

10. Shaun Gregory, "The French Military in Africa: Past and Present," *African Affairs* 99, no. 396 (2000): 435-448.

11. Ibid., 437-438.

12. Frank Foley, *Countering Terrorism in Britain and France: Institutions, Norms and the Shadow of the Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 25-27.

13. Rachel Utley, "The Sacred Union? French intervention in Lebanon and Chad under François Mitterrand," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 10, no. 3 (1999): 10-17.

14. Ibid.

15. Gregory, "The French Military in Africa," 445-447.

16. Ibid., 446.

17. Chivvis, *The French War on Al Qa'ida in Africa*, 44.

18. Michael Shurkin, *France's War in Mali: Lessons for an Expeditionary Army* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2014).

19. Chivvis, *The French War on Al Qa'ida in Africa*, 44-45.

20. Interactions with and briefings by French military officers, Libreville, Gabon and Yaoundé, Cameroon, March 2015.

21. Interviews with US officials, US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and US Embassy, Nairobi, Kenya, June 2012. Interactions with US officials in Uganda and Tanzania, March 2013; Mali, Burkina Faso, and Ghana, March 2014; Cameroon, Gabon and Ethiopia, March 2015; and Rwanda, Kenya and Ethiopia, March 2016.

22. Eliza Griswold, "Can General Linder's Special Operations Forces Stop the Next Terrorist Threat?" *The New York Times*, 13 June 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/15/magazine/can-general-linders-special-operations-forces-stop-the-next-terrorist-threat.html?hpw&rref=magazine; and Bill Knarr, "Matching the Footprint of Governance to the Footprint of Sovereignty," in *The Role of the Global SOF Network in a Resource Constrained Environment*, ed. Chuck Ricks (MacDill AFB: Joint Special Operations University Press, November 2013), 31-40. The role of Special Forces (SOF) has been instrumental in combating violent extremists, especially in Somalia and the Sahara, and will continue to be so if the United States wants to intervene more assertively in resource-constrained environments. In both Eastern Africa and Sahara, good intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) are required to manage the dangerous places.

23. Karsten Friis, "Peacekeeping and Counter-Insurgency: Two of a Kind?" *International Peacekeeping* 17, no. 1 (March 2010): 49-66. This shift happened at a time in which US experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan were leading to adoption of stability operations, which focused on engaging from the bottom-up with local populations in order to mitigate violent extremism.

24. Interviews with US defense officials, US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and US Embassy, Nairobi, Kenya, June 2012.

25. Interview with US Somalia expert, US Embassy, Nairobi, Kenya, 12 June 2012.

26. Interviews with Somalia experts at US AFRICOM headquarters, Stuttgart, Germany, 30 May 2012.

27. Ken Menkhaus, "After the Kenyan Intervention," (Washington, DC: Enough Project, January 2012), 1-15. http://www.enoughproject.org/files/MenkhausKenyaninterventionSomalia.pdf.

28. "Transcript: General Carter Ham Discusses Security Challenges, Opportunities at George Washington University," US Africa Command, 3 December 2012, http://www.africom.mil/media-room/transcript/10170/transcript-general-ham-discusses-security-challeng.

29. "Senior State Department Official Previewing Conference on Somalia," US Department of State, accessed 20 February 2016, https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/02/184480.htm. From 2008-2011, the United States spent $385 million supporting the African Union Mission.

30. William F. S. Miles, "Deploying Development to Counter Terrorism: Post-9/11 Transformation of US Foreign Aid to Africa," *African Studies Review* 55, no. 3 (December 2012): 27-60.

31. Government Accountability Office, *Combating Terrorism: Actions Needed to Enhance Implementation on Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP)*, Report to the Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives (Washington DC: Government Accountability Office, July 2008), https://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08860.pdf. The GAO report found that there was no discernible effect on militant groups and a lack of focus and coherence; these problems have persisted.

32. "Programs and Initiatives," US Department of State, Bureau of Counter-terrorism, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/programs/.

33. United States Agency for International Development, "Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership," US Foreign Assistance Performance Publication, Fiscal Year 2009, www.state.gov.

34. United States Agency for International Development, *Midterm Evaluation of USAID's Counter-extremism Programming in Africa* (Washington, DC: USAID, 1 Feb 2011), 1-47. www.hsdl.org/?view&did=691725.

35. Miles, 27-60.

36. Ibid.

37. Heisbourg, "A Surprising Little War: First Lessons of Mali," 7-18.

38. Research data collected from meetings during the US Air War College Regional and Cultural Studies program field visit to Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana, 2-13 March 2014. For certain US officials, the TSCTP is "an accounting line" and is rarely mentioned. However, regionally focused USAID officials believe that TSCTP is being taken more seriously, especially since the Al Shabaab attack on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya. One US official commented that the TSCTP is now being accepted as a regional strategy for the Sahara and Sahel.

39. Matt Freear and Cedric de Coning, "Lessons from the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) for Peace Operations in Mali," *Stability: International Journal of Stability and Development* 2, no. 2 (2013): 1-11, https://www.stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.bj/.

Leadership Revised

How Did the Ukraine Crisis and the Annexation of Crimea Affirm Germany's Leading Role in EU Foreign Policy?

Wolfgang Koeth*

The Annexation of Crimea by Russia in March 2014 and Russia's destabilizing role in eastern Ukraine have put an end to the EU's illusion that Europe had for good arrived in the post-modern world, where military conflicts and territorial conquests would belong only to history books. For the last decade, the EU had built its foreign policy on the assumption that, in the absence of classical military threats, security challenges would stem from non-state actors: terrorism, failed states, organized crime and Balkan-style regional conflicts.[1] Brussels generally assumed that, in the twenty-first century, foreign policy was based on the projection of norms and values abroad rather than on military strength.[2] The belief that this post-modern policy approach would have the power also to transform former Soviet republics into modern European states was the main driver behind the association agreements signed between the EU and Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova in 2014.

In line with its post-war pacifist traditions, Germany has been a strong promoter of a rules-based multilateral foreign policy.[3] Its own foreign policy has been characterized by its role as a civilian power and its *Ostpolitik* or special relationship with the countries of the former Soviet bloc. Also, the German-Russian relationship had been significant for Germany not only in economic terms, but also in political terms, as it raised Berlin's significance in both EU and NATO. Therefore, the annexation of Crimea and Moscow's thinly disguised military aggression in Eastern Ukraine had a strong impact on German foreign policy, which not only prompted Berlin to reconsider the nature of its relations with Moscow, but also changed the dynamics in the European Union, where Germany saw its leadership

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role strengthened, although rather by accident than by design. This emancipation of Germany as an active player in EU foreign policy already became visible in Kosovo and in Afghanistan, after the Kohl government had been replaced by a Red-Green coalition in 1998. While not seeking out a leadership role, Berlin would also no longer avoid such a role, thus finding itself in a position of accidental leadership.[4]

This article analyses how Germany, in particular through the Ukraine crisis starting in 2014, affirmed itself—although reluctantly—as a nexus of decision making in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and became the de facto leading nation for defining the EU's response towards Russia. The article points out the internal and external consequences of this new role, also with regards to other policy fields, and, more in particular, for the Baltic States. For this, we first need to take a closer look at the tenets of German foreign policy and at the specificity of German-Russian relations.

German Foreign Policy: Coming in from the Cold (War)

For the casual observer, it might sometimes be difficult to understand the policy drivers behind German foreign policy. Whereas most countries see foreign policy as an instrument to defend their political and economic interest abroad by influencing other countries to behave in a certain manner, attempts to use foreign policy as a means to gain influence have been, for decades, a taboo for post-war Germany.[5] Although in the first twenty years of the FRG's existence revisionist tendencies were still present in the country, the total rejection of the nationalistic ideology was one of the founding pillars of post-war Western German identity.[6] This new approach to foreign policy, partly driven by a sense of guilt and shame about the Nazi past, partly driven by fear of the spread of communism, eradicated the concepts of "national interest" and identity from the mainstream political vocabulary.

Germany's uneasy relationship with its past, its reliance on its Western allies and its need to redefine its place in Europe and the World made the country a champion of European integration. The process of European integration allowed the Federal Republic to assume a new role among the civilized nations that would be compatible with its economic interests (access for its industrial products to the common market). This desire was perfectly compatible with the desire of Germany's neighbours to keep Germany in check through supranational cooperation mechanisms that would prevent it from again going its own *Sonderweg* (special path), while allowing them to benefit from the dynamism of the German industry. Thus, the FRG became the poster boy of European integration: a positive and

productive role for Germany in international politics existed only in and through Europe.

Whereas Germany's Euro-Atlantic integration proved to be a win-win situation for both Germany and its allies, it was the relations with the Soviet Union and the countries of the Eastern bloc that became, in the 1960s and 1970s, the litmus test of West German foreign policy. The geopolitical situation of Germany demanded a degree of pragmatism: the division of Germany, family ties of many Germans behind the Iron Curtain, and the question of West Berlin (a Western enclave within the GDR) made reasonable working relations mandatory. The *Ostpolitik* of chancellor Brandt in the early 1970s—symbolized by the famous *Kniefall* (genuflection)—towards the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in 1970) had the triple benefit of facilitating human exchanges, opening markets for the (West) German industry and allowing the FRG to occupy the "moral high ground" vis-a-vis Eastern Germany, since it assumed the responsibility for its past.

The possibility to promote freedom and democracy not only on behalf of itself, but on behalf of the whole Western world, helped Germany even more to reinforce its new post-modern identity based on multilateralism and "soft power", which is still the driving force of German policy today. When the GDR collapsed in 1989, the magnetic attraction of the West German model combining economic wealth with democracy and the rule of law, moral superiority and a positive international reputation became thus irresistible for Eastern Germans.

Germany and the CFSP

The Slow Emancipation of Germany's Foreign Policy in a European Context

The "2+4" agreement of 1990 finally put an end to the old cold war order and restored Germany's sovereignty in foreign policy as well. Initial fears among its Western partners about the hegemony of a united Germany in Europe—in particular after Germany's uncoordinated recognition of Croatia and Slovenia in 1991—resulted in the setting up of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) with the 1993 Maastricht Treaty. The CFSP was defined as a greater diplomatic operation and balance of power exercise in which the Member States sought to firmly embed an enlarged German State in a stronger European entity.[7] Also, in this period of major geopolitical changes, in which Europe had suffered a loss of face during the Gulf and Yugoslav crises, CFSP was seen as a tool to strengthen European identity.[8]

Tellingly, during the design phase of the Maastricht treaty, Germany was among the states that advocated a more supranational CFSP, including decisions made by qualified majority voting (which would have abandoned national veto

rights) and a greater involvement of the European Parliament—proposals that were strongly rejected by two other major foreign policy players, the UK and France. From an outside view, it could seem that Germany allowed its policy space in foreign policy to be reduced through its integration into the CFSP. However, it was the "uploading" of its foreign policy into the CFSP that enabled Germany to emancipate itself as a foreign policy actor within the EU framework.

But being a part of a European policy framework also made it more difficult for Germany to pursue its former policy of avoiding political responsibility by the means of *Scheckbuchdiplomatie* (cheque-book diplomacy) which consisted in financially contributing to policies implemented by its partners while staying itself out of the limelight. Taking political responsibility required Germany to overcome its patterns of avoidance and of military non-engagement (as in the 1991 Gulf war or in the first two Balkan wars).

This was not uncontroversial: when German troops started to participate in international peacekeeping missions in the 1990s, parts of the German political spectrum warned of an infamous return to a militaristic tradition that would fuel fears about a new German hegemony and imperialism: fears, that were, in general, more voiced within Germany itself than outside the country. It was in Kosovo in 1999 when Germany definitively managed to move beyond its history and accepted that its own military intervention was justified—as part of an US-led coalition—in order to honor its post-war commitment to the slogan of "never again" with regards to genocides and concentration camps.

With hindsight, the fear of Germany abandoning the European project in favor of a *Sonderweg* proved unjustified: the Kohl government, dominated by a generation of politicians that were still traumatized by the experience of fascism and WWII, were still wholeheartedly committed to the European project and had a natural dislike of any German attempts of domination. Instead, its economic power, demography and geographical position made Germany gravitate towards the power center of Europe. This role, which became very obvious with the financial crisis from 2008 on, was not only accepted, but actively supported by many of its central and eastern European neighbors. The attitude of these countries was best expressed by Polish foreign minister Sikorski when he publicly stated in 2011 that—within the context of the Euro crisis—"I fear German power less than I am beginning to fear German inactivity."[9]

Within the EU, Germany's close partnership with France had allowed the country to stay out of the limelight while still actively shaping EU policies in line with its own interests. Major initiatives (as the economic and monetary union) were prepared in close cooperation and then proposed as a joint endeavor: this matched the desire of France to *increase* and of Germany to *decrease* its profile as

driving force behind shaping the European policy agenda. But not always did the interests of Berlin and Paris match: the enlargement process, which started in the second half of the 1990s (and culminated with the accession of ten mainly central and eastern European states in 2004) was, above all, driven by Germany striving to export stability to its Eastern neighbors while expanding the EUs single market eastwards. Paris saw enlargement rather as a threat to a closer political union and as a weakening of the French/German leadership in the EU.

Within the CFSP, the special relationship with Russia proved to be significant for Germany, not only in economic, but also in political terms. First of all, this relationship was highly symbolic, Russia being the country that had suffered most from German atrocities in WWII. Good relations with Russia served Germany as a way to exhort its militaristic past. Also, the privileged relationship gave Germany additional significance within the EU and NATO, thus compensating for a lack of military power. Therefore, Europe quite naturally started looking at Germany—which had already taken on a leadership role in the post 2008 Euro crisis—after the annexation of Crimea by Russia. Again, in order to properly assess Berlin's attitude in the Ukraine crisis, one would have to look at the history of German-Russian relations.

The Specificity of German-Russian Relations

Through the centuries, Germany and Russia have always played a key role for each other in their respective foreign policies. Both countries share many similarities: neither country has natural borders; both have historically expanded at the expense of their neighbor's liberty and sovereignty in an attempt to increase their influence and power,[10] and both countries have repeatedly cooperated in this regard, as in Rapallo or with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. In the twentieth century, both countries justified imperialist tendencies with ideology—and both found their imperial ambitions defeated by history. For both countries, the redefinition of their national identity can be explained by their past. Whereas Germany managed to acquire a new post-modern identity through a complete break with its past, Russia went the opposite way: trying to reconnect with the past by reclaiming its former glory.

The combination of historical guilt, the gratitude to Russia for having enabled German unification and the departure of Soviet troops, combined with its economic interests, may explain why Germany counted as one of the most fervent supporters of Russia in the early 1990s. At this time, Russia—as were the other successor states of the Soviet Union—was faced with a profound economic and social crisis. For Germany, the demise of the Soviet Union and the emancipation

of Central and Eastern European nations were seen as the confirmation of Francis Fukuyama's "End of History", in which European values like democracy and human rights were shared from Lisbon to Vladivostok.

But Germany underestimated the sense of humiliation of many Russians, who were more likely to suffer the dramatic fall of standards of living than to profit from the geopolitical benefits brought about by the end of the Cold War. The mismatch of perceptions was symbolized in the figure of Michael Gorbachev, who enjoyed pop star status in Germany,[11] but who was despised in Russia for bringing down living standards and for humiliating a nation that had been transformed in less than one decade from a fear-inspiring superpower to a pity inspiring recipient of humanitarian assistance.[12]

The ascendance of Vladimir Putin, a young KGB official in Dresden at the time when the GDR imploded, to the Russian Presidency in 2000, coincided with a period of rising commodity prices, in particular for gas and oil it exported, which boosted standards of living to previously unknown levels. The enlargement of NATO and the EU in 2004 was grudgingly accepted by Russia, which did not have the means to prevent it, since it was still tied up with the second Chechnya war and other internal challenges. Russia also did not respond to the EU's initiative of a "European Neighborhood Policy" regrouping all of the enlarged EU's neighbors in 2004, as it refused to be reduced to the role of a mere object of EU foreign policy.

Putin never dissimulated his disregard for the EU and his preference for a "divide-and rule" approach which consisted in exploiting potential divisions between member states. In particular, Putin reminded Germany that Russia had been supportive and had enabled the process of German unification against the resistance from France and the UK. In this regard, the building of the North Stream pipeline bringing Russian gas directly to Germany, while bypassing the Baltic States and Poland, was a main strategic achievement of Russia.

When Angela Merkel replaced Gerhard Schroeder in 2005 as chancellor of Germany, the relation between the two leaders drastically changed. Schroeder, who had qualified Putin as a crystal-clear democrat, had developed a strong *Männerfreundschaft* (male bond) with Putin. Merkel, socialized in the former GDR and knowing the mechanisms of authoritarian power from the inside, was much less susceptible than Schroeder to the wooing of Putin. Still, being one of Germany's major trade partners,[13] and in line of German traditions of economic diplomacy, Russia remained an important building block of Germany's foreign policy. This reflects the continuity of Germany's policy of *Wandel durch Annäherung* (change through rapprochement or détente) with the Eastern bloc through a

bottom-up small scale cooperation which would ease the tensions, introduced by former chancellor Willy Brand in the late 1960s.

Throughout the building up of the Ukraine crisis Merkel had sought a close cooperation with her European partners. While firmly rejecting any calls for an accession perspective for Ukraine (highly unpopular on the political agenda), Germany strongly supported the EU association agreement with Ukraine as a basis for closer integration. For the EU—and for Germany—the association agreements had been designed as an instrument to export European norms and values, such as democracy, the rule of law and a free market economy, to its partner states. This approach had been perceived as uncontroversial, since it presupposed the will and the ability of every partner state to make sovereign policy choices.

But, born in a time where the EU was the sole integration model on the European continent, this approach now collided with Russia's plans to set up a Eurasian (Customs) Union. Therefore, the simple fact that another state could not only oppose its plans, but also openly try to challenge them, not shying away from a military conflict, had been unimaginable before March 2014. But unlike the EU, Russia has not yet arrived in a post-modern world: it rather sees its interest through the prism of the first-half of the twentieth century *zerosum realpolitik*, where geopolitical influence comes as a result of military and economic power. This was already apparent with Russia's military incursion into Georgia in 2008, although not widely acknowledged at the time. Thus, Russia interpreted the signing of the Association Agreement as a direct challenge to its geopolitical aspirations, which demanded a harsh response.

Whereas Russia had, until 2008, presented itself as the paragon of the inviolability of borders and national sovereignty,[14] it had started shedding these principles already in 2008 in Northern Ossetia and Abkhazia, where it operated a dramatic rhetoric U-turn. Abandoning all references to territorial integrity and inviolability of borders, it cited the unilateral declaration of Kosovo—recognized by Germany and 23 other EU member states—as a precedent and militarily supported the secession of Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia, referring to the right of citizens to self-determination and alleged human rights violations, of which Russian speakers were the victims.

The lack of reaction from the EU to the de-facto annexation of Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia in 2008—except for a few diplomatic protest notes from the EU and the MS—and the fact that business in Berlin and in Brussels went quickly back to normal also gave the impression to Putin that the West would not dare to confront Russia by intervening in what it still considered as its "*bližnij zarubež*" or "near abroad."

German Reactions to the "Euromajdan" and to the Annexation of Crimea

German chancellor Merkel has never been known for bold politics. Her profound dislike of taking risks and her avoidance of decisive action had over one decade of being at the helm of the German government, become something of a trademark.[15] Politically, her wait-and-see approach paid off, since she has hit record high ratings in the polls and has been re-elected twice. Staying out of the limelight in political controversies allowed the chancellor to foster her image of "mother of the nation."

Nevertheless, during the *Euromajdan* which started in late 2013 and culminated in the fleeing of president Yanukovich and the annexation of Crimea by Russia in March 2014, Merkel issued a number of stern statements that in other European capitals were perceived as a sign that Germany might be willing to assert its resolve and leadership. The Russian state media were quick to exploit German support for the *Euromajdan* for their own purposes, presenting their leaders to the domestic audiences as fascists and not refraining from drawing parallels between the fate of Russians in Ukraine and the fate of Jews in Nazi Germany.

In particular the annexation of Crimea by Russia in March 2014 sent a shock wave through Berlin: Russia, by annexing Crimea, had thrown overboard the post-cold war consensus based upon the respect of national sovereignty and democratic process, thus turning the clock back to nineteenth-century policy of territorial conquest by power. Merkel immediately reacted by condemning the annexation as illegal, later even qualifying it as "criminal."[16] While calling for a strategic rethink of Germany's and the EU's energy dependence upon Russia and favoring further sanctions (and thus risking to alienate her support base among the German industry), she also insisted on dialogue and cooperation.[17] Merkel had spoken to Putin almost daily during the build-up of the Ukraine crisis and even after since the Russian leader sent troops into Crimea.

It was only after the shooting down of civil aircraft MH17 in July 2014 that an increasingly frustrated Germany went beyond rhetorical condemnation of Russia. Although not itself a strong proponent of harsh sanctions, Germany took a clear lead in consolidating a common sanctions policy.[18] Still, Berlin constantly reminded its partners that the door towards a peaceful solution must be kept open and that emotions should not be allowed to be a policy driver.[19] Germany also took its role as broker—together with France—of the Minsk II ceasefire agreement very serious, even as other states started losing their faith in this process.

Berlin was so keen to avoid a rhetorical escalation that, in spite of its high level of indignation, it specifically rejected any use of historical parallels: a number

of German observers pointed out that, ironically, the annexation of Crimea had taken place on the template of the annexation of the Sudentenland by Nazi Germany in 1938.[20] But when German minister of finance Wolfgang Schäuble (because of his age and reputation the most outspoken government member) openly pointed out the Sudetenland analogy, the reactions back home were unforgiving:[21] even an indirect comparison of a European leader with Adolf Hitler was seen as a step too far, as it could serve to banalize the Nazi regime through means of historic comparison. Merkel, short of reprimanding her minister, immediately took her distances from him, declaring that the annexation of Crimea was a *sui generis* case.

The Sudentenland comparison highlighted the sensitivity of German-Russian relations in Germany's internal debate. Even if the annexation of Crimea was condemned by virtually the entire political class, there is still a strong opposition to being confrontational with Russia. Opposition comes not only from the far left side of the political spectrum, as from *Die Linke* party descending from former East German communists with a still strong anti-American and anti-NATO bias. Additionally, parts of the Social Democrats, such as former chancellors Gerhard Schröder and Helmut Schmidt, have come out with statements condemning the harsh approach towards Russia.[22] These members of the intelligentsia expressing empathy for Russia and Putin are often referred to by the rather sarcastic term of *Russlandversteher* ("those who understand Russia" or Russia apologists). But by no means are the *Russlandversteher* confined to the political left: on the far right, Putin enjoys a degree of sympathy among the populist *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), and board members of some of Germany's large companies have been heavily lobbying against the impositions of sanctions.[23] However, the Green Party, in spite of its pacifist origins, is strongly favoring a tougher line towards Moscow.

As a Social Democrat and former protégé of then-chancellor Schröder, Foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier was also politically closer to the *Russlandversteher*. But Putin's blunt and undiplomatic behavior during the crisis made it easier for Steinmeier—and, at a later stage, for Merkel—to shed their reluctance, as any attempts to revive the more cooperative *Ostpolitik* approach of the 1970s in the present context would have looked naive and would have risked undermining Germany's standing among its transatlantic and European partners.

Assuming that most countries see the relations with Russia through the lens of their own individual history, experience and interests, Germany is not different from the other EU Member States. The particular sensitiveness of German-Russian relations can explain why Germany has, from the beginning, taken a cautious and even ambiguous position. Whereas the UK, Poland, the Baltic and

the Scandinavian states followed a rather US-like confrontational approach, most of the Southern and South-East European members are—for economic reasons or fear of harming energy supplies—loathe to see relations with Russia souring over Ukraine. In this context, the question is how a common EU position can be more than the lowest common denominator of 28 individual national positions? This is where the question of leadership comes into play.

The Impact of the Ukrainian Crisis on Germany's Leadership Role in the EU

In January 2014, beyond the background of the *Euromajdan*, German President Joachim Gauck pleaded at the Munich security conference for a new German foreign policy strategy based on more active engagement on the international stage, and embedded into the EU framework. Although as a president Gauck has a mere ceremonial role, his speech hit a nerve among German politicians born after the war. A number of government ministers, including foreign minister Steinmeier, openly acclaimed Gauck, even if this could be seen as an open challenge of the chancellor. In fact, this statement was not only intended as a signal to Germany's European partners. It was also meant as a "wake-up-call" for Merkel, seen as lacking resolve not only in foreign policy matters.[24] According to Gauck (who, in his inauguration speech, had defended the German culture of military restraint), Germany should get rid of its habit of "looking the other way" when facing an international crisis.[25]

The home-grown drive for a more active role of Germany coincided with an obvious lack of political leadership not only within the CFSP, but also globally: entangled in their own internal problems, the United States were not ready to assume a leadership role; unlike the Bush administration, Barack Obama does not feel a specific responsibility of the United States for Europe. He expects Europeans to take the lead with regards to crises on their own continent. Given the inability of the EU to speak with one voice, the EU institutions were also unable to take on any leading role. The other potential leaders at the European level, the UK and France, were too entangled by their own domestic problems. Whereas Britain, with its double identity crisis highlighted by the Scottish referendum and the uncertainty of its European future, has retreated into "unsplendid isolation,"[26] France is on a nearly permanent basis absorbed by its own economic and political woes.

The annexation of Crimea had challenged German foreign policy in several regards. Germany is a strong supporter of a common EU foreign policy, since the EU, like Germany, has consistently favored norms and rules over power in inter-

national relations. Also, the German-Russian relationship has been significant for Germany not only in economic terms, but also politically, as a source of Berlin's significance in the EU and NATO.[27] With these elements of its foreign policy being challenged, and the United States standing with Europe but not taking the lead, all eyes were turned towards Berlin to coordinate the EU's response.

Still, it was only after the shooting down of flight MH17 in July 2014—allegedly by Russian supported separatists—that Merkel fully assumed the role the rest of Europe was expecting from her. Although not itself a strong proponent of harsh sanctions, Germany became the clear leader in consolidating a common sanctions policy in the second half of 2014.[28]

It was not the first time that Berlin found itself, without France as a co-pilot, in the EU's driver's seat. With the economic and financial crisis that started in 2007/2008 the political center of gravity within the EU has shifted from Brussels towards the capitals of the EU member states. In particular, the crucial role played by Berlin in the Eurozone's sovereign debt crisis (and Germany's economic strength in general) shifted Germany towards the nexus of EU decision making. As in the Euro crisis, Germany found itself at the top of EU foreign policy in the wake of the Ukraine crisis, not by design, but rather as consequence of the vacuum of leadership within and beyond the EU.

Germany's restraint in terms of foreign policy has always been more prominent than in other policy fields. It was only gradually, at the turn of the century, that the country began to act like a "normal" foreign policy actor and gradually shed its "leadership avoidance reflex"[29] by assuming responsibilities in Kosovo and Afghanistan. But assuming a leadership role meant also taking a risk, since the fear of being accused of hegemony was always present in Berlin. With a reason, as in particular, any unilateral moves towards Moscow were met with suspicion in the "new" EU member states. In April 2006 Radosław Sikorski, then Poland's defense minister, compared the North-Stream gas pipeline project between Russia and Germany that would bypass the Baltic States and Poland to the infamous 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between the USSR and Nazi Germany.[30]

Although most member states see the Ukraine conflict through the lenses of their own experiences and interests, in practice most EU members generally closely align themselves with Germany's position. This informal acceptance of German leadership is partly due to Berlin's combined advantage of sufficient diplomatic capacities and privileged access to information, which significantly enhances its authority among its peers. But it is even more due to the European credentials of Germany, which is generally perceived as less self-interested and more sensitive with regards to the positions of the smaller countries than the other big EU member states.

In addition, the practice of "informal governance", where key decisions are hammered out in informal meetings between the EU leaders before they are formalized in an official way, and the strong bonds between Berlin and Warsaw, helped to reassure Germany's partners to accept German leadership in order to realize the EU's shared foreign policy ambitions: to stop Moscow from pushing back EU and NATO and from regaining control over what Putin still considers its "near abroad."

On the Russian side, given Putin's obsession with status and prestige, it is also unlikely that Moscow would have accepted to deal in substance with a less "heavyweight" interlocutor than Germany, since both France and the UK were unable or unwilling to fulfill this role. The choice of key interlocutor is supported by the personal relations between Merkel and Putin, who speak each other's language. Furthermore, Moscow is aware that Germany, due to the weight of history and of its economic stakes in Russia, is less keen on damaging bilateral relation and therefore likely to adapt a more moderate approach. Thus, it can be concluded that Russia, through the annexation of Crimea, its military intervention in Eastern Ukraine and its clear preference for a dialogue with Berlin rather than with Brussels, indirectly promoted Germany as a key player in the EU's foreign policy.

What does this mean from a Baltic perspective? For Russia, with a worsening economic situation, the defense of its citizens against perceived outside enemies (which includes the Baltics) has replaced economic wellbeing as a source of legitimacy. By escalating tensions, Putin can deflect public anger about falling living standards and direct them against the West. Although sheltered against a direct military aggression from Russia through their NATO membership, as direct neighbors, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are among the first to suffer from the political and economic fallout. Seen from Vilnius, Riga or Tallinn, Germany's moderating influence on Russia might look as an indicator of lacking firmness. However, any further rhetorical escalation would only contribute to strengthening the Putin system, as it would allow the Kremlin to further justify the increasing hardship of ordinary Russian citizens while fighting off internal opposition.

Conclusion

The three successive crises—Euro, Ukraine, and refugees—that shook the EU in just a few years have exposed wide rifts among its member States and put into question some basic assumptions about the EU's internal cohesion. In all three crises, Germany found itself in the driver's seat, first reluctantly, but with increasing comfort. The Euro crisis exposed the objective need for a strong leadership, and this leadership went to Berlin as a default solution. Boosted by the

mainly positive reception of its new role by most of its partners, and in view of another leadership gap during the Ukraine crisis, Germany grew more assertive also in the field of foreign policy—much facilitated by Russia's increasing hubris and gross violation of both European core values and international law.

Seen from Vilnius, Riga or Tallinn, the specter of a possible German hegemony in Europe currently looks like the "least worst option." As the EU's resistance to its leading role faded away, Berlin saw its approach of uploading its foreign policy to the EU vindicated, as it had managed to conciliate the defense of its own interests with strengthening its image as a value-driven society, upholding the EU's norms and values.

Beyond this background, Berlin's role in the third European crisis—the 2015 refugee crisis—might seem illogical, given that Germany, by opening its borders widely to Muslim refugees from Syria and other war-torn regions, took the risk of alienating its European partners and of undermining its leadership acceptance. However, a second look reveals some logic behind Berlin's attitude. The policy space of post-war Germany is today bigger than ever, as its leadership role is now widely accepted externally, and given that internally there is no destructive populist opposition strong enough to seriously harm the government. As a result, Berlin can therefore afford the "luxury" to implement a value-driven policy to an extreme by opening its borders to Muslim refugees.

Berlin hopes that the short-term negative impacts and the unpopularity of this measure at home and abroad is likely to be outweighed by the long-term benefits in terms of perception management and economic growth. At a time where nationalism, populism and religious intolerance are making a forceful global comeback, Germany's reputation as a value-driven, open and tolerant nation is likely to stand out brighter than ever, making its brand name increasingly attractive on the global markets. When it comes to "Made in Germany," values and interests are never far apart.

For Berlin, the preferred option would certainly be to "upload" its refugee policy to the EU—thus sharing both the risks and the opportunities that come with this approach. But the present political climate in the EU does not support such hopes. In the end, German leadership risks being weakened and centrifugal forces in the EU strengthened as a consequence. This is a perspective which, bearing the alternatives in mind, does not look attractive neither to Berlin and Brussels, nor to Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn.

Notes

1. "European Security Strategy - A Secure Europe in a Better World - EU Global Strategy—European Commission," (Brussels: EU Global Strategy, 2003), https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/european-security-strategy-secure-europe-better-world.

2. For the EU, these norms and values are defined in art. 2 of the EU Lisbon Treaty: "The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail." European Union, *Treaty of Lisbon Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community*, 13 December 2007, 2007/C 306/01.

3. In this article, "Germany" and "German Foreign Policy" refer, for the period 1949-1989, to Western Germany (the FRG), which became the template for the foreign policy of unified Germany after 1990. In the former GDR, the space for an autonomous foreign policy was strongly limited and defined by the USSR.

4. Nicolas Wright, "Germany and the CFSP: The accidental leader?," paper prepared for the 37th Annual Conference of the International Association for the Study of German Politics, London, 16-17 May 2011.

5. Lisbeth Aggestam, "Germany," in ed. Ian Manners and Richard Whitman, *The Foreign Policies of European Union Member States* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 71.

6. The other two pillars being Euroatlantic integration and its redefinition of patriotism as *Verfassungspatriotismus* or constitutional patriotism, where the allegiance moved from the ethnic nation state towards a value system, expressed in the *Grundgesetz* (basic law).

7. Stephan Keukeleire and Tom Delreux, *The Foreign Policy of the European Union* (London: Palgrave, 2014), 46.

8. Ibid, 47.

9. Radek Sikorski, "I fear German power less than I am beginning to fear German inactivity," *Financial Times*, 28 November 2011.

10. Angela Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, the Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

11. But for different reasons: whereas many on the German left saw him as a reformer of socialism, those on the right (and in Eastern Germany) cheered him for bringing down the Soviet Union and for enabling German unification.

12. The agenda of the EC's Maastricht Summit of December 1991, where the Member States discuss the Maastricht Treaty that would two years later give birth to the EU, also features the issue of the food supply situation in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

13. Russia is Germany's 11th biggest trading partner. In 2013, Germany exported goods and services worth € 23 billion to Russia.

14. These principles were frequently quoted by Russia for refusing to endorse in 2007 the UN-led Ahtissari plan to settle the Kosovo status, since it would encroach upon Serbia's sovereign rights and territorial integrity.

15. Even adding a new entry into the German dictionary: "merkeln," meaning to be unable to take decisions or give your own opinions.

16. "Merkel nennt Annexion der Krim 'verbrecherisch,'" *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*, 5 October 2015, http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/70-jahre-kriegsende/gedenken-in-moskau-merkel-nennt-annexionder-krim-verbrecherisch-13585275.html

17. "Kanzlerin Merkel droht Russland mit Sanktionen," *Deutscher Bundestag*, 13 March 2014, https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2014/49865952_kw11_de_regierungserklaerung_ukraine/216288.

18. ECFR foreign policy scorecard 2015, www.ecfr.eu/scorecard/2015.

19. Walter Steinmeier, "Wut und Empörung dürfen in der Ukraine-Krise nicht das letzte Wort sein," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*, 8 March 2014.

20. A part of Czechoslovakia bordering Germany with an ethnic German majority until their expulsion in 1947. The Sudentenland was annexed by Nazi Germany in 1938. This was motivated by Hitler with the alleged oppression of ethnic Germans by the Czechoslovak authorities and by their desire to live within the borders of the German Reich.

21. "Ärger um Schäuble: Merkel distanziert sich von Putin-Hitler-Vergleich," *Der Spiegel*, 31 March 2014.

22. "Helmut Schmidt hat Verständnis für Putins Krim-Politik," *Zeit Online*, 26 March 2014, http://www.zeit.de/politik/2014-03/schmidt-krim-putin.

23. "Deutsche Wirtschaft fordert sofortigen Stopp der Russland-Sanktionen," *Deutsche Wirtschafts Nachrichten*, 26 June 2015, http://deutsche-wirtschafts-nachrichten.de/2015/06/26/deutsche-wirtschaft-fordert-sofortigen-stopp-der-russland-sanktionen/.

24. In particular under Steinmeier's predecessor at the ministry of foreign affairs, Guido Westerwelle, the MFA was perceived as being non-relevant.

25. Joachim Gauck, inauguration speech at the 50th Munich security conference, 31 January 2014.

26. Philip Norton, *Opt-out: Britain's Unsplendid Isolation. In European Disunion: between Sovereignty and Solidarity* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

27. Joseph Janning, "German foreign policy and the EU: Leader by default?," *ECFR commentary*, 2 May 2015.

28. ECFR foreign policy scorecard 2015.

29. Charlie Jeffery and William E. Paterson, "Germany and European Integration: A Shifting of Tectonic Plates," *West European Politics* 26, no. 4 (2003): 59-75.

30. Von Hans Michael Kloth, "Polnischer Minister poltert gegen Schröder und Merkel," *Spiegel Online*, 30 March 2016, http://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/indirekter-hitler-vergleich-polnischer-minister-poltert-gegen-schroeder-und-merkel-a-413931.html

Rethinking Liberal Democracy

Prelude to totalitarianism

Isabel David, PhD*

The Theoretical Foundations of Liberal Democracy

In the long course of human evolution and political experimentation, liberal democracy, especially after the events of 1989, has come to be seen as the best political system, or, at least, as Winston Churchill put it, "the worst form of government, except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."[1] In fact, we seem to have reached the so-called *end of history* and of all ideologies. By portraying itself as the only valid way of thinking, what this language entails is, in fact, the obliteration of alternative modes of thinking, and thus the effective dominance of this particular ideology. The effect of this mechanics is self-evident: the persistence of one particular form of thinking self reproduces and, through repetition, generates its own legitimacy. Tocqueville has brilliantly described its essence: in a democratic society, where the passion for equality is the prevalent and irresistible dogma, all people have to work, which means that all live in a state of perpetual agitation.[2] This state of affairs is simply incompatible with contemplation and its ultimate end—the search for truth—if by no other reason than that thinking requires time, something which is lacking in such societies. In other words, democracies have no leisure class, precisely that which has traditionally dedicated itself to these matters. In the absence of theoretical concerns, people turn to their material well-being and live for the present, a context in which science comes to exist not *per se*, but only possesses a utilitarian rationale that merely conceives of its immediate and practical application.

This prevalence of the economy, of the technical sphere, and the advent of a *government of things*, instead of a *government of men*, seems to be intimately con-

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nected with a qualitative change which took place in the 16th century, namely, the Reformation. The most important break in Western unity was especially espoused by the most economically developed areas, by those most favored by natural resources and by the wealthiest towns of the Holy Roman Empire; in one word, by the bourgeois way of life. The emphasis on earthly salvation through work and *economic rationalism*, as Max Weber put it, instead of after-life salvation, and the rejection of transcendentalism, seems to compose a materialistic picture duly incompatible with the spiritual and ascetic essence of Christianity.[3] Once implemented, this system tends to develop a legitimacy that increases in proportion to its stability.

These "ethical maxims,"[4] having penetrated the cultural realm, gave rise to an ideological foundation—liberalism—traceable to the writings of John Locke, and later continued by Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Immanuel Kant and David Hume. John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*[5] were as much a reaction against Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarch*[6] and Stuart's absolutism as they were a eulogy of Whig interests, associated with emergent industrial lobbies and wealthy merchants.[7] Hence his fierce defense of the doctrine of unalienable natural rights—individual liberty, life, property—that constituted the inviolable private sphere of a civil society, conceived as a domain in which there could be no state interference. The cornerstone of his theoretical edifice lay in the social compact, based on consent and choice, as the means to create a body politic. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, he proposed the famous *tabula rasa* doctrine, arguing that there are no innate universal moral notions—speculative and practical principles—in the human mind.[8] Rather, moral principles, along with faith and revelation, require reasoning and discourse, in order that their truth is discovered. In fact, all knowledge begins with experience, through the senses, and must be made dependent on the end one wants to achieve. Among the ideas which are received from sensation and reflection are pain and pleasure, in reference to which good and evil can be measured. Hence, that which is called good is that which is apt to cause or increase pleasure, or diminish pain. Evil, on the contrary, is that which is apt to produce or increase any pain, or diminish any pleasure in us. Happiness consists in the maximum pleasure we are capable of, and misery the maximum pain.[9] Hence, principles such as virtue are generally approved, not because they are innate, but because they are profitable to each individual.

It was with Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* that freedom decisively acquired its markedly economic tone.[10] For him, people's actions are guided by the utilitarian consideration of self-interest, in a supposedly well ordered competitive system, guided by an *invisible hand*.[11] Jeremy Bentham was responsible for the

doctrine of utilitarianism as such.[12] As for Locke, for Bentham pain and pleasure are the sovereign masters which decide what we ought to do and determine right and wrong. Based on these foundations, the principle of utility "approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question."[13] The final goal of the system thus created is felicity, by the hands of reason and law. In fact, the principle of utility, as the true source of morality, is aimed not only at individual action, but also at government action. The individual is the best judge of his own utility, due to man's reasonable nature. In this sense, the art of directing a man's own actions is named private ethics, or art of self government and the sum of the interests of the several members who compose the community forms the interest of that community. The art of directing people's actions to happiness and augmenting it through the law is called the art of government. In this context, punishment, which is an evil in itself, should only be admitted if it can exclude some greater evil.

John Stuart Mill elaborated on the concept of utilitarianism, considering general happiness as a moral standard and the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions.[14] It is anchored on the natural social feelings of mankind, and is, for that reason, the most important and desirable end. Money, fame and power are components of happiness. Hence, the best government is that which is most conducive to progress. Mill mitigates this understanding of utilitarianism, by advocating the superiority of intellectual and moral pleasures, with a view to a "higher mode of existence," reflecting the distinctive human faculty of reason.[15] Here resides the justification for the absolute sphere of human sovereignty in matters of lifestyle, inner consciousness, personal conduct and opinion—and hence unhindered individualism[16]—in which the state has no power to intervene, even with an ethical purpose, to restore moral standards—the "despotism of custom,"—save in those cases where the aim is to prevent harm done to others. In his view, liberty is the only trustworthy source of improvement. Thus, each individual, bringing with him an endless diversity of experiences, is a possible independent centre of improvement.

The role of the state, in this context, should be that of a central depository, circulator and diffuser of these experiments. Immanuel Kant's philosophy rests on an optimistic view of the human condition, based on the assumption that men are originally predisposed to good and able to perfect themselves.[17] Hence, morality can be built on the postulation that man is a free agent who can bind himself through reason alone to laws, therefore not needing either religion or any other incentive than the law to apprehend and do his duty. Right and wrong are determined solely by reason. In this context, the categorical imperative is that which represents an action as necessary in and of itself, being able to ignore all ends.

There is only one categorical imperative: "Act so that the maxim of thy will can always at the same time hold good as a principle of universal legislation."[18] Thus, what each of us calls good must be desired by all rational men, which means that a universal kingdom of ends can be conceived, binding all rational beings by common laws. The final outcome will be that each one of us will treat others, in every case, as an end, and never as a means.

For David Hume, knowledge comes from experience, through the senses.[19] This is the case of morality, which depends on subjective perceptions and appetites. Thus, good and evil can be distinguished according to the impressions they produce: if the impression is agreeable, then something is good; if, on the contrary, the impression is uneasy, we are in the presence of evil. There are, therefore, no objective moral standards. Similarly, justice does not exist per se, but rather arises artificially from education and human convention to remedy some inconveniences such as selfishness and lack of generosity. From then on, the pursuit of happiness—traceable to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*—for the greater number and avoidance of pain as the only ends of human action were to be considered as the guidelines for all moral considerations, capable of defining good and evil, instead of considering an action good in and of itself.[20] This view, which can be best described as a revival of sophism, has come to dominate the political and philosophical debate and was translated into neoliberalism, drawing mainly from the works of Friedrich von Hayek and Milton Friedman. The view also gave birth to the doctrine of state neutrality that emerged in the 1970's, which regards the liberal state as one that does not impose upon its citizens or favor any definition of the good, leaving people free to pursue their own private moral conceptions.

This regression from the public sphere—the sphere of freedom *par excellence*—to the despotism of the household can only be looked at with great concern. In fact, when private interests take over public life and governments start acting as companies—privatizing public utilities and welfare, marketizing health services, social insurance and pensions, promoting competition between universities, introducing private sector forms of management into public service, treating citizens as clients—that is, as mere providers of goods and services, politics will be built "on the basis of private law" and the common good becomes a sum of private interests.[21] In the impossibility of "linking the individuals' responsibilities and obligations to a well defined political order (…), the very possibility of politics is put into question."[22] For economy, as Hannah Arendt mentions, can never decide "which form of government is better; tyranny or a free republic."[23] Because the two spheres, the economic and the political one, have divergent goals, and once politics is evicted by the market, democratic decisions lose credibility, given that money can be neither democratized nor held accountable,[24] and citizenship is

converted into plain "ratification of decisions or consumption of services."[25] At the same time, representation fails and elections turn into a simple appointment of agents and delegates of interest groups. The reduction of freedom to such a "diminished normative"[26] conception—the economic rationality of the consumer, who has replaced the citizen—puts aside the moral component that is supposed to underlie public space, built on the idea of reciprocity associated with the *categorical imperative* (or with the *general will*) in which the citizen comes to participate on an equal basis in the *polis*, a possibility immediately denied by the market, which merely "reproduces, and augments, the comparative advantages, *previously established*, of enterprises, of the domestic and of people."[27] The people, by definition a public law concept, dilutes into a shapeless mass of isolated individuals incapable of being held accountable. For liberalism, by reducing the role of the state and by making the private sphere the only domain where freedom could be maintained, has shielded the citizens from the public realm. Liberal morality is reduced solely to the endeavor of preserving oneself as the first and only basis of virtue. However, as Hannah Arendt noted, "nothing proved easier to destroy than the privacy and private morality of people who thought of nothing but safeguarding their private lives."[28]

Beyond Good and Evil

The relativism that ultimately springs from egalitarianism, in that all opinions are alike in dignity, even wrong ones, as Mill argued,[29] can best be summarized in Rousseau's *volonté de tous*, a sum of individual private and egoistic wills from which no general will can ever emerge.[30] St. Augustine reinforces the private nature of evil, which arises when man starts focusing on the lower goods, to satisfy his egotistic interests.[31] Reason cannot be the measure of morality, as Kant wanted, for, as Horkheimer and Adorno claim, "Reason is the organ of calculation, of planning; *it is neutral with regard to ends*; its element is coordination."[32] Nietzsche's superman, someone capable of creating values ex-nihilo, tries to replicate Kant's categorical imperative.[33] This is the problem with liberals: trying to create values ex-nihilo.

The full implications of these doctrines are not, as a matter of fact, liberation from state tyranny, but rather from traditionally accepted and established known values, as Socrates inaugurated them—it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong—then their subversion and, finally, their destruction.[34] Values thus became "social commodities that have no significance of their own but, like other commodities, exist only in the ever-changing relativity of social linkages and commerce."[35] Ultimately, this extreme mutability seems to be intimately connected

with utilitarianism, a process in a strict dialectical relation with scientism, the new religion associated with economic progress, by which humanity has reached the end point of the eschatological interpretation of history of which Auguste Comte spoke—the scientific or positive stage—having successfully abandoned the theological and the metaphysical stages.[36]

Here lies precisely the explanation for the replacement of one God by another. In fact, faith in progress rests on the fact that it is more readily accessible to all, saints and sinners, and hence more egalitarian and consistent with the spirit of democratic morality. In addition, it reflects the abandonment of the uncertainty of faith in a hereafter, which may not exist, to embrace a more certain man-made world. The killing of God, the one thing that ultimately ensures the stability and immutability of all things human, comes, in this respect, as the necessary prerequisite for the inversion of known values and the advent of ever-changeable sets of new ones. In fact, once God is killed, in a first stage values still exist, but not their ultimate source—call it God or natural law—and, once their guarantor is not there any longer, those values completely disappear.

In effect, what this continuous change means is that "the sense by which we take our bearings in the real world—and the category of truth vs. falsehood is among the mental means to this end—is being destroyed."[37] After the killing of God, as Montesquieu had noticed; only customs—*les mœurs*, the morality of every civilization—could prevent the moral and spiritual breakdown of Western culture.[38] But, contrary to what he noticed—that the decline begins with unlawfulness, either when the laws are abused by the government or when the authority of the law's source becomes doubtful and questionable—[39] it is not the corruption of the laws that leads to decay but rather, as Plato noted, that corrupt mores encroach upon the laws and transform them.[40] In a context in which freedom becomes a means, and not an end, and is replaced by free will, the arbitrariness of isolated individuals reigns supreme.

Since the absolute barrier that once separated good from evil was blurred by relativism, indifference becomes the prevalent feature of democratic societies. From indifference, the leap to skepticism is only a very short one, and an even shorter one to nihilism.

The attempt at a new beginning by man alone, through secularization, which has been the driving force behind all modern revolutions—all openly atheist—could only have one outcome: tyranny. The full implications of such a conception showed to what extent the demiurge—the superman of which Nietzsche spoke,[41] in an attempt at imitating divine art, an apocryphal manifestation of God—hadn't liberated himself from the political order which he ruled, but, as Locke had anticipated,[42] from natural, and hence, divine law, to which he had been subjected

prior to the Modern Age, having tried to create a secular religion and thus tried to find "within the political realm itself, a fully satisfactory substitute for the lost religious sanction of secular authority."[43] Modern times have indeed become a witness to the most unacceptable crossing of ethical boundaries, having reached its height in the open criminality of totalitarian regimes—it is well known that the elite formations of the Nazi party were organized after the model of criminal gangs and trained to commit mass murder, while criminals received a fairly better treatment in concentration camps than totally innocent people—but not solely confined to them. The events in former Yugoslavia or Rwanda fully demonstrate that totalitarian solutions are here to stay and can indeed be extraordinarily popular.

The Shape of Things to Come

And if moral virtues remain in us through education and habit[44], as Aristotle noted, the greatest danger lies in that "no one who spent his life among rascals without knowing anybody else could have a concept of virtue,"[45] when all references have been eliminated. In the end, the last resort will be human nature.

From lack of moral standards, emerges a particular type of citizenship: apathetic, passive and unenlightened[46] and thus incapable of adequately choosing its representatives. This fact is particularly disturbing in a system which was meant to rely on a high degree of discernment on the part of its people. In a context in which individuals lack time and thus proper knowledge to effectively participate in the *res publica*, state power is bound to grow. More so when people are willing to lose their freedom, in the name of safety, as the current crisis has proved, with the rise of the far right all over Europe. This thought is particularly troubling and aggravated in our time, marked by the "ethos" of the market and by the "transformation of the world into industry"[47]:

> The danger of the corpse factories and holes of oblivion is that today, with populations and homelessness everywhere on the increase, masses of people are continuously rendered superfluous if we continue to think of our world in utilitarian terms. Political, social and economic events everywhere are in a silent conspiracy with totalitarian instruments devised for making men superfluous. (…) Totalitarian solutions may well survive the fall of totalitarian regimes in the form of strong temptations which will come up whenever it seems impossible to alleviate political, social, or economic misery in a manner worthy of man.[48]

Mass murder in the political sphere merely emulates mass production in the economic realm. People are judged by their market value. Reified, people become eventually obsolete and thus disposable. As things, human beings can be used and manipulated. In this utilitarian world, ideas, religions, ideologies are of interest

"only insofar as they increase or decrease the survival prospects of the human species on the earth or within the universe."[49] In the end, the origins of such concepts must reside in the utilitarian formula that obliterates meaning and purpose and blurs the difference between means and ends.

If "all of European history through many centuries had taught people to judge each political action by its *cui bono* and all political events by their particular underlying interests,"[50] in the absence of values, what can be the boundaries to political violence? A nihilist society, however committed to science, can only have totalitarianism as its final destination. Totalitarianism, then, does not proceed from ignorance. And from this cycle there seems to be no escape: "whatever the punishment, once a specific crime has appeared for the first time, its reappearance is more likely than its initial emergence could ever have been."[51] There is indeed a strikingly frightening similarity between democracy and totalitarianism, in that the former paves the way for the latter.[52] One needs only to compare the brilliant studies conducted by Tocqueville and Hannah Arendt, *Democracy in America* and *Totalitarianism* respectively, to understand the meaning of such an affirmation.[53] Once the difference between right and wrong is no more[54]—and then we will have attained what Plato saw as the cause of evil: ignorance—men relapse into a Hobbesian state of nature since the instinct of self-preservation prevails when each one of us does what he wants,[55] paving the way for the utmost perversity and fully demonstrating its consequences once such men reach government, as Plato noticed.[56] The ultimate perversion is the trivialization of all feelings which ennoble and elevate the human condition—love, friendship, loyalty. And this development proves how easily modernity has destroyed both man's ability to think—and especially to reflect on himself—and his practical reason,[57] the one faculty on which Liberal philosophy rests, by trusting human nature. Hitler's election is the living proof—action alone determines the nature of the moral person and not intention, as Aristotle noted.[58]

Conclusion

The Need for the Definition of a Common Good?

When wrong actions are dismissed as normal and acceptable and even criminality goes unpunished, reversing legality, as Plato noted,[59] even in the eyes of intelligent people,

> there is usually more involved than just nonsense. There exists in our society a widespread fear of judging that has nothing whatever to do with the biblical 'judge not, that ye be not judged.' (…) For behind the unwillingness to judge

> lurks the suspicion that no one is a free agent, and hence the doubt that anyone is responsible or could be expected to answer for what he has done.[60]

Actually, the refusal to obey the law or to render it effective finds its cause also in this attempt of man to become *causa sui*. The tragedy is that, ultimately, punishment has always come as the last resort to make people obey moral standards which were always thought to be self-evident; as history has shown, "natural law itself needed divine sanction to become binding for men."[61] With the loss of the "restricting limitations which protected its boundaries, freedom became helpless, defenseless,"[62] and thus ready to be destroyed. People have to be forced to be free, as Rousseau would put it. In this sense, the Christian faculty of forgiveness has no applicability in relation to the "sins" committed in the political domain. For "it is the grandeur of court proceedings that even a cog can become a person again."[63]

In this context, "the boundaries of positive laws are for the political existence of man what memory is for his historical existence: the guarantee of the preexistence of a common world, the reality of some continuity which transcends the individual life span of each generation,"[64] that is, only "in the body of positive laws of each country do the *ius naturale* or the Commandments of God achieve their political reality."[65] Between the strong and the weak, it is freedom that oppresses, while the law liberates[66] and the role of the Constitution is that of limiting power, so that we won't have a government of men, but a government of laws.[67] Indeed, that means the rejection of the social compact on which liberalism is based for

> a state exists for the sake of a good life, and not for the sake of life only. (…) Whence it may be further inferred that virtue must be the care of a state which is truly so called, and not merely enjoys the name: for without this end the community becomes a mere alliance which differs only in place from alliances of which the members live apart; and law is only a convention, 'a surety to one another of justice,' as the sophist Lycophron says, and has no real power to make the citizen good and just.[68]

This presupposes a common ethical understanding of society and its values; in other words, striking an agreement about the definition of "positive liberty." In order that freedom survive, relativism cannot be condoned, especially that which, in the name of freedom, can put an end to it, under the presupposition that the responsibilities associated with government will ultimately operate a transformation on radical political elements. As history has shown, when the nature of these elements is such that it is incompatible with the respect for the rules of the game, freedom will always be the weakest element, proving that it is necessary "to dissolve the sophistic-dialectical interpretations of politics which are all based on the

superstition that something good might result from evil,"[69] for "those who choose the lesser evil forget very quickly that they chose evil."[70] Because at the basis of freedom stand moral and ethical values; freedom is not devoid of substance. Additionally, our system of justice, our laws, our institutions, what is criminalized or not, are based on moral conceptions. Hence,

> a democratic government is not supposed to become an accomplice in its own overthrow by letting Gnostic movements grow prodigiously in the shelter of a muddy interpretation of civil rights; and if through inadvertence such a movement has grown to the danger point of capturing existential representation by the famous legality of 'popular elections,' a democratic government is not supposed to bow to the 'will of the people' but to put down the danger by force and, if necessary, to break the letter of the constitution in order to save its spirit.[71]

As Voegelin notes elsewhere, "While … might does not make right, it is unfortunately equally true that it makes an order, and that without it an order can be neither created nor maintained."[72] These are issues we would like to forget because they point to the authoritarian origin of politics. In fact, the advent of totalitarian regimes seems to have inaugurated a political era of all or nothing, in which, as Arendt explains,[73] all means an undetermined infinity of forms of human living together and nothing, the inevitable doom of human beings, in an ultimate confrontation between good and evil in which war appears as catharsis, a last possibility for humanity to be born anew,[74] when, having reached his lowest point, man is confronted with his bestial condition. In the impossibility of a return to God, "death is the greatest evil; and if life cannot be ordered through orientation of the soul toward a *summum bonum*, order will have to be motivated by fear of the *summum malum*."[75]

Notes

1. From a House of Commons speech on 11 November 1947.
2. J. P. Mayer, *Alexis de Tocqueville: Democracy in America*, trans. George Lawrence (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1969), http://www.gutenberg.org/files/816/816-h/816-h.htm.
3. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Routledge, 2001).
4. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Thomas Hollis (London: A. Millar et al., 1764), http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/222.
5. Ibid.
6. Sir Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha; of the Natural Power of Kings. By the Learned Sir Robert Filmer Baronet* (London: Richard Chiswell, 1680), http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/221.
7. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty, Vol. XXV, Part 2, The Harvard Classics* (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1909-1914), http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/m/mill/john_stuart/m645o/index.html.

8. John Locke, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes*, Vol. 1 (London: Rivington, 1824), http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/761.

9. Utilitarianism then has its true foundations in Locke.

10. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. Edwin Cannan (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd, 1904), http://www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smWN.html.

11. Ibid.

12. Jeremy Bentham, *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), http://www.econlib.org/library/Bentham/bnthPML.html.

13. Ibid., Chapter 1.

14. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1871), http://www.gutenberg.org/files/11224/11224-h/11224-h.htm.

15. Ibid., Chapter II.

16. In *On Liberty*, Mill argues that liberty consists in doing what one desires and that the individual is unaccountable to society for his actions.

17. Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2002).

18. Ibid., book I, chapter I.

19. David Hume, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (London: A. Millar et al., 1748), http://www.gutenberg.org/files/9662/9662-h/9662-h.htm.

20. "The Internet Classics Archive | Nicomachean Ethics by Aristotle," http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.2.ii.html.

21. Carl Schmitt, *Parlementarisme et démocratie* (Paris: Seuil, 1988), 31.

22. Wagner quoted in, Jürgen Habermas, *Après l'État nation. Une nouvelle constellation politique* (Paris: Fayard, 2000), 261.

23. Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 215.

24. Jürgen Habermas, *Après l'État nation*.

25. Robert B. Hawkings Jr., "Power-Sharing and Municipal Governance," in *Constitutional Design and Power-Sharing in the Post-Modern Epoch*, ed. Daniel J. Elazar (Lanham: University Press of America, 1991), 82.

26. Jürgen Habermas, *Après l'État nation*, 97.

27. Ibid., 98.

28. Hannah Arendt, *Totalitarianism* (New York: Harvest Books, 1968), 36.

29. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1871), http://www.gutenberg.org/files/11224/11224-h/11224-h.htm.

30. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du Contrat social*, dir. Pierre Burgelin (Paris : Garnier-Flammarion, 1966).

31. Philip Schaff, "NPNF1-02. St. Augustine's City of God and Christian Doctrine," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series I, Volume 2* (Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), book XII, chapter 7, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.iv.XII.7.html.

32. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 69.

33. Ibid., 90. I am indebted to Horkheimer and Adorno for this equation.

34. Plato and Donald J. Zeyl, *Gorgias* (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 1987), 469a-479e.

35. Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 32.

36. Auguste Comte and Harriet Martineau, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte* (London: J. Chapman, 1853).

37. Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, 252-254.

38. Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, trans. Thomas Nugent (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1914), book XIX, chapter 16.

39. Ibid., book VIII, chapter 8.

40. "The Internet Classics Archive | The Republic by Plato," http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.8.vii.html.

41. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

42. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*.

43. Arendt, *On Revolution*, 158.

44. "Nicomachean Ethics by Aristotle," book II, chapter 1.

45. Kant quoted in Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgement* (Westminster: Knopf Publishing Group, 2003), 61.

46. The relationship between morality and the improvement of citizenship was clearly perceived by the Classical world, from Socrates to Cicero.

47. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 29.

48. Arendt, *Totalitarianism*, 157.

49. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 185.

50. Arendt, *Totalitarianism*, 46.

51. Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 273.

52. Twenty-five centuries ago, Plato noted how democracies inevitably degenerate into tyrannies.

53. Mayer, *Alexis de Tocqueville: Democracy in America* and Arendt, *Totalitarianism*.

54. This blurring does not apply anymore, as Kant thought, when [Man] is conscious of the moral law but has nevertheless adopted into his maxim the (occasional) deviation therefrom. Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within the Bounds of Bare Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Hackett Publishing, 2009), Book One, III, http://www.hkbu.edu.hk/~ppp/rbbr/toc.html.

55. "Abundance needs no law, and civilization's accusation of anarchy sounds almost like a denunciation of abundance (…) it is the lack of contact between the cave dwellers which is the true reason for the absence of objective laws…" Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 50-51.

56. "The Republic by Plato," book VIII.

57. Kant had stated that the will is the faculty of choosing only that which reason recognizes as good.

58. "Nicomachean Ethics by Aristotle," book III, chapter IV.

59. "The Republic by Plato," book VIII.

60. Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgement*, 19.

61. Arendt, *On Revolution*, 191.

62. Hannah Arendt, "What is Authority" in *Between Past and Future* (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), 91-142.

63. Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgement*, 148.

64. Arendt, *Totalitarianism*, 163.

65. Ibid, 162.

66. Jean-Baptiste Henri Lacordaire.

67. "Nicomachean Ethics by Aristotle," book V, chapter X.

68. "The Internet Classics Archive | Politics by Aristotle," book III, http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.3.three.html.

69. Arendt, *Totalitarianism*, 140.

70. Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgement*, 36.

71. Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 144.

72. Eric Voegelin, *Collected Works. The Nature of the Law and Related Legal Writings*, vol. 27 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 86.

73. Arendt, *Totalitarianism*, 141.

74. Hermann Hesse, *Demian* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 1999).

75. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*, 182.

The Crime-Conflict Nexus and the Civil War in Syria

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By January 2017, the Syrian civil war had produced close to 5 million refugees, 6.3 million internally displaced persons, 13.5 million Syrians who required humanitarian aid[1] and estimates put the number of fatalities due to the war at 500,000.[2] Western popular interest in the Syrian civil war tends to focus on the use of chemical weapons by the government of Bashar Al-Assad; the military successes and brutality of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS);[3] Russian military involvement and the refugee 'crisis' which resulted from the conflict. This paper focuses on an often-overlooked aspect of the conflict, but one that is central to its longevity and intensity: the role of organized crime in the Syrian civil war.

Early in the conflict, UNESCO raised alarm about the increased illegal trade in antiquities and artifacts from Syria. Both the policymaking[4] and academic communities[5] have since acknowledged the proliferation of organized crime during the war. These studies show how protagonists in the Syrian conflict are involved in a range of illegal economic activities, including people trafficking, oil smuggling, the illegal narcotics trade, kidnapping and looting. These activities vary in profitability, but they generate sufficient funds to allow insurgents and the government to buy weapons, pay combatants, provide social services and establish institutions in the areas under their control. These factors are crucial in reproducing the armed groups and maintaining the conflict. Yet, very little is known about how the war provides opportunities for this illicit economy to expand. This paper asks how war and organized crime affect each other in the context of the Syrian civil war.

There has been a steady recognition of the role of organized crime in sustaining violent conflict[6] and the threat it poses to international peace, security and stability.[7] This interplay between organized crime and war, the 'crime-conflict

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nexus', has been studied in various contexts, including Colombia;[8] Mali;[9] Afghanistan[10] and Iraq.[11] This article contributes to the study of the crime-conflict nexus by illustrating, in the Syrian context, how armed groups simultaneously engage in political and criminal activities, how organized criminal activity is politically significant in the context of war and how civilians engage with the crime-conflict nexus.

This article states that organized crime in Syria is both a consequence of the war and, at the same time, a driver of the war. It proceeds from the premise that the crime-conflict nexus is central to understanding the civil war in Syria. In the first half, the focus will be on how war creates space and opportunities for organized crime. The civil war weakens the state's law enforcement capacity and thus lowers the opportunity costs for those engaging in organized crime. Furthermore, the war causes unprecedented levels of hardship amongst the population. This creates a domestic demand for consumer goods on the black or grey markets and produces a pool of labor, which can be absorbed into the illicit economy. Consequently, the civil war produces a range of non-state armed groups that need money to wage war. These groups turn to the illicit economy to raise funds and are instrumental in expanding these markets and opening new avenues for international organized crime.

The second half of the argument focuses on how organized crime drives war. The expanding illicit economy, which characterizes the Syrian civil war, affects its intensity and duration. Armed groups now have access to funds, which means they can afford to wage a longer and more violent war. Secondly, armed groups also have resources to spend on providing social and political goods in the communities where they are based. This means that they can become perceived as legitimate political actors and this can translate into popular support. This further fragments the central state and destroys the social contract between state and society,[12] making a resolution of the conflict more complex. These relationships between local populations, armed groups and organized crime are central to understanding how organized crime and war interconnect.

This research provides an analysis of the ways in which crime and conflict mutually reinforce each other: how war creates opportunities for an illicit economy to expand and how organized crime, in turn, facilitates war. The study begins with an overview of the literature on organized crime and war. It then proceeds to a description of organized crime in Syria, both before and during the civil war. Following this overview, the first part of the argument (that war provides opportunities for organized crime) presents a consideration of the conditions which make organized crime in Syria feasible. The second part of the argument (that organized crime is a driver of conflict) is then advanced through an analysis of how armed

groups use the revenues gained in the illicit economy and how that impacts the conflict. The article concludes with reflections on the contribution of this case study to the crime-conflict nexus and the prospects for peace in Syria. But, first a conceptualization of organized crime is needed.

Organised Crime

Organized crime remains a heavily contested concept. The dominant conceptualizations of organized crime assume a law enforcement perspective. The Palermo Convention and the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for example, define an organized criminal group as:

> A structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences…to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit.[13]

In 2011, the UK Home Office defined organized crime as:

> Individuals, normally working with others, with the capacity and capability to commit serious crime on a continuing basis, which includes elements of planning, control and coordination, and benefits those involved. The motivation is often, but not always, financial gain.[14]

The definitions share several characteristics: they emphasize the collective nature of organized crime (perpetrated by a group, not individuals); its longevity; that it takes place outside the law and that the overall aim is to turn a profit. This approach is underpinned by normative assumptions about a 'legal' vs 'illegal' dichotomy[15] which is assigned by the state. These traditional definitions lead to a focus on state building and the ability of political institutions to respond to organized crime. The law enforcement perspective fits neatly into the Liberal Peace paradigm with its focus on democracy promotion, the rule of law and the building of state institutions.

Yet, there are significant weaknesses to this law enforcement perspective. It assumes that the state is legitimate and criminal organizations are illegitimate – even though this view might not be shared by the population in places where state authority is contested or weak.[16] These state-assigned labels might thus not necessarily reflect civilian notions of what constitutes legitimate economic activity. In fact, there may be significant local support for an 'illegal' economy.

A further weakness of the law enforcement perspective on organized crime is that it underplays the way in which these activities change the nature of the state itself. The close relationships fostered between organized crime and state officials lead to a distortion of local economies as government policies aim to

serve the interests of organized crime, rather than the population.[17] Local economies change over time as organized crime groups extract taxes and enable civilians to circumvent formal markets.

Another criticism of the law enforcement approach holds that organized crime is often an activity, rather than an identity, as actors dip in and out of illegal activities. Organized criminal networks possess a range of motivations, which are not always financially-motivated, but could be political.[18] This recognizes the diverse portfolio of activities to which one conflict actor can subscribe.

This alternative conceptualization of organized crime moves away from the legal-illegal dichotomy, towards a recognition of the complex political, economic and social environments within which organized crime networks operate. This approach is undoubtedly more in line with the assumptions of this study, which recognizes that organized crime networks can have a range of goals. Consequently, violence becomes dual-purpose, serving both individual and strategic organizational needs simultaneously.[19]

This is particularly relevant to the crime-conflict nexus where the boundaries between political and criminal actors are increasingly blurred. Not only are their goals varied, but their impact can vary as they establish social, economic and political relationships with the populations and states where they are active. In addition, the critical approach to organized crime emphasizes the relationship between local populations, armed groups and the illicit economy—a recurring theme in this research.

Civil War and Organized Crime

The relationship between organized crime and conflict has become increasingly recognized in the study of civil war. Theories of 'new wars' developed in the 1990s as scholars turned their attention to the opportunities which globalization and war present to the growth of organized crime.[20] In the new post-Cold War context, regimes and insurgents alike had to find alternative sources of revenue as external backers (particularly the United States and USSR) retreated from involvement in internal conflict.[21] Some scholars analyzed how civil war presents profit-making opportunities to insurgents and states—often by exploiting natural resources such as oil, diamonds or minerals.[22] The argument was that the potential for self-enrichment in a conflict setting will determine the war's feasibility, intensity and longevity. This greed thesis elicited a great deal of academic interest and culminated in a debate about the importance of political economy explanations for war, vis-à-vis more conventional political explanations related to inequality, discrimination, and political grievance.[23]

Both new wars theories and the greed thesis emphasize the role of globalization in facilitating the activities of international criminal networks and, at the same time, the increasing cooperation between organized crime and violent political actors. This cooperation is beneficial to both the political actors and the organized crime groups: those engaged in political violence engage in organized crime to raise funds, whilst organized crime benefits from the opportunities which war presents.

An interpretation of this relationship gained prominence in the years following the 9/11 terror attacks on the United States. The 'crime-terror' nexus literature focuses on the dynamics and networks involved in the funding of international terrorism.[24] In doing so, these studies uncover the alliances between organized crime and terror networks which exist for their mutual benefit. The literature illustrates how international terrorism became involved in a range of organized criminal activities in order to fund political violence.[25]

Increasingly, a similar approach to the study of civil war was adopted. Here the spotlight falls on particular, geographically bound conflicts—as opposed to the global nature of international terrorism. It became known as the crime-conflict nexus.[26]

The crime-conflict nexus literature exposes the fallacy of upholding a hard distinction between organized crime and political violence: organized criminal groups can assume political goals and, likewise, political groups can engage in organized crime in efforts to fund their use of violence.[27] Violence increases in a context where the aims and activities of organized crime and political violence become increasingly blurred. Organized crime and conflict become interdependent and exacerbate each other.[28] In the war economy that results, violence becomes an entry point for participation in these activities as groups that use force are more successful in gaining access to economic opportunities.[29] Indeed, the crime-conflict nexus literature illustrates the extent to which organized crime during violent conflict is political: it funds political violence, it changes the abilities of local political actors and it has long-term political consequences for the state and peacebuilding.

The focus in this article is on the ways in which civil war presents opportunities for organized crime—as activities, rather than a set of actors—to flourish. A central assumption that underpins this approach is that all or most armed groups in Syria are involved in both political and criminal violence. This research is interested in how large-scale political violence present opportunities for organized crime, which in turn, stimulates and prolongs the conflict.

Different sections of society are typically involved in the illicit economy during war: the populations that produce and consume the illegal goods and services,

the crime groups such as mafia and drug trafficking organizations, armed military groups such as terrorists, insurgents or paramilitaries, as well as corrupt government officials and law enforcement personnel.[30] A major theme in this paper is the centrality of the relationships between armed groups and the local populations in the crime-conflict nexus. War creates space for strengthening this relationship between insurgents and civilians. The following discussions show how these relationships underpin the illicit economy that expanded during the civil war in Syria.

The Civil War in Syria

The current conflict in Syria started in March 2011 with popular protests against the authoritarian regime of President Bashar al-Assad and demands for the release of political prisoners.[31] The government responded violently and the protests spread and escalated. It was initially seen as part of the 2010–2011 wave of popular uprisings against authoritarian regimes in states such as Yemen, Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, known as the Arab Spring. However, the Syrian uprising soon proved to be a more sustained and longer-term conflict and by 2012 the International Red Cross officially labelled it a civil war.

More than 1000 different groups are thought to be involved in the conflict.[32] These include the government of President Bashar al Assad, supported by Hezbollah in Lebanon; ISIS (the Salafist jihadist group who advocates a conservative version of Islamic rule); the Sunni Jihadist Jabhat al Nusra (the Front for the Defense of the Syrian People, which was allied with Al Qaeda, but since its split in 2016, is now known as Jabhat Fateh Al-Sham); the YPG (the Kurdish People's Protection Units); the Islamist groups Ahrar Al-Sham and Jaysh Al-Islam and the Free Syrian Army.[33] In addition to these high-profile groups, there are a myriad of smaller groups who come and go, and who exist in varying degrees of cooperation with the larger groups.[34] The conflict has become internationalized, with Russia and Iran emerging as major military and financial supporters of the regime, whilst the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia support the Sunni Islamist groups.[35]

A range of political, economic, ethnic and social factors caused this conflict. These include growing inequalities and youth unemployment that resulted from the economic liberalization policies that the Assad regime had implemented in the years preceding the uprising. The outbreak of war also signals dissatisfaction with the system of patron-client relationships which have been carefully cultivated by the Syrian Ba'athist regime. The state concentrated its provision of public services such as the provision of electricity, employment, schooling, agricultural

aid and health care in the areas where its support was strongest.[36] The Alawite sect (of which Assad is a member) has long dominated the state and the resulting discontent amongst Sunnis also contributes to the conflict.[37]

Pre-war Organized Crime in Syria

Organized crime is not new to Syria. The country has long been a transit point for drugs originating from Europe, Turkey and Lebanon and destined for Jordan, Iraq and the Persian Gulf.[38] There is also a long-standing tradition of looting and antiquity smuggling from archaeological sites prior to the war in Syria.[39] Matt Herbert provides a comprehensive historical narrative of pre-war smuggling and organized crime in Syria.[40] Local cross-border tribes and groups have engaged in trafficking livestock and consumer goods (and to a limited extent, drugs) between Syria and its neighbors since the inception of the state after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Initially, the Syrian government was not directly involved in the illicit economy—except for individual government officials who may have benefited financially. In Herbert's analysis, two major events created motivation and opportunity for the Syrian regime to become more actively involved in organized crime.

Firstly, Syria's 1976 invasion and subsequent presence in Lebanon heralded a period of entrenched cooperation between the Syrian government and Lebanese-based criminal groups. Networks of bribery between government officials and smugglers developed. The Syrian military, in particular, became firmly entrenched in the Lebanese trade in hashish and heroin by taxing traffickers. Western sanctions against Iraq in the 1990s are the second major event that provided motivation and opportunity for the Syrian regime to expand its involvement in the transnational illicit economy. Syria helped Iraq to bypass these sanctions by encouraging and directly operating smuggling networks that moved weapons, luxury goods, food and oil to and from Iraq. The Syrian regime retreated from direct involvement in smuggling after the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, but continued to tax the lucrative Iraq-Syrian trafficking of artifacts and oil.

Several factors can explain the success of the illicit economy in Syria before the civil war. Syria's central geographic position in the Middle East makes it attractive for organized crime. It has access to the coast, which provides it with connections to international markets and gives it value as an export point. Syria is surrounded by weakened states and shares lengthy and poorly controlled borders with states that are known to harbor active international organized crime networks, notably Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon.[41] The country's pre-war infrastructure enhanced the feasibility of illicit economic activities: it has an elaborate road net-

work linked to seaports, good electricity supply and relatively high levels of industrial development.[42] These factors, combined with the state's inability (and unwillingness) to control its borderlands, create a fertile environment for organized crime.

This discussion implied that a range of actors were involved in Syria's pre-war organized crime networks and many of them remain active. These include the local tribes; small-time cross-border smugglers; larger, more sophisticated trafficking networks and the Syrian regime itself. The Shabiha are an interesting example of a group that has straddled the pre-and post-war organized crime periods.[43] The Shabiha were a small group of government militias (mostly from Assad's Alawite sect) who were deeply (and brutally) involved in trafficking and smuggling in the borderlands during the 1980s and 1990s. The outbreak of civil war has led to an explosion in their numbers. This was partially due to the government's policy of releasing career criminals in exchange for political loyalty during the early years of the conflict. The Shabiha illustrate how armed groups can simultaneously assume political and criminal roles and how these roles can change over time: these groups remain deeply involved in war-time organized crime, but they also play a role in political violence as government militias which control towns and villages. The Shabiha illustrate an important aspect of the crime-conflict nexus: an armed group's ability to assume and shed political and criminal identities as circumstances change.

Participation in the illicit economy in Syria widened as the conflict intensified. The trafficking of weapons into Syria at the start of the conflict illustrates this: initially, armed groups in Syria would procure weapons in neighboring countries (usually Iraq) and these would be smuggled into the country by vehicle, donkey or on foot.[44] However, as the conflict intensified and became prolonged, weapons smuggling became more sophisticated. By 2012 the Free Syria Army was acquiring weapons through professional arms traffickers and international weapons dealers. Entirely new business networks have emerged since the start of the war to supply the demand for weapons, fuel and consumables.[45] It is difficult to paint an accurate picture of the nature of cooperation between armed political groups and criminal groups—not least because the distinction between political and criminal motives and activities are blurred.[46] What is clear, however, is that that insurgent groups have learned how to capitalize on the economic opportunities which war presents.

Organized Crime during the Syrian War

Ultimately, this paper argues that organized crime both aggravates and is a consequence of the war in Syria. An overview of the range of illicit economic ac-

tivities which exist in the context of the civil war in Syria is useful. The activities which will be described often co-exist in the same settings and are undertaken by the same actors. Consequently, the focus is on discussing the activities which constitute the war-time illicit economy in Syria—rather than producing an account of each armed group's involvement in these areas.

The crime-conflict nexus literature provides a ready tick-list of illegal economic activities which typically present profit-making opportunities to conflict actors: the illegal trade and smuggling involving natural resources such as alluvial diamonds (e.g. Sierra Leone); timber (e.g. Cambodia); minerals (e.g. DRC) and oil (e.g. Iraq). International drug trafficking is a major explanation for the intensity and longevity of the Colombian civil war, where the FARC have been involved in cocaine production for decades,[47] the heroin trade is closely associated with Taliban involvement in poppy cultivation in Afghanistan[48] and the Kosovo conflict was heavily influenced by the billion-dollar narcotics trade in the Balkans.[49]

An armed group's ability to control movement from and into its territory is crucial to its political and economic success. Control over territory in Syria is not only a sign of geopolitical military prowess, but also provides access to sources of revenue. A secondary, illicit economy has been built around the unofficial movement of commodities into areas and neighborhoods under siege. Extracting bribes and fees at border crossings or on highways is an important source of income for local militias and army officers.[50] Rebels that control border crossings set fees for allowing vehicles and individuals to cross and for the movement of luxury items, food, livestock and oil to and from neighboring countries.[51]

The most profitable form of cross-border trafficking involves oil. There is significant variation between different groups and regions in terms of how oil is extracted, transported, taxed and sold.[52] In some cases, local tribal chiefs are in charge of extracting oil from small oil fields under their control and produce about 300-1000 barrels a day.[53] Local militias then tax oil smuggling in their territories or provide armed protection (at a price) to the rudimentary refineries.[54] ISIS, for example, is heavily involved in oil smuggling and extraction. At the height of its power, it controlled around 80 per cent of Syria's oil fields (including the largest oil producing area of Deir az-Zour) and produced 65,000 barrels of oil per day.[55] Oil has become one of ISIS's main sources of income. It is impossible to get an accurate estimate, but according to some reports the organization earned approximately $2USD million per day through its control and sale of oil in Syria and Iraq.[56] ISIS sells oil to various local and international buyers, including its main adversary, the Assad government, through a series of middlemen.[57] This strategic cooperation between the regime and one of its fiercest adversaries illus-

trates the shifting and varying patterns of cooperation between armed groups which typify conflict settings.[58]

Considerable international media attention has fallen on the production and smuggling of the illegal narcotic, Fenethylline, in Syria. This amphetamine is marketed under the street name 'Captagon.'[59] Captagon is popular as a recreational drug on the Arabian Peninsula,[60] but there are reports that combatants on all sides in the Syrian war are using it too—prompting TIME magazine to refer to them as 'super-human soldiers.'[61] By early 2014, the UN reported increases in the Syrian production of amphetamines[62] and some armed groups are directly involved in this production and cross-border trafficking of Captagon.[63]

Looting is another form of economic activity that is dependent on the illicit market. Post-Saddam Iraq is an obvious example of large-scale looting in the context of violent conflict. Hospitals, museums and shops were emptied during the chaos that followed the toppling of the Saddam Hussein regime. Looting is often a symptom of the collapse of a political and security structure at the start of the war.[64] In the case of Iraq and Syria, the availability of lootable items (like oil or cultural artifacts); the presence of large groups of people (as individuals and armed groups) who are able to loot; and a culturally permissive environment,[65] were all in place to make looting possible. According to reports, members of progovernment groups are allowed to loot in areas previously held by rebels. Rebels loot factories and industrial areas under their control, selling the bounty on local or international markets.[66]

The looting of antiquities has become a prominent feature of the Syrian conflict's symbiosis with organized crime. In October 2013, UNESCO warned about the increase in the looting of antiquities and other valuable artifacts from Syria and there were reports of endemic racketeering and smuggling in many of the rebel-held areas.[67] The stripping of archaeological sites in Syria and the selling of artifacts on international markets are commonplace.[68] By 2015, satellite imagery comparing historical sites before and after the start of the war, showed a significant increase in illegal archaeological excavations in Syria. [69] Interestingly, this analysis of archaeological digs found evidence of an increase in both minor looting (which is probably done by individuals and civilians who are merely trying to survive economically), as well as severe looting which requires some organizational and mechanical capacity and is generally more destructive. The revenues for rebel groups through this trade have been estimated at $300USD—$500 million USD in the two years since 2013.[70]

Control over grain is an unusual activity that forms part of organized crime in Syria. Martínez and Eng provide a fascinating account of the political capital that bread provision holds in Syria, which helps to explain why bakeries are often

targets in military campaigns.[71] The subsidized provision of bread has long been a corner stone of the welfare state in Syria. As insurgent groups took control of new territory, they continued the provision of this public good as part of their 'hearts and minds' strategy. Various armed groups in Syria have become involved in a protection racket in the grain industry where bakeries must pay for 'protection' from other groups. In other cases, insurgent groups are directly involved in the milling of grain themselves.[72]

Kidnapping and hostage taking is another common activity for those involved in organized crime in conflict zones. Both rebels and state security forces in Syria are involved in kidnapping and hostage taking. Ransoms are often negotiated through chains of contacts involving local peace committees.[73] It is estimated that, in 2014, ISIS earned $45USD million from ransoms.[74] Hostage taking is of huge symbolic significance to terrorist groups, in particular: it provides them with publicity and a psychological advantage vis-à-vis their enemy. In contrast to the indiscriminate nature of terror attacks in general, terrorist groups are generally selective in who they take as hostages in order to maximize the publicity and impact.[75]

This section described how a range of conflict actors are involved in the very lucrative illicit economy in Syria. These economic activities vary from the highly profitable extraction and trafficking in oil, to the illegal trade in narcotics and antiquities; from control over grain and bread production to kidnapping and hostage taking. The activities discussed above are not necessarily exhaustive of all illicit economic endeavors in this conflict, but they illustrate the diversity and complexity of the crime-conflict nexus in Syria. There is evidence that the illicit economy has expanded since the outbreak of the war and many of these activities are highly lucrative. The following section provides an explanation for this expansion of the illicit economy during the civil war and considers how civil wars provide opportunities for organized crime.

War Provides Opportunities for Organized Crime

Several aspects of the Syrian war created an environment that created further opportunities for organized crime. These conditions include a diminished state capacity, which reduced opportunity costs for the illicit economy; a population that faced unprecedented economic hardship which made participation in the illicit economy attractive and the existence of armed groups who needed to raise funds for weapons and other war-related expenses.[76]

Firstly, armed conflicts weaken state legitimacy and capacity to function, and thus provide opportunities for organized crime. This lowers the opportunity costs

for insurgents and civilians to become involved in the illicit economy. It makes the black and grey markets more attractive and viable alternatives for civilians in need of consumer goods and employment.[77] The state diverts much of its resources to the war, which reduces its capacity for maintaining law and order. Consequently, the state is less able to control borders and to contain illicit economic activity.

Secondly, sanctions against the Syrian government since 2011 contributed to fuel shortages for households, a decline in oil revenue and had a negative effect on the livelihoods of poor Syrians, in particular.[78] The sanctions, combined with the general economic catastrophe that accompanied the descent into war, stimulated a demand for grey and black market goods and provided incentives for the smuggling of consumables. Drug production and trafficking, for example, provide profits for insurgents with which to buy weapons and to pay recruits. But, importantly, it also provides employment opportunities for civilians who can become couriers, be involved in the manufacturing process, or sell the drugs.[79]

The relationship between armed groups and the communities where they operate is central to understanding the opportunities which war presents for organized crime. In her focus on the illegal drugs economy, Felbab-Brown argues that the non-state armed groups provide security and act as economic and political regulators to local populations through their involvement in the illicit economy: they protect the local population's livelihood from government efforts to repress the illicit economy, they mobilize revenues from these illicit activities towards social services and they protect local populations from other predatory groups.[80]

An example of how the population directly benefits from the decentralization of the economy that characterizes the crime-conflict nexus is again found in the oil industry in Syria:

> With the rebels selling a barrel of oil for anything up to $22, refiners can make a profit of 30 cents on every liter of gasoline sold to the public. Those who make their living from road haulage and associated trades have seen their business boom; body shops, for instance, can't keep up with the demand from truckers who need giant tanks fitted to the backs of their vehicles. Unemployed young men can now make a living selling fuel from roadside kiosks, and mechanics have plenty to do in repairing engines damaged by the low-quality fuel. The free market that the rebels have unconsciously fostered is a win-win for suppliers (the rebels themselves) and consumers (everyone else).[81]

This illustrates how the insurgents' stake in the oil industry has created a range of economic opportunities for civilians in Syria. Armed groups expect to gain some level of popular support (even if this support is strategic and opportunistic, rather than principled) in exchange for the economic opportunities they provide.

Thirdly, as the greed thesis emphasizes, armed groups require funds in order to be able to afford to wage war. The illegal economy gives non-state armed groups access to resources that enable them to wage war. As the earlier section has shown, it is not only insurgents who turn to organized crime to raise funds, but states do so, too. Sanctions also affected the Syrian regime's involvement in the illicit economy as they became forced to seek alternative intermediaries for international transactions.[82] This provided new opportunities for the cultivation of local and international networks involving the state.

This section has considered the ways in which war provides opportunities for organized crime in the Syrian context through: the state's weakened law enforcement capacity; an economically vulnerable population that creates domestic markets and participates in the illicit economy; and the abundance of armed groups that require an income. These combined factors provide a suitable environment for organized crime to flourish.

Organized Crime Contributes to War

The flipside of how war creates opportunities for the illicit economy, lies in asking how does organized crime contribute to the conflict? An obvious contribution lies in the funding streams it provides for rebel groups and the government to buy weapons, pay insurgents and help them to capture territory. This helps to prolong and intensify the conflict. These funds also enable them to provide political and social goods to communities, such as subsidizing bread or setting up local mechanisms for resolving disputes. In exchange for these services, armed groups receive protection, loyalty and cooperation from local communities. It leads to a further fragmentation of a central authority. This section will illustrate how organized crime during war is political: it enables the material reproduction of armed political groups and affects the socio-political infrastructure of a society.

Clearly, militants in Syria—as in most conflicts—raise significant profits from their involvement in the illicit market. We need to consider how armed groups spend these profits in order to understand the medium to long-term impact of this symbiosis between organized crime and armed conflict. Of course, it is entirely plausible that a certain amount of the profit disappears into the pockets of powerful individuals. However, much of armed groups' expenditure goes towards paying its supporters; the acquisition of weapons and technology needed to fight the war; and lastly, into the institution-building projects which many of the protagonists engage in.

One of the major expenses for armed organizations in Syria are stipends for combatants. A new member of the FSA, for example, would be paid $50 per

month, but it is well known that the Islamist organizations pay their members the highest salaries.[83] ISIS fighters claim to receive $100 per month from the organization, in addition to other privileges such as stipends for their families or their rent and electricity.[84] It is impossible to know the exact numbers of ISIS fighters, but estimates vary wildly between the 17,000 suggested by the Pentagon to 200,000 suggested by the Kurdish forces.[85] Whatever the real figure may be, if all the tens of thousands of soldiers receive similar benefits, the organization's monthly expenditure is significant.

Another obvious expense is weapons and ammunition for military campaigns. Its international allies, notably Russia, supply the Assad regime with weapons.[86] However, the rebel groups tend to use weapons from a variety of sources. Many weapons are recycled from nearby conflicts in Libya or Iraq[87] or had originally been sold by European manufacturers to other MENA countries such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Qatar.[88] There is clearly a great degree of recycling and transferring of weapons which involves international weapons smuggling networks. Evidence shows that ammunition used early in the Syrian conflict was manufactured in a range of countries such as China, Sudan, Romania and Iran.[89] The varying suppliers and sources of weapons used in the Syrian conflict points to a sophisticated (and expensive) weapons trafficking network which all groups tap into to continue their campaigns. Organized crime thus contributes to the political struggle by enabling armed groups to buy weapons and to pay combatants.

Insurgent organizations often engage in complex processes of institution-building and service delivery in the areas which they dominate. Hezbollah in neighboring Lebanon, for example, has established a sophisticated network of organizations through which they fund and manage schools, medical centers, urban infrastructure development projects and provide municipal services such as garbage removal in the Shia areas under their control.[90] It is crucial for armed groups to enjoy some level of legitimacy and acceptance in their communities. If the population does not acquiesce to their presence, they will either withhold compliance with taxation, production or conscription policies directed by the military group, or they can instigate a violent challenge to the group's presence in their community.[91] Armed groups' provision of public and political goods is an important technique for acquiring this tacit acceptance.

It is therefore unsurprising that insurgent groups are keen to engage in some form of institution-building in the regions where they have established military control. The notion of the caliphate is central to ISIS ideology and means that the group has a dual purpose of Jihad and state-building. The latter implies governance and the delivery of public services. In contrast to ISIS's well-known brutal-

ity, this use of soft power (the 'carrot' in the carrot-and-stick approach) is an important part of their strategy for dominance and control.[92] It provides not only an extensive network of courts based on a very strict form of Sharia law, but also schooling, medical care, public transport, water and sanitation, flour for bakeries and price caps on necessities such as bread or rent.[93] Insurgents' welfare provision and governance roles are also central to their long-term military success as it creates an impression of a viable alternative to the existing regime and affirms their political legitimacy.[94]

The state and insurgents, alike, use the funds raised through their involvement in organized crime to pay combatants; buy weapons and technology; and most importantly, to provide public and political goods to the populations where they are based. The provision of these social and political goods is essential in acquiring legitimacy and support from the communities where they are based.

Conclusion

This article describes the range of activities that constitute the war-time illicit economy in Syria. Various actors, including the state, insurgents, and local populations are involved in activities that include drug manufacturing, oil trafficking, extortion and looting. Local populations are clearly important in the crime-conflict nexus: inhabitants of conflict areas directly participate in the illicit economy. In return, they are the recipients of political and social goods, which the armed groups provide and which are funded by the proceeds from organized crime.

The research shows how war provides opportunities for organized crime by creating an environment where the central authority is unable to regulate economic activity within its borders. The economic hardship facing populations during war often leaves them with little choice but to engage in organized crime—either as direct participants in the activities, or as consumers. Lastly, war facilitates organized crime by creating a pool of armed political groups who need to raise revenue in order to wage war. These groups dominate and expand the illicit markets.

In turn, organized crime also exacerbates the conflict. Organized crime enhances an armed group's capacity for violence. It thus affects the intensity and longevity of the war by providing armed groups with revenue with which to buy weapons to intensify their struggle. Furthermore, it enables these groups to engage in institution-building and to provide social and political goods to the communities where they are based. This can buy them loyalty, cooperation and protection from civilians.

This paper illustrated how militant groups in the Syrian war succeed in straddling both the political and criminal worlds. Organized crime during war is

undoubtedly political in its effects. It enables armed groups to reproduce themselves materially, to build institutions and to gain some level of political legitimacy and cooperation. Local populations are central to the crime-conflict nexus: civilians provide markets and participants to the illicit economy and they are the beneficiaries of armed groups' spending.

So, if war creates opportunities for crime, and organized crime can drive war, then where does that leave the prospect for peace in Syria? It is not the intention of this paper to engage in depth with the implications of the crime-conflict nexus for peacebuilding, but it will certainly affect the post-war state and society.

Militants could be unwilling to negotiate an end to the conflict, as peace (and the accompanying disarmament and demobilization of armed groups) will be bad for business. Armed groups may actively resist or spoil peacemaking and peacebuilding activities, because their economic interests are so closely aligned to the informal economy. Local populations too, may be less enthusiastic about peace and the economic uncertainty that it could bring. It could lead to a strategic trade-off where peace operations accept organized crime as part of the political settlement to achieve short-term stability. This could entrench organized criminal structures into the post-war state. Smuggling networks rely heavily on the cultivation of political relationships and these are likely to exploit the fragile post-war context. In addition to these political-criminal networks, the close relationships of mutual dependency between civilians and armed groups will probably continue amid the unstable security, economic and political contexts which often characterize immediate post-war societies.[95] Peace processes in places as diverse as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Northern Ireland and South Africa have shown that peace could indeed strengthen war-time criminal networks.

Insurgent groups leave behind formal and informal institutions, which could become an obstacle to the new post-war state's attempts to provide centralized governance. It is unlikely that the future Syrian state will resemble the centralized version that existed before the war because of the way that the conflict has fragmented authority, territorial control and governance in the country. The continuing relationships between local communities, politicians and armed groups will pose a significant threat to the success of peace operations and may well thwart efforts to establish a fair, transparent and effective post-war state and society.[96]

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Reversing the Stabilization Paradigm

Towards an Alternative Approach

Mark Knight*

In reviewing existing policy documents, articles, and commentaries on stabilization, it becomes evident that current academic and policy materials fail to elucidate core concepts or approaches that would define stabilization, particularly as a theory under the generic heading of international aid. Based on this review and the author's experiences, this Practice Note presents an approach to stabilization that is entirely compatible with existing international engagements in support of national transition processes, can be applied across the spectrum from consent to coercion, and establishes an organizing principle for stabilization actions through clarity of purpose. The Practice Note concludes with a definition of stabilization, as:

> Stabilization is action, or coordinated actions, designed to support a **strategic process**. A suite of stabilization actions constitutes a stabilization intervention. Stabilization interventions aim to engender support amongst **actors present** for the strategic process, through **focused actions** on their **capacities** to impact that process. The outcomes of stabilization interventions are measured and assessed in terms of achieving the aim, and their human rights impacts.

Within this definition, **strategic process** is understood as the national transition process, and the multitude of international engagements designed to support the national transition. **Actors present** related to actors' abilities to influence the strategic process, regardless of geographic location. **Actors' capacities** are defined in terms of assets and/or legitimacy. **Focused actions** in stabilization fall into three categories: (1) Influence an actor's position (related to the strategic

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process); (2) Capacitate an actor's legitimacy, and/or assets; (3) De-capacitate an actor's legitimacy, and/or assets.

This Practice Note also identifies four specific policy implications, which are relevant for states that are adopting the approach to stabilization, as presented in this document. These include (i) stabilization funds supporting diplomatic functions, (ii) the inclusion of Intelligence Security Services in the planning and delivery of stabilization, (iii) further research to understand and engage with concepts of legitimacy, and (iv) establishing a process to integrate human rights within stabilization planning, delivery, monitoring, and assessment.

Commentaries on Stabilization

The concept of stabilization, as an approach to delivering programs under the generic heading of international aid, has grown in strength in recent decades. It has spawned numerous academic articles, policy fora, debates, government departments, UN mandated missions, and most noticeably—and possibly the cause of such extensive interest—new funding streams for international aid practitioners.[1] Regardless of the increased focus and activity, there remains a lack of clarity on what stabilization activities seek to achieve, or what stability encompasses.[2]

Despite the lack of clarity over its definition, the majority of commentaries on the evolution and application of stabilization point to a paradigm based on three main points.

1. The objective of stabilization is the 'liberal peace,' understood minimally as democracy and free markets;
2. This objective can be delivered by stabilization interventions at the sub-national level, and;
3. The desired outcome of such interventions is stability.

Furthermore, the commentators are equally in agreement on three further points. Firstly, past experiences of sub-national stabilization have failed to achieve their objective of stability.[3] Secondly, the consensus over the 'liberal peace' as the objective of stabilization is matched only by the corresponding unanimous criticisms, and often rejection, of the 'liberal peace' as either an unethical or unachievable objective.[4] Finally, there exists a consensus of silence within the commentaries concerning human rights.

In order to forge an understanding of stabilization, it is necessary to examine the separate elements of the existing paradigm. Chief amongst these is the idea that 'stability' is an achievable objective. Whilst a definition of 'stability' has proved elusive, many commentators generally concur that stabilization interventions occur in dynamic, evolving, and contested environments.[5] The author's experience of

delivery programs in contexts of ongoing and recently-ceased armed-conflict further recognizes that highly intelligent individuals compete utilizing any assets available—including group identities—to survive, evolve, and struggle for resources for themselves and their group. Stability in such diverse, frenetic, contested contexts is a non-definable, unachievable, immeasurable, and elastic concept that possesses no inherent value. As such, the pursuit of stability as the outcome for stabilization is abandoned within the approach to stabilization presented. If stability cannot be seen as an achievable outcome for stabilization, then the question arises of what should take its place. In order to answer this question, it is useful to highlight key tenets of the present application of stabilization.

States and Stabilization

A theme within the commentaries on stabilization is that it is States, as well as multilateral organizations that derive their resources and legitimacy from States, who conceive and deliver stabilization interventions. Modern day concepts of stabilization originate from national stabilization doctrines of the 'P3—France, the UK and the US—predominantly to deal with cross-governmental approaches to counterinsurgency operations conducted throughout the 2000s.[6] Acknowledging the centrality of States provides a perspective through which to understand and define an approach to stabilization.

Within commentaries on stabilization, the chorus of justified criticisms of the 'liberal peace' is balanced only by a corresponding absence of alternatives. There is for example, no international intervention that would conceivably aim for an imagined end-state of a national transition process of a one-party state, with absolute political power residing in a standing committee of the politburo. It therefore seems axiomatic and entirely uncontroversial that liberal democratic States view the solution to 'instability' as liberal democratic States, just as State-centric international bodies view the solution to 'instability' as a functioning State. Despite the views that it is an unachievable objective, the 'liberal peace' remains the least-worst ideology by which to organize a State.

Critically, the 'liberal peace' remains the only end-state that ensures the pursuit, protection and enjoyment of human rights. The purpose and essential creed of a liberal democratic state is to ensure the protection and enjoyment of human rights, summarized by the UN, as:

> The values of freedom, respect for human rights and the principle of holding periodic and genuine elections by universal suffrage are essential elements of democracy. In turn, democracy provides the natural environment for the protection and effective realization of human rights. These values are embodied in the

> Universal Declaration of Human Rights and further developed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which enshrines a host of political rights and civil liberties underpinning meaningful democracies.[7]

Recognizing that "*human rights can be protected effectively only in a democratic state*," the protection and enjoyment of human rights replaces stability as the measurable outcome of stabilization in the approach presented.[8]

Stabilization and Human Rights

The absence of human rights from the existing stabilization paradigm can be seen to precipitate a disconnect between the existing 'liberal peace' objective and the programs implemented to achieve this objective. The current paradigm aims to achieve the 'liberal peace' at the sub-national level by replicating the engagements of the national process, through the creation of the structures of a liberal democratic functioning state. In the approach presented, it is not the structures of a liberal democratic functioning state that form the basis of stabilization actions, but rather the purpose and creed of these structures in the protection and enjoyment of human rights.

Integrating human rights within stabilization requires modifications of the existing human rights programmatic approach. Whereas a chief precept of human rights is that 'all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated', integrating human rights within stabilization requires prioritizing a hierarchy of rights for each specific context.[9] Similarly, stabilization's quixotic pursuit of 'stability' is replaced with measurable human rights outcomes. Moreover, integrating human rights within stabilization requires that human rights objectives be established during the planning phase, that impacts on human rights are monitored during implementation, and that stabilization interventions are assessed and measured against their human rights objectives and impacts.

In summary, an examination of the current dialogue surrounding stabilization identifies a paradigm configured around the idea of so-called 'liberal peace' being delivered at the sub-national level through stabilization interventions, with the desired outcome being 'stability'. Amongst the commentaries, there is consensus that 'liberal peace' is an unachievable objective that inhibits 'stability'. The author reverses this analysis by arguing that 'stability' is an unachievable objective that inhibits the desired outcome of a liberal democratic functioning state, and therefore 'stability' is replaced with the protection and enjoyment of human rights as stabilization's desired outcome.

The Military and Coercion

With States identified as the main protagonists, it is not surprising that the inclusion of a military component is viewed as a necessary constituent of stabilization. All commentaries describe a combination of civilian and military approaches as a key element of stabilization.[10] This leads to the question of what the inclusion of a military component in Stabilization implies. General Smith states that there are "only four things the military could achieve when sent into action in any given political confrontation or conflict: ameliorate, contain, deter or coerce, and destroy."[11]

Existing international aid approaches employ non-military means to ameliorate and contain. Traditional peace-keeping forces can deter or coerce. It is the addition of 'destroy' that distinguishes the concept of stabilization from existing international interventions falling under the umbrella term of international aid. The military role in stabilization goes beyond the use of military capacities and assets to deliver or protect aid delivery: it has incorporated within it a concept and approach to war fighting, that is, counter-insurgency. Nonetheless, the inclusion of counter-insurgency within stabilization is not an innovation, but rather the formalization of the contemporary approach of coercive Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR).

Unpacking and understanding the three stages in the evolution of DDR practices and concepts allows key elements of stabilization to be identified, including the acceptance and inclusion of coercive force. Commentaries on DDR describe the three phases as an initial consensual approach, from second generation to contemporary next generation DDR.[12] Traditional DDR was conceived as a consensual end-of-hostilities activity, designed to voluntarily transition ex-combatants to sustainable, productive, and peaceful livelihoods. A transformation to second generation DDR was necessitated by what is described as the shifting anatomy of armed conflict. This resulted in a concept of DDR intended to deal with armed groups whilst conflict was ongoing, and more generally to deal with situations of armed conflict that involved hybrid forms of violence. The third iteration of 'Next Generation DDR' has taken a far more robust approach, exemplified by the Force Intervention Brigade of United Nations Organization stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), or MONUSCO, which has adopted 'forceful DDR' and engaged in 'targeted operations to neutralize and disarm.'[13]

This perspective highlights two key issues for stabilization. First, an examination of the evolution of DDR highlights its progression from consent, to inducement, to coercion, which was necessitated by fundamental changes in the

dynamics of organized violence. Pre-existing international programmatic approaches individually incorporated one or other of these approaches. Stabilization's unique construct is that it can adopt all these approaches concurrently, through building consent, introducing inducements, and/or employing coercion. Secondly, coercive DDR and counter-insurgency meet and merge in stabilization, whilst retaining elements of both approaches. Stabilization incorporates elements of counter-insurgency by adopting an established military doctrine to destroy the type of armed groups that DDR is designed to deal with, whilst also retaining the concept that an alternative is available for individual combatants and armed groups. The alternative, in this sense, can be understood as DDR for individuals and the national transition process for armed groups. Counter-insurgency within stabilization aims to destroy armed groups that are irreconcilably and violently opposed to a national transition process, whilst retaining a route for both individual members and armed groups to accept an alternate option by engaging with the process.

Stabilization can be seen to combine a full spectrum of approaches, from consent at one end to violent coercion at the opposite end. In order to achieve a coherent approach, as opposed to being a silo combination of programmatic approaches, the aim of stabilization must be consistent for all actions across the spectrum. When considering stabilization's application of violence, the distinctive and defining aspect is that all such actions are designed in support of an alternative route, understood as the national transition process. In this view, stabilization should aim to engender support for the national transition process by applying one or more of the approaches along the spectrum from consent to coercion.

In summary, an examination of the inclusion of the military within stabilization, and the evolution of coercion within DDR practices, identifies two requirements of stabilization:

1. The aim of stabilization must be consistent for all actions across the spectrum, from consent to coercion;
2. Stabilization's application of violence should be designed in support of an alternative route.

Actors Present and Strategic Process

Stabilization that aims to engender support for the national transition process questions the sub-national focus of stabilization doctrine. Whilst some may be present at that level, actors that have either a positive or negative impact on the national transition process are not confined to sub-national geographies. Actors that have an interest in the outcome of the national transition process, and are also

able to influence that process, can be found at sub-national, national, regional, and international levels. In this regard, the importance of any actor to stabilization relates only to their willingness and capacity to influence the national transition process. The geographic location of these actors is a secondary consideration. The focus of stabilization should therefore be on actors' abilities to influence regardless of location. A better term to adopt, therefore, is their 'presence' in relation to the national transition process. An actor is 'present' when they possess the will and capacities to influence the national transition.

National transition processes are often supported by a multitude of international engagements. These engagements adopt umbrella terms that summarize the international support and define the national transition process, e.g., Transition from Autocracy, Peace Process, Counter-insurgency etc. Stabilization actions must encompass a focus on national and international actors, located either inside or outside of the transitioning country. Within the stabilization approach presented, the single term of **strategic process** is adopted, which encompasses both the national transition process and the international engagements in support of this process. The focus on the strategic process requires that stabilization interventions are compatible with, and do not supplant, these international commitments.

Actors' Capacities

The capacity of an actor's presence to influence the strategic process is understood in terms of **assets and/or legitimacy**. **Assets** are understood in the first instance as physical resources, including equipment, money, property, and means of communications, as well as more complex understandings, such as structures and networks of formal or informal groups. A pithy understanding of assets is any resource to which access can be denied or inhibited. **Legitimacy** is a far more complex and fluid concept to understand. Legitimacy incorporates an acceptance of authority by both elite and non-elite groups, although not all individuals are equally able to confer legitimacy. Different groups confer degrees of legitimacy upon different individuals and structures.[14]

Critical for stabilization is the idea that the significance of different sources of legitimacy depends on who is making the judgement, i.e. the conferee. For stabilization to effectively understand and therefore interact with legitimacy, the starting point is an acceptance that the legitimacy of actors' presence is not related to the legitimacy of the strategic end-state (liberal democratic functioning state). The perceived legitimacy of the strategic end-state is conferred by those seeking to achieve this end-state, whereas the legitimacy of actors' present – in relation to the national transition – is conferred by local populations, and/or local, national and international groups and networks. The context-specific concept of legitimacy

must be understood, mapped and tracked in order for stabilization interventions to be effective.

In summary, the strategic process is understood as the national transition process and the multitude of international engagements designed to support this transition. In this regard, it is argued that stabilization should not be viewed exclusively as a sub-national or field-activity, but rather as actions to impact 'actors present,' where presence relates to actors' abilities to influence the strategic process. The importance of any actor to stabilization relates only to their willingness and capacity to influence the strategic process, with their geographic location as a secondary consideration. The capacity of an actor present is understood in terms of **assets and/or legitimacy**.

Stabilization Actions to Engender Support

Stabilization aims to engender support amongst actors present for the strategic process, through focused actions on their capacities to impact that process. The type of actions necessary to achieve the purpose of 'engendering support' is outlined below, where the purpose of stabilization actions falls into three categories:

Purpose of Stabilization actions	
• Influence	actor's position
• Capacitate	actor's legitimacy, and/or assets
• De-capacitate	actor's legitimacy, and/or assets

Influence: This is a planned and focused attempt to persuade the actor present to support the national transition process, or at minimum, cease their active opposition to the process. Influence can be enacted through traditional diplomatic processes and other means, focused on communications, engagement, and interaction. Dependant on the location of the actor present, the ability to influence may require deployments to sub-national 'field' locations. Equally, the focus of influence as a stabilization action may be in national capitals. Actions to influence can be viewed as both the first option available, regardless of the capacities of the actor present, and also as a continuous process pursued concurrent to other stabilization actions.

Capacitate Assets: Actors present who support the national transition process, but are assessed as having low asset capacities, require stabilization actions intended to capacitate their assets. This may include institutional capacity building, transfer of equipment, training programs, and/or support to the actor's development. An assessment of ongoing humanitarian and development programs may

identify existing activities that achieve the purpose of capacitating assets, in which case support to ongoing programs may be the most effective and impactful stabilization option.

De-capacitate Assets: Actors present that oppose the national transition process, and are assessed as having high asset capacities, require stabilization actions that deny or inhibit their access to, or ability to utilize, these assets. This includes equipment, money, property, and means of communications, as well as structures and networks of formal or informal groups. Denial of access to, or utilization of, assets includes the removal of assets, inhibition of their function, and/or their destruction.

Capacitate Legitimacy: Actors present that support the national transition process, but are assessed as having low legitimacy, require stabilization actions intended to capacitate legitimacy. Dependant on the construct of legitimacy within the context, actions may include influencing relevant constituencies and capacitating assets, although these alone may not be sufficient to capacitate legitimacy. Each stabilization action with the purpose of capacitating legitimacy will be a unique concept and design, specific to the actor present and the context.

De-capacitate Legitimacy: Actors present that oppose the national transition process, but are assessed as having high legitimacy, require stabilization actions intended to de-capacitate legitimacy. Dependant on the construct of legitimacy within the actor's context, actions may include influencing relevant constituencies and de-capacitating assets, although these alone may not be sufficient to de-capacitate legitimacy. Again, each stabilization action with the purpose of de-capacitating legitimacy will be a unique concept and design, specific to the actor present and the context.

The options for action outlined are not presented as 'either/or' options, but are better understood as 'pick and mix,' wherein two or more actions may be focused on an actor present at the same time. Moreover, the language used may appear abrasive, and the concept of de-capacitating legitimacy may initially appear unscrupulous. It is important to note, however, that this approach is not an operationalization of Machiavelli, as the ends do not justify the means. Stabilization actions will be compliant with all applicable national and international law, and that the outcomes of stabilization will be measured and assessed in terms of their human rights objectives and their human rights impacts.

In summary, stabilization aims to engender support amongst actors present for the strategic process, through focused actions on their capacities to impact that process. An actor's capacity is understood in terms of assets and/or legitimacy. The type of actions necessary to achieve the purpose of 'engendering support' falls into three categories: (1) Influence an actor's position (related to the strategic

process); (2) Capacitate an actor's legitimacy, and/or assets; (3) De-capacitate an actor's legitimacy, and/or assets.

Economy of Effort

The approach to stabilization presented in this Practice Note acknowledges the strategic end-state of a national transition process, and international engagements that support that process, to be a liberal democratic functioning state. In this regard, stabilization can be understood as actions, often political in nature, in support of an ideological outcome. This stands in stark contrast to the existing thematic approaches of Development and Humanitarian interventions, which both claim political and ideological neutrality.

It is highly likely, however, that contexts in which stabilization interventions are implemented also have Development and Humanitarian interventions occurring in the same geographic space, and potentially focused on the same actors identified as 'present' for stabilization actions. The actors included in the analysis for stabilization actions should include Development and Humanitarian operations, if they are assessed as positively impacting the strategic process. Stabilization can achieve economy of effort by either supporting ongoing interventions, or through separate stabilization actions that build on the outcomes of existing Development or Humanitarian interventions.

The intent is not to colonize existing thematic approaches, but rather to maximize the impact of resources available. Achieving stabilization objectives by utilizing existing interventions, or building on the outcomes achieved, does not affect the objectives and outcomes of the planned or ongoing interventions, nor impact the developmental or humanitarian credentials of such endeavors. Stabilization support for these interventions would be unconditional, requiring no alterations to the present or planned delivery. However, additional stabilization resources could support the expansion of the approach into additional locales.

In summary, the approach to stabilization presented can be understood as political actions in support of an ideological outcome. Thus, stabilization is distinct from Development and Humanitarian interventions. Economy of effort for stabilization interventions can be achieved by identifying Development and Humanitarian programs as 'actors present'; therefore allowing stabilization resources to be deployed in support of or as expansions to existing or planned Development or Humanitarian programs.

Jus Ad Bellum, Jus In Bello / Just Cause, Just Execution

The ethical basis of this approach to stabilization is premised on the mistranslation *'jus ad bellum, jus in bello'* as 'just cause, just execution.' Stabilization is explicitly and overtly understood as political actions to achieve an ideological end-state. The 'just cause' is understood to be the strategic end-state of a liberal democratic functioning state; that protects and ensures the enjoyment of human rights. Ideological preference being a matter of individual opinion and conscience, the justness of this cause is entirely in the eye of the beholder. It is recognized that the definitions of stabilization action presented, specifically the language of decapacitating assets and legitimacy, could appear unscrupulous. In stabilization, however, the ends do not justify the means, and it is a fundamental premise that stabilization actions will be compliant with all applicable national and international laws.

However, as 'the road to hell is paved with good intentions' it is necessary to inculcate 'just execution' not only within the concept, but also within the processes, templates, measurements, and decision points during the planning and implementation of stabilization interventions. In pursuit of 'just execution', human rights are incorporated into the initial analysis, planning, delivery, and defined outcomes of stabilization interventions. Furthermore, the inculcation of human rights within stabilization enhances the integrity of stabilization by bridging the tactical and strategic objectives, both of which seek to achieve outcomes of the protection and enjoyment of human rights.

Potential Policy Implications

Four specific policy implications are identified as relevant for states adopting the approach to stabilization as presented:

1. **Funding of diplomatic positions:** Stabilization actions focused on influencing actors present, can be undertaken in the host nation's capital, and/or other regional or international capital cities. In such cases, stabilization funds could be committed through existing diplomatic structures, to fully or partially fund diplomatic positions in embassies. The position funded would engage in influencing as a stabilization action.
2. **Inclusion of intelligence security services:** The inclusion of a State's intelligence security services in stabilization structures presents two potential advantages: (1) Establishing a process that allows for the inclusion of the intelligence security services' data and analysis, which would greatly increase the breadth and depth of the stabilization analysis, and potentially identify less overt actors present; (2) Stabilization funding could be utilized to sup-

port the intelligence security services delivering stabilization actions, which can only be achieved through these organizations' unique capacities and reach. Stabilization actions undertaken by intelligence security services, as with all stabilization actions, would be compliant with all applicable national and international laws, and would be measured and assessed in terms of achieving their human rights impacts.

3. **Understanding legitimacy:** In order for stabilization to engage with Legitimacy, it is necessary to formulate an analysis framework for understanding legitimacy in any given locale. Furthermore, there is a need for a process that allows for the initial assessment of legitimacy to be monitored and updated in relation to changes within the operating environment, and due to the impacts of stabilization actions.
4. **Process to integrate human rights:** The integration of human rights within stabilization requires that human rights objectives are established during planning, that impacts on human rights are monitored during implementation, and that stabilization interventions are assessed and measured against their human rights objectives and impacts.

Notes

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Prescription for an Affordable Full Spectrum Defense Policy

Jan P. Muczyk, PhD*

Persons knowledgeable in international relations consider the United States an indispensable nation. Hence, it needs to pursue a full spectrum defense policy. However, a full spectrum defense policy is expensive indeed and must compete with pressing domestic priorities. Therefore, viable ways of making it more affordable have been presented. They include: total asset visibility; looking in the right places; reducing federal bureaucracy; building weapons from low-hanging fruit; exploiting economies of scale; lesser reliance on military specifications, focused leadership education; and growing the technological fruit tree.

Economic Limitations to the Arms Race

The belief by many of our civilian and military leaders based on outdated formulas developed by Frederick Lanchester at the height of WWI that technology will negate numerical superiority has led to a reliance on transformational technology which, in turn, has resulted in staggering product development costs and unprecedented product development life cycles. The cost of one B-2 bomber is $2 billion, which compelled Congress to limit its volume to 21 aircraft; and one has already been lost in an accident. The cost of one F-22A is $355 million ($420 million with retrofit items), and it took 22 years to field it. If it were being developed for WWII, it would not have seen service until the Vietnam conflict. The joke in the Pentagon has it that the 22 stands for the number of years it took to develop this plane. The F-35 is on the same glide path as the F-22A with respect to cost and product development time.[1]

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Since insurgencies, the existential and near term threats, lack air forces and navies, the United States can fight them without the so-called fifth generation platforms. However, insurgencies last a long time and are expensive, and the United States cannot afford to bankrupt itself with prohibitively expensive high-tech weapon systems with dubious military advantages for fighting insurgencies. Former Congressman, Barney Frank, D-Mass., speaks for many legislators:

> The math is compelling: If we do not make reductions approximating 25% of the military budget starting fairly soon, it will be impossible to continue to fund an adequate level of domestic activity even with a repeal of Bush's tax cuts for the very wealthy. American well-being is far more endangered by a proposal for substantial reductions in Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security or other important domestic areas then it would be by cancelling weapon systems that have no justification from any threat we are likely to face.[2]

Indeed, the opportunity costs of a large defense budget are considerable. Conservative historian, Robert Kagan, offers a rebuttal:

> 2009 is not the time to cut defense spending. A reduction in defense spending this year would unnerve American allies and undercut efforts to gain greater cooperation. There is already a sense around the world that the United States is in terminal decline. Many fear that the economic crisis will cause the United States to pull back from overseas commitments. The announcement of a defense cutback would be taken by the world as evidence that the American retreat has begun.[3]

What Robert Kagan overlooks is the fact that our allies have not paid their fair share of their own defense since the end of WWII, and it is about time that they become unnerved.[4]

Historically, the United States has contributed 50% of NATO's budget. Recently, the United States share has jumped to 75% with Europeans using their economic woes as an excuse for not doing more. In light of the population size of the European Union and its combined GDP, this is inexcusable. Europe should heed the warning issued by former Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, in his NATO valedictory address to contribute much more to its own defense because the United States can easily lose the appetite to do so. A more recent Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, echoes Robert Gates. These gentlemen were not just crying "wolf." With the inauguration of Donald Trump as president, the time has actually arrived. There is some talk that the European Union should have its own unified military. This notion should receive full support from the US government.[5]

Lessons learned from the arms race

Nations should learn lessons not only from their war experiences but from arms races as well. As the Soviets realized, quantity has its own quality advantages, even with superior equipment. Wonder weapons, with the exception of nuclear warheads, are not a substitute for simpler but effective counterparts available in large numbers. When Soviet Field Marshal, Georgy Zhukov, who knew more about large scale warfare than anyone, with the possible exception of Napoleon, was asked at the end of WWII what it took to win a large scale military conflict, he responded, "more—more troops, more tanks, more planes, more ships, more artillery, etc." The US WWII experience mirrors Marshal Zhukov's advice.[6]

Does the United States get good value for its huge expenditures?

There is an old British saying: "When you run out of money, you must begin thinking." It appears as though exotic weapon systems expand to exhaust the money available in the Defense Department (DoD) budget. As a result, fiscal austerity becomes the mother of an efficient and effective military. The size of the US defense budget should not be confused with national security. It took a former general, President Eisenhower, to alert the nation to the military/industrial/congressional complex, but we did not listen. Eisenhower was convinced that the "Pentagon Boys" exaggerated threats in order to get larger military budgets. The politicians went along because jobs in my district get me elected and reelected, and that is what matters. Lockheed/Martin has subcontractors for the F-35 in 47 states to gain maximum political support. And this is not an isolated exception. The Navy F-18E/F has subcontractors in 44 states.

A report by the Government Accountability Office meticulously documented in 2012 that the Pentagon's 95 largest weapon systems were nearly $300 billion over budget.[7] Deloitte Consulting LLP concluded that cost-overruns have steadily worsened.[8] Technical complexity accounts for an ever-increasing percentage of weapon's cost overruns. Complexity is also the enemy of reliability and meeting deadlines. The F-35 is so computer code dependent that writing and debugging the code has become the "long pole in the tent." The F-35 is not only over budget and behind schedule, but the critics of the F-35, the most expensive weapon system of all time, make a compelling case that the plane can't climb, can't turn, and can't run, and is no match for the top of the line Russian fighters if it is thrust into aerial combat. Quite frankly, the US taxpayer and our allies who are counting on this plane to be the backbone of their future air fleets deserve better. In time, the F-35 may become a viable platform since complex weapon systems experience lengthy teething problems. But that will not happen anytime soon.[9]

Flawed funding processes based on unrealistic cost estimates are an integral part of the problem. Realistic cost estimates frequently are unavailable because most programs are funded and launched while there is still significant uncertainty about most everything. Hence, only fixed cost contracts should be negotiated by the DoD so that contractors also incur the risk associated with cost overruns.

How to Make the Arms Race More Affordable?

How much a nation spends on its national defense is a necessary condition, but the sufficient condition is how wisely the money is spent. We cannot risk unilateral disarmament because we no longer can count on two oceans for creating the lead time to rearm, as was the case in the past. Intercontinental ballistic missiles have seen to that. However, potential enemies continue to exist. Yet, we have pressing domestic priorities that compete with the defense budget. Hence, we must make a realistic defense policy more affordable. The ways exist. All we need is the will. First, we must guarantee that the books of the Pentagon and all the military branches are auditable. Until that is done, we cannot know what we need because we have no way of knowing what we have.[10]

Relying on the intelligence community

The United States has a robust Intelligence Community—both human intelligence as well as signals intelligence.[11] The information that it possesses should be the starting point with regard to identifying the assets needed to neutralize current and potential threats. Relying on government contractors may result in the procurement of inordinately expensive systems of dubious military value. Moreover, such systems could unnecessarily fuel the arms race.

Vital nature of total asset visibility

The United States sent twice as much materiel to the Persian Gulf as was required, and our troops did not know where half of it was at any given moment. Half of the 40,000 bulk containers shipped into the theater had to be opened in order to identify their contents, and most of it failed to contribute in any way to our success on the battlefield. If we recognize the coalition nature of present and future conflicts, then it becomes obvious that there is a big payoff associated with integrating our asset visibility system with those of our allies.

Look in the right places

The largest savings potential rests in the mission and roles category. For example, not only does the Navy have its own Air Force, the Marines has its own air force as well. Incidentally, the Army has its air force (and a large one at that when rotary aircraft are included) and a navy Corps of Engineers too. The Air Force is anxious to rid itself of the A-10 close air support aircraft, and the best one available, which leads the ground forces to question its commitment to close air support. Little wonder that the Marines insist on providing their own close air support. Perhaps, given the fact that Air Force generals appear to be ensorcelled by high tech wizardry, the close air support mission and the A-10 should be assigned to the Army.[12]

Reducing the size of the federal defense bureaucracy

The US force structure and budget have declined by about one third from their 1985 peak levels. The infrastructure, however, has declined about 18%.[13] Therefore, the two should be brought into balance before reducing the end strength of combat forces, and it should be done by proven re-engineering methods instead of for political reasons. After all, the WWII experience reveals that lean organizations produced the most impressive results.[14]

Re-engineering means excising those activities that are either unrelated or marginally related to the central mission (occupational hobbies), removing redundancies, and creating or refining processes through which mission relevant goals and objectives are attained in an efficient and effective manner. Re-engineering requires evaluating the value chain and eliminating or reducing components that either add no value or very little, while retaining and even enhancing those that add considerable value.

A good place to begin re-engineering efforts is activity-based accounting (ABS)—a systematic method for assigning costs to business activities. First, a reasonable number of business activities needs to be defined, and all costs associated with each activity need to be assigned to the appropriate activity. Once this much has been accomplished, the activities with their associated costs can be allocated to products, processes, customers, or vendors. Next, activities need to be assigned priority on the basis of cost, with the most expensive activity receiving top priority for scrutiny with respect to redundancy, relevancy, and criticality. Last, whenever appropriate, the unnecessary or marginal activities are eliminated. Whenever practicable we must insist that all technology, processes, and procedures "buy" their way into the organization in terms of reducing the total cost of doing business.[15]

We need to abandon practices that have been tried and found wanting. I have in mind trying to meet the needs of all the military branches with variants of one aircraft. That was tried in the past with the tactical fighter experimental (TFX) without success. Now the DoD is trying the same thing with the F-35. To meet the Marine Corps requirements for Short Takeoff Vertical Landing (STOVL) aircraft, serious design compromises were made to the Air Force and Navy variants. The McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II was first built for the US Navy and was later adopted by the US Air Force and the US Marine Corps with minor modifications. Also, a number of allied countries bought the aircraft. This airplane is considered among the best multi-mission aircraft ever to see service. This strategy, however, is not to be confused with building variants of a "joint strike fighter."

The concurrency doctrine of beginning production before testing is completed needs to be jettisoned as well. Testing reveals many problems that can only be fixed with redesign and major modification. Retrofitting is too time consuming, expensive, and often inadequate. Economists agree that there are more cost efficient and socially beneficial job creation programs than building weapon systems. Military weapons should be justified on the basis of military necessities alone. While the author does not subscribe to the notion that national defense is too important to leave to generals (admirals), he is a strong supporter of vigilant oversight by Congressional committees and subcommittees.

Building weapon systems from low-hanging fruit

This effort demonstrates that being first with new technology provides a military advantage for a while. The length of time depends on how adversaries perceive the value of the weapon system in question. If considered critical, they will devote the necessary resources to minimize or eliminate the lead, providing they possess the economic and technical capacity to do so. Otherwise, they will either get around to it eventually or elect not to compete. The lead is important if a nation intends to start a war, and can serve as a deterrent for nations that wish to preserve the peace. Also, it is a military advantage if a nation is attacked. Simply getting the lead to demonstrate the political and economic superiority of the system a nation is committed to is of dubious military value.

Since a superpower needs to prepare for practically any contingency, and the United States is indubitably such a superpower, it needs to design versatile weapon systems from low-hanging technological fruit with the capacity of being upgraded. Also, the reliance on military specifications should be restricted to areas where they are absolutely necessary. Modern weapon systems rely heavily on elec-

tronics, and electronic advances typically originate in consumer sectors of Information Technology such as computers and video games.

Also, in the interest of minimizing cost overruns change orders should be discouraged by setting "drop dead" deadlines for modifying requirements. Often, military leaders wish that a new defense system should do just about everything. Yet, typically it is the last twenty percent that accounts for a disproportionate amount of the cost. Hence, encouraging the eighty percent solution when viable should receive serious consideration from the defense acquisition community.

WWII examples

The Grumman F6F shared a heritage with the ineffective F4F. But evolutionary improvements, principally the Pratt and Whitney R-2800 double Wasp engine, made it the best Navy fighter plane during WWII, and is credited with destroying 5,163 Japanese planes. The P-51 was an ordinary plane until it was upgraded with the Packard built Rolls-Royce Merlin engine and the bubble canopy, which made it the best fighter of WWII.

Cold war examples

The F-117 was constructed with off-the-shelf components with the exception of the foil and coating. As a result, its product development cycle and cost were uncommonly short and reasonable (schedule slippage of 13 months and cost overrun of merely 3%). The RQ-1A Predator is another example of matching maturing technologies with warfighter needs. The Air Force began taking deliveries of an upgraded RQ-1B less than 5 years from program inception. The best examples of upgrading weapon systems are the B-52 heavy bomber and the KC -135 aerial tanker. Both are still in service. The GBU-28 Bunker Buster was developed from off-the-shelf parts, tested, and deployed in 28 days during Operation Desert Storm. The F-18E/F Super Hornet is the evolutionary progeny of earlier F-18 models, which were designed to be upgraded. As a result of this approach, the Navy was able to field what it considers to be the most advanced multi-role strike fighter available today and for the foreseeable future. Other examples of the evolutionary approach are, the Trident II D-5, which is the sixth generation member of the Navy Fleet Ballistic Missile Defense, and The Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC)-3, which was introduced during the first Gulf War.[16] The Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation, amplifies the point with upgrades of the SU-27 and the MIG-29. The current US F-16s, F-15s, and F-18s are much superior platforms than the original versions as well, especially the F-15SE and F-16V. Ascertaining which upgrades provide the biggest bang for the buck is vital

to this strategy. For example, while the F-22A and F-35B have limited thrust vectoring capability, providing robust thrust vectoring for all fighters and fighter bombers merits serious consideration. After all, if we accept the proposition that stealth is an asset of declining value, then eventually agility and speed will regain their historic preeminence. The United States Air Force is getting ready to select a prime contractor for its next generation heavy bomber. Let us hope that it elects to upgrade the B-2 rather than rely on transformational technology to build a new one from a blank sheet. The DoD should learn from failed efforts to field weapon systems developed from transformational technology. Examples are: the Navy A-12 Avenger II; the Crusader mobile artillery; Comanche helicopter; the Army Future Combat Systems; and the Marine Corps Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle. Not only was a king's ransom spent developing these failed systems, but canceling them proved inordinately expensive as well.

Appreciating the significance of economies of scale

It is not unusual for the R&D phase of a complex weapon system to amount to as much as 50% of the production cost of the system. Ipso facto, purchasing such a system in small numbers drives up the cost to staggering proportions. Restricting the number of F-22A fighters to 187 was a serious blunder. The DoD could have purchased the F-22A, a superior plane to the F-35, at about the same price had it procured the required number. Now Congress has instructed the United States Air Force to examine the feasibility of reopening the F-22A production line. Acquiring only 21 B2s was also a mistake that necessitated retaining three heavy bomber fleets, two of which are obsolete. Now the Air Force is compelled to launch a new heavy bomber program. Increasing joint ventures with allies and partners likewise will assist in securing the benefits of economies of scale.[17]

Congress is also culpable when it comes to ignoring the benefits of economies of scale. When the DoD proposes a very expensive weapons system, rather than sending the DoD back to the drawing board to design a more affordable aircraft, it reduces the number of units, thereby driving up unit cost. Of course, producing an ineffective aircraft in large quantities is an even greater blunder.

The most meaningful force multiplier

Let us not forget that the most significant force multiplier is leadership. However, the most common degrees offered on military installations are business administration degrees, which prepare service members for post-retirement occupations. The military would get greater returns on its education dollars if it

followed the example of the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) and offered focused education. Approximately one-half of the AFIT faculty is civilians who see to it that best practices, even though they are derived from civilian organizations, are incorporated into the curriculum. "Little Israel" offers the best example of the multiplier effect of quality leadership with its repeated victories over the entire Arab world. In fairness, being supplied at first with modern French weapons and later with advanced US weapons helped the Israelis immensely.[18]

Growing the Technological Fruit Tree

When the Soviet Empire collapsed, the Russian Federation had to choose what parts of its defense establishment it would preserve. It elected to preserve its design bureaus rather than place orders for additional aircraft. That is to say, it chose the future over the present. Hence the United States should continue to grow the technological fruit tree by adequately funding basic as well as applied research. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), The Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), especially through its Air Force Office of Scientific Research Directorate (AFOSR), Air Force Institute of Technology (Graduate School of Engineering and Management), and the counterparts of the Navy, Army and Marine Corps should be funded in accordance with the high priority given pressing warfighter needs. Incentives should be provided to the private sector so that it would invest some of its capital to grow the technological fruit tree.[19] For example, Pratt and Whitney, the manufacturer of the F-135 engine that powers the Lockheed Martin F-35 fighter bomber, has upgraded the engine to produce a 6 to 10 percent thrust increase and a 5 to 6 percent fuel burn reduction by relying on the Navy sponsored Fuel Burn Reduction program and the Air Force Sponsored Component and Engine Structural Assessment Research Technology Maturation effort at no additional cost.

Conclusion

The Cold War left the United States as the de facto leader of the free world with the obligation to create a defense policy capable of fighting regional conventional military engagements, counter insurgencies, as well as deterring major conflicts with the Russian Federation and China that could escalate into thermonuclear exchanges. All this created an unprecedented arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective alliances—NATO and Warsaw Pact.

Since the United States exited WWII with its economy unscathed by the war, it could afford guns and butter for the duration of the Cold War. Now, press-

ing domestic needs create serious competition for the federal dollar, and potential enemies, reverting to historical tendencies, refuse to go away. While arms limitation treaties have slowed the arms race, the United States still needs to fashion an affordable defense policy. Toward that end recommendations have been made that include: rationalizing missions and roles, streamlining the federal defense bureaucracy, discontinuing failed practices, exploiting economies of scale, lesser reliance on military specifications, setting "drop dead" deadlines on change orders, giving serious consideration to 80% solutions, integrating US asset visibility with that of our allies, increasing joint ventures with allies and partners, providing focused education, and building weapon systems through an evolutionary process rather than through transformational technology in case diplomatic strategies fail.

Notes

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