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The Critique of Democracy in the Writings of Nicolás Gómez Dávila
(1913 – 1994)

Abstract
The Western world is experiencing the "death of God" and is living in a self-proclaimed "postmodern era", which boasts of "liberating" the human being, thanks to the cult of reason and the rejection of religious dogmas. In the twentieth century, in Latin America; in the heart of Colombia, Nicolás Gómez Dávila lived and thought. The thinker emphasizes the limitations of human reason, in opposition to the modern cult of reason, freedom and the aspiration to build an earthly paradise. The objective of this article is to present this "illustrious unknown", considered by many researchers as one of the most original thinkers of the twentieth century, who played the role of philosopher-writer in the modern world in a unique style; and his critical view of democracy.

Keywords: Nicolás Gómez Dávila; Democracy; Critique of Democracy;
1. Who is Nicolás Gómez Dávila?

There are writers who seem to come from nowhere. They appear unpredictably from a background that is foreign to them, unprepared for anything or anyone; unprecedented, free of recognition or of useful signals to define them. Eccentric, uncomfortable, unusual; they are unclassifiable and unmistakable. In his manner of writing, Nicolás Gómez Dávila certainly counts as one of them.¹

Born in Bogota, Colombia, on May 18, 1913 and died on May 17, 1994, this great Latin American writer and philosopher is the author of work that is just beginning to be recognized. He was one of the most comprehensive critics of democracy. He achieved international recognition a few years before his death, thanks to German translations of some of his works.

Gómez Dávila spent most of his life among a circle of friends and the confines of his library. He belonged to high social class and was educated in Paris. Due to severe pneumonia, he spent nearly two years at home, where he was educated by private tutors and developed his admiration for classical literature. However, he never attended college. In the 1930s, he returned to Colombia and never visited Europe again, except for a six-month stay with his wife in 1949. He gathered an immense, private library containing more than 30,000 volumes around which gravitated all his philosophical and literary life. In 1948 he helped to found the University of Los Andes in Bogota.²

Nicolás Gómez Dávila’s work was true to his times. He did start with disappointment as a life attitude which echoes that of his teachers Burckhardt, Montaigne and Thucydides; his work has a unique position in the history of philosophy, which allows the development of a critique of the major topics of modern culture such as democratic religion and nihilism, capitalism or

socialism. In order to avoid falling into apologetics or pedagogy, he focuses on a genealogy of error, developing a work mainly aphoristic. His caustic criticism similar to that of Nietzsche and Cioran departs, however; from their nihilistic despair due to an aristocratic irony and a firm belief in God.  

2. Who inspired Nicolás Gómez Dávila?

Highly erudite and a great expert of classical languages, Dávila defended a skeptical anthropology founded on an in-depth study of the historians Thucydides and Jacob Burckhardt. He believed that hierarchical structures such as, the Church and the State should order society, and criticized the concept of popular sovereignty. Like Donoso Cortés, Gómez Dávila believed that all political errors ultimately resulted from theological errors. This is why his thinking is described as a form of political theology.  

As a Catholic with high ethical standards, his work is openly critical of certain forms of modernity such as, democracy and liberalism which shelter decadence and corruption. His aphorisms, called by him “glosses”, are loaded with corrosive irony, intelligence and deep paradox.  

Gómez Dávila recognized the French philosopher Michel de Montaigne and the Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt as leading masters of thought, and particularly appreciated their methods of thinking, “My patron saints: Montaigne and Burckhardt”. In fact, although he mentioned them explicitly very little, he had the complete works on the thought of these two authors in his library.

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5 Ibídem.
After a lengthy study of his library it is possible to determine the philosophical currents that influenced the thought of Gómez Dávila: 1. The intellectual school of the French Action, with its representative Charles Maurras; 2. The counterrevolutionaries, Loyalists, French Catholic traditionalists and pamphleteers; 3. The Counterenlightenment (Gegenaufklärung) and German Romanticism; 4. German thinkers of the "Conservative Revolution"; 5. The Romantics, apologists of Christianity and British Conservatives; 6. European intellectual and economic liberalism. 7

This classification emerged after a lengthy examination of Gómez Dávila’s library catalogue. The analysis was done both on a quantitative level (the number of volumes of each author listed or unlisted) and a qualitative or implicit one, by confronting the text itself. From this research is possible to find the influence of Gómez Dávila’s readings in shaping his political ideas condensed in aphorisms.

The grouping made under these currents of thought obeys both, a cultural and historical linguistic logic (Loyalists and French maurassianos, Romantic and German neo-conservatives, British Conservatives) and an obvious intellectual affiliation to traditionalism, conservatism, reactionism, Christianity; all characteristic of Gómez Dávila’s philosophy.

Some writers were in the forefront of his library such as Justus Moser, the father of rural conservatism and the Russian edition of the complete works of Konstantin Leontiev, famous castigator of the “average European” as an instrument and ideal of universal destruction. In addition, there were Joseph de Maistre, Donoso Cortés and other sources of reactionary thought who

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accompanied him since his youth in Paris, such as Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras, who left a mark on Gomez in his formative years.⁸

What did Gómez Dávila think about Nietzsche? He read him, no doubt, and admired him. He sympathized with him to the point of considering that, compared to Hegel who was "blasphemous", "Nietzsche was only “spoiled.” He understood the gist of the German philosopher, because he foresaw that "reading Nietzsche’s response is not understood. Nietzsche is a huge question mark”. Gómez Dávila was careful not to summarize the work of Nietzsche under the generic label of ‘atheism’, preferring to speak of him as a "maverick" who invented Superman as "human comfort to the death of God”. Thus, he distinguished it from Gnostic atheism, which proclaims the divinity of man, hence democracy. In his words, "democracy proclaims the sovereignty of man, God’s Christianity."⁹

Nietzsche and Gómez Dávila are disparate thinkers with notable features in common, but while one sprang from the Protestant tradition of Saxony, the other was the outcome of “Catholicism as the cradle of reaction.” These two thinkers shared much of their philosophy of life inspired by the transition to the twentieth century. They also shared ‘aristocratism’, but one connected it to life while the other found it in the structure of the feudal middle Ages. Both were notorious and lucid critics of modernity and its ideology, but their opinions differed, however, in terms of diagnosis and improvement.

Both in their own way emphasized art as a sublime activity. Their ontological approach to the power of the will is partially complemented by the theory of deification of man. One, being a platonizó who glorified values, while the other actually said openly that value is what the will values. The basic difference between them is faith, which determines Gómez Dávila’s submission and

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⁹ Ibídem, p. 36.
surrender, and his conception of democracy as blasphemous and catastrophic to civilization against the Nietzschean vision of the death of God as liberating and opening up human creativity.\textsuperscript{10}

Gómez Dávila, in his turn, considered ‘disinterested simplicity’ with monastic austerity as the most appropriate expression of “wavering thought, filled with contradictions,” and claimed that his notes and glosses are “the most discreet and the closest verbal expressions of silence”. This is just "because things have meaning when we see them as God sees them”.\textsuperscript{11}

3. What current of thought can Nicolás Gómez Dávila be classified under?

Nicolás Gómez Dávila writes from the position of what he calls "reactionary". In his opinion being reactionary in our times means opposing the ideas of equality and unlimited freedom, progress and democracy, materialism, socialism, capitalism and revolution. In other words, his stance is to oppose everything that is considered as universally accepted and contemporary. On the other hand, being reactionary is to be strongly linked with feelings of one's own impotence against the abrupt changes that revolutions bring. The Thinker consciously departs from what is contemporary and keeps everything, even conservatism meaningless because in the modern world almost no decent things are to be preserved.\textsuperscript{12}

Gómez Dávila devotes much space to philosophy. One can risk the opinion that he maintained dialogue with all major philosophers of the past and expressed his opinion on almost all basic philosophical problems. For him, philosophy meant endeavoring to constantly answer the same questions with a

\textsuperscript{10} Gutiérrez B. Carlos, La Crítica a la Democracia en Nietzsche y Gómez Dávila, Ideas y Valores vol.56, no.136, Bogotá Jan./Apr. 2008.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibídem, p. 121.
changing vocabulary. But he believed that cultivating philosophical reflection not only requires technical competence but also an ability to analyze, literary talent and the ability to use metaphors.

Nicolás Gómez Dávila is an enemy of all currents of human thought that ignore the complexity and internal plurality of human reality. He is against the ideas of materialism, utilitarianism and determinism. He is among the thinkers who systematically reject theistic concepts, while feeling a real liking for Nietzsche - at least he gives that impression - and believing that only the philosopher is fully consistent and truly brave. Gómez Dávila gives much attention to Marx, whose achievements he recognized, and the Marxists, whom he judges abortive and careerists.

He holds highly reactionary thinkers such as Plato and Christian thinkers in great esteem and based on his teachings on them. Furthermore, Gómez Dávila appreciated philosophers like Descartes, Pascal, Kant and Schopenhauer, but warns of the dire consequences of adopting Stoic doctrines, Hegel and those related to the French Enlightenment.

This so-called Bogota Solitaire is presented as a God-centered thinker who identified with the past in the conflict between the rationalists and voluntarists while constantly emphasizing the fundamental character of grace and the redemptive work of Christ. He cannot accept either the current trend to place man at the center of the universe, nor Gnosticism. Nor does he share the modern faith in the liberating force of progress, scientific and technical development. Instead, he expects a miracle to happen and puts his trust in the efficiency of patiently repeated prayer.

14 Ibidem.
Nicolás Gómez Dávila was known as a liberal thinker with aristocratic reactionary thought and scholasticism. Deeply religious and a zealot in his works, he described himself as a Catholic – a reactionary – verging on gender traditionalism. What he had in common with thinkers like Joseph De Maistre or Juan Donoso Cortés was an unshakable trust in traditional truths. These were not, however, expressed in a vast and slow prose like that used in the nineteenth century but in spirited style characterized by disappointment, rebellion and lucidity.

4. What is democracy for Nicolás Gómez Dávila and what is his critique of democracy?

For Nicolás Gómez Dávila, modern democracy is the theology of man-god, as it assumes man as God and from this principle derives its rules, its institutions, and its accomplishments. But "if man is the only end of man, a vain reciprocity stems from this principle as two empty, mutually reflecting mirrors."15 This image being like a relapse into emptiness is equally unacceptable to Nicolás Gómez Dávila on the political level for example, in his belief that democracy is the best system of government. On the contrary, it forms part of a mistaken view: "The error of democratic thought: each individual himself attributes all attributes to the concept of man."16

"Democracy is a system in which the just and the unjust, the rational and the absurd, human and bestial, are determined not by the nature of things, but by an electoral process."17 In addition "Democrats describe a past that never existed and predict a future that is never made,18 and this makes empirical democracies alive, while they are trying to evade the consequences of theoretical democracy". “The more severe are the problems, the greater the

15 Gómez Dávila N., Escolios a un Texto Implícito, Atalanta, 1977, p. 79.
16 Ibidem, p. 343.
18 Gómez Dávila N., Escolios a un Texto Implícito, Atalanta 1977.
number of the inept that democracy calls to resolve”. “The people’s vote is a vote and nothing else”.19

After such meditative reflexions the reactionary’s attack on modern society appears everywhere as a constant leitmotif, like the incessant droning of an insect the idea obsessively follows Don Nicolas everywhere, even within the walls of his aristocratic library, where he found shelter from that despicable and sordid society consisting of a violently homogeneous mob: ‘Life should resemble a room with well-educated people where everyone knows each other but where no one embraces one another…the anonymity of a modern city is as intolerable as the familiarity of existing customs’.20 The same crude product of this democratic society, “modern (man) attempts to draw with lust, violence and vileness, the innocence of a hellish paradise”.

For Gómez Dávila it is not necessary to illustrate a view, just open your eyes and look around to confirm what has been said, because it is true that “modern society has been progressively reduced to swirling animals in heat”,21 while the two poles of modern life are, obviously, business and sexual intercourse. And in the midst of such absurdities, “recent generations of humans wander through the rubble of Western culture like caravans of Japanese tourists by the ruins of Palmyra” Such a poignant frightening and accurate image crystallizes in one of the great aphorisms by the author: “Modern society is not educated to live but to serve”.

According to Nicolás Gómez Dávila’s thought “Democracy is an anthropotheistic religion. Its principle is an option of a religious nature, an act by which man takes on the role of man god. Its doctrine is a theology of God man; in practice it is the realization of the principle in behavior, in institutions

19 Gómez Dávila N., Notas, Ibídem.
21 Ibídem.
and at work.” Both Capitalism and Communism, and their hybrid, shameful forms, are just different paths leading towards the same or similar goal. Their supporters propose dissimilar techniques, but abide by the same values. The solutions divide; the ambitions however are identical. Their methods are placed in rivalry but their achievements are identical.

The ideologues of capitalism do not reject the communist ideal; Communism does not censor the bourgeois ideal. When investigating the social realities of these concurrent ideologies with the aim of denouncing their vices, or disputing the exact identification of the facts, each of them judges with similar criteria. If Communism preaches economic contradiction, the alienation of man, an abstract freedom, the legal equality of bourgeois societies, Capitalism in parallel, stresses the ineptness of the economy, a totalitarian absorption of the individual, political slavery, the restoration of real inequality in communist societies. Both apply the same system of rules, and their dispute is limited to discussing the role of certain legal structures. For each of them private property is a hindrance to another stimulus; but both agree on the definition of property that either hinders or stimulates action.

Bourgeois ideologies and ideologues of the proletariat are, at different times and for different social classes, carriers of rival banners of one and the same hope. All proclaim themselves as an impersonal vote of the same promise. Capitalism does not consider itself as a bourgeois ideology but a construction of human reason. Communism does not declare a class ideology because it says that the proletariat is only a delegate-body of humanity. If Communism denounces bourgeois fraud and deception, Communist Capitalism, are both historical hybrids of the democratic principle; both crave a society in which Man is actually, master of his destiny. Rescuing man from the greed for land,

24 Ibidem, p. 58.
from the scourge of blood, social slavery is their common purpose. Democracy expects the redemption of man, and claims that he is in charge of redemption himself...

To overcome his terrible misfortune is the most natural desire of man, but it would be ridiculous for a needy animal, which is threatened and oppressed to place his trust solely in his own intelligence to subjugate the majesty of the universe without attributing to himself greater dignity and a loftier origin. Democracy is not an electoral procedure, as naive Catholics imagine; nor a political system, as the hegemonic bourgeoisie of the nineteenth century thought; or social structure as taught by the American doctrine; or economic organization as recommended by a Communist thesis.  

Those who witnessed the irreligious violence of democratic convulsions believed they were witnessing a profane revolt against the sacred alienation. Even though the popular animosity only breaks out sporadically in furious fierce riots, a cruel criticism of the religious phenomenon and a militant secularism deaf and surreptitiously accompany democratic history. Its explicit manifestations seem subordinated to a deeper desire - sometimes hidden, sometimes public, sometimes quiet, and sometimes outspoken - to secularize society and the world. This irreligious fervor, which lies demurely within, projects a soul-cleansing principle of all mystical excrement.

The religious aspect of the democratic phenomenon is usually explained in two ways: for bourgeois sociology, it is the similarities that sway social turmoil propagated in the emotional strata which is the source of religiosity. For communist sociology, the similarity confirms the social character of religious attitudes. There, intense emotion assumes the form of religion masquerading as

social purpose. For the research of any democratic fact, only religious analysis helps us to clarify the nature of the phenomenon and allows us to attribute democracy its right dimension. Because by proceeding differently we will fail to establish its genetic definition or show the consistency of its forms or tell its story.

The divinity that democracy attributes to man is not only a poetic figure of speech, but brings forth a strictly theological principle. Democracy speaks to us eloquently, and using a vague lexicon, proclaims human dignity, the nobility of one’s origin and destination, intellectual dominance over the universe of matter and instinct. Democratic anthropology is one which agrees with the classic attributes of God.

Anthropotheism, given the current misery of our condition, defines the divinity of man as a past reality, or as a future reality. In his present misfortune of being a fallen man there is god, or is he a risen god. Anthropotheism poses the dilemma of the first two-faced god.

The democratic doctrine forms an ideological superstructure, thoroughly adapted to its ‘religious’ tenets. Its tendentious anthropology extends to militant apologetics. If one defines man as consistent with His (God’s) postulated divinity, its ideology, in order to confirm the myth of anthropotheism, defines the universe in a manner consistent with the man-contrived definition of man. The doctrine has a speculative purpose. Every democratic thesis is a contentious argument, but no verdict has been given by the judge. In order to fulfill its theological purpose, democratic anthropology defines man as a will. Democratic man has no nature but a history, an inviolable free will that his earthly adventure cannot masquerade or alter.

27 Ibidem.
If the will is his essence, the man is just freedom because freedom is autonomous determination, essential will, man is essential freedom. Democratic man is not conditional liberty, liberty which human nature can condition, but it is total freedom. Only his free acts are acts of his essential being, and what reduces his freedom corrupts him. Man cannot be subordinated without giving up. His freedom does not prescribe because essence cannot be prescribed.\textsuperscript{28}

For the democratic anthropology men are sovereign and equal entities equipped with free will. After settling his anthropological definition, the doctrine proceeds to develop the four ideological theses of his apologetics. First and foremost, the most obvious democratic ideology is pathetic atheism.

Democracy is not atheistic because it has proved the unreality of God, but because it firmly demands the inexistence of God. The conviction of our divinity involves a denial of His existence. If God existed man would be his creature. If God existed man could not feel His alleged divinity. Transcendent God overrules our futile rebellion. Democratic theology of atheism is an immanent God.\textsuperscript{29}

The theory of values is the thorniest companion of democratic ideology. Atheism and progress only ask an emphatic rhetorical question because God's existence is not obvious, because a simple gesture towards the future confirms the faith of a hesitant progressive; while the presence of values is the fact that nullifies the democratic principles with quiet insolence. According to the democratic doctrine value has a subjective status that tests the correlation between the will and fact. The objectivity of value is a function of their empirical generality, and its normative character comes from its vital reference. Value is what the will recognizes as its own property.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibidem, p. 28.

\textsuperscript{29} Gómez Dávila N., Escolios a un texto implícito, Atalanta, 2009, p. 98.
The last thesis of democratic apologetics is universal determinism. To strengthen its prophecies, the doctrine needs a rigid universe. Effective action requires predictable behavior, and suppresses the indeterminacy of casual certainty of purpose. As man is not sovereign but is governed by a blind necessity of the universe, the doctrine refers to external circumstances that are the attributes of man. If the world, society and the individual are not, in fact reducible to a mere, casual constant even a tougher, smarter and more methodical effort may fail before the inscrutable nature of things, before the unsuspecting history of societies, before the unpredictable decisions of human consciousness. Total freedom of man asks for an enslaved universe. The sovereignty of the human will only be able to rule the corpses of living things.  

To be held in control by behavior, institutions and work, the democratic principle comes with cruel consistency. The apparent confusion of its phenomena manifests the extraordinary evidence of the cause. In different circumstances the paths are different for the purpose remains intact. Two successive forms of democratic practice inspire the principle: the principle as sovereign will or as authentic will.

Although it does not allow for legitimacy of the free will, democracy is translated into final rule, balancing momentary expressions of the will in a multiple electoral market. The proper functioning of the market is an area free of ethical erudites cleansed from the spoils of the past. The validity of political decisions and economic decisions is a function of the pressure exerted by the will of majority. Ethical rules and aesthetic values are both involved in the same balance of power. Automatic market mechanisms determine the rules, laws and pricing.

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For democracy, volition is free of internal obligations without the right to appeal to higher courts against popular standards, formally enacted against the law or against the personally established price. A democrat cannot declare that a rule is false but he craves for another rule; or that a law is not fair so he wants another one; or that a price is absurd so he chooses another, more suitable one. Justice, in a democracy, is what exists at any time. Its regulatory structure is formed by a configuration of wills, their legal structure being a sum of positive decisions, and its economic structure a set of acts.\textsuperscript{31}

Democracy suppresses any institution that involves irrevocable commitment, rebels against continuity which is revealed in everydayness. The democrat rejects the weight of the past and does not accept the risk of the future. His will seeks to erase past history while creating future history, unhampered by anything. Incapable of loyalty to a company earned by years of work for it, his present is not based on the passage of time; his days aspire to the discontinuity of a sinister clock. A society governed by the first form of democratic principle is inclined to theoretical anarchy of a capitalist economy and universal suffrage.

The principle is in its second form when the use of freedom threatens democratic principles. But the transformation in a collective and despotic democracy does not violate the democratic purpose or purposes which are like an adulterous promise. The first form contains and carries the second as a possible historical extension and as an inevitable theoretical consequence.

A collectivist and despotic democracy subjects the heretic will to an autocratic management of any nation, class, party or individual who embodies the right will. For a collectivist and despotic democracy, the realization of a democratic purpose has precedence over any other consideration. All things are lawful in

\textsuperscript{31} Ibidem, p. 70-71.
establishing real equality that allows true freedom where the sovereignty of man is crowned with the possession of the universe. Social forces must be channeled with unwavering determination towards an apocalyptic goal, sweeping across troubled ground, exterminating those who resist. Trusting his purpose corrupts the authoritarian democrat who enslaves others for the sake of freedom awaiting the advent of a god in the debasement of man. The practical realization of the democratic principle actually calls for, a frantic use of technology and relentless industrial exploitation of the planet.\footnote{Bielsa José A., El pensamiento reaccionario de Nicolás Gómez Dávila (1913-1994), Una Introducción, 2010, retrieved from josbiarbi.blogspot.com}

The technique is not a product of democracy; it is the cult of an art and the veneration of its work, faith in its eschatological triumph, these are the inescapable consequences of this democratic religion. The technique is a tool of its deep-seated ambition, an act of ownership over the subjected universe.

The Democrat hopes the technique redeems him from sin, misery, boredom and death. The technique is the word used by the god-man. Democratic humanity accumulates technical gadgets with feverish enthusiasm. It matters little that their development and production besmirch the planet or are life-threatening to man. A god who forges his weapons has no scruples about mutilating man. The democratic religion nests in medieval crypts where the seething larvae of heretical texts proliferate in the damp shade. The modern democratic religion is like plasma in which the Bogomil dualism and Cathars combine and merge with apocalyptic messianism.\footnote{Bogomil (Богомил) was a Bulgarian priest and heretic of the tenth century, which was a founding patriarch of the heretical stream of Bogomil, gnostic-Manichean sects that denied the divine birth of Christ and were in favor of returning to the origins of Christianity. The Cathars were heretics of Christianity, for criticizing the structure of the church and the exercise of power of the church, and calling themselves pure (that means the name) ended up adopting a different faith to Christianity, i.e. Manichenism.}

Leaving the gloom of his furtive incubation, the democratic religion spreads through the centuries developed by evil cunning, the colossal superstructure of
its successive ideologies. As the democratic doctrine can display at any time and by any individual the full meaning of its theoretical implications, history does not present a doctrinal development, but a progressive possession of the world. Before enacting the sovereignty of man, the democratic enterprise delimits the premises where the enactment seems lawful. In proclaiming the sovereignty of the state, Bodin gives man the right to reach his destination. The sovereign state is the first democratic victory. As every democratic episode raises, in its most fervent proponents, a spasm of anxiety about the claim that unmasks every form of doctrine implying a negative copy that seems so alone, with its faded and pale image, one that is indeed a reactionary reflexion of the abyss.34

The second stage of the democratic invasion begins when man claims, in the framework of the sovereign state, a sovereignty that democratic doctrine grants him. Every democratic revolution consolidates the state. The revolutionary people do not rise against the omnipotent state but against its momentary possessors. The people do not protest against the sovereignty that oppresses them but against its envied holders. They claim the freedom of being tyrants of themselves.

The democratic era presents a unique economic development because economic value is partially malleable by democratic principles. Bourgeois society is characterized by a notorious predominance of economic function, whereby the economy determines the structure, fixes the targets and measures the prestige. Economic power in bourgeois society not only accompanies it and gives it luster and social power, but also creates it; the democrat does not conceive wealth, in different societies, resulting from the reasons that underlie the social hierarchy.35

35 Gómez Dávila N., Textos, Atalanta, 2010, p. 79.
The veneration of wealth is a democratic phenomenon. Money is the only universal value that the pure democrat obeys, because it symbolizes a usable piece of nature and because its acquisition is allocable to human effort alone. The cult of work with that man flatters himself is the engine of the capitalist economy; and contempt of hereditary wealth, traditional authority of a name, of the free gifts of intelligence or beauty, expresses a Puritanism which proudly condemns what man effort is not granted to himself.

Man forgets his impotence and mimics divine omnipotence before the useless pain of another man whom he tortures. In the universe of the dead god and the abortive god, the empty space left after His death is, stunned, by its own vacuity. The human being rebels against the act of killing God. The comprehensive rejection of democratic doctrine is the final exiguous bastion of human freedom. In our times rebellion is reactionary; otherwise it is merely a hypocritical and facile farce.36

36 Ibidem, p. 84.
References


Factors which influence Foreign Policy of Bhutan

Abstract
This article discusses the factors which play a major role in shaping the foreign policy of Bhutan. How Bhutan, a tiny landlocked country and the youngest democracy in the world gets influence by the behavior and interest of the neighboring big powers: India and China. This article will look into many facets of Bhutan to understand its foreign policy-making, such as Location, Political institutions, Security, Economy and Gross National Happiness.

Keywords: Foreign Policy of Bhutan, Foreign Policy Factors, Land-locked States, Buffer States, Gross National Happiness, Bhutan, South Asia, Weak States, India, China, Bhutan between India and China
Introduction

Bhutan, also called Druk Yul, is a Himalayan Buddhist Kingdom in South Asia located between India and China. Bhutan is a small landlocked country with limited economic scope and military power. It is situated in the eastern Himalayas and borders by 470 kilometers to the north and northwest Tibet (China’s Xizang Autonomous Region), and by 670 kilometers India. To the west Bhutan shares its border with India’s state of Sikkim, West Bengal to the southwest, Assam to the south and southwest, Arunachala Pradesh to the east. Sikkim, an eighty-eight-kilometer-wide territory, divides Bhutan from Nepal, while West Bengal separates Bhutan from Bangladesh by only sixty kilometers. In World’s country comparison, Bhutan is the 137 largest country with a total area of 38,394 sq. km, which is entirely landmass.1 Bhutan’s capital city, Thimpu, is centrally located towards the country’s western border with India. Bhutan was never colonized unlike its neighboring countries. Bhutan was also spared percussion from the two World Wars and the Cold War, which led to major instability and alignments in case of other countries.

This paper aims to study the role of Bhutan as a buffer state between the two emerging world powers of India and China. In the study of Bhutan, its smallness is irrelevant as its importance is enhanced due to the geopolitical and geostrategic location by being the buffer state between India and China. Bhutan’s case is a very unique one as Bhutan was in a self-imposed isolation and completely cut off from the remaining world for many centuries until around 1960, and it is the youngest democracy in the world. Study and researches about this country has been neglected by scholars for many years mainly due to the isolation, remoteness and smallness of the country except a handful of researches on the bilateral friendship between Bhutan and India. As the world debates shifting of the world power to Asia from the West, the role

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of this small kingdom will play a very important role in balancing the world power.

The friendship between the world’s smallest and the largest democracy, Bhutan and India, is evident and talked over since many decades. Bhutan has always kept its distance from China after the Tibet issue, but as China is becoming the fastest growing world power, Bhutan can no longer ignore and have to play the role of a balancer more cautiously now.

This paper focuses on the period between 2008-2015, when the country had held its first and subsequently the second National Assembly Elections and this is the time when the country was on the threshold of its transition. Being a small country, Bhutan has many sensitive issues. However the most sensitive issue for the Bhutanese society has always been the preservation of its sovereignty, territorial integrity and its security.

Factors and Circumstances shaping Bhutan’s Foreign Policy

The role of Foreign Policy is very important for the peace and progress of every country in today’s World. Every nation strive to be self-reliant and for the nation to be self-reliant, the nation has to play along and depend on other nations. Foreign Policy is the set of principles or guidelines adopted by the nations to give a meaning and direction to its behavior in the international relations. Foreign Policy is also an instrument, or an activity of the state with which it aims to fulfil and serve the national interest and goals in the international arena. There are numerous explanations and interpretations of Foreign Policy by the various political scientist.

Rosenau defines “Foreign Policy as a systematic decision-making by constitutional authorized officials of individual states. Their intention is to maintain, or change the state of affairs in the international system in line with an objective, or objectives they or their superiors have chosen.”\(^2\) According to

\(^2\) Political Science and Public Policy, edited by James N. Rosenau (Chicago 1968). 222
George Modelski, “Foreign Policy involves all activities of a nation by which that nation is trying to change the behavior of other nations and to adjust its own behavior in the international environment.” He also adds that Foreign Policy always aims at successfully changing the behavior of other nations. Crabb defines Foreign Policy in a very simple way, which is also one of the most effective definitions: ‘National objectives’ that should be the goal and the ‘means’ that should be used in the process of attaining this goal. The interaction between objectives and means is the essence of ‘statesmanship’, and of ‘foreign policy’. Hadfield and Dunne define “foreign policy as the strategy, or approach chosen by the national government to achieve its goals in its relations with external entities.”

1. Geo-strategic Location

Geography is the foremost and primary determinant of Bhutan’s foreign policy. The location, size and shape of the country are the main geographical factors influencing the foreign policy of Bhutan. Bhutan is a strategic buffer state between two nuclear giants, India and China. Its rugged mountain terrain and a landlocked location in the Himalayas have certain implications on the world view and the security perception in Bhutan. UN - OHRLLS (United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States), which supports the special needs of smaller nations, describes “lack of territorial access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets and high transit cost continue to impose serious constraints on the overall socio-economic development of landlocked developing countries. Their sea-borne trade unavoidably depends on transit through other countries. Additional border crossings and long distance from the market substantially increase the

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3 George Modelski, A theory of Foreign Policy, Princeton University, 1962
4 Cecil V. Crabb Jr., American Foreign Policy in the Nuclear Age, New York 1988, 1
total expenses for the transport services”⁶ as a primary restraint faced by landlocked states.

The Kingdom of Bhutan at a first glimpse would not seem to be a country that would influence heavily the regional power calculation. A country, whose size and landmass is smaller than Switzerland and ranks 136th in the Countries of the World by Area⁷, ranks 163th of Countries in the World ranked by 2014 population⁸. This tiny landlocked Himalayan country however become increasingly influential strategically to both India and China. The reason for the increase in the importance of Bhutan to these two giants is not because of untapped mineral riches, or a large consumer class. It is because of three geographical features which make Bhutan a very important strategic location for India and China.

Firstly, Bhutan does not have any access to either the sea or any other third country without passing through either India’s or China’s land or airspace. Secondly Bhutan controls numerous historical trade routes between the two nations, India and China. Thirdly, Bhutan is an important buffer for the Siliguri Corridor, also known as the ‘chicken’s neck’, which measures twenty-five kilometers at the narrowest point. Through this narrow road run the roads and rail lines between India’s North east and the remaining parts of India.⁹

Bhutan followed a self-imposed isolation policy and was largely cut off from the rest of the world until the 1950s, even television was not legalized until 1999. As Bhutan started opening up in the recent years to the outside world, the country finds itself engaged in a cautious but considerable diplomatic battle between India and China. The core of this issue is nothing else than Bhutan’s territorial disputes with China.

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⁶ http://unohrrls.org/about-lldcs/
⁷ http://www.nationononline.org/oneworld/countries_by_area.htm
⁸ http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/
⁹ Protracted Contest „John W Garver” P. 96
There are three territorial disputes between Bhutan and China. Both China and Bhutan claim the 495 square kilometer area of Pasamlung and Jakarlung valleys as part of their respective countries in the central sector and 269 square kilometer area in the western sector. The Pasamlung and the Jakarlung valleys are of interest to China because of its closeness to Tibet but China envy Doklam Plateau the most. India is deeply worried because of China’s claim to these areas and India’s Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) describes the strategic value of the region: “The Doklam Plateau lies immediately east of Indian defenses in Sikkim. Chinese occupation of Doklam would turn the flank of Indian defenses completely. This piece of dominating ground not only has a commanding view of the Chumbi Valley but also overlooks the Silguri Corridor further to the east.”

2. Political Institutions

There are many definitions of political institutions by various political scientist. Peters and Pierre define political institutions as “it refers not only to formal political organizations such as political parties and parliament, but also to

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11 Himalayan Frontiers of India: K Warikoo P.151
informal constraints such as customs, ideals, guideline sand actions”. David Wiens, 2012, emphasizes that these formal and informal rules establish and stabilize roles. Moreover, Garret & Lange, 1995 expressed that “there is no consensus amongst theorists of what makes an institution political”. Based on the Stanford Encyclopedia’s definition of Social institutions, Political institutions can also be defined in the same way. Social institutions are defined by the Stanford Encyclopedia as „sets of rules and norms that organize human activities within a society”. Similarly political institutions can be defined as “sets of rules and norms that organize political activity”. These institutions do not need to be drafted or penned down, but they should be imposed, or socially accepted.

Monarchy

Figure 1: Monarch and Reign

Source: http://www.bhutandnc.com/bhutantodayjan06.htm

13 http://www.bhutandnc.com/bhutantodayjan06.htm
The smallest Himalayan country in South Asia, the Kingdom of Bhutan came out after one hundred years of rule by absolute monarchy as a parliamentary democracy with the constitutional head as the monarch on the top. Bhutan was in self-isolation for many decades, until it came under the rule of the fourth king of Wangchuck dynasty, King Jigme Singye Wangchuk in 1972 after the death of his father, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk. The Fourth King has been vested with absolute powers during most of his reign and he was not under any internal, or external pressure to begin the path to political modernization. Bhutan, with the support of India, was living in peace and tranquility during that time and could have continued to live the same way for several more years. Changes in the political system in any country happen usually due to the result of long and painful social and political struggle conducted in the event of economic underdevelopment or oppression. Example of such a political change was witnessed by Nepal, one of the neighboring country of Bhutan.

The wind of change which blew through Bhutan was different, however, since King Jigme Singye Wangchuk was a genuine reformer and he was keen to follow his own path to reach an objective that has been the crucial lead of his regime, leading Bhutan on the way to modernization and decentralization. This path then in the course of time would have lead to participation and democratization, and transforming an hereditary absolute system of government into a constitutional monarchy. His institutional reforms have been organized under three major headings: decentralization, devolution of his own powers, and good governance, paving the way for the constitution. On the contrary and unlike the practice of most monarchical systems in the world, modesty has been the heraldry of King Singye Wangcguk, whose style of living and ruling has been as close to the people as it can be in such a regime. His decision to give full executive powers to an elected cabinet, and to submit himself to a vote of confidence give manifestation about his personal vision: “The time has now come to promote greater people's participation in the decision making process. Our country must be ensured to always have a
system of government which enjoys the mandate of the people, provides and efficient governance, and also has an inbuilt mechanism of checks and balances to safeguard our national interest and security". In 1999, the Jigme Singye Wangchuk created a body of Council of Ministers called the “Lhengye Zhutshong” and the Druk Gyalpo as the Head of State. Lhengye Zhutsong exercised the executive powers, while the government and the former Grand National Assembly was vested with the legislative powers.

On December 17, 2005, King Jigme Singye Wangchuk announced to a stunned nation that the first general elections would be held in 2008, and he would abdicate the throne in favor of his eldest son, the crown prince. King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk took the throne on December 14, 2006 upon his father’s abdication. Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck was adorned with Bhutan’s Raven Crown at an ornate coronation ceremony in Thimpu on November 6, 2008, becoming the world’s youngest reigning monarch and head of the newest democracy. The young king began his reign by overseeing the democratization of his country by presiding over the last sessions of the parliament where electoral laws, land reform and other important issues were deliberated. He stated that the responsibility of this generation of Bhutanese was to ensure the success of democracy. He traveled extensively to explain and discuss the Draft Constitution of Bhutan with the people, and to encourage participation in the upcoming democratic exercises. He continues such visits, speaking mainly to the youth of Bhutan on the need for Bhutanese to strive for greater standards in education, business, civil service and the need for people of a small country to work harder than those of others.

He signed a new treaty of friendship with India in February 2007, replacing the treaty of 1949. Number of government actions were initiated by the new King.

15 Bhutan Foreign Policy and government guide, P 65
King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk with a prospect to strengthen the system in the establishment for the democratic changes in 2008. The first elected Parliament adopted the Constitution of Bhutan was adopted on 18 July 2008. His first landmark project after his formal coronation was launching the National Cadastral Resurvey in March 2009, aimed at resolving long-standing land issues of excess land that affects every Bhutanese household.19

The National Assembly (The Tshongdu)

In 1943, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk established the National Assembly. King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk instituted to establish the National Assembly to promote political awareness among the his people and also to allow them a greater say in the country's functioning. Any gathering held to discuss the common interest is termed as “Jomdu” in Bhutan and termed as “Tshongdu” if the gathering is in large numbers. Hence, the name, “The Tshingdu” for the “The National Assembly”. The primary responsibility of the National Assembly are to execute laws, approve senior appointments in the government and advise on all matters of national importance.

There are three reasons for the establishment of the National Assembly. Firstly The representatives of the people shall assemble to articulate the issues of the people and provide solutions to their problems. Secondly, The Assembly will come up with plans and ideas to benefit the development of the kingdom, and strengthen it. Thirdly, The Assembly will record accounts of revenues in the Kingdom as well as annual expenditure incurred for the government, and for development purposes.20

The National Assembly of Bhutan was unicameral representative body until the introduction of parliamentary democracy which brought Bhutan its bicameral Parliament (the National Council and the National Assembly). It had been the highest decision-making body in the country. The 1954 constitution of the National Assembly had that His Majesty reserved the right to amend all its

decisions. However, in 1968 it was decided that the decisions of the National Assembly would be final and binding from then on, and not even His Majesty would be allowed to amend them. Should he have had misgivings about the soundness of the Assembly’s decisions, he would have address the Assembly to propose to reconsider the decisions. King proposed to make the National Assembly a sovereign institution and the Assembly members endorsed it. Strengthening the National Assembly as a supreme body, the king introduced the vote of no confidence in monarchy despite the Assembly’s outright rejection in three consecutive sessions. The introduction of vote of no confidence in the Monarchy meant the King surrendered his veto power and vested all the legislative power in the National Assembly. In 1998, the Fourth King empowered the National Assembly to elect the council of ministers who would be entrusted with the responsibility to take care of the governance affairs of the country. The Assembly was also empowered to develop a mechanism for registering a vote of confidence in King. The National Assembly was formally dissolved in 2007 in the lead-up to Bhutan’s historic transition to parliamentary democracy in 2007 – exactly after 100 years of progressive monarchical rule.

The current National Assembly is the second one since the Kingdom of Bhutan transitioned to parliamentary democracy in 2007. The first democratically elected National Assembly completed its tenure in 2013. The House is one of the Chambers of Bhutan’s bicameral Parliament. There are two political parties in the National Assembly – People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and Druk Phuensum Tshogpa (DPT). Elections to the National Assembly take place in two tiers - primary round and the general election. Political parties registered with the Election Commission of Bhutan contest the primary round. The two political parties that get the highest and the second highest number of total votes cast are qualified to run for the seats in the National Assembly in the general round of election. The party that gets the maximum seats forms the

government and the other takes the opposition bench. Today, there are 47 members in the House. PDP is the ruling party and DPT the opposition. The Constitution has a provision that the House shall have a maximum of 55 members, elected from each *dzongkhag* (district) in proportion to its population. However, no *dzongkhag* shall have less than two members or more than seven members. The National Assembly has the legislative, oversight and representational mandates.\(^\text{22}\)

The Vision of the National Assembly of Bhutan is “*To achieve the Kingdom of Bhutan’s overarching goal of Gross National Happiness enshrined in the Constitution through an inclusive and a vibrant democracy*”. The Mission is “*To effectively carry out legislative, scrutiny, oversight and representational functions to fulfill the aspirations of the Bhutanese people*”. And the core Values of National Assembly of Bhutan are: (i) Professional values & Integrity: We the Members and Secretariat staff of the National Assembly will maintain and promote the highest level of professional values and integrity in our endeavor to promote the National Assembly as an epitome of democratic institution and to serve the people. (ii) Accountability & Result-oriented: We will be judicious in using resources and perform our duties to achieve commendable results. (iii) Ethical values: Integrity, honesty, empathy, transparency, impartiality, probity, and neutrality will be the hallmark of our profession and responsibility. (iv) Democratic values: The National Assembly will champion promoting and deepening democracy by serving the people of Bhutan and abide by the Constitution of the Kingdom both in letter and spirit. (v) Consensus building: The National Assembly will work toward promoting national unity through consensus building in our unique democracy.\(^\text{23}\)

\(^{22}\) http://www.nab.gov.bt/en/about/national-assembly

The Royal Advisory Council (Lodoi Tsokde)

In 1965, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck established the “The Royal Advisory Council” or “Lodoi Tsokde”. The council consists of nine members and of the nine people, six members represent the people, two members represents the clergy and king nominated one member. The head of the Council is the Chairman called kalon. The kalon represents the government and is granted the rank of a minister. This council became the highest advisory body in the Bhutan and main task of the council was to advised and assist the King and the ministers in the governance matters. The term of the council is for three years.

Functions and responsibilities of Royal Advisory Council:

1. The Royal Advisory Council shall be primarily responsible for promoting and safeguarding the trust, confidence and the harmonious relations existing between the Government and the People of the Kingdom. In this regard, should the Council or anyone of it’s members become aware of situations or threats that may undermine the security, peace and stability of the Kingdom, such information should be immediately brought to the attention of His Majesty the King.

2. The Royal Advisory Council shall be the guardian of the policies, laws and resolutions passed by the National Assembly and it shall ensure their faithful implementation by the government and the people.

3. The Royal Advisory Council shall endeavor to ascertain whether the national policies, plans and programs are being implemented by the government and the people. Should the Royal Advisory Council, in its judgement, find that this is not the case, it shall bring the matter to the

attention of His Majesty the King, and thereafter, if necessary, to the attention of the Lhengyal Shungtsog and the National Assembly.

4. The Royal Advisory Council shall discharge all its functions and responsibilities without fear or favor and with complete impartiality, integrity, loyalty and dedication.

5. The Royal Advisory Council shall render advice to His MAJESTY THE King with utmost dedication, loyalty and sincerity keeping in view the interests of the Kingdom and the wellbeing of the people.

6. Besides participation in the policy and legislative bodies such as the National Assembly and the Lhengyal Shungtsog, the Royal Advisory Council as and when desired by His Majesty the King, shall attend meetings dealing with issues of national importance.

7. Should the Royal Advisory Council find any action or activity of any person or organization including that of the King himself, to be detrimental to the interests of the Kingdom and the People, they shall, without any hesitation whatsoever, report such matters to His Majesty the King and thereafter, if necessary, to the Lhengyal Shungtsog and the National Assembly.

King Jigme Singye Wangchuck further strengthened the position of the Royal Advisory Council in 1984 as the king felt that the council lacked the necessary clout to carry out their important responsibilities even though the council has the authority to advise the king and watch over the performance of the government. The most addition is the inclusion of a clause that states that “if any person, including His Majesty the King, does anything harmful to the
interest of the Kingdom and the people, the Royal Advisory Council without surpassing such matters and free of fear from the quarter shall bring it to the attention of His Majesty the King and, if necessary, even report it to the Cabinet and The National Assembly”. The National Assembly strongly objected to this clause empowering the Royal Advisory Council to report against the King. The Assembly felt that it was a violation of traditional values and that it undermined the sacred principles of loyalty and devotion to the throne. His Majesty the King however insisted that this clause was of great importance and was very necessary as no one can predict or guarantee the actions and sense of responsibility to the nation of future rulers.25

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Foreign policy formulation is the most critical task for a country like Bhutan. However, during the first four decades of the 20th century, the foreign policy of Bhutan was not a complex issue for the Kingdom as the basic operating principles of Bhutan’s external relations were set by the events surrounding the British Younghusband Expedition into Tibet (1903-05) and the treaty between Bhutan and British India signed in 1910. In Foreign policy terms, then, British India constituted the only potentially complicating factor for the newly-established monarchy in Bhutan in 1907, and it is not surprising that King Ugyen Dorji made a satisfactory accommodation with the British his first order of Business. The British recognized Bhutan’s internal sovereignty and did not insist upon the establishment of a “Residency” in Bhutan as they had in Nepal and Sikkim. The only qualification imposed on Bhutan’s sovereignty was the clause in the 1910 treaty under which the Bhutanese “agreed to be guided by the advice” of the British on the foreign policy matters.26

After India’s independence from British in 1947, the government of India succeeded the role of the British and the Himalayan Kingdoms of Nepal,

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25 Bhutan Country Study Guide, Volume 1 strategic information and developments, p.75
26 Pacific Affairs, Leo E. Rose, p.192
Sikkim, Tibet and Bhutan had reached an agreement with India. Nepal, Sikkim and Tibet signed a “standstill agreement” under which these three kingdoms would continue functioning the same way as they had been previously until a new treaty is negotiated. Bhutan and India did not formally sign the standstill agreement, however they acted as if they had signed it. In the summer of 1949, the negotiation for a new Indo-Bhutanese treaty commenced and the treaty was signed on August 8, 1949. Under this treaty Bhutan’s independence was recognized but the treaty included the clause from the 1910 treaty under which the Royal Government of Bhutan agreed to accept Indian guidance on foreign policy. The new treaty would have had stiffer clause had it been signed after 1950. By 1950 Indians became acutely disturbed by the expressed determination of the new Communist regime in China to “reunite” some territories with the Chinese Motherland. India’s heightened concern was reflected in the secret letters attached to the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Nepal and in the retention of Sikkim as a “protectorate” in the 1951 Treaty with Sikkim.

In October 1950, the Chinese offensive was launched on the eastern frontier against Tibet and another Chinese force moved into Western Tibet from Sinkiang, which is a territory claimed by India. This event convinced the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, of the requirement to assert clearly India’s defense policy on the northern frontier. On December 6, 1950 in a statement to Parliament, Jawaharlal Nehru declared: “From time immemorial the Himalayas have provided us with magnificent frontiers. We cannot allow the barriers to be penetrated because it is also the principal barrier to India. Therefore, much as we appreciated the independence of Nepal, we cannot allow anything to go wrong in Nepal, or permit that barrier to be crossed, or weekend, because that would be a risk to our own security.” Nehru decided to visit Bhutan in the fall of 1958 to discuss the situation with the king and he

27 Bhutan Foreign Policy and Government Guide, p. 67
28 Pacific Affairs, Leo E. Rose, p.193-194
29 Jawaharlal Nehru Speeches (1949-53), Publication Division, Government of India, 3rd cl., 1963, p.252
strongly urged the Royal Government to modify its isolation policy, at least to the extent of accepting Indian economic aid. Bhutan’s immediate response was non-committal despite its own increasing concern over the developments in the north since Bhutan still hoped to avoid any involvement in the dangerous big power confrontation emerging at that time. In March 1959, a massive popular uprising against the Chinese in Lhasa was finally suppressed after several days of hard-fighting, but by this time virtually all of Central Tibet was in revolt, and the Dalai Lama with thousands of his followers fled to India. The Chinese incursions coincided with increasing pressure from New Delhi directed towards the “opening” of Bhutan and the establishment of a substantial Indian “presence” in the country. Bhutan appeared to be one of the most vulnerable points in the Indian security system.30

During this time, the Bhutanese Prime Minister J.P. Dorji acted as a representative of Bhutan in India and in international affairs until his assassination in 1964. The 1960s were a dangerous period for Bhutan both externally and internally, but by the end of the decade the most serious problems had been effectively handled, if not necessarily resolved, by the king and the corps of experienced administrators upon whom he has come to depend. Prospects of the 1970s thus had appeared much brighter. Even the King’s death in mid-1972, and the succession of the 17-year-old Crown Prince to the throne, did not result in a major political crisis as would certainly had been the case a few years earlier31.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established in 1972 due to some constraints that arose, such as importance to have a greater acceptance and recognition of Bhutan’s national identity, as well as the debate on Bhutan’s admission to the United Nations. India proposed Bhutan’s admission to the international organization and a resolution to this effect was quickly approved without opposition. Bhutan’s formal admission at the 1971 Fall UN Session was universally welcomed in Bhutan as a major achievement. Bhutan was provided

30 Pacific Affairs, Leo E. Rose, p.195-196
31 Pacific Affairs, Leo E. Rose, p.201-202
with a second channel of communication to the outside world, in some respects
more important than the mission in New Delhi, which functioned in an Indian.
Both the missions are of course in normal contact with other foreign
delегations, including those of China, Pakistan, Nepal and other neighboring
Asian states with which Bhutan does not have any direct bilateral relations yet.
Bhutan’s dependence upon India as its intermediary with the outside world
was thus substantially reduced. Therefore establishment of two missions
abroad and the need to maintain contacts with a growing number of foreign
countries led to formation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1972. For the
first time there has been a government institution responsible for foreign
policy, a task that had been managed previously on an ad hoc, non-
professional basis.\textsuperscript{32}

Lyonpo Dawa Tsering was appointed as the first Foreign Minister of Bhutan
and the current Foreign Minister, Lyonpo Damcho Dorji is the 7\textsuperscript{th} older of this
office\textsuperscript{33}. Since then Bhutan has established diplomatic relations with 52
countries and the European Union\textsuperscript{34}. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bhutan
plays a significant role in various regional and international organizations,
namely: UN, NAM, SAARC and ESCAP. The foreign office of Bhutan also
chaired some important sessions in the forum of NAM, ESCAP and SAARC.

\textit{Religion and Tradition}

Religion can legitimize governments as well as specific policies followed by
governments. Legitimacy can be defined as “the normative belief by an actor
that a rule or institution ought to be obeyed”\textsuperscript{35}. Religion can be a very
important tool while convincing others that your policy preference is
legitimate. Religion is certainly not the only source of legitimacy and there are

\textsuperscript{32} Pacific Affairs, Leo E. Rose, p.202-203
\textsuperscript{33} http://rulers.org/fm1.html
\textsuperscript{34} http://www.mfa.gov.bt/about-the-ministry
University Press. p.361

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some set bounds on what is considered legitimate and what is not. For instance, self-defense is near-universally considered legitimate and genocide is not. However, there is a substantial middle ground where debate is possible over the legitimacy, or illegitimacy of an action, or policy. It is in this grey zone that is up to policy makers to convince others – including their constituents, other policy makers from their own state, policy makers from other states, and the population of other states – of the legitimacy of their actions and policies.\(^36\)

According to John C. Turner, while “the role of religious legitimacy has rarely been discussed in the context of international politics, it is often discussed in the context of domestic politics. Until a few centuries ago, it was taken for granted that religion was the basis for the legitimacy of the state itself, with the Church, as God’s agent, granting rulers the right to rule”. According to Clifford Geertz, “in this modern age, this is not entirely the case as the state’s legitimacy resting on multiple sources of legitimacy but “a strong residual element of religion continues to exist and continues to perform basic legitimizing functions”. According to Mark Juergensmeyer, many argue that this legitimizing function of religion is becoming increasingly important as governments guided by secular ideologies are seen as failing to provide basic needs like: security, economic well-being, and social justice. This is applicable with regard to foreign policy because mostly all politics, including international politics, is operated locally as the policy makers operate within state governments and to varying degree, depending on the nature of that state’s regime, need to convince domestic constituencies, and other policy makers in their own states, that the course of action they take is correct and legitimate. They also need to convince them to support, or at least to acquiesce to, those policies. Thus, if religion is a potent source of legitimacy in local politics, it can be the same for international politics.\(^37\)

The Kingdom of Bhutan is a Buddhist country as the state religion of Bhutan is “Vajrayana Buddhism”. Bhutan is the only country where Vajrayana Buddhism

\(^37\) Routledge handbook of religion and politics, edited by Jeffrey Haynes, p.278
is practiced in the world. Buddhists comprise two-thirds to three-quarters of its population. In Bhutan, religion and monarchy cannot be separated as the King is not only the head of the state but he is also the protector of the Buddhist faith and culture. This can be understood by looking at the members of “Royal Advisory Council”, where two members represent the clergy. According to B.C. Upreti, foreign policy in Bhutan is an important instrument of increasing the Gross National Happiness, the alternative model of development that Bhutan has pursued over the last two decades.

A balanced foreign policy is required to attain the objectives of Gross National Happiness. This intriguing idea does not, however, appear to manifest itself in anything more profound than a statement regarding the importance of attempting to engage with globalization and foreign influences in such a way as not to undermine Bhutan's existing Buddhist culture while increasing the country's economic and human development. On the other hand, Leo E. Rose holds the view that the national and international affairs of Bhutan are not much influenced by the institution of religion, or religious groups. According to him, the vested interests among the elite are very influential in the formulation of Bhutan's foreign policy.

Every Bhutanese life is directed by rituals and religion, and performing religious duties and traditions is not only a private matter but it is also a part of the public life of Bhutan. To ensure that Buddhism stays vividly alive, one son from every family usually attends a monastic school.

A monarchical mandate was declared in 1989 in which “Driglam Namzha” formed part of the official theme of the sixth Five-Year Plan (1987-1992). Driglam Namzha is the medieval social code of peaceful and obedient conduct, and understood abstractly sets “the principles of Bhutanese customs and traditions”, or more concretely the “national dress and language”. Driglam

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39 Pacific Affairs, Leo E. Rose, p.84-88
40 http://www.bhutan.com/religion
Namzha was introduced in order to make up a unique Bhutanese national identity on the basis of the culture. The introduction of the policy of Driglam Namzha in Bhutan indicates the importance of the influence of religious and traditional institutions in the foreign-policy making of Bhutan.

3. South Asia Security Complex

The international system has experienced a dynamic shift at the end of the Cold War. The comprehensive bipolar structure of the international security environment crumbled with the demise of the Soviet Union. Many international relations scholars and scientist have sought to explain the dynamics of this transformation, its principal features and what it means for the future of security affairs in the international system.

The importance of regional security was emphasized in the Third World Countries post the Cold War. The emphasis can be seen mainly in three areas. The first one is that regional security has become the most significant issue in the super powers’ dialogue agenda. Secondly, regional wars and conflicts in the third world countries have apparently become the chief threats to the international system. Thirdly, there has been an increasing demand for regional security arrangements in the third world countries.

Regional Security Complex Theory

In order to define regional security complex theory, one should have a clear idea of definition of “region” with reference to the security concept. Barry Buzan defines a region as “a distinct and significant sub-system of security relations that exists among a set of states who have been locked into close geographic proximity with one another.”

Regional security complex theory emphasizes the inter-subjective construction of security issues by the state actors while emphasizing geographic proximity.

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as the foremost generator of security concerns\textsuperscript{42}. Buzan also identifies four primary features of a region security. Firstly, a security region must be comprised of two or more states. Secondly, the states must be in relative geographic proximity to one another, and thirdly, the security interdependence within the region is more pronounced than one on the global level. Regional analysis is considered as the practical way to understand world events because region is the intercessor between the state and the international system. Contentions that are securitized by region and that affect regional stability are projected onto both the state and international level. The interdependence of security is more intensified on a regional level than it is on a global level. Hence, most of the sovereign states generally lack the ability to project power much beyond their own regional sphere.

The traditional international relations theory argues that the global system is composed of individual units and that all of these units possess the same power to affect systemic dynamics. Hence, the relation among the units is defined by anarchy and war is an ever present reality. However since the World War II, this is no longer strictly the case. An array of multilateral institutions have spurted and sought to reject the Clauswitzian notion that war is a continuation of politics. The bottom-line ambition of these organizations has been the collective quest for creating awareness that war is not an unpalatable mechanism for actions within the international system.

South Asia as defined in the domain of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), namely India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Afghanistan. Although Myanmar has been geopolitically and historically part of the region, it is not included into South Asia as it is not part of the regional association. The U.S. and Russia are defined as important external powers, and China is defined as an “important potential power of South Asia,” mainly because it is an immediate neighbor of South Asia. The region of South Asia continues to be one of the most important crisis

\textsuperscript{42} Regions and Powers : the structure of international security, Buzan and Waever Cambridge University Press, 2003. 45-46
regions in the 21st century. The region is defined by an intertwined web of new and old security risks. This region is very fragile and can ignite dangerous situations due to the unresolved territorial disputes, such as Kashmir, as well as the proliferation of nuclear weapons and also the wide range of religious, ethnic, and left-wing rebellions that have links to regional and global terrorist groups connected with organized crime. The South Asia region, unlike the Southeast and Central Asia, also lacks regional organizations for security cooperation. However, at a closer look, there is more security cooperation among member countries of the SAARC than is visible in most political and academic discussions. The collaboration is mostly bilateral and depends on the overall relationship between India and its neighbors.

Security Cooperation

Since 1990s, the region has seen expansion of security cooperation and the reason for this expansion is probably the change in India’s South Asia policy. India has been inclined to make one-sided acknowledgements in bilateral conflicts and in economic cooperation. However, now India seeks its security interests through collaboration with its neighbors and not by interfering in their domestic affairs anymore. For most of the South Asian countries, the biggest security threats are ordained from the domestic challenges like, various religious, ethnic and communist rebellions rather than from external forces. Lack of institutionalization on the regional level for such security cooperation is mainly due to the different types of conflicts in this region. Regional security building is characterized by a system of different forms of collaboration. External powers outside of the region, such as the United States and China have exacerbated their relations in economic and security areas with South Asian countries. However, these extra-regional powers have only limited interest in becoming ramified in the various domestic conflicts. Hence military cooperation by these South Asian countries with extra-regional powers is not an interference for security collaboration. The European Union and Germany also have shown interest in fostering the security cooperation process due to
this region’s complex security situation. In the context of bilateral cooperation, these organizations and countries can improve the national security architecture in South Asia, and at the same time may also contribute indirectly to better regional collaboration in this field.

**Bhutan’s Security Complex**

From the perspective of India and its security system, Bhutan is the one of the most vulnerable area because of its strategic frontier and endurance of the entire Himalayan neighbors have become very important for India’s security after the Chinese occupation in Tibet. The British doctrine of preventing the areas within its strategic interest is also practiced by India and hence India has always been sensitive about preserving an exclusive control in the southern Himalayan region. A vulnerable Bhutan means a vulnerable “buffer state” or “extended frontier” for India with China. In order to help Bhutan to become stronger, India has played an important role in pulling out Bhutan from its isolation policy, assisted socio-economic development and promoted Bhutan’s international stature through UN membership and other multilateral organizations. India’s help and support diffusely fixed to Bhutan’s denial of China’s assistance. Extensive assistance by India in security and defense arrangements of Bhutan with regard to military training and preparing the Royal Bhutan Army was induced by many circumstances such as location of Bhutan, which is one of the most important in India’s security structure, the increase of insurgency in the North-Eastern region of India, Chinese activity in Tibet, India China Border disputes which dates back to 1914, border war between India and China in 1962 and also the increasing Chinese threat to the Indian boundaries. India’s military collaboration with Bhutan is uncontroversial unlike the relationship with Nepal.

With the Friendship Treaty of August 1949, which gave India considerable leverage in handling Bhutan’s foreign policy and international affairs, India also intended to protect its own security interest as well in the Himalayan region. Between 2012 and 2013, thirty-six percent of the funds from the Technical and
Economic Cooperation Program went to Bhutan.\textsuperscript{43} For many years, the kingdom of Bhutan has been the biggest recipient of India’s development assistance. The Indian Military Training Team was set up in 1963 for Bhutan in order to help and support the training of the Bhutanese forces.\textsuperscript{44}

Since the 1864-65 Duar war, no country has threatened Bhutan’s territorial integrity. While Bhutan’s southern border was always quiet due to the excellent Indo-Bhutan relationship, the greatest threat was from the northern borders. The threats were territorial intrusions, land invasions and claims against its sovereignty. Hence, the limited security forces of Bhutan have guarded the northern borders and there was not even a single security check points at the southern borders. In the recent years, ironically the major threats to the Kingdom of Bhutan have entered through the southern borders rather than the northern borders. These threats are the non-state actors from India, from its north eastern region, the insurgents from North-East India, who have been fighting for independence from India.

Since the 1990s, various militant groups which are operating in India’s northeastern region had set up their camps in Bhutan’s southern part. These insurgents have been using the Kingdom of Bhutan for refuge and for training to perpetrate activities against crucial infrastructure and Indian security forces. The presence of these militants on Bhutan’s soil have been a great concern for Bhutan. The Bhutanese forces initiated a massive military operation in December 2003 due to the pressure from the Indian government. This was the first military operation, “Operation All Clear” ever conducted by the Royal Bhutan Army between 15\textsuperscript{th} December 2003 till 3\textsuperscript{rd} January 2004 and they were able to wipe out all 30 camps of the militant groups at the end of the operation.\textsuperscript{45} Both countries have established the India-Bhutan Joint Group on Border Management and Security.\textsuperscript{46} Bhutan has never militarized itself even if it is situated between two military giants. However after the militant crisis and

\textsuperscript{43} Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Annual Report 2012-2013 (New Delhi, 2013), 210
\textsuperscript{44} Government of India, Ministry of Defense, Annual Report 2011-2012 (New Delhi, 2012), 190.
\textsuperscript{45} The Kuensel, Bhutan’s national newspaper reported on January 3, 2004
“Operation All Clear”, Bhutan’s security forces employ 14,209 personnel.\textsuperscript{47} Bhutan has strengthened its security at the southern borders through regular patrolling and surveillance of the areas which are high on risk. Bhutan have also established military camps and deployed troops along the eastern and western borders too.\textsuperscript{48}

4. Bhutan’s Economic Factors

Foreign policy decisions are often influenced by the economic interest of the country. Economic factors has become one of the most significant factors in the international relations as almost all the country’s foreign policy is more and more guided by financial considerations. Economic power or might provide incomparably more political leverage than military might. Globalization is inevitable and market takeover is now more important than the annexation of territory. The growing economic interrelationship is increasingly interpreting war as antiquated.

“When it is said that economics are more important today than they had ever been, ‘economics’ can mean one, or more, of the following four things: (i) economic means (ii) economic ends (iii) economic implications and (iv) economic causes. It may mean therefore, that economic means (tariffs, quotas, currency manipulation, aid, sanctions) are now more important; or that economic ends (full employment, low inflation, growth, development) has assumed more importance; or that political and other acts today have far greater economic implications or consequences; or that a greater number of significant political and other acts and events, including the achievement of peace and the outbreak of war, have economic causes.”\textsuperscript{49}

The economic performance of landlocked developing countries reflects the direct and indirect impact of geographical situation on key-economic variables. Landlocked developing countries are generally among the poorest of the

\textsuperscript{47} “Strengthening national security” at www.kuenselonline.com, July 25, 2004
\textsuperscript{48} “Need to strengthen Indo-Bhutan border security” at www.kuenselonline.com, July 25, 2004
developing countries, with the weakest growth rates, and are typically heavily dependent on a very limited number of commodities for their export earnings.

“Bhutan’s economy, small and less developed, is based largely on hydropower, agriculture, and forestry, which provide the main livelihood for more than half of the population. Because rugged mountains dominate the terrain and make the building of roads and other infrastructure difficult and expensive, industrial production is primarily of the cottage industry type. The economy is closely aligned with India’s through strong trade and monetary links and is dependent on India for financial assistance and migrant laborers for development projects, especially for road construction. Multilateral development organizations administer most educational, social, and environment programs, and take into account the government’s desire to protect the country’s environment and cultural traditions. For example, the government, in its cautious expansion of the tourist sector, encourages visits by upscale, environmentally conscientious tourists. Complicated controls and uncertain policies in areas such as industrial licensing, trade, labor, and finance continue to hamper foreign investment.

Bhutan’s largest export - hydropower to India - could spur sustainable growth in the coming years if Bhutan resolves chronic delays in construction. Bhutan currently taps only 5% of its 30,000-megawatt hydropower potential and is behind schedule in building 12 new hydropower dams with a combined capacity of 10,000 megawatts by 2020 in accordance with a deal signed in 2008 with India. The high volume of imported materials to build hydropower plants has expanded Bhutan’s trade and current account deficits. However, Bhutan and India in April 2014 agreed to begin four additional hydropower projects, which would generate 2,120 megawatts in total. A declining GDP growth rate in each of the past three years in the absence of new hydropower facilities has constrained Bhutan’s ability to institute economic reforms. Bhutan inked a pact in December 2014 to expand duty-free trade with Bangladesh, the only trade partner with which Bhutan enjoys a surplus.”

Economic development and the juncture of the development with regards to economic development of any country has its consequences on the country’s foreign policy. Countries which have more progressed industries are more involved in international relations with other countries because these advanced countries need markets for raw materials from where they can source and also need markets where they can sell their products. These advanced countries are also always on a lookout for advanced technical know-how and knowledge. In order to fulfilled the above needs, these countries maintain close association between the groups and people of one country with their counterparts in the other country. Higher gross national product is expected from these industrially advanced countries and to allocate greater funds for economic aid program, military investment and comprehensive diplomatic commitments. On the contrary, countries which are industrially backward have not been able to involve themselves in the external affairs actively due to many factors, such a lack of skilled professionals, think tanks etc.

Bhutan’s economy is predominantly rural, with more than 70 percent of its population living in rural areas.\(^{51}\) Bhutan’s economy is among the weakest economies of the world and also in comparison in the whole of South Asia. In the last 50 years of planned socio-economic development, Bhutan advanced from the conventional lap to the prerequisite for economic ascend. Several macroeconomic and human development indicators have enhanced considerably since 1980. In the first six years of the present century, Bhutan has experienced a sharp rise in average annual growth rate of real GDP to 7.9% from 5.9% in the 1990s.\(^{52}\)

\(^{51}\) Planning Commission : Ninth Five year Plan 2002-07, p3
\(^{52}\) National Accounts Statistics 2009, National Statistical Bureau, Bhutan.
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>GDP (in US$)</th>
<th>Population (in million)</th>
<th>Surface Area (1000 sq.km)</th>
<th>Population Density (people per square kilometer of land area)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2 066 902</td>
<td>1 295</td>
<td>3287</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>246 876</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>173 819</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>1222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>74 941</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>20 842</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>19 636</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>3 032</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>1 821</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The World Bank data of 2014

Bhutan in South Asia, 2014
Bhutan aspires to be a country where development is holistic, inclusive and sustainable. The aspiration comes from the visionary statement “Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National product” first enunciated by his Majesty the Fourth King of Bhutan in the early 1970s – long before sustainable development became a global agenda.\(^5\) The economic reforms in Bhutan is based on sustainable development, which takes into account the social, financial, economic, cultural and environmental sectors while the country’s flexibility is interpreted in terms of its capability to adapt and respond effectively to changes.

During the last four decades of Bhutan’s planned economic development, the country has increased its cooperation significantly at the bilateral and multilateral levels. The strategy in development has gently started moving towards assimilating the benefits of globalization and also increase in the cooperation in international trade, through structural changes equipped at securing faster growth and economic diversification. As the economic reform process in Bhutan has not emerged from any economic crisis, there is a difference from the “conditionally driven” reforms. The economic reform process in Bhutan had been of self-adjustment based on the growing requirements of its society and economy. The changes seen in Bhutan are mainly driven by domestic needs and also due to repercussion from the external developments in the neighboring countries. Therefore, the process of economic reforms in Bhutan can be characterized as an experiment to make up for disparity in policies with regard to its major partners in economic development or from the requirement to associate in the international communities to share the benefits of liberalization.

Bhutan has actuated its effective engagement under several forums and treaties within and outside the sub region. Bhutan was given observer status in 2009 in WTO. \(^5\)“In 2009, the then Thinley government had almost decided to join the world trade body but withdrew at the last hour. The accession would open up

\(^5\) Government of Bhutan, Letter from the Prime Minister, Jigmi Y. Thinley, 31 May 2012
trade opportunities for the country but there are questions whether Bhutan can sustain the open-door trade and promulgate enough legal tools to regulate such trade.\(^{54}\) It is perhaps the longest time Bhutan has ever taken to make a decision. More than 15 years after it was granted an observer status to the World Trade Organization, opinions remain divided over what the benefits and dangers would be of joining the international body.\(^{55}\)

**Regional Economic Cooperation**

For a small country like Bhutan, which is also a landlocked country, regional economic cooperation is one of the most crucial forms of cooperation. Due to the Indo-Bhutan treaty of 1949, Bhutan and India share special bilateral relations in trade and development. The Growth Quadrangle Initiative within SAARC, comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN-GQ) have helped Bhutan in exports as well as in many other areas of economic development. The BBIN-GQ was established to step up the pace of economic development among the member countries through identification and implementation of specific projects. The sectors identified for priority attention are multi-model transportation and communication, energy, optimal sustainable utilization of natural resource endowments, trade and investment facilitation and promotion, and tourism and environment. However, there is very little development in areas of cooperation like poverty eradication, social welfare and improvement in the quality of life even though this initiative seeks objectives beyond trade.

Bhutan has joined the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) in February 2004 at the sub-regional level outside of SAARC. The objective of this alliance was to harness shared and accelerated growth through mutual cooperation in different areas of common interests by mitigating the onslaught of globalization and by utilizing regional

\(^{54}\) http://www.bhutannewsnetwork.com/2015/04/government-to-decide-soon-on-wto-accession/

\(^{55}\) http://www.bhutannewsnetwork.com/2014/02/bhutans-wto-dilemma/
resources and geographical advantages. Unlike many other regional groupings, BIMSTEC is a sector-driven cooperative organization.  

Table 2: Bhutan’s trade with neighboring countries and rest of the world

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>22,41</td>
<td>19,84</td>
<td>26,00</td>
<td>29,32</td>
<td>25,76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangla</td>
<td>758.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>906.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>76.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>715.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9682.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9746.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2,377.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9746.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, Selected Economic Indicators, March 2015

The Table 2 does not include China, even when the country is a neighbor, mainly because of the fact that trade and economic contacts between Bhutan and China are very limited and their common border remains closed. Bhutan does not export to China. However the table below shows that there is improvement, though slowly since Bhutan open its door to China’s import in 2000.

Table 3: Bhutan’s import data from China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Import from China</th>
<th>Import shares in percentage from China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>205.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>182.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>281.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>402.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>844.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>487.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>611.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>878.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,330.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,089.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, Selected Economic Indicators

Bhutan’s decision to broaden and deepen relations with India and the policy of engagement with China post-2000 indicate that when threats to national security and political culture are low, or minimal, economic opportunities guide foreign policy choices in Bhutan.57

5. Gross National Happiness

Gross National Happiness or GNH is a policy instituted in Bhutan in the 1970s which aimed at a holistic and sustainable approach to development, which balances material and non-material values upon the conviction that humans want to search for happiness and to determine the priorities in order to maximize happiness for both individual and society.58 The kingdom of Bhutan seems to be in a predicament to modernize and develop, while at the same time to upholding its unique traditional and cultural identity. Bhutan’s ruling

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58 [http://www.gnhcentrebhutan.org/what-is-gnh/](http://www.gnhcentrebhutan.org/what-is-gnh/)
elite has adopted the Gross National Happiness as the alternate path to achieve both the objectives.

The development strategy of Bhutan seeks to strike an appropriate balance among social, economic, political, cultural and environment goals. While mapping the future development course, Bhutan 2020: A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness clearly brings out these goals in the “Normative Architecture for Change and Development”. The development strategy places human development at the center-stage. A holistic approach to development has been designed to take care of material as well as spiritual needs of individuals. Health and education are considered priority areas for basic capacity development towards the generation of human capital. This is to be achieved within the framework of traditional values and ethics so that the “society in transformation” continues to draw inspiration from the nation’s cultural heritage. It is crucial that sustainability be observed because an untenable proposition in any field is likely to have a negative impact on the sovereignty and security of the nation.59 The national development vision accords the Gross National Happiness as the central development concept, one that encompasses goals, principles, objectives and direction of development.60

59 Planning Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan, Part II
60 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/798bhutanreport.pdf
Bhutan started the journey of modernization and development only after 1950 and follows a policy to have closer ties with India through the treaty of 1949. Nonetheless, consciously Bhutan has been making effort to allow modernization and developments to happen in a way that these developments does not damage its basic cultural ethos. After many decades of limiting its foreign aid resources to a few friendly countries like India, Bhutan has expanded its foreign aid avenues in the last few years, but it has been conscious of her goals and requirements. Bhutan Prime Minister made it clears thus: “We are looking for economic assistance from countries other than

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traditional donor nations, but we are determined to ensure that such aid has no political strings attached. We shall not seek aid from either the US or the USSR as we do not wish to get involved in the super power racket”. 62

Bhutan is also concerned about the preservation of its traditional religion and cultural identity, peace and stability, which indeed is a vital aspect of the concept of GNH. The Bhutanese ruling elite believes that its sovereignty and identity depends on the preservation of its cultural values as represented by Drukpa society and Buddhist religion. It was opined that: “This imperative, which has been linked to our identity, sovereignty and even survival as a nation state, must find clear expression in the priorities and directions we set for the future. More than 350 years ago, Shabdrung Ngawang Namgjal realized that Bhutan’s independence was dependent upon the formation of a distinct identity that would enable the nation to preserve its culture and religion in a world that was hostile to its existence. Today, it is the culture and tradition bequeathed to us by our ancestors that can protect us from some of the negative and indiscriminate forces of modernization and enable us to retain our identity and dignity in a world in which ‘culture’ is increasingly defined as a global commodity”. 63

The concept of the GNH and the foreign policy orientation has been complimentary to each other. In fact, the alternative model of development that Bhutan has pursued needs a balanced foreign policy as well as to limit its foreign policy options according to its requirements. Bhutan became a member of the United Nations in 1971. Bhutan became a member of the United Nations in 1971. Bhutan does not have diplomatic relations with any of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, including the United States. 64 Currently, Bhutan maintains 5 embassies abroad in Bangladesh, Belgium, India, Kuwait and Thailand as well as 20 consulates and other representations. The Bhutanese capital Thimphu hosts 3 embassies, and in addition there are 6

62 Times Of India, September 29, 1985
63 Bhutan 2020:A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness, Part II, p.34
consulates and 5 other representations in Bhutan.\textsuperscript{65} Despite not having residential diplomatic relations, Japan, Norway, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland and Netherlands are the countries which are seriously engaged in Bhutan’s development in recent years. In fact, these are the countries which have taken interest in Bhutan’s alternative path of development. It is clear that: (i) Bhutan’s foreign policy operates in a limited framework; (ii) Bhutan’s relations are confined to few countries only; (iii) Bhutan has not accepted economic assistance from the traditional donor countries whose aid is generally believed to have political strings attached to it; and (iv) Bhutan has instead accepted aid from those countries which have appreciated its model of development, and its priorities and needs. A balanced foreign policy approach is required to attain the objectives of GNH.\textsuperscript{66}

**Bhutan’s Foreign Policy**

The bottom line of the foreign policy of any nation, small or big, is the achievement of its external goals. Bhutan is not different from other countries, the ultimate aspiration of Bhutan is also the fulfilment of its national interests. The objectives of Bhutanese foreign policy as described in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan are as follow:

1. Political:
   - to enhance and maintain national security,
   - promote world peace and security by engaging in meaningful dialogue with the international community,
   - promote and contribute towards international understanding and cooperation as well as international peace and security on the basis of peaceful co-existence,

2. Economic and Trade:

\textsuperscript{65} http://www.embassypages.com/bhutan  
\textsuperscript{66} Gross National Happiness and Foreign Policy of Bhutan: Interlinkages and Imperatives, B.C. Upreti. P.11
• develop and expand mutually beneficial bilateral, regional and multilateral economic and trade co-operation,

• contribute towards the development of a dynamic and a sustainable economy through mobilization of external resources.

In May 1983, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck outlined the basic framework of the foreign policy of Bhutan: “Our aim continues to be threefold: Firstly, we are committed politically to be a strong and loyal sense of nationhood to ensuring the peace and security of our citizens and the sovereign territorial integrity of our land. Secondly, to achieve economic self-reliance and thirdly to preserve the ancient religious and cultural heritage that has far so many centuries strengthened and enriched our lives”

New political and economic developments have brought changes in the foreign policy goals of Bhutan since the late sixties. Following factors have influenced the growth of Bhutanese foreign policy and its formulations. 67

• Firstly, realization of its geo-strategic importance between two Asian giant nations – China and India, has provided profound and continual impact on its foreign policy.

• Secondly, Bhutan’s treaty relations with India, heavy dependence on India economic aid and its land-locked status hindered the growth of independent diplomacy.

• Thirdly, absence of political parties and non-subscription to any of the large ideologies that determined the course of work politics until the eighties had direct bearing to the growth of country’s relatively stable but limited external relations. It never had a ‘neutral’, or ‘equi-proximity’, or ‘equi-distance’ foreign policy towards its giant neighbor. There was set foreign policy agenda in any given period of time.

67 Bhutan, Country Study Guide, Volume 1, Strategic information and development, P. 134, 135
Fourthly, lack of education and professional manpower, financial resources and traditional mindset of Bhutanese society also influenced the conduct of foreign policy at very minimal. As a traditional society, country’s need were also very minimal in the past. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was created only in 1972, before that it was a part of Ministry of Development. Until mid-seventies, Bhutanese foreign policy was largely Indo-centric and inward looking. The growth of external relations can be grouped into four major heads: relationship with India, multilateral, regional and international bilateral relationships.

The Foreign Policy of Bhutan has operated within three basic parameters since the 1960s and they are as follows:

- internal consolidation
- gradual extension of diplomatic and economic relations
- active involvement with non-controversial regional issues.\(^\text{68}\)

**Bhutan’s Foreign Policy towards India**

Amity towards India is the core of Bhutan’s foreign policy, characterized by the evolution from an exclusive and dependent relationship to a more balanced and strategic partnership.\(^\text{69}\) The Bhutan government decided to strengthen Indo-Bhutan relations, but to do this cautiously. Bhutan started to developed close relations with India with its two foreign policy objectives, namely: “Modernization of the economic, governmental and educational system” and “Building a modern defense capability”.\(^\text{70}\)

Reiterating that India is the cornerstone of Bhutan's foreign policy, Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay said that the Bhutanese Government is committed to this policy, and added that Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to his country is significant for the bilateral relations between the two


\(^{69}\) A political and Economic Dictionary of South Asia, Mitra, Wolf, Schottli first edition, p.69

countries. In 1958, when the magazine “China Pictorial” printed a map showing a part of Bhutan within China’s border, the National Assembly of Bhutan objected, but asked India to take up the matter with China on behalf of the Bhutan Government. This revealed the extent to which Bhutan traditionally had depended on India for the conduct of its external affairs, the basis for which was Clause 2 of the Indo-Bhutanese Treaty of 1949: “The Government of India undertakes no interference in the internal administration of Bhutan. On its part the Government of Bhutan agrees to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in regard to its external relations.” The Indo-Bhutanese Treaty of 1949, which gave India control over Bhutan’s foreign relations, was renegotiated in 2007 to allow Bhutan greater sovereignty in foreign policy. However, India will likely continue to have substantial influence over Bhutanese politics.

Bhutan’s pursuit for an independent identity had lead Bhutan to act on a few occasions in opposition to India’s decision on the international forum. In 1971-72, Bhutan established relations with Bangladesh without seeking India’s approval. In 1979, Bhutan differed with India on the issue of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in Havana regarding the Republic of Kampuchea’s admission to the UN. Bhutan also differed with India on the issue of position of landlocked countries in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Manila. It abstained from voting at the UN on the Afghanistan issue as it was against the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. It is articulated that, “Bhutan’s search for identity is usually interpreted as Bhutan’s urge to come out of the shadow of its huge southern

74 Bhutan’s Foreign Policy Determinants : An assessment, Medha Bisht, 5th Jan 2012, p. 61
neighbor India, which had remained a dominant consideration for the regime in Thimpu since the British period.”

Even though Bhutan shares a very close and friendly relationship with India, it has always been mindful of the inequality between the two countries. During a very limited period of late seventies and early eighties there has been a major structural shift in its foreign policy vis-à-vis India. Bhutan perceived bilateral relations with India politically risky and uncertain, especially after the annexation of Sikkim in 1975. Hence, Bhutan opted for multilateralism in its subsequent stages of economic development in the late seventies and early eighties. In contemplation of reducing the political risk, Bhutan has been expanding and transforming its international relations by applying for membership and successively becoming members in a number of international organizations. Bhutan is now a member of 154 international organizations.

Many small countries in South Asia play the China card while trying to balance the Indian hegemony. But Bhutan has not seen so far the need to use the China card against India because a pro-China policy for Bhutan is not a practical choice, since China is not in a position to sustain Bhutan economically in the long run. Supply lines into Bhutan favor India and not China. Bhutan may not completely trust India, but Bhutan also does not consider India as a national threat. Bhutan has stood by India on issues such as its refusal to rarity the Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaties and India’s clear test in May 1998 in Pokhran even though Bhutan has neither the capability, nor the determination to develop nuclear weapons.

Bhutan’s actions in the last few decades indicate that while maintaining good relationship with its huge neighbor India, it has also been successful in creating

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76 Bhutan, Country Study Guide, Volume 1, Strategic information and development, P.135
77 http://www.mfa.gov.bt/foreign-policy/multilateral-relations
79 A political and Economic Dictionary of South Asia, Mitra, Wolf, Schottli first edition, p.69
a unique identity and project its independent status in the international community.

**Bhutan’s Foreign Policy towards China**

Bhutan felt vulnerable when the Chinese aggression of Tibet in 1959, the incident periled Bhutan’s trust and intentions of China and Bhutan was shaken by the Chinese offensive during that time. This was the incident and the time when the King of Bhutan, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, decided that Bhutan should come out of its isolation in order to save its sovereignty. As Bhutan is landlocked between China and India and does not share any border with any other country, the option left for Bhutan, when it felt threatened from China, was to move closer to its southern neighbor India. After 1959 Bhutan predominantly perceived national security as being synonymous with economic development. This objective was clearly articulated in 1959 when the National Assembly concluded that maintaining sovereignty of the kingdom through economic self-reliance and discovering ways and means of developing the nation should be Bhutan’s primary objective.80

Cautiously Bhutan has not so far shared any diplomatic relations with any of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, including China as Bhutan feels that it does not want to be in the power struggle of the world. Jigmi Yoser Thinley, Bhutan’s then-Prime Minister expressed that “there was a time when diplomatic relations signified one’s position vis-à-vis conflicting powers, choosing sides. It’s no longer the case”81. The bilateral relations between Bhutan and China cannot be considered poor ever since both the countries started Sino-Bhutan Border talks in 1984, despite not having formal diplomatic ties. However the trade relation is quite minimal even though Bhutan knows that the country will benefit if the trade relations with China improve.

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81 http://www.bhutannewsservice.com/main-news/we-dont-need-formal-relations-with-washington-pm-thinley/
Bhutan supported China’s admission to the United Nations in 1971, recognizes PRC’s One-China policy, and voted adversely when Taiwan attempted to participate in international forums. The relations between Bhutan and China is sometimes endangered by the Chinese troops’ incursions into Bhutan’s territory. To resolve the demarcation of the boundary line with China and also the question of intrusion of Tibetans in Bhutanese territory, and while doing so maintaining good relations and an atmosphere of friendship and co-operation with China, are the main objectives of Bhutan’s foreign policy. However, the opening of direct talks between Bhutan and China for the settlement of their long-standing boundary dispute can be considered as the most important development in Bhutan’s steadily evolving foreign policy. Bhutanese eagerness to have direct talks with China could be seen from the speech the Foreign Minister of Bhutan, Dawa Tshering at the Tshogdu in June 1981. He said that Bhutan would like to start direct and bilateral negotiations with China to delineate and demarcate the Bhutan-China boundary, and that the status-quo in the present Bhutan traditional border should be maintained until such time as the border negotiations were concluded. “The Royal Government of Bhutan no doubt wants China as a friendly (or at least non-threatening) neighbor, but one with whom relations are correct rather than intimate.” This is how the foreign policy of a small state like Bhutan works for its survival when it is sandwiched between two powerful countries. Such a policy cannot but be ambivalent and non-antagonistic. A small state has little choice other than to maintain a low profile in dealing with its larger and more powerful

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82 Himalayan Frontiers of India: Historical, geo-political and Strategic perspectives, K. Warikoo, 2009, p.154
neighbors. This is the strategic stand taken by Bhutan vis-à-vis China.\textsuperscript{85} Bhutan’s China policy operates in accordance with India-China relations.\textsuperscript{86}

**Conclusion**

Bhutan has been a very vulnerable country due to many factors, especially due to its geopolitical location. The Bhutanese leaders have enforced the foreign policy initiatives and the developmental plans judiciously. The leaders under the guidance of the king, has managed to bring up this tiny country in the global scenario without doing harm in its ecosystem. Today, the country has successfully followed the gross national happiness way of measuring country’s development. Bhutan has successfully transitioned from monarchy to democracy and in maintaining its sovereignty mainly due to the foresightedness of its leaders. The country has slowly opened to the outside world but Bhutan is still yet to establish diplomatic ties with its second neighbor, China. Bhutan will be all the more cautious when it comes to changing its alliance with India due to the recent event in Nepal.

\textsuperscript{85} Foreign policy of Bhutan : with special reference to its relations with neighbours since 1952, Shrikrishna, Kharat Rajesh, p. 161

\textsuperscript{86} A political and Economic Dictionary of South Asia, Jivanta Schottli, Subrata K. Mitra, Siegried Wolf, p. 69
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International Approaches to the Crisis in Ukraine

Abstract

The crisis in Ukraine is one of the greatest challenges for international community, especially for Euro-Atlantic area (EAA) USA and the EU. The political tension, caused by the annexation of the part of Ukraine, the Crimea, has inclined the experts to talk about the beginning of the new Cold War between Russia and the West. Evidently this crisis has an international character, complexity, and different levels. At least, there are “the West vs Russia”, “Ukraine vs Russia”, and “Ukraine vs Ukraine” levels. Naturally complexity determined different propositions of the conflict solution among scientists and decision makers. The article explores the conflict using the international relation theories as hallmarks of approaches to the crisis and SWOT-analysis and comparative method as tools of analysis. The liberal, realist, and constructivist approaches to the crisis are distinguished. Every approach has special propositions for the solution of the crisis. These propositions based on the set of beliefs which are involved by the approach. The liberal way of resolving foresees economical assistant to Ukraine, cooperation with Russia and Ukrainian neutrality. The realist approach admits Russian right to renew spheres of influence and sees Ukraine as a buffer state in a future. The constructivists approach to the crisis considers EU membership of Ukraine as a recipe of the solution.

Keywords: The Crisis in Ukraine, Russia-Ukraine Conflict, The Ukrainian Crisis, War, IR Theories, Liberalism, Realism, Constructivism
Introduction

The question how the social science theories concerning practice is still open. There are different views among the scientists. Some argue that a theory can shape the reality like the Communism did. Others believe that all big theories just described results of the human practice. Probably the first and the second are right simultaneously.

On the international relations field there are infinite debates about what theory is more applicable to the world structure and what theory can provide appropriate tools for international relations analysis. Robert Jackson and George Sorensen wrote that international relations theories are the “lenses” through which we can see the world.¹ The theory provides us to understanding facts and it systematizes our knowledge about the world. What facts are more or less important? These debates are also important because the decisions which politicians make depend on the theoretical “lenses” in their glasses. If one believes in the democracy, one would not usurp a power. The reasons why there is not one common and dominant theory lie in the complicated diversity of international relations (dissimilar cultural, social, political and others dimensions.)

As every international theory has distinguished features and it pays attention to the distinct main factors, it is rationally to apply different theories to one international issue. Change eyeglasses and gaze upon one subject from different perspectives. This practice is necessary when international issue involves dissimilar actors and dimensions.

In fact, if we want to understand reasons and ways of the international problem solution we have to look at the problem from points of the main actors’ views. This is the aim of our article. We try to select main determinants of the evaluation and behavior of the actors of the crisis in Ukraine. Further these determinants will be assessed and compared with regard to the nature of

the crisis. This analysis helps indicate more and less adequate approaches and propositions to the crisis that still threatening a continental security.

**Methodology**

The object of the analysis is the crisis in Ukraine and the most popular approaches to its resolving. For that purpose we will organize the facts and approaches according to three grand theories of International Relations (eventually, scientific theories are the tools of knowledge organization.)

After the description and classification of the approaches to the crisis we will analyze their basic assumptions and recommendations. For that purpose we will use an interdisciplinary method named SWOT-analysis. Despite the fact this method is from economic field of knowledge it is convenient for analyzing strategies and different scenarios. Its general principles foresee exploring and analysis of object through four features: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT). One could object that it is dangerous practice to use specific economic methods in the international studies. However we think it could bring more usefulness than damage. Especially, that we are not pioneers in this field. There were some publications concerning international relations where SWOT analysis has been used.² In any case this heuristic method has an instrumental characteristic in our paper. It serves only to organize information.

We assume that actors (states and decision makers) on the international arena act according to their convictions and beliefs. The best systems of different beliefs and convictions in term of international relations are comprised by international relations theories: realism, liberalism, constructivism etc. For instance, we assume that Vladimir Putin uses the realism doctrine in his foreign policy strategy. So Russia behaves according to his beliefs about power or sphere of influences.

We realize that there isn’t one approach within realist or liberal doctrines, but many. International relations theories in our case serve as criterion of typology

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of the approach. Supporters of the realist approach to the Crisis in Ukraine see the power concept, the anarchy or the equilibrium as main determinants of foreign policy. In the liberal approach the market, the international law, and a democracy would be the most important. In constructivist view it is an identity, a culture, values etc.

Second, we are convinced that the crisis in Ukraine has complicated structure and more than one dimension. It is a multidimensional crisis with different actors and levels. There are three main actors of the crisis: Ukraine, The West\(^3\) (EU, USA, Canada and others democratic state), and Russia. Further we will analyze the nature of the crisis deeper.

Each actor evaluates the crisis on the base of its own beliefs, which means within the frame of international relations theory which is the closest to the actor’s view. So if EU acts according to liberal doctrine the evaluation of the crisis and the solution that are proposed are also framed by the liberal doctrine.

The analysis will be developed under four main headings. First is anatomy of the Crisis in Ukraine where we will be finding the most important reasons of the crisis. For this purpose, the nature of the crisis and its main actors will be described. Second, we will try to evaluate the crisis using the liberal approach. Then we will use the realist and constructivist theories in the same way and evaluate the most appropriate proposed solution.

\(^3\) In general, conception “the West” means a broad group of democratic states that in majority are NATO participants. But in the analysis we use term “the West” frequently having in mind EU (especially France and Germany) as their leaders represent the position of the West in negotiations with Russia and Ukraine (Normand format). We don’t distinguish the position of USA as a separate one (despite USA position is more radical toward Russia) because of a few reasons. First, USA has completely entrusted the regulation process to EU partners. Second, it is methodologically difficult and requires more than one article. Very often the US talks like liberal but acts like realist as John Mearsheimer has noticed. Third, the USA policy is reacting regarding to the crisis. There isn’t clear strategy towards the crisis and all decision makes after negotiations with EU leaders.
The sources of Ukrainian foreign policy and Anatomy of the crisis

Ukrainian foreign policy during all of its modern history (from 1991 – till now) has been determined mainly by internal factors, which were always volatile. There has never been a precise doctrine of Ukrainian international or foreign policy. On July 1993 the Ukrainian parliament accepted the act “On the main direction of foreign policy of Ukraine” but this legislation has never been fulfilled. When Leonid Kuchma became the president, he positioned himself as pro-Russian leader during the first term of his presidency and conducted foreign policy, which was directed toward Moscow. He began his second term as pro-European president, but after a number of international scandals and his “isolation” from Western countries he initiated the new foreign policy concept, called the “multivector,” trying to balance between Russia and the EU simultaneously. The next Ukrainian president, Victor Yushchenko, was pro-European leader, who started negotiations about the Association Agreement with the EU. The next president, Victor Yanukovych, started as pro-Russian, but in the middle of his presidency he changed his rhetoric and turned to the EU. However, in 2013 the Euromaidan Revolution occurred and he again backed to Russia. In 2010 Yanukovych elaborated a new foreign policy concept declaring the non-alignment status of Ukraine. After the Euromaidan revolution the new president Petro Poroshenko initiated principal amendments to the act. The Parliament rejected the non-alignment status and confirmed Ukrainian aspirations to join NATO.

We assume that there are two major determinants of Ukrainian foreign policy. The first is Ukrainian geographical position which is obvious if one looks on the map. The second is its identity or even different identities. The point is that there are two different political identities within Ukrainian nation. According to Volodymyr Kulyk we can single out “the national” and “the post-soviet” types.

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4 Про Основні направи зовнішньої політики України. [On the main directions of Ukrainian Foreign Policy], Постанова Верховної Ради України, Відомості Верховної Ради України (ВВР), 1993, N 37, ст.379; Available at: http://zakon0.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3360-12

of identities. These groups have different and often contradictory views on politics, history, national interests, religion, languages or even Ukraine at all. According to Samuel Huntington Ukraine was a “cleft state,” or divided by civilization border. The scholar argued that “Ukraine is divided between nationalist Ukrainian-speaking west and Orthodox Russian-speaking east...The civilizational fault line between the West and Orthodoxy runs through its heart and has done so for centuries.” Despite the author’s forecast about the Ukrainian future never came true we partly agree with his diagnosis of the state of Ukrainian identity, especially in the beginning of 90s. There wasn’t one dominant identity, and soon after the establishment of independence the issue of identity has become the question of political technologies. Insofar, the Ukrainian foreign policy is totally dependent on its domestic policy, and the domestic policy is dependent on the identity of Ukrainian electorate. Thus, Ukrainian identity is the cornerstone of its foreign policy. When the state and the government act contrary to the identity of the majority of the Ukrainians, the political crisis and revolutions have occurred. It happened in 2013. It is the main reason of Revolution and the Ukrainian crisis.

From 1991 the identity of Ukrainians has been shaping hugely. We can see it among young people. Prominent universities, NGOs, a lot of western institutions have been working to overall soviet heritage during 20 years. The generation change has occurred. As Jaroslaw Hrytsak argues today’s Ukrainian young people are more similar to the young people abroad than to previous generation of the Ukrainians. And in 2013 new, young, pro-European identity brought people to the street. It was response to the change of foreign policy direction. This direction toward EU in people’s minds associates with

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8 Грицак Ярослав. Євромайдан не мав би перемогти. [Yaroslav Hrytsak. Euromaidan wasn’t supposed to win], ZAXID.NET 11.09.15; Available at: http://zaxid.net/news/showNews.do?yevromaydan_ne_mav_bi_peremogti&objectId=1365158
democratization, rule of law, prosperity, and freedom. “For Ukrainians, the promise of Europe is not only as a common market for Ukrainian goods and a spur to political reform; it also figures as an idea of reciprocal recognition of European states and civil societies that could bring Ukraine out of the shadows of Russian provincialism.”

Joint national participation in the protest provided to active cooperation among civil activists from the whole country and different levels and fields of working. The Euromaidan was a horizontal broad civil movement that brought together creative people with one aim – change the country. That’s why after Revolution won and Yanukovich fled a big part of the activists have continued to cooperate.

Over the course of one month, post-Maidan civic organizations – in the face of inaction on the part of the state – countered the separatist movements, kept the streets safe, put pressure on political groups with demands for lustration, and fought against Kremlin propaganda in Ukraine and all over the world. All this happened without state financing and outside of any legal system. New civic organizations saved Ukraine in the spring of 2014, when they took responsibility for fulfilling the basic tasks of a state and lent credence to the new party system, which was still embryonic at that time.  

Despite some negative practice of the social self-organization (like rare uncontrolled military volunteer association) which is inevitably during the war, in general, civil movement in Ukraine was further gaining strength. A group of journalist and activists got into parliament. Other activists started working in presidential and governmental structures. Mikheil Saakashvili joined new

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people in Odessa region. All of these are the evidences that social movement is still present in Ukraine and has leverages on the political process. These leverages are still being very influenced because of the state condition. After the revolution and war Ukrainian institutions are still very weak. In 2014 Ukraine was on the fourth place in crony-capitalist index and strength of institutions in the state was 2 points, what means one of the weakest institutional strength in the world\textsuperscript{12} (to compare Germany has 19, Turkey 12, Poland 8.)

Other active players in Ukrainian political process are oligarchic groups. When the state is weak huge economic groups influence it. The oligarchs have their own political party and ministers. So, the political process in Ukraine is hugely defined by civil society and oligarchic groups. One important feature – oligarchs influence economy, but civil society responsible for democracy. As we have mentioned before, foreign policy in Ukraine connects with democracy issues. So, any international move of Ukrainian politicians is studied precisely. Civil society is pushing Ukrainian authority to EU-integration.

Now the term of “The Crisis in Ukraine” should be defined.\textsuperscript{13} We treated the crisis in Ukraine as a chain of events which consists of the Ukrainian revolution in winter 2013-2014, the Crimea annexation in 2014, the war in Eastern Ukraine and other developments that related to foreign and domestic policies of Ukraine and others actors of the crisis. It began in summer 2013 when Russia has protested Ukrainian and EU intentions to sign the Free Trade Association Agreement. In November 2013 Viktor Yanukowych has resigned to sign the agreement. Immediately the protests named “The Euromaidan” has sparked in the center of Kyiv. Tensions on the streets grew and it turned into

\textsuperscript{12}Planet Plutocrat. Crony-capitalism index. The Economist Newspaper. 15.03. 2014; Available at: http://www.economist.com/news/international/21599041-countries-where-politically-connected-businessmen-are-most-likely-prosper-planet

\textsuperscript{13} Because of complexity of the term “the crisis in Ukraine” we are distinguishing definitions: “the crisis in Ukraine” and “the Ukrainian crisis.” In the first case we talk about general international crisis with the West-Russia confrontation. By “the Ukrainian crisis” we mean domestic issues in Ukraine that are more narrow, but important in terms of the solution of the international crisis.
violence from the authority. At the end of February 2014 more than 100 unarmed people were killed by police.\textsuperscript{14} Viktor Yanukowych has escaped to Russia. Ukrainian parliament appointed the date of a new presidential elections and created new pro-European government. Simultaneously, Russian troops without any recognition marks have occupied main government buildings of the Crimea. They have provided the referendum where absolute majority vote for annexation the Crimea to Russia appeared. The West defined the referendum as illegal. On 20th of March Russian parliament has approved the annexation. All these events have provoked the first big economic sanction’s wave against Russia. Further Russian troops without recognitions marks have appeared in the eastern Ukrainian region the Donbas. They initiated referendum like in Crimea and proclaimed “DNR” (Donetsk People’s Republic) and “LNR” (Luhansk People’s Republic) independence. They have organized local people in militia groups. Russian officers have provided them with heavy arms and training. When a war has begun, Russian army helped them directly in the battles with Ukrainian Army. The war, the downed Boing, the Russian threats and demonstrative military manuvers near EU borders have provoked other wave of Western sanctions against Russia. More painful for Russia, and for the West too.

Now the regulation of the conflict is in the Minsk agreement framework. Crisis in Ukraine still is one of the most serious challenges for international community today. The term “New Cold War” quite often is faced in mass media, scientific journals or variety reports of think tanks. Economic sanctions against Russia stay unflappable. The “Normandy Four” summits with Petro

Poroshenko, Angela Merkel, Francois Hollande and Vladimir Putin are taking place regularly.\textsuperscript{15}

All mentioned developments indicate the crisis in Ukraine as multidimensional as we have already noted. There is an international level where the main actors are Russia and the West. There is a Russian-Ukrainian level which involves two countries with all political, economic, historical bilateral problems. Also, there is Ukrainian domestic level with internal issues like social and cultural heterogeneity, political and economic crises. This Ukrainian internal level of the crisis will be described more precisely further, as we believe that other dimensions and levels can’t be solved without solving the domestic level of the Ukrainian crisis. We can also see at least three participants of the crisis. In Ukraine, Russia has broken an international law by war and illegal annexation, so now EU involve into the process of law reviving and peacemaking on the EU borders. Simultaneously the US is involved as guarantor of Ukrainian security according to Budapest memorandum.\textsuperscript{16} So Ukraine, Russia and the West are three main actors of the crisis.

That is why the consequences of the crisis are not only about Ukraine. Andreas Ulmand in the article "The Global Impact of the "Ukraine Crisis": Russia’s Decline and Euro-Asiatic Security in the Early 21st Century" wrote about international character of the crisis:

\textit{“The supra-regional, if not transcontinental corollaries of the “Ukraine Crisis” are not so much - or even not at all - about Ukraine. Rather, they influence Russian domestic affairs, Kremlin foreign policy, and their international repercussions. They concern, first, international efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They, secondly, question the sustainability of Russia’s current regime and darken the general prospects of the

\textsuperscript{15} Nikolay Pakhomov, Why the ‘Normandy Four’ Summit Is a Big Deal for Ukraine. The National Interest. September 25, 2015; Available at: http://www.nationalinterest.org/feature/why-the-normandy-four-summit-big-deal-ukraine-13930

\textsuperscript{16} Pifer Steven, The Trilateral Process: The United States, Ukraine, Russia and Nuclear Weapons, Arms Control Series (Brookings, May 2011) Available at: http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2011/05/trilateral-process-pifer
Russian post-Soviet multi-national state. They, thirdly, worsen the prospects of pan-European cooperation and association across the Earth’s northern hemisphere, in the new century.  

In sum, we can see broad set of issues which have interdependence, with an internal logic and an international influence. Every actor has own reasons, tactic and strategy. Their agencies are correlated with internal domestic nature of the actors and international structure (context).

**Liberal approach to the Crisis in Ukraine**

Articles in scientific journals, academic debates and media show that there are three main theoretical approaches for analysis of the crisis in Ukraine. First, there is the realist approach. The second is liberal one. The third is something that one could name a constructivist approach. These approaches has mirrored in the political positions of the actors. If we take the main pillars of a theory and compare them with rhetoric of politicians and opinion leaders we can distinguish theoretical frames in which actors operate. Hence the rhetoric of political leaders and states actions point on the theoretical doctrine of IR in which they exist. For instance, liberalism is “currently guiding the world response to the crisis.” Instead, Russia is guided by opposed theoretical attitude: political realism. John Mearsheimer in his controversial assay argued that “logic of realism” is still important and “realpolitik remains relevant” in the case of the Ukrainian crisis.

Liberalism became the most influenced international relations theory after the end of Cold War. From that time advantages of capitalism and democracy in

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18 The neoconservative vision (Robert Kagan, Joshua Muravchik) is the fourth important approach especially in the USA. At the same time, the neocon ideas have no big influence among the decision makers today. So, because of space limitation we do not analyze neoconservatism in the article.

19 Spencer Christopher, Ukraine Crisis: The Theories Involved, 5.03. 2014; Available at: http://guardianlv.com/2014/03/ukraine-crisis-theories-involved/

the West world were rarely questioned. The influence of the theory became interdependent in academic and political fields. Politicians were constructing new free economic areas. Military thought about NATO enlargement. Scholars have been justifying democratic movement and initiatives.

Liberal tradition of international relations has three pillars. First, it argues that trade is one of the most important determinants of international relations. The supporters of this paradigm believe that capitalism and free market create a unique space of cooperation among states. Second, it is democracy. The idea of common benefits from democratization based on the conviction that democratic countries rather would be seek opportunity to cooperate for finding solution of a problem. There is the democratic peace theory within this idea. The theory argues that probability of the war between two democratic states is very low. Third pillar of the liberal theory is the international law. Liberals see the international law as a safeguard that can guarantee some comparative order in the anarchic world.

Liberalism has deep roots in the Western political practices, so it is no surprise that liberal standards reflected in the politicians’ behavior. In the crisis in Ukraine the West strongly stands on the liberal position. It uses the market tools to influence a violator of the international law. Serious economic sanctions against Russia were imposed. These steps are painful for the West as well as for Russia. In Europe, especially in Germany the business community is pressing on the government. They demand to revive the economic cooperation with Russia. Despite that the position of Berlin is unshakable. Russia has broken the international law (the cornerstone of liberalism) by Crimea annexation, so it must be punished for that. But there is always room for reconciliation. If Russia implements the Minsk Agreement, sanctions would be lift.

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Wolfgang Ischinder, former German diplomat and the Chairman of the Munich Security Conference has offered a comprehensive strategy for western decision makers in term of liberal views. It seems that the EU is moving in this informal road map. Ischinder sees two main problems threaten Ukraine today. First, war and territory separation. Second, it is the economic collapse. In order to avoid these threats, the cooperation among decision makers inside and outside Ukraine is necessary. Professor Ischinder sees four steps which have to be done for the crisis solution.

First, EU should “put in place more credible and capable defense policy.”

Second, International financial assistant to Ukraine should be increased. Third, international community has to support EU aspiration of young Ukrainians. For instance, be more active in the visa-free program. Fourth, the West should start “to begin to bring Russia out of the cold” which means assurance of non-NATO membership for Ukraine and alternative format of G-8 where Russia will has a place.

“To start, the dispute over Ukraine’s prospects of joining NATO must be definitively settled. After all, the question of whether to admit Ukraine into NATO has already essentially been answered in the negative in many European capitals. The EU could, while offering increased assistance, encourage Ukraine to redefine itself as a bridge between East and West — as Finland, Austria, and even Switzerland have done in the past.”

All the points mentioned above more or less can be found in the speeches of the western politicians. In brief: economic assistants to Ukraine – yes; military means – no; cooperation with Russia – yes; confrontation – no, even if Russia behaves aggressively.

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23 Ibid.
**Strengths:** the strategy is rational. Actually, liberalists believe in rational human behavior. And on these believes the strategy of the West is built on. If trade and market is the answer, so we have to bargain. Ukraine should be democratic, capitalistic and pro-European. It will be better for security of Europe. For that purpose financial assistance and grants should be increased. Simultaneously, any military actions don’t even presume. “There is no military solution to the crisis in Ukraine”\(^{25}\) – is the most popular position among the West’s politicians. Paradoxically but rationalism simultaneously is a strength and a weakness of the strategy.

**Weaknesses:** Andrew Wilson indicates seven reasons (“deadly sins”) why EU misunderstands the crisis in Ukraine. And most of them are determined by looking on the problem from one, European point of view, while the problem requires multidimensional approaches. He argued that bureaucratism can’t be the answer in the Eastern Neighborhood policy because of the nature of the post-soviet political structure: “the rules-based approach of the Eastern Partnership is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of how post-Soviet societies work. They are anti-Weberian.”\(^{26}\) Other problem is Mercantilism in EU’s policy. The primacy of economy in the EU’s analysis of situation leads EU to wrong conclusions. If one wants to fix the problem, politics should be on the first place, not economy. “If politics would be wrong – economic would be suffer.”\(^{27}\)

Wilson described also three main techniques that are used by Russian propaganda for constructing “right” agenda for EU’s media: “what-about-ism” (we can’t criticize Russia, because the West does the same), “An aversion to moral clarity”( the truth is in the middle), “It’s-all-our-fault-ism” (the West has


\(^{26}\) Andrew Wilson. Europe’s Seven Deadly Sins Or, seven reasons why Europe gets the Russia-Ukraine crisis wrong, Transitions Online: Regional Intelligence, 2.06. 2015; Available at: http://www.tol.org/client/article/24820-europes-seven-deadly-sins.html

\(^{27}\) Ibid.
provoked Russia.) \(^{28}\) Other weakness of the Western approach lies on the field of understanding Russia.

“There is no critical analysis, just the constant refrain of how we must listen to Russia’s worries, interests, and legitimate concerns, and assuage its supposed psychology of “humiliation.” All are treated as objective givens... But the real problem is that both supposed Russian national interests and tropes like “humiliation” are not objective givens but are the product of Russia’s political technology propaganda machine. Tropes like “Russia has been humiliated,” “Russia is surrounded by enemies,” “The West destroyed the USSR” - none of these is really true... Russia is a propaganda state or “political technology” state. Its day-to-day diet is myth. Its foreign policy is full or dubious assertions and fake facts, such as the current process of “reassuring” Russia over entirely spurious objections to the trade agreement with Ukraine. Our problem in the West is therefore not just classic appeasement. Nor is it even that we have internalized so much of Russia’s agenda. It is that we do not understand the nature of that agenda, and the modus operandi that generates it.” \(^{29}\)

**Opportunities.** The opportunities of the approach have derived from its flexibility. By denying the “military solution” the Western politicians leave the wiggle room for possible compromise with Russia. Moscow hints that the Crimea could be this compromise. \(^{30}\) One of the biggest challenges for European politicians today is the choice between economic cooperation and international low. It also should be noted, that the sanctions which are multiplied by the low oil prices turned to be really effective. But it is short time solution. An efficiency of the strategy depends on energy market conjuncture. Other big

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\(^{28}\) Ibid.

\(^{29}\) Andrew Wilson. Europe’s Seven Deadly Sins Or, seven reasons why Europe gets the Russia-Ukraine crisis wrong. Transitions Online: Regional Intelligence, 2.06. 2015; Available at: http://www.tol.org/client/article/24620-europes-seven-deadly-sins.html

\(^{30}\) Lebedev Alexander, Inozemtsev Vladislav, Russia and the West need a compromise over the Crimea, Independent, 8.11. 2014; Available at: http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/analysis-and-features/russia-and-the-west-need-a-compromise-over-the-crimea-9848221.html
opportunities lie in the negotiation’s dimension. Two main formats: Normand and Minsk have been established. Within these formats parties have direct communication that is very important in a case of military conflicts. At least, it was settled two periods of ceasefire. One of them is effective till today. During the periods of ceasefire Ukraine with western assistance can build on military and economic capability.

**Threats.** The middle term rationality determines new frozen conflict and visibility of stability. Minsk protocol cannot be completed. Ukrainian Parliament wouldn’t vote for Constitutional amendments regarding autonomy of the separatists’ districts. Separatists’ leaders and Russian curators don’t give up the border under Ukrainian control. This is the deadlock. As the result, we will get two new (the Donbas and the Crimea) relatively frozen armed conflicts. It would be a threaten not only for Ukraine but for the whole continent. Especially if we look at it in a broader context we would see a range of artificially frozen conflicts from the Transnistria through the Donbass to the Nagorno-Karabakh which can catch fire according to political directives from Moscow.

**Realist approach to the crisis in Ukraine**

The doctrine of realism has few key assumptions. Realists see the international structure as anarchy. In this world, there is no power that can guarantee an order. The main actors of this struggle are independent states. They contest for the security, so struggle and conflicts lie in the nature of the international relations. Realists argue that the power and the military capabilities are the most important in term of international relation. Realists don't pay much attention to the agency of middle-power states. According to the realist doctrine, the main roles in the international arena are played by super-powers and great powers. They shape the international relations on the way of seeking their security. In the states where realism is prevailing doctrine of foreign policy the main role usually is played by the leader of the state. President or other legitimate leader interpreted aims of foreign policy according to national
interests. If liberals put the international law on the first place, realists, on the other hand, have the national interest as leading determinant of their foreign policy.

As we have already noted Russia and their leaders are leading by the logic of realism. Probably that is why most of the articles and researches based on the “realpolitik” point of view consider Russia as the most important actor of analysis. In general, they argue that we cannot blame Russia as the main reason of the crisis. The West and Ukraine are more responsible because they provoked Moscow.

John Mearsheimer’s popular article “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault” is one of a classical example of the realist evaluation of this crisis. He tries to see the structure of the post-Cold war world looking through the Russian’s glasses. It seems that he precisely has described Kremlin’s point of view or at least declarative part of the point. Mearsheimer argued that “the taproot of the trouble is NATO enlargement” which is the “central element of a larger strategy to move Ukraine out of Russia’s orbit and integrate it into the West.” Professor wrote that three main reasons create the crisis: NATO enlargement, EU expansion, democracy promotion.

These points of view are correlating with Vladimir Putin’s words that he said about Crimea annexation. In 2014 Putin explained “Our decision on Crimea was partly due to ... considerations that if we do nothing, then at some point,


32 Mearsheimer J. John, Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault, Foreign Affairs, September/October 2014; Available at:https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-uest-s-fault
33 Ibid.
guided by the same principles, NATO will drag Ukraine in and they will say: 'It doesn't have anything to do with you.'

Mearsheimer agreed that mentioned by Vladimir Putin factors have provoked Russia to act in aggressive matter. That’s how Moscow shows to the world that it won’t tolerate any West’s move eastward. Russia is going to use any energetic, economic and military resources for political strategy and it demonstrates that.

Roger E. Kanet also sees the source of the conflict in the term of the Western-Russian rivalry.

"The West was committed to pushing Russia, and the other post-Soviet states, in the direction of democratic political system and capitalists economic institutions that would be fully integrated into existing western institutions. President Putin and his supporters in Moscow were increasingly committed to a nationalist agenda that would re-establish Russia’s dominate role in its near neighbourhood and equality in the international system. These two policy orientations came into increasing conflict..."  

John Mearshaemer has proposed his solution of the crisis that can be regarded like a brief position of realists in this conflict. He claimed that the West could continue scenario of hostility with Russia that would devastate Ukraine. In this case everyone would lose.

"Or they (The United States and its European allies – I.O ) can switch gears and work to create a prosperous but neutral Ukraine, one that does not threaten Russia and allows the West to repair its relations with Moscow. With that approach, all sides would win."  

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36 Mearsheimer J. John, Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault, Foreign Affairs, September/October 2014; Available at: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault
**Strengths** of the realists’ approach stem from their pragmatism. They consider security and relationship of the powerful actors as a core issue of the conflict. Any risks that could jeopardize relations among great powers should be reduced. Especially, if these risks stem from the weak state that one country considers as own sphere of influence. This logic is guided by a fear of the new World War that could spark as a result of the great powers clash. Realists are not bounded by primacy of the international law, so they could construct the scenario of the crisis resolving relying on their understanding a nature of international relations. That provides simplicity and logic of the approach. That provides its strength and attractiveness.

**Weaknesses.** There are few critical points in mentioned realist positions which should be distinct. Initially, almost in all cases of the realist analysis of the crisis in Ukraine we haven’t seen Ukrainian perspectives. We have not seen the position of Ukrainian government and vox populi. Sometimes there are the geopolitical position of Ukraine and its military and economic capabilities. The reason is simple as Walt puts it “Russia is the more important country.” In some respect it is normal within the realism doctrine because for realists only power really matters and should be evaluated. So they pay attention to Russia as more powerful actor of the crisis. But it is not appropriate for analysis the crisis in general especially when one intent to propose a solution. Alexandr Motyl selects three main “reasons why realism is irrelevant in the conflict.” First is the crisis is more about “important domestic developments within Ukraine and Russia.” Instead realists evaluate the conflict like ongoing war between two states. Second is that realists don’t seriously take into consideration ideology, culture, believes, history, but pay all

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37 Walt M. Stephen, Would You Die for That Country? Foreign Policy 24.03.2014; Available at: http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/03/24/would-you-die-for-that-country/
38 Motyl J. Alexander, The Surrealism of Realism: Misreading the War in Ukraine, World Affairs, January/February 2015; Available at: http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/surrealism-realism-misreading-war-ukraine
39 Ibid.
attention to interests of the states. Third, states and their leaders don’t always act rationally as realists assume. 40

There are empirical examples that make realist’s argumentation weaker. Vladimir Putin explained that Russia has annexed Crimea because of NATO enlargement. A lot of scholars have agreed with him. But in Russia-Ukrainian relations there have already occurred tensions because of Crimea. In the first part of 90s the Crimea has broad autonomy. The peninsula has its own constitution and post of president. In 1994 there was the presidential election. Yuriy Meszkow had won. He was representative of the “Russia block”. The Parliament in Simferopol “appealing to President Boris N. Yeltsin of Russia to back it in its dispute with the Ukrainian authorities.”41 The developments were so fast that Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma sent the troops to Crimea and deleted the post of president. As we know in 1994 there wasn’t any NATO enlargement and Russian minority in Ukraine lived without concerns for their national identity. In fact, President L. Kuchma won the elections as a pro-Russian candidate.

In 2003 there was another conflict over Tuzla Island near the Crimea. This conflict also provoked Ukrainian military activity. Ukrainian border guard had blocked Russian constructions in the Kerch Strait.42 There was big risk of military escalating and full-blow crisis.

These two examples show us two main points in Russian-Ukrainian relations. First, NATO enlargement doesn’t play the main role in Russian aspirations over the Crimea. Second, in 2003 during the Tuzla conflict, Ukraine has pro-Russian president and government. These two examples show that Russian arguments about “NATO enlargement” and “threats of Russian minority” simple don’t work. The Orange Revolution didn’t occur yet, NATO wasn’t enlarged, but Russia already has questioned Ukraine’s sovereignty.

40 Ibid.
Opportunities. Within this approach we probably would be able to understand and predict more some aspects of Russian foreign policy behavior. Power, security, imperialist ambitions, and internal determinants are frames which could give us broader understanding of Russian foreign policy. Looking through realpolitik lens we can see that economic benefits are inferior to geopolitical concerns. It is really important regarding EU-Russian reciprocal understanding.

Threats. The main hazard of the realists approach to the crisis in Ukraine would concern the propositions of crisis solution. Every few years we can see new war with similar patterns in the area which Russia treats as its sphere of influence. If the world does not pay attention to the Russian backyard (as realists call on) this strategy will continue. Ukraine could be annexed slice by slice. Further could be Kazakhstan, Belarus or some NATO-members. Another huge issue is a nonproliferation regime. It should be mentioned that Ukraine gave up more than 1 thousand of nuclear missiles. In exchange Kyiv got the security guarantees. If these guarantees would not be supported by deeds, it could lead to nonproliferation crisis. After all, who would believe in some new security guarantees?

Constructivist approach to the Crisis in Ukraine
Constructivism concerns about culture, identity, values and believes as main determinants of foreign policy. In some aspects constructivism is an alternative worldview to rational theories like realism or liberalism. Supporters of constructivism argued that reality is relative. Simply put: what is important to one state or society, not necessary will be important to others. “It all depends on how states and societies define their ends and apply means to achieve those ends. If culture is the basis of means and ends, then we can expect to see very different ideas of “rationality” around the world.”43 Within this theory, different non-state actors like NGOs or international institutions have played not the last role in the creating of foreign policy. It is proved that states change their

43 Ferrero J. Christopher, Constructivism & US-Iran Relations. US-Iran-Relations.com. Available at: http://us-iran-relations.com/wordpress/theory-us-iran-relations/constructivism-us-iran-relations/
attitude to some war tools usage like land mines because of the influence of “rhetoric or other forms of lobbying, persuasion, and shaming” from internal and international NGOs.

Like in the previous case there are many different approaches to the crisis in term of the constructivism. Some are completely polarized. For instance in 2015 Russian Institute for Strategic Studies printed the book titled “Ukraine – is Russia.” Ideological concepts that are constructing in this institute lie on the field of identity and beliefs. Probably the biggest part of Russian propaganda machine works to promote the “Russian World” concept like new geopolitical reorganization. It is comprehended constructivist concept in the service of neo imperialism doctrine. The solution proposed by this concept is simple. There are not any Ukrainians. There are Russians who have forgotten their roots. When they come back home (to Russia), they will remember. This kind of project has a small value for us because it is the propaganda product without any scientific base.

There is not one point of view on the crisis among the Western analytics. The answers for the issue vary and could be described by name of the Ben Judah’s article: “Arm Ukraine or Surrender.” Probably the most comprehensive receipt of solution of the crisis in Ukraine in regard of identity issues and values was proposed by famous philanthropist Gorge Soros who knows Ukrainian internal situation very good. In his essay “Ukraine and Europe: What should be done” printed in The New York Review of Books he wrote:

The only way to prove Putin wrong is by establishing a better balance between sanctions against Russia and support for Ukraine. My “winning strategy” advocates effective financial assistance to Ukraine, which would combine large-scale budgetary support with

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44 Slaughter Anne-Marie, International Relations, Principal Theories Wolfrum, R. (Ed.) Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law (Oxford University Press, 2011) Available at: https://www.princeton.edu/~slaughtr/Articles/722_IntlRelPrincipalTheories_Slaughter_20110509zG.pdf
45 Смолина М.Б., Украина – это Россия [Ukraine is Russia]. Российский институт стратегических исследований, 2015; Available at: http://riss.ru/bookstore/series/ukraina-eto-rossiya/
affordable political risk insurance, along with other incentives for the private sector... By doing “whatever it takes” to enable the new Ukraine not only to survive but to flourish, the European Union would achieve a dual objective: it would protect itself from Putin’s Russia and it would recapture the spirit of cooperation and solidarity that used to fire people’s imagination in its early days.\textsuperscript{47} Soros argues that EU should consider economic assistance to Ukraine as defense expenditure. He elaborates "winning strategy" for the EU and Ukraine. Soros admits that Ukraine can't regain occupied territories in short perspective. In return Ukraine should maintain its moral and political integrity. EU shouldn't push the Ukrainian leaders with the Minsk issues, but has to promise "to do “whatever it takes” to help the new Ukraine to succeed."\textsuperscript{48}

**Strengths.** One of the main strengths of the constructivist approach is a multi-perspective analysis. The analysis sees the crisis from the Ukrainian point of view in contrast to the two previous approaches. Simultaneously the EU and Russian outlooks are included too. Soros is familiar with internal situation in Ukraine and in Russia. He understands the nature of post-soviet elites. He has also elaborated the plan that bypasses the biggest risks like recapturing territory or NATO-integration. In return, he calls for Ukrainian moral and political integrity, reforms and for "whatever it takes" assistance of the EU.

**Weaknesses.** The biggest weakness of this approach stems from its nature. There are no incontestable evidences that "new Ukraine" has appeared. Just because only few years have passed we can't understand if the reforms what have been done are irreversible. The history of the Orange revolution only strengthens the doubts. To apply the strategy the decision-makers should believe in winning. But it's not surprise, after all constructivists pay big attention to beliefs and hopes.


\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
**Opportunities.** This scenario foresees resolving the Ukrainian crisis (internal crisis in Ukraine) as the first step to resolving the crisis in Ukraine (international crisis). As it was reported before the solution included Ukrainian membership in the EU and new state with rule of law and democracy. There isn’t any wiggle room for Ukraine as a buffer state. It is impossible because of Russia’s attitude towards its neighbors. We have mentioned above that Ukraine has very low institutional strength. Main engine which determined foreign policy is the civil society. This society rose up with EU partners and believes in EU values. Simply EU’s soft power has won in Ukraine. Hence any compromises that concern identity and international place of Ukraine can’t be discussed. Ukrainian civil society has been taught during 25 year that values are more important than political circumstances. And “successful guys” from the West were the teachers.

Now if Ukraine doesn’t get perspective of EU membership, there will be social frustration that involves 45 million people. It is hard to predict further developments, but permanent arm conflicts would be more then possible. After two years of war Ukrainian fertile soil is comfortable for far right nationalists who only wait for the Euro-integration activity fall. Visible the EU membership opportunity to Ukraine is as necessary, as well a financial assistance. Otherwise war, refugees and new fail state will be on the border of the EU. Or Russian backed forces will recapture the power and in few years new Soviet Union will rise. So, the choice is between resolving and deepening the crisis and constructivists see it very clearly.

**Threats.** The main threats of the constructivist approach are economic risks. The solution foresees big economic assistance from the West, so the failure would be measured by billions. Another risk regards reputation of the West as a democracy promoter. Ukraine was an unpredictable partner. If Kyiv suddenly changed foreign policy direction, it would be ponderable punch on the Western image (not to mention the image of Ukraine.)
**TABLE 1. Outlook on the crisis through the different approaches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features / Approaches</th>
<th>Liberal approach to crisis</th>
<th>Realist approach to crisis</th>
<th>Constructivist approach to crisis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representatives of the approach</strong></td>
<td>Ischinger Wolfgang, Federica Mogherini</td>
<td>Kissinger Henry, Mearsheimer J. John</td>
<td>Motyl J. Alexander, Soros George</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The main concepts</strong></td>
<td>Economic statecraft, cooperation, international law</td>
<td>Power, security, sphere of influences</td>
<td>Identity, values, civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons of the crisis</strong></td>
<td>Russia misunderstanding the West’s policy in Eastern Europe and took it like a threat</td>
<td>NATO enlargement, EU expansion, USA dominance, and humiliation of Russia</td>
<td>The Ukrainians changed civilization and foreign policy vector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The status of Russia</strong></td>
<td>Difficult and gross partner</td>
<td>Rational actor who protects his interests</td>
<td>Provocative of a new Ukrainian identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The status of Ukraine</strong></td>
<td>Weak partner</td>
<td>Sphere of influence</td>
<td>Central place in the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The status of the Wests</strong></td>
<td>Rational peacemaker</td>
<td>Rival</td>
<td>Beacon and donor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The proposed solution</strong></td>
<td>Limited financial assistance to Ukraine and cooperation with Russia. Neutrality of Ukraine.</td>
<td>To recognize the right of a stronger partner to renew sphere of influence. Ukraine a buffer state.</td>
<td>The EU-Ukraine integration and modernization of a state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td>Flexible and secure</td>
<td>Pragmatic</td>
<td>Comprehensive and consequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
<td>Underestimated irrational factors</td>
<td>Underestimated irrational factors</td>
<td>Overestimated irrational factors which can’t be measured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Permanent communication among parties of the conflict</td>
<td>Understanding of Russian behavior (limited)</td>
<td>Possibility to solve internal crisis in Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Threats</strong></td>
<td>The unstable frozen conflict</td>
<td>The unstable frozen conflict</td>
<td>Economic and reputational losses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion:
The crisis in Ukraine includes three main actors: the West, Russia and Ukraine. Therefore, we could consider it as the international. The crisis is developing on the three different levels simultaneously. There is internal Ukrainian level (the Ukrainian crisis.) International levels include Russia-Ukraine conflict and West-Russia hostility (the crisis in Ukraine.) As the conflict has the unusual scope it isn’t surprising there is a broad range of different political and analytical approaches to the crisis. We have selected three general approaches and have classified them with regard to the main concepts. The liberal, the realist and the constructivist approaches have been selected. Everyone has the strategy of the crisis evaluation and everyone has proposed a solution to the crisis.

The analysis indicates that every approach has worked out a strategy toward the crisis in Ukraine. It is hard to forecast which strategy is better because the crisis resolution has not occurred yet. So, all assumptions about better strategy can’t be measured empirically. Instead we can evaluate preferences and risks of the approaches. For that purpose we evaluate them within a SWOT-analysis method.

We have selected strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of every strategy. The general comparison of the strategies points out that every approach has a comprehensive view on the subject. Everyone has proposed the solution. The liberal strategy sees Ukraine as neutral and Russia as a partner. The realist strategy sees Ukraine as a buffer state in the Russia’s sphere of influence. Nevertheless the rational approaches have misunderstood intents and irrational behavior of the post-soviet states. The constructivist approach assumes that the answer of the crisis in Ukraine is in the internal Ukrainian situation. This leads us to the conclusion, that constructivist strategy is more suitable and effective for resolving the crisis in Ukraine. So to say, through the internal to the international regulation.
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Regime change and the future of popular sovereignty

Abstract

Today the notion of popular sovereignty is seen as the standard of political legitimation. However, there is an important theoretical discussion to be had about the helpfulness of this notion since it is not clear who constitutes the ‘people’ or whether ‘the people’ possess the necessary agency in order to enact sovereignty. This discussion takes on practical interest in light of recent popular struggles for democracy, as evidenced by the Arab Spring of 2010-12 as well as the uprisings in Syria. This paper seeks to discover how far these popular revolutions of the early 21st century can be understood as conforming to or diverging from the liberal notion of popular sovereignty derived from the dominant social contract model.

Keywords: Regime change, popular sovereignty, the people, democratic legitimacy.

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Introduction

Popular sovereignty is the doctrine in political theory according to which government is created by, and is subject to the will of the people. It is 'the people', not a monarch, religious leader or other absolute ruler - who are the ultimate authority and source of political legitimacy. The people are understood to be the last court of appeal and the body, which ultimately legitimizes all political institutions and governmental power.

The philosophical justification for this view was laid by the social contract tradition through the works of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Suarez who despite their vast differences each postulated that no law or rule is legitimate unless it rests directly or indirectly on the consent of the individuals concerned. The American War of Independence and later democratic revolutions in Europe then make this idea into a political reality. Subsequently, the notion of popular sovereignty becomes the political norm in the Western World from which other understandings of legitimate political authority such as monarchy or oligarchy are, at best, considered to be deviations and, at worse, abuses. Struggles for post-colonial independence, with greater or lesser degrees of success, also attempted to recreate the same Western model of political sovereignty, similarly so with the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe after the regime changes of the late 80’s and early 90’s of the twentieth century. Indeed it would not be an exaggeration to say that in today’s liberal democracies, popular sovereignty is seen as the standard of political legitimation par excellence.

However, the idea is beset with problems. Contemporary democratic political theory is at something of a loss as far as the notion is concerned. Many scholars have questioned whether the notion of popular sovereignty is indeed helpful since not only is the indeterminacy as to who constitutes the ‘people’ (Hazlitt, 1991), but there are also reservations about whether ‘the people’
possess the necessary agency in order to enact sovereignty (Morgen, 1988). These theoretical issues become particularly pressing in contest of recent popular struggles for democracy, as evidenced by the Arab Spring of 2010-12 as well as the uprisings in Syria which followed. This paper will seek to discover how far these popular revolutions of the early 21st century can be understood as conforming to or diverging from the liberal notion of popular sovereignty derived from a social contract model.

The creation of popular sovereignty

Before looking at how far recent people’s revolutions are similar or dissimilar from those of the past, it behoves us to consider anew the grounds upon which the notion of popular sovereignty was created, how it became a basis for the liberal democracies of the Western World, and how this theoretical notion is manifest in concrete political practice. Moreover, we need to recognize, highlight and, as far as possible, alleviate the tensions and complications contained within that concept. In other words, we must trace out popular sovereignty’s past and present in order to understand its future.

In terms of political theory one may speak of popular sovereignty in terms of two great traditions or trajectories: the liberal and the republican (Lupel, 2009, 29). The first of these derives from the writings of John Locke, in which the author maintains that once the exchange of rights between individuals has been secured in the social contract it requires a neutral arbiter to legislate and therefore protect these rights and expand the sphere of freedom (Locke, 1988). This legislative power was supposed to represent the people and if this power was abused the people retained the right, even the duty, to replace the legislative. However, he did not envision anything like a direct democracy, where the people would be called upon for regular political intervention and decision-making. The second tradition can be traced back to the work of John Jacques Rousseau who did understand the people as being entrusted with legislative power. He also saw the need for representation, but the legislative
was charged with discovering and upholding ‘the general will’, extending both the same rights and the same obligations with total equality (Rousseau, 1966). In other words, the legislative in Rousseau’s model was much more dependent on the wishes of ‘the people’ than in the Lockean model.

Sociologically speaking, the notion of popular sovereignty, which began life as a theoretical construct used to explain political legitimacy, was later able to gain enough force to justify and actually bring about regime change in the centuries that followed. The first and most noteworthy instance of popular sovereignty legitimating a regime change from monarchy to democracy can be seen in the founding of the United States. Alexis de Tocqueville goes so far as to say that popular sovereignty is America’s ‘dogma and ’law of laws’. ‘At the present day the principle of the sovereignty of the people has acquired in the United States all the practical development that the imagination can conceive. It is unencumbered by those fictions that are thrown over it in other countries, and it appears in every possible form, according to the exigency of the occasion. Sometimes the laws are made by the people in a body, as in Athens; and sometimes its representatives, chosen by universal suffrage, transact business in its name and under its immediate supervision.’ (Tocqueville, 1966, Book I chapter 4).

However, America is by no means the only liberal democracy to take the idea of popular sovereignty seriously. Britain too began to give voice to ‘the people’ in the form of parliamentary sovereignty with the Reform Act of 1832 and the enfranchisement of women almost a century later (Jackson, 2011, 83). Germany similarly holds onto a strong conception of popular sovereignty. Indeed author Lars Vinx maintains, not without sharp criticism, that the German Federal Constitutional Court relies on a conception of popular sovereignty according to which ‘a written constitution is itself legitimate, and thus has the power to legitimate ordinary laws enacted in accordance with its rules and constraints, if and only if it has been created by a constitution-giving act on the part of the
people as constituent power and continues to enjoy the people’s tacit support’ (Vinx, 2013, 102).

The aforementioned author takes exception to the notion that the people exist prior to and apart from all law, including constitutional law, and have the right to give itself whatever constitution they please, favoring a weaker version instead in which the constitutional law shapes the people as much as they shape it. However the commitment to uphold the ideal of strong popular sovereignty is shared by other nation states both in Europe and across the globe, with the countries of the former Soviet bloc and other relative newcomers in the adoption of liberal democracy being no exception (Krasner, 1999, 186-194).

Put differently, popular sovereignty is not a myth or merely a convenient trope to which politicians pay lip-service. The idea has had a very real influence not only on the hearts of men in order to bring about regime change, but it has had just as much impact in the later determination of legislation and construction of political institutions, not to mention, of course, its influence in the drafting of a plethora of constitutions and foundational documents (Lessard, 1999). In the American context, Bruce Ackerman is correct to argue that ‘the Founders developed a distinctive form of constitutional practice which successfully gave ordinary (white male) Americans a sense that they made a real difference in determining their political future. This Founding success established paradigms for legitimate acts of higher-lawmaking that subsequent generations have developed further.’ (Ackerman, 2014, 329).

**Two persistent problems**

However, despite its success, it must be admitted that from its inception the idea of popular sovereignty has struggled with two persistent difficulties. Having briefly sketched out both the philosophical and the historical
development of popular sovereignty, we can now move to the more critical endeavour of delineating the problems that beset this concept.

The first and perhaps greatest of these, one which has always haunted the concept, is that of how to transform the expression ‘the people’ from an abstraction into a concrete reality. As many scholars rightly point out there is a great deal of indeterminacy when it comes to deciding who constitutes ‘the people’. ‘Who are the American people?’ asks Jackson, ‘Does a segment of the population have a right to assert a separate and subsequent declaration of independence?’ (Jackson, 2011, 80) Are they to be understood as a collection of specific individuals? But if so, then, which ones? Are they merely the aggregate of citizens of a given nation state? Americans may be inclined to give just such an answer. If not explicitly then at least in the sense that ‘the people’ of whom Thomas Jefferson speaks in the Declaration of Independence -- those by whom and for whom ‘governments are instituted amongst Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed’ (US Declaration of Independence) -- are later interpreted by the Constitution as referring to citizens. But as Jackson again rightly asserts: ‘the people must be constituted and organized by somebody’ (Jackson, 2011, 82). One might go even further and say that ‘the people’ must first be ‘named’ by somebody as a people before citizenship status can be conferred on them. Indeed this is a *sine qua non* in the case of regime changes where a new independent state is coming into existence, since ‘the people’ at the moment prior to its founding are necessarily the citizens of a different state or political entity, presumably the one from which they wish to be released and not of that which they are trying to create. ‘The American people’ therefore had to precede ‘American citizens’.

One may dismiss this as a chicken-and-egg problem, and argue that yes a ‘baptismal moment’ is required, but once ‘the people’ have been named and the criteria for their admittance have been set; henceforth ‘the people’ are synonymous with ‘the citizens’ of a given state. However this explanation is
also is unconvincing to anyone with even the most basic knowledge of America’s democratic beginnings in which only a small percentage of the US populace was understood as having citizenship status and the rights that accompanied it. Notable, and embarrassingly, women and African Americans who together made up well over 50% of the population of the United States were excluded from citizenship, until their gradual inclusion with the citizenship clause of the XV Amendment in 1870 (US Constitution) and the enfranchisement of women in 1920 (Amendment IX of the US Constitution).

Moreover, what about numerous non-citizens who legally live and work within a given state, not just in America but also in other liberal democracies such as resident foreigners, children or the disenfranchised? (Hazlitt, 1991, 12). Should they be excluded from ‘the people’? In an era of increasing immigration especially within the borders of the United States and the European Union, this ceases to be merely an academic question. Interestingly, Bruce Ackerman seems to offer something of a response, namely he presents ‘a richly detailed story of the mechanisms by which the Supreme Court eventually bends to the demands of social movements and changes its doctrines to accommodate legislation that the Court would previously have deemed unconstitutional...providing an incisive explanation of how constitutional law came to accommodate the exercise of legislative power, both state and federal, formerly considered at odds with the Constitution’s text.’ (Barnett, 2014, 2). Although Barnett agrees that Ackerman presents an accurate account of the evolution of constitutional law, he remains unconvinced that this evolution is a normatively legitimate expression of popular sovereignty.

However, even if the first issue were resolvable in the way Ackerman suggests and popular sovereignty were indeed malleable enough to admit changes in the constitution of ‘the people’ without any loss of legitimacy, a second question remains. While it is easy to understand how sovereign power and the decision-making authority that goes with it can be placed in the hands of the
one or the few, what does it mean for sovereign power to be in the hands of the many or indeed everyone? Somebody has to make actual laws and actual executive decisions, how can ‘the people’ as a collective do this? This is not a problem for democracy per se which talks in terms of the decisions of a majority based on regular, fair elections as well as occasional referenda and plebiscites. Is it not simply a pious fiction to think that ‘the people’ as a whole can have sovereign power, one that is ultimately no more helpful for actual politics than the concept of divine sovereignty which preceded it? Both the divine law-giver as well as ‘the people’ require some elite to first interpret their will and secondly, to do their bidding. Both tasks are, of course, easily open to manipulation.\(^2\)

In his foundational essay on popular sovereignty, Harold Laski puts the matter quite succinctly and decisively: ‘It is clear, in brief, that popular sovereignty if it means that the whole people, in all but executive detail, is to govern itself, is an impossible fiction’ (Laski, 1919, 204). In other words, unlike the direct democracies of ancient Athens, we cannot avoid ‘the device of representation’ (Laski, 1919, 204). John F. Knutsen agrees with Laski that while popular sovereignty does not demand that the people directly influence decision making on every legislative issue. He believes that ‘it is not possible to envision popular sovereignty without (at least) a form of semi-direct democracy’ (Knutsen, 2011).\(^3\)

Such a conception would naturally rule out the Hobbesian understanding of popular sovereignty, which can be thought of as merely a temporary affair. As

\(^2\) That is why the Federalists insisted on a system of checks and balances in which the legislative, executive and judicial were pitted against each other, precisely in order to moderate excessive populism to which the legislative, as the most direct representative of the people would be prone. For more on this see Federalist 51 (Hamilton, 2003).

\(^3\) Knutsen defines semi-direct democracy as ‘a combination of direct democracy and representative (also called indirect) democracy. A semi-direct system is characterized by the people having delegated legislative powers to a parliament or other representative body, but having made this delegation revocable and limited. In addition to the legislature there must also be a mechanism allowing for the people to express its will directly.’
for Locke there is an exchange of rights between individuals in the social contract, but once this contract has been drawn up there is a hand-over of sovereign power to an absolute ruler who henceforth makes all the rules according to his own wishes, with the single exception that he cannot endanger the lives of those who vested him with power (Hobbes, 1994). We may not like or indeed want Hobbes’s form of popular sovereignty, but it is possible to envision it. Indeed there is nothing logically incoherent about his reasoning. What happens when popular sovereignty understood as ‘the authority of the final word (which) resides in the political will or consent of the people of an independent state’ (Jackson, 2010, 78) is not democratic? In other words, what happens when the people freely consent to hand over sovereignty to an absolute law-giver or elite? This is an issue to which we will return, as we look as some contemporary struggles for popular sovereignty especially in the Middle East.

In recent literature, a number of scholars have tried to resolve the aforementioned problem by offering a more complex understanding of popular sovereignty. One amongst these is Yale Professor Paulina Ochoa Espejo who argues in a recent publication that democratic political theory has long had an erroneous understanding of ‘the people’. According to her, we are suffering under two misconceptions; the first is that ‘the people’ is a cultural, ethnic or national construct, the second is that ‘the people’ is simply the majority of citizens. She forcefully argues for a third alternative – namely that the people ‘should be seen as a series of events, rather than a collection of individuals’. (Espejo, 2011, 13) Like Ackerman she believes in the malleability of the concept of ‘the people’, which is shaped over time and has a different depending on the socio-cultural context.
Struggles for popular sovereignty in the new millennium: similarities and discontinuities.

Historically, of course, the relationship between popular sovereignty has always been one directional. As the notion of popular sovereignty has taken hold as a way of explaining and securing political legitimacy, so authoritarian or absolute forms of government have given way to democratic ones. If the people are the source and summit of political authority, this must be made manifest in their actual decision-making power, if not in the impractical form of direct democracy then at least in the form of representative or ‘semi-direct’ democracy, as Knutsen calls it. (Knutsen, 2011). This model was initiated with the American War of Independence, and has followed suite in Europe and increasing parts of the globe ever since. It has often been assumed therefore that this relationship could not be otherwise. Popular sovereignty and representative democracy must go hand in hand, in other words.

However, this is precisely what is being called into question today. If Espejo is correct that ‘the people’ is not just a fixed association of individuals but something that is constructed by social events and legal decisions, (Espejo, 2013) then it ought to be safe to assume that the desires of the people are also not fixed but they differ based on social, cultural and religious context. If this is true there is nothing at all to rule out the possibility of struggles for popular sovereignty, which will not end in a regime change towards liberal democracy with all the trappings of constitutionalism, but away from it. They could just as easily decide upon popular sovereignty of the Hobbesian sort, which ends in the mortal God of the Leviathan.

Take for example the uprisings of the Arab spring and the rise of fundamentalist Islam in the Middle East. Describing the fall of Mubarak’s regime in Egypt, author Ege Ozyegin admits that these struggles for popular sovereignty have had a different outcome from the American and French
Revolutions that preceded them centuries ago. ‘These uprisings are not yet revolutions, but remain as “bottom — up mass movements” that demonstrate the power of the people. However, interestingly the uprisings also show how their power is constrained. Until recently, the countries in the Middle East have changed to stay the same’ (Ozyegin, 2015). Following Brownlee in his book *Democracy Prevention*, she seems to believe that the reason the popular uprisings that toppled the Egyptian dictator have ended in authoritarianism rather than democracy is that they this has served US foreign policy interests. The persistence of autocracy in the Middle East in other words, is largely due to America’s support of authoritarian rulers over democratic governments made up of former opposition leaders (Brownlee, 2012). Indeed nowhere is this truer than in Egypt, which has shared a long-standing alliance with the U.S. Indeed many prominent U.S. political leaders are officially moving away from the previously unanimous stance of supporting regime change that results from bids towards popular sovereignty. Indeed when it comes to the Middle East these days many are happier to support authoritarian dictators than popular mass-movements.

This is not because dictators promise the U.S. lower oil prices in exchange for their support, but because ‘recent history has shown that ...(this) opens the door for the kinds of chaos that sucks in American troops and creates problems worse than the ones the U.S. was trying to solve’ (Seib, 2015, 1). And ‘this worse problem’, not just for the U.S., is that of the radical Islam which has been able to take hold in the region after the popular uprisings. As Sen. Ted Cruz put it: ‘Assad is a bad man. Gadhafi was a bad man. Mubarak had a terrible human-rights record. But they were assisting us—at least Gadhafi and Mubarak—in fighting radical Islamic terrorists. And if we topple Assad, the result will be ISIS will take over Syria’ (Seib, 2015,1).

And what if the blame for this situation is not to be placed with the U.S. and other Western countries for propping up authoritarianism, but somewhere else
entirely, namely at the feet of a rather naïve liberal understanding of popular sovereignty which always results in an American-style constitutional democracy of the republican variety? What if, as has earlier been mentioned, ‘the people’ are not all the same? What if they are not all equality-loving democrats but ‘the general will’ really does desire the establishment of the caliphate and the radical execution of Sharia law? Adam Lupel is correct to argue that in today’s complex globalizing world we cannot take anything for granted, especially that what has been resulted in the context of Western liberal democracies, namely representative democracies that have resulted from the struggles of popular sovereignty, can be everywhere reproduced according to the same model. Indeed Lupel states that ‘pace Rousseau popular sovereignty has seldom if ever concerned the governance of unified societies, but rather struggles for power in divided societies (Lupel, 2009, 141).

His own response to this situation, following in the footsteps of Habermas and Held, is to develop some kind of transnational popular sovereignty, which is based on a cosmopolitan solidarity between peoples. Paradoxically however, it seems that the truest current manifestation of what we might call transnational popular sovereignty although admittedly in a pathological form is not, as Habermas, Held or Lupel would have it, to be found in the European Union but in the Islamic State (ISIS).

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it seems that today’s struggles for popular sovereignty do not conform to the normal trajectory to which the Western world has grown accustomed. Of course we have focused only in a cursory way on the events in the Middle East, and not undertaken a comprehensive study in how regime change is occurring across the globe. However with that proviso in mind, enough has been said to at least undermine the previously thought

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4 For more on this see my previous work on the subject matter (Olearnik-Szydlouska, 2015).
unshakeable relationship between popular sovereignty and liberal democracy. Moreover, as has also been shown the philosophical and social context in which the notion of popular sovereignty developed and was able to assert itself in actual political decision-making and institution-building was highly culturally specific and it necessarily follows the same pattern everywhere. Indeed, perhaps Hobbes's realism was correct after all, that in situations of grave insecurity popular sovereignty exists only for a moment in order to name an individual or group as sovereign who when has absolute power and is owed absolute obedience by all.
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