

KAS INTERNATIONAL REPORTS

"SMALL" STATES IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

■ **The End of Neutrality and Non-Alignment? Finland is Seeking Stronger Nordic and Regional Cooperation in its Foreign and Security Policy**
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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

Helmut Kohl once expressed one of the fundamental principles of his European policy as follows: “The small countries in the European Union deserve as much respect as the large ones. The significance of a Member State cannot be measured by the size of its population or the square kilometers it occupies.” While Kohl was concerned with Europe, of course the principle applies beyond its borders. Although other countries tend to be in the limelight of international politics, the significance of the so-called small states should not be underestimated.

However, the ability to exert influence in international politics despite lacking in size requires a sophisticated strategy, as Anna-Lena Kirch explains in her article on the central topic of this issue, using Finland as an example. Extraordinarily sparsely populated with just over five million inhabitants and therefore a “small” state in this regard, Finland pursues a systematic foreign policy course of cooperation with its Nordic neighbours and involvement in international organisations. With this approach, the country tries to safeguard its security and maximise its influence despite its limited political, military and human resources. Against the backdrop of a Russian expansionist agenda and constrained public finances, the government in Helsinki is prepared to pursue this strategy with even greater purpose in future and even depart – at least rhetorically – from the principle of military non-alignment, which the country had adhered to for decades.

In his article on Mongolia’s foreign policy, Daniel Schmücking illustrates how difficult it can be for the so-called small states to hold their own amongst the large states. Sandwiched between the “giants” Russia and China, the country’s so-called third neighbor policy symbolises its endeavour to free itself at least to some extent from the oppressive embrace of its two overpowering neighbours and to diversify its political and economic foreign relations. Europe should continue to support Mongolia in these efforts, because we can benefit from a closer partnership with the young democracy not only in the competition for raw materials but also

where the embedding of democratic values in Asia is concerned and, not least, with respect to security matters.

The Vatican, or more precisely the Holy See, which is the actual subject of international law, represents a special case among the small states in many respects. With a land area of just 0.44 square kilometers and a population of some 840, it is by far the smallest of the small states but derives an incomparable amount of influence from the fact that it represents over a billion Catholics the world over. In their article, Christian Rieck and Dorothee Niebuhr therefore refer to the Vatican as a “cultural superpower” and illustrate how the Pope, representing the Roman Catholic Church, has repeatedly succeeded in exerting influence in the foreign policy arena.

If there is one thing that unites all three articles on the central topic of this issue, it is the realisation that size alone is not necessarily the decisive factor. With a sophisticated strategy, small states can exert significant influence. And that is why – as Helmut Kohl rightly stated – one should never underestimate the so-called small states.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Gerhard Wahlers," with a stylized, cursive script.

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THE END OF NEUTRALITY AND NON-ALIGNMENT?

**FINLAND IS SEEKING STRONGER NORDIC AND REGIONAL
COOPERATION IN ITS FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY**

Anna-Lena Kirch



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Finland is facing great challenges in both its domestic and foreign policy. Against the backdrop of Russian sabre rattling in the Baltic, the Northern European country is confronted particularly acutely with the issue of its national defence capabilities and its options where security alliances are concerned. Furthermore, they face the long-term question – just like other “small” and “medium-size” countries within the EU – as to what steps can be taken to secure influence and effective power to shape events in view of increasing globalisation in conjunction with a worrying economic situation and demographic development. The new government under Juha Sipilä has responded by re-evaluating its foreign policy priorities and announcing its intention to seek stronger Nordic cooperation, deeper European integration in the area of security and defence policy as well as closer cooperation with NATO.

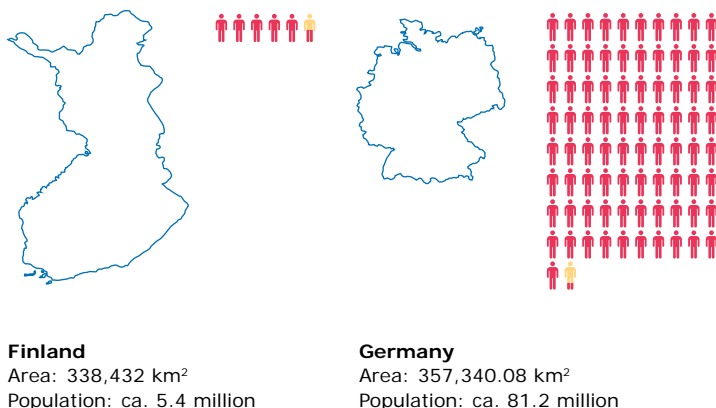
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN FINNISH FOREIGN POLICY

The small and sparsely populated country at Europe’s periphery shares a 1,300 kilometers border with Russia. This geographic proximity meant that Finland was in the direct sphere of influence of the Soviet Union during World War II and during the Cold War. After varying alliances in World War II, Finland and the Soviet Union signed the “Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance” in 1948, which committed Finland to refrain from entering into any alliances with other countries and to maintain military neutrality, thereby restricting its foreign policy options significantly. While the other Nordic states sought affiliation with various international organisations early on, Finland did not join most international organisations (such as the Council of Europe, the EU and the OECD) until much later and is still not a member

of NATO. One exception to this approach of non-alignment and preservation of foreign policy independence has been the United Nations (UN), which Finland joined as early as 1955 on account of the organisation's global orientation. It was as a member of the UN that Finland took part in numerous international civilian crisis management and peacekeeping missions in collaboration with other Nordic states while the Cold War was still ongoing.

Fig. 1

Finland in Comparison by Size



Source: Own illustration, © racken.

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union finally opened up new scope in the foreign policy arena for Finland. Particularly joining the EU in 1995 had far-reaching effects on the development of Finnish foreign and security policy. Finland not only saw its economic interests represented most effectively through its membership in the European Single Market, but also considered the EU a security guarantee. The country thereby abandoned its stance of political neutrality while retaining the concept of military non-alignment, at least formally.¹ This approach was in line with Finland's efforts to maintain good-neighbourly relations with Russia, which is still one of its most important trading partners besides Sweden and Germany. One further constant of Finnish politics is its close cooperation with the Nordic states of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland. The partnership with Sweden stands out most significantly. The two countries joined the EU together and NATO accession is only conceivable for Finland in concert with its Swedish neighbour.

1 | Cf. Teija Tiilikainen, "Finland – An EU Member with a Small State Identity", *Journal of European Integration*, Jan 2006.

Finnish foreign and security policy is marked strongly by the awareness that, being a “small” state, it can only exert a very limited influence in the international arena by itself.

Besides these specific historically and geopolitically based influences, Finnish foreign and security policy is marked strongly by the awareness that, being a “small” state with a small population, with correspondingly limited voting rights in EU institutions such as the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament as well as limited military resources, it can only exert a very limited influence at a European and global level by itself. Teija Tiilikainen (2006) therefore speaks of the Finnish “small state identity”.² National sovereignty and security are under permanent potential threat, which is why politicians take matters of national security very seriously. This awareness of a special vulnerability and potential marginalisation in international relations explains not only Finland’s formal adherence to the principle of military non-alignment but also the significant efforts it makes within the EU to secure the rights and influence of “small” states. Research on “small” states indicates that there are various strategies for exerting influence in the international political arena, and these can clearly be seen realised in Finnish politics.

INFLUENCE OF “SMALL” STATES IN INTERNATIONAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Due to the limited amount of resources available to them, “small” states benefit significantly from their membership in international organisations with multilateral decision-making processes, particularly if all member states have comparable voting rights whatever their size and if the principle of unanimity is applied.

However, there have been a number of instances in the history of European integration – amongst them occasions when the Benelux countries have influenced European decisions, to name just one example – when “small” and “medium-sized” states were by no means condemned to insignificance, even under institutional and procedural conditions that were less ideal.³

Potentially, “small” states can exert greater influence if they bring their interests to the attention of supranational bodies as early as possible during the decision-making process, i.e. during the

2 | Cf. *ibid.*, p. 76.

3 | Cf. Diana Panke, “Small states in multilateral negotiations: What have we learned?”, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 3/2012, pp. 387-398.

conceptual phase, when expertise and well-founded arguments are more important than during the subsequent inter-governmental negotiations where large states are capable of enforcing their interests more effectively due to their greater voting rights or by offering more attractive compromise solutions and material incentives. In the EU context, it has therefore proved advisable for “small” and “medium-sized” states to focus on few policy areas of outstanding national interest and then approach the European Commission at an early stage, offering their expertise.

In the EU context, it has proved advisable for “small” and “medium-sized” states to specialise on a small number of policy areas of outstanding national interest.

Another promising option is to take on a mediator role between diverging interests or act as a “norm entrepreneur” for value-related issues. If “small” states succeed in making their mark over a prolonged period by emphasising the joint European interest in their activities, they will potentially be able to exert significant influence in fostering compromise.

Finally, “small” and “medium-sized” states have to rely even more on forging coalitions than “large” states in order to pool their resources, their expertise and their influence: The more options a state has for forming coalitions, the greater its chances of success. “Small” states therefore frequently pursue a flexible, issue-based approach in their choice of cooperation partners, leveraging one of their greatest strengths, their high level of adaptability.⁴

TRADITIONAL FACTORS DETERMINING FINNISH FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

On account of the way it has been influenced by its geographic location, its historical path dependence and its modest resources, the traditional Finnish foreign and security policy can be described by the following characteristics:

Strong Involvement with International Organisations

As a “small” state with limited political, military and human resources, Finland has always striven to secure its influence within multilateral decision-making processes and to channel its own values and objectives into negotiations. During the Cold War, the UN was the preferred body for this purpose. Since then, the EU has become the main arena of Finnish endeavours.

4 | Cf. Tiilikainen, n. 1.

Military Non-Alignment

For a long period, essential characteristics of Finnish foreign and security policy included the principle of non-alignment in peace time and neutrality in the event of a military conflict, which is why Finland is not a member of NATO. Within the EU, Finland prefers to retain some flexibility when it comes to entering into coalitions. In the past, the country has consequently argued against the establishment of a fixed Nordic block in EU institutions.⁵ While the country still officially adheres to military neutrality, the close cooperation with and involvement in EU and NATO missions reveals that the principle has, in fact, been abandoned.

Involvement in Nordic Cooperation

Nordic cooperation is one of the oldest and most traditional formats of sub-regional cooperation in Europe. It is based on common values, similar political systems and a shared history. To avoid incompatibility with non-alignment, Nordic cooperation in the area of foreign and security policy has traditionally consisted of consultation and coordination of positions.⁶

Comprehensive Security Concept

In line with the other Nordic states, Finland operates on the basis of a comprehensive security concept, which includes a distinct non-military dimension in addition to the traditional military one. Finland's security needs are not limited to guaranteeing the country's defence capability and avoiding military conflicts, but also involve non-military risks such as climate change and conflicts in the immediate and wider neighborhood.

NEW CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE NEW STRATEGIES

The new Finnish government under Juha Sipilä from the Centre Party was sworn into office on 29 May 2015. Beside the Centre Party the government includes the conservative National Coalition

5 | Cf. Tuomas Iso-Markku/Juha Joleka, "The Finnish Strategy: Focus on Issues instead of Coalitions", in: Josef Janning/Almut Möller (eds.), *(Re-)Building Coalitions: The Role and Potential of Member States in Shaping the Future of the EU*, DGAP Analyse No.20, 2014, pp.29-32.

6 | Cf. Tobias Etzold, "The Case of the Nordic Councils. Mapping Multilateralism in Transition No.1", International Peace Institute, Dec 2013, http://ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_e_pub_nordic_council.pdf (accessed 13 Oct 2015).

Party and, for the first time, also the populist Finns Party (formerly known as Basic Finns or True Finns), represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs Timo Soini and the Minister of Defence Jussi Niinistö. In the past, Soini, the leader of the Finns Party and at the time still a Member of the European Parliament, had drawn attention to himself repeatedly with strongly Eurosceptic statements ("Where there is EU, there is a problem.").⁷ Upon taking office, he softened his rhetoric and clarified that Finland supported Europe, but that the EU urgently required far-reaching reforms.⁸



Juha Sipilä (m.) after his election victory in May 2015: The new Prime Minister announced a strategic re-orientation of foreign and security policy. | Source: © Markku Ulander, picture alliance/AP Photo.

During the election campaign, foreign and security policies were hardly visible despite Russia's sabre rattling. Topics of social and economic significance dominated the discussions instead. The Finnish economy has been in recession for three years. Finland also has the fastest aging population within Europe. This unfavourable combination of structural factors has resulted in the rating agency Standard & Poor's downgrading the country from the highest AAA credit rating in October 2014. In May 2015, the European Commission warned that it may initiate an excessive deficit

7 | Cf. Silke Bigalke, "Timo Soini, der 'wahre' Finne", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 May 2014, <http://sueddeutsche.de/politik/populismus-in-europa-das-sind-die-europaskeptiker-1.1933410-8> (accessed 10 Aug 2015).

8 | Cf. Silke Bigalke, "Timo Soini: Finnlands neuer Außenminister, vom rechten, populistischen Rand", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 28 May 2015, <http://sueddeutsche.de/politik/1.2497201> (accessed 10 Aug 2015).

procedure.⁹ The new Finnish government is therefore under pressure to make significant savings. Sipilä has announced budget cuts of four billion euros by 2019.

A cross-party parliamentary report of 2014 warned that without additional investments the Finnish military would no longer be able to fulfil its remit within a few years.

The precarious economic situation in turn has a negative impact on Finnish foreign and security policy. Extensive cuts to the defence budget had already been made under former

Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen. A cross-party parliamentary report of 2014 warned that without additional investments the Finnish military would no longer be able to fulfil its remit within a few years, and recommended that past cuts should be compensated for by increasing the defence budget again from 2016 to 2020.¹⁰

To do justice to these recommendations against the backdrop of increasing security risks and simultaneously take account of the economic and budgetary limitations, Sipilä therefore announced a strategic re-orientation of foreign and security policy. In its government program, the Finnish government announced stronger Nordic cooperation, intensified EU integration, greater consideration of new security risks, and a re-evaluation of the opportunities and risks of an accession to NATO.¹¹

FINLAND AND THE NORDIC STATES

Against the backdrop of the euro crisis and increasing tensions with Russia in the course of the Ukraine crisis, cooperation between the Nordic states has been attributed increasing political potential over recent years. Nordic cooperation is held in high regard by politicians and the population alike and follows the general trend of stronger macro-regional differentiation (e.g. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EU Strategy for the Danube Region, The Northern Dimension) and sub-regional cooperation within the EU (Visegrád Group, Benelux Union).

9 | Cf. European Commission, "Finland: Report prepared in accordance with Article 126(3) of the Treaty", 2015, http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/deficit/countries/finland_en.htm (accessed 10 Aug 2015).

10 | Cf. Parliament of Finland, Long-term Challenges of Defence, May 2014, https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/tietoaeduskunnasta/julkaisut/Documents/ekj_5+2014.pdf (accessed 10 Aug 2015).

11 | Cf. Prime Minister's Office Finland, *Finland, a land of solutions: Strategic Programme of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Government*, 29 May 2015, <http://vnk.fi/julkaisu?pubid=6407> (accessed 8 Aug 2015).

In late 2013 and early 2014, the Nordic states published three joint strategy papers, in which they laid out their comprehensive common goals in Nordic cooperation, foreign policy and defence policy. Nordic cooperation also plays a more dominant role in Sipilä's current government program compared to earlier strategy and position papers. In the chapter on Foreign, Security and Defence Policy, the Nordic countries are listed even before the EU, NATO, OSCE and UN as forming the framework for Finnish foreign and security policy.¹² One can infer from all these programs and position papers that concerns about closer Nordic cooperation leading to block formation have diminished and that they are now outweighed by positive assessments and expectations.

Concerns about closer Nordic cooperation leading to block formation have diminished and are now outweighed by positive assessments and expectations.

Besides regular meetings of the heads of government and civil-society cooperation, Nordic multilateral cooperation, frequently referred to as "Norden", mainly involves the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Nordic Council was established in 1952 for the purpose of parliamentary cooperation and opinion-forming. It comprises five expert committees, in which parliamentarians devise policy recommendations for the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic governments, addressing joint Nordic challenges and problems.¹³ All parties with a presence in the national parliaments of the Nordic states are automatically represented in the Nordic Council, which underscores the inclusive approach of the Nordic states.

The Nordic Council of Ministers, the Nordic format for intergovernmental cooperation, was established in 1971. It comprises ten constellations of councils of ministers, focusing on different policies, plus the council comprising the Ministers for Cooperation (MR-SAM), which coordinates the intergovernmental decision-making processes – similar to the EU General Affairs Council.¹⁴

12 | Cf. *ibid.*, p. 37.

13 | The expert committees are concerned with culture and education, citizen and consumer rights, the environment and natural resources, business and industry as well as welfare.

14 | The ten Councils of Ministers are concerned with culture, gender equality, legislative affairs, education & research, labour, business, energy & regional policy, health and social affairs, finance, the environment, as well as fisheries, agriculture, food and forestry.

Decisions are taken unanimously. There is thus no supranational element that restricts the sovereignty of the Nordic states. Nordic cooperation is consequently formally limited to a policy of the smallest common denominator, which severely restricts the scope of action and the effectiveness of joint Nordic initiatives. The Council of Ministers further oversees over 30 research institutes, which facilitate the development of special expertise in areas such as innovation, the environment and climate in the Nordic states.



Meeting of the Nordic Prime Ministers in October 2015: Nordic cooperation is an important cornerstone of Finnish foreign, economic and security policy. | Source: © Jens Noergaard Larsen, picture alliance/Scanpix Denmark.

Nordic cooperation realised at the level of the Nordic Councils is particularly intensive in areas such as environment and climate policy, regional development, innovation, culture and gender equality. Foreign policy and security policy were officially excluded from the cooperation when the Nordic Council was founded in consideration of the restrictions imposed by the Cold War, diverging foreign-policy interests of the individual states and particularly Finland and Sweden's commitment to non-alignment. So far, any attempts to formally include these policy areas in a Nordic Defence Union have failed.¹⁵ However, the Nordic states do cooperate in this area on an informal basis.

15 | Cf. Etzold, n. 6, p. 4.

In November 2009, the informal defence cooperation activities, which had been taking place for some time, were combined and formalised in a joint cooperation framework, Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO). NORDEFCO currently involves cooperation in areas such as strategic development of military hardware, basic military training and other training measures, and joint operations in international crisis management under EU and UN control. The aim is to create synergy effects and enhance the national defence capabilities. However, in terms of practical implementation the military cooperation is still in its infancy.¹⁶

Extensive task sharing in the defence sector and the associated creation of dependencies among the Nordic states are particularly hampered by the fact that Finland and Sweden are not members of NATO. However, the two countries already cooperate closely with the NATO. They have been part of the "Partnership for Peace" program since 1994 and have been involved in various NATO missions such as the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. At the NATO summit in Wales, which took place on 5 September 2014, Finland and Sweden signed a "Host Nation Support"

agreement, which allows for military support being provided to both countries by NATO in the event of crises. In Finland, calls for the country to join NATO are becoming louder in

In response to increasing military provocations on the part of Russia in the Baltic, calls for the country to join NATO are becoming louder in Finland.

response to increasing military provocations on the part of Russia in the Baltics. However, opinions on this issue are anything but unanimous – both at the political level and among the population. The Centre Party and the Social Democrats in particular are still predominantly opposed to the idea, while Alexander Stubb, former Finnish Prime Minister and member of the National Coalition Party explicitly endorses NATO membership.¹⁷ A number of different scenarios are currently under discussion. Sipilä further announced in his government program that he would produce a report on Finnish security and defence policy, evaluating the possible implications of NATO accession.¹⁸ For now, however, Finland is responsible for its own defence and has to rely on the goodwill of the NATO states. There is also some uncertainty about the interplay

16 | Cf. Tobias Etzold/Christian Opitz, "Zwischen Allianzfreiheit und Einbindung", *SWP-Aktuell* 33, Apr 2015, p. 4, http://swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/aktuell/2015A33_etz_opt.pdf (accessed 13 Oct 2015).

17 | Cf. Richard Milne, "Once a taboo, Nato membership now a hot topic in Finland", *Financial Times*, 17 Apr 2015, <http://on.ft.com/1LI1i7g> (accessed 1 Aug 2015).

18 | Cf. Prime Minister's Office Finland, n. 11, p. 37.

between the EU and NATO in the event of a military conflict on Finnish sovereign territory. One can therefore assume for the time being that defence cooperation will concentrate mainly on joint training missions as well as joint participation in international crisis management and peacekeeping operations.



Finnish ISAF troops: Although the country is not a member of the alliance, it provided troops for NATO's mission. | Source: © Markku Ulander, picture alliance/dpa.

Within this context, there is particularly intensive cooperation taking place between Finland and Sweden. In May 2014, the two countries signed an action plan for greater defence cooperation, which includes not only joint training missions and proposals for joint air and sea monitoring but also envisages the joint use of military infrastructures and the establishment of joint military units.¹⁹ However, what form this closer cooperation will take in detail remains to be seen.

Within international organisations such as the EU, the Nordic states still do not present themselves as a united Nordic block. While the Nordic heads of government have held meetings before important EU summits since 2001, these have been more about information sharing than about a detailed coordination of

19 | Cf. Government Offices of Sweden, "Defence Cooperation between Finland and Sweden", 19 May 2015, <http://government.se/t/80423/en> (accessed 10 Aug 2015).

positions and agreement on a joint strategic policy approach.²⁰ Traditionally, Nordic cooperation has instead been particularly strong in the areas of pooling and sharing of resources and conducting joint projects and missions in the Nordic region or in third states. Prominent examples of joint regional projects include the early implementation of a joint passport union and a joint labour market in the 1950s as well as agreements on welfare and on the rights to vote in local elections. At the international level, the Nordic states have also cooperated intensively in civil crisis management and development cooperation during and after the Cold War, particularly by participating in joint missions under the auspices of the UN. The countries pursued this mode of cooperation because it does not affect their sovereignty and is compatible with the asymmetrical memberships of the Nordic countries in various institutions and organisations. At the same time, it takes into account the small countries' limited resources in terms of manpower, finances and administration and is in line with research on how small and medium-sized states can maximise their influence.

At the international level, the Nordic states have cooperated intensively in civil crisis management and development cooperation under the auspices of the UN.

There has also been an intensification of cooperation between the Nordic and the Baltic states. In the 1990s, the Nordic states provided crucial support to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia with their preparations for EU accession. Since then, there has been a loose form of cooperation in existence between the Baltic and Nordic states, which has been referred to as the "five-plus-three" model and later the "Nordic Baltic Eight" (NB8). Besides regular meetings of the heads of government – particularly before sessions of the European Council – the Nordic states take an active part in regional cooperation formats such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Since 2014, there has also been an agreement on defence cooperation between NORDEFCO and the Baltic states, which allows for the Baltic states to take part in all NORDEFCO initiatives.²¹

20 | Cf. Peter Viggo Jakobsen, "Small States, Big Influence: The Overlooked Nordic Influence on the Civilian ESDP", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Jan 2009, p. 93.

21 | Cf. Marko Lehti, "Baltic Europe", in: Kenneth Dyson/Angelos Sepos (eds.), *Which Europe? The Politics of Differentiated Integration*, Basingstoke, New York, 2010, p. 133.

A COMMITTED MEMBER OF THE EU

Finland is frequently called the “model pupil of the EU”.²² Since it joined the EU in 1995, the country has taken part in all significant integration measures and has advocated well-resourced and transparent EU institutions, particularly a strong European Commission – albeit insisting on consistent application of the subsidiarity principle.²³ Finland is a member of the euro area and has

As a “small” country at Europe’s periphery, which shares a border with Russia, Finland considers the EU as the guarantor for its military and economic interests.

not negotiated any opt-outs in other policy areas. From the beginning, the country made special efforts to be part of the inner circle of the EU and to present itself as a proactive and constructive EU member state contrib-

uting to decision-making processes, in contrast to its passive role during the Cold War.²⁴ As a “small” country at Europe’s periphery, which shares a border with Russia, Finland considers the EU as the guarantor for safeguarding its military and economic interests as well as the influence of “small” and “medium-sized” states at the European and global level. This is how the former Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen expressed it in 2000: “Through the EU even small states can influence European and world developments on the basis of equality. Without EU-membership we would be a bystander in these days when the new Europe is being built.”²⁵ By contrast, the other Nordic states have a reputation of being “selective supranationalists” or “hesitant Europeans”.²⁶ Norway and Iceland are not members of the EU but cooperate closely with the EU in numerous areas. Denmark is exempted from the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union and from the defence element of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). While Sweden formally takes part in all stages of integration, it has so far not adopted the euro.

In the course of the economic and financial crisis, however, Finland’s reputation as a model European began to crumble, at the latest by the time the nationalists of the Finns Party made serious gains during the 2011 parliamentary elections. As a result,

22 | Cf. Tobias Etzold/Pawel Tokarski, “Neue Mitte-Rechts-Regierung in Finnland”, *SWP-Aktuell* 57, Jun 2015, p. 1, http://swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/aktuell/2015A57_etz_tks.pdf (accessed 13 Oct 2015).

23 | Cf. Prime Minister’s Office Finland, n. 11, p. 34.

24 | Cf. Iso-Markku/Joleka, n. 5, p. 30.

25 | Quoted from Tiilikainen, n. 1, p. 79.

26 | Lee Miles, “Nordic Europe”, in: Kenneth Dyson/Angelos Sepos (eds.), *Which Europe? The Politics of Differentiated Integration*, Basingstoke, New York, 2010, p. 197.

Finland demanded collaterals from Greece and Spain in exchange for Finnish participation in the rescue packages offered to those countries.²⁷ In the eurozone, Finland is considered a “euro hawk” and frequently pursues an even harder line than Germany within the group of creditor states. The country argues against any form of debt mutualisation and would like to see the Commission’s leeway in assessing compliance with deficit and debt rules reduced. The lenient approach taken by Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker towards deficit rule violations by France and Italy has been met with severe criticism in Finland, expressing Finnish concerns “large” and “small” states are not treated by equal standards.²⁸

As a small and open economy, Finland is a vociferous advocate for deepening the European Single Market. European trade is particularly crucial for the Finnish economy as it lost one of its most important export markets when the Soviet Union collapsed and trade with Russia underwent a further serious downturn because of the EU sanctions policy and Russia’s countersanctions. Nevertheless, after some initial hesitation, Finland is now a staunch supporter of the EU sanctions policy.

As a small and open economy, Finland is a vociferous advocate for deepening the European Single Market.

Finland – in collaboration with Sweden – is very active in the CSDP, particularly by participating in numerous EU missions in the context of international crisis management. One achievement resulting from concerted action of the two countries is the incorporation of the Petersburg Tasks, the civilian dimension of crisis management, into the Amsterdam Treaty. Furthermore, together with five other states, Finland and Sweden constitute the EU Nordic Battle Group, with Sweden providing the majority of the 2,400 troops, 1,900 troops in total.²⁹ Finland and Sweden also advocate for larger EU capacities in civilian crisis management and peacekeeping as well as stronger cooperation in the armaments industry and collaboration in the fight against terrorism, international crime and hybrid threats. They are also calling for the mutual assistance clause in the Lisbon Treaty (Article 42 (7) TEU) to be implemented and to be made binding in order to transform the EU into a system of collective security.³⁰ This is

27 | Cf. Iso-Markku/Joleka, n. 5.

28 | Cf. *ibid.*

29 | Besides Finland and Sweden, the Nordic Battle Group includes Norway, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ireland.

30 | Cf. Etzold/Opitz, n. 16, p. 3.

derived from the wish to become more involved in the provision of European security without entirely abandoning the status of military non-alignment.³¹

OUTLOOK

To best defend its national security interests against the backdrop of perceived threats from Russia and a difficult economic situation, Finland has announced its intention to engage in closer cooperation with the Nordic and Baltic states in the areas of foreign, security and defence policy – both within the region and within international organisations – and called for greater European cooperation in these areas. The country is thereby departing from its long-held policy of military non-alignment and pragmatic freedom of association within the EU, at least rhetorically, and seeks closer coordination and cooperation with its Nordic neighbours against the backdrop of Russian propaganda and repeated military violations of sovereign territory in the North.³² Whether and how these announcements will translate into more formalised Nordic cooperation remains to be seen.

In the medium and long term, greater Nordic cooperation and pooling of resources may not only help Finland and the Nordic states to consolidate their budgets and guarantee their defense capabilities. Nordic cooperation might also serve as a role model within the EU and help to systematically counter disintegrative tendencies: "Since the EU is in turmoil itself, regional cooperation within the Nordic framework could become more and more valuable. [...] [T]he [...] Nordic countries could contribute through their regional cooperation to the stabilization of the European integration process. Since the Nordic countries have found tangible solutions for some current and future challenges – due in large part to their cooperation – they could set an example for other European countries, helping them to solve their current problems."³³ The EU could build on existing cooperation structures of the Nordic states and benefit from the countries' expertise – in the area of security and defence as well as other areas such as energy policy, innovation, digitisation and regional development.

31 | Cf. Iso-Markku/Joleka, n. 5, p. 30.

32 | Cf. Christian Opitz, "Potentiale der nordisch-baltischen Sicherheitskooperation", *SWP-Aktuell* 69, Jul 2015, http://swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/aktuell/2015A69_opt.pdf (accessed 13 Oct 2015).

33 | Etzold, n. 6, p. 5.

SEARCH FOR THE THIRD BORDER

MONGOLIAN FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN RUSSIA AND CHINA

Daniel Schmücking

A country's foreign policy is determined substantially by its geographic size, the size of its population, its economic power and its location. Mongolia stands out with respect to all these aspects. It is considered to be the world's most sparsely populated state. Mining is the dominant business sector in this country, which is four times the size of Germany and has a population of only three million. Added to this is a challenging geostrategic location without access to the sea and with just two neighbours: Russia and China. Both neighbours have dominated the country at different times in its history. From the 17th century onwards, Mongolia was under Chinese rule as part of the Manchu Empire. It was not until 1911 that the Manchu dynasty was overthrown and Outer Mongolia declared independence. However, between 1915 and 1921, China regained sovereignty over the territories of the present Mongolian state. Shortly after this period, the country underwent the Communist Revolution aided by Russia. After the end of World War II, Mongolia developed into a highly subsidised satellite state of the USSR and pushed ahead with improvements in infrastructure development, education, healthcare, urbanisation and industrialisation with support from the Soviet Union.¹ Because of the Cold War, Mongolia remained politically and economically isolated and therefore of little interest to other powers.² Since the peaceful revolution of 1990, the country has succeeded in developing into an independent, democratic state with a market-based economy, leaving 300 years of periods of dominance by China and Russia behind. While the young democracy does have problems, such as corruption, a democratic deficit within the political parties and

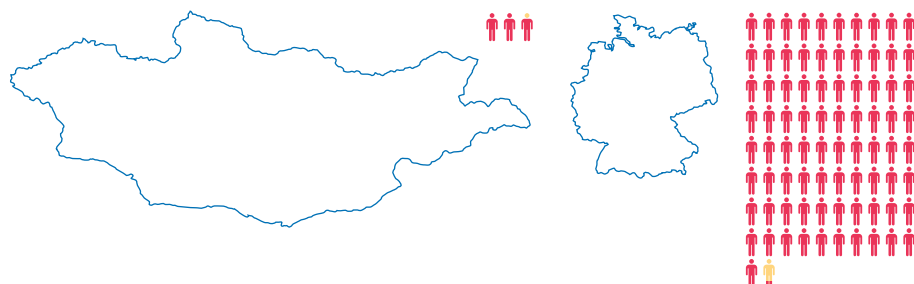


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- 1 | Cf. Verena Fritz, "Doppelte Transition in der Mongolei. Politischer und wirtschaftlicher Systemwechsel in einem postsozialistischen Entwicklungsland", *Osteuropa* 49, 1999, p.936.
- 2 | Cf. Mashbat Otgonbayar Sarlagtay, "Mongolia's Immediate Security Challenges: Implication to Defense Sector and The Regional Cooperation", *NIDS Joint Research Series*, Jul 2012, p. 105.

a low level of public engagement in politics, its foundations have remained solid.

Fig. 1
Mongolia in Comparison by Size



Mongolia

Area: 1,564,116 km²
Population: ca. 2.9 million

Germany

Area: 357,340.08 km²
Population: ca. 81.2 million

Source: Own illustration, © racken.

DILEMMAS FACING MONGOLIAN FOREIGN POLICY

The first aspect to consider is the country's significant economic dependence on its two neighbours. Mongolia sources 76 per cent of its gas and diesel from Russia. Conversely, only 1.4 per cent of Mongolian goods go to Russia. That said, Russia represents the third most important market for Mongolian products behind China (90 per cent) and Canada (3.6 per cent). China's dominance is less pronounced where imports are concerned. 37.8 per cent originate from China and 27.6 per cent from Russia.³ Trade relations with Western countries are of relatively little significance and are underdeveloped compared to the diplomatic relations. Only 0.3 per cent of Mongolian exports thus go to Germany, despite an agreement on cooperation in the extractive, industrial and technological sectors signed in 2011 in Ulaanbaatar by Angela Merkel and her counterpart Batbold.⁴ The agreement ranges from joint

3 | Cf. Gabriel Dominguez, "Mongolia's 'rebalance' towards Russia and China", *Deutsche Welle*, 2 Sep 2014, <http://dw.de/p/1D4eg> (accessed 2 Mar 2015).

4 | Cf. "Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Regierung der Mongolei über Zusammenarbeit im Rohstoff-, Industrie- und Technologiebereich, Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie", 13 Oct 2011, <https://www.bmwi.de/BMWi/Redaktion/PDF/A/abkommen-zwischen-brd-und-mongolei-zusammenarbeit-rohstoff-industrie-technologie,property=pdf,bereich=bmwi2012,sprache=de,rwb=true.pdf> (accessed 28 Sep 2015).

investigation, exploration, extraction and processing of raw materials and the creation of the corresponding infrastructure to the basic and further training of specialists. The outcome in terms of economic impact has been disappointing to date. Since the beginning of the downturn in the Mongolian economy in 2013, there has been hardly any trade in goods between the two countries (Mongolia's ranking on the list of imports to Germany in 2014: 150; ranking for exports: 121).⁵ A similarly negative picture emerges with respect to imports to Mongolia. Only 2.9 per cent of Mongolian imports come from Germany.⁶ The concentration on one economic sector makes the Mongolian economy vulnerable to crises. Mongolian exports are poorly diversified. Coal (26.3 per cent), copper concentrate (22.2 per cent), iron ore (15.3 per cent), crude oil (12.1 per cent), gold (7.3 per cent) and textiles (6.6 per cent) accounted for almost 90 per cent of all exports in 2013.⁷ When international raw material prices go down, as has happened recently, this has a very high impact on the Mongolian economy.

Secondly, the country is dependent on Russia and China in terms of infrastructure. There is a large modernisation deficit due to the fact that the Mongolian rail network is owned by the Ulaanbaatar Railway, a Mongolian-Russian joint venture. The Russian shareholders have so far refused to modernise the rail network.⁸ In the south, Mongolia depends on Chinese railway lines. Consequently there are two different track widths in Mongolia. This is an issue insofar as there are no through rail links from the Mongolian coal mines to China and the coal needs to be transferred at the border. This means that there are high transport and logistics costs attached to Mongolian raw materials. And the situation is exacerbated by the fact that Mongolia is landlocked and does not have access to the high seas.⁹

5 | Cf. German Trade and Invest, "Wirtschaftsdaten kompakt: Mongolei", May 2015, http://www.gtai.de/GTAI/Content/DE/Trade/Fachdaten/PUB/2015/05/pub201505292016_13556_wirtschaftsdaten-kompakt-mongolei-mai-2015.pdf (accessed 28 Sep 2015).

6 | Cf. Alexander Simoes, "Mongolia", *The Observatory of Economic Complexity*, <http://atlas.media.mit.edu/profile/country/mng> (accessed 2 Mar 2015).

7 | Germany Trade and Invest, "Mongolische Importe starten schwach ins Jahr 2014", 14 Jul 2014, <http://www.gtai.de/GTAI/Navigation/DE/Trade/maerkte,did=1048220.html> (accessed 26 Mar 2015).

8 | Cf. Sarlagtay, n. 2, p. 108.

9 | Cf. Ruth Kirchner, "Arme Menschen, reiches Land", *Tagesschau.de*, 4 Mar 2015, <http://tagesschau.de/ausland/mongolei-tourismus-101.html> (accessed 14 Apr 2015).

Fig. 2
Mongolia between Russia and China



Between giants: Although four times the size of Germany, Mongolia seems small in between Russia and China. | Source: Own illustration, © racken.

Thirdly, Mongolia is also highly dependent on its large neighbours for its security. From 1993, i.e. since the withdrawal of the Russian Army, the Mongolian military has been on its own where safeguarding national security is concerned. There are currently some 10,000 soldiers in active service and 130,000 reservists – low numbers compared to the neighbours. Men are obligated to do one year's compulsory military service.¹⁰ Securing the national borders (3,485 kilometers with Russia and 4,677 kilometers with China) is a great challenge. There are regular incursions by illegal Chinese settlers and immigrants across the southern border. There is also some illegal mining taking place.¹¹ Incursions from the north for the purpose of cattle or horse rustling are no rare occurrence either.¹²

10 | Cf. B. Khash-Erdene, "Men Born with Debt", *UB Post*, 23 Apr 2015, <http://ubpost.mongolnews.mn/?p=14315> (accessed 13 Oct 2015).

11 | Cf. Wayne Nelles, "Meeting basic needs, embracing the world and protecting the state", *Asian Perspective* 25, 2001, p. 214 ff.

12 | Cf. Valerij Niolaevic Scetinin, "Under the banner of Genghis Khan", *International Affairs* 42, May-Jun 1996, p. 137.

THIRD NEIGHBOUR POLICY AS A RESPONSE TO THE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Mongolia's foreign policy strategy has been influenced by the country's dependence on its large neighbours and the fear of being dominated by them. A process of re-orientation began in 1990. Mongolia was faced with the challenge of developing its own foreign policy and positioning itself in the arena of world affairs. The country made efforts to emancipate itself from being a mere object of Soviet foreign and security policy and develop into a self-reliant actor. The geopolitical interests that existed back in the socialist era, such as performing the role of a buffer zone between Russia and PR China as well as controlling the national borders, are no longer sufficient today for holding its own in the web of international relations. Having said that, Mongolia does have some security-related potential, which endows it with an importance over and above its economic significance.

By unilaterally declaring itself a "nuclear-weapon-free zone" (NWFZ) in 1992, Mongolia took a significant step into the international security policy arena. The striving for neutrality that this step reflects has been in evidence throughout the concept of Mongolian security policy since 1990. Mongolia prohibits the stationing or transit of foreign troops, nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destructions within its national territory. Basing its foreign policy on neutrality promised Mongolia the respect and esteem of the neighbouring states and simultaneously increased the value of its own geostrategic location. The country tried to transform the "necessity" of a state surrounded by major powers into a "virtue" of neutrality and therefore inviolability. The decision to declare the country a NWFZ met with international approval.¹³ The speedy and transparent manner in which the country defined its foreign and security policy after the political turnaround caused by the fall of the Iron Curtain earned Mongolia international recognition, which held promise for economic benefits as well.

Basing its foreign policy on neutrality promised Mongolia the respect and esteem of the neighbouring states and simultaneously increased the value of its own geostrategic location.

The goal of third neighbour policy is to balance out the direct influence of China and Russia by developing bilateral and multilateral relations with democratic countries in the areas of politics, business and culture. One of the important objectives is to improve

13 | Cf. Jargalsaikhany Enkhsaikhan, "Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. Concept and practice", *Asian Survey* 40, 2000, p. 342 ff.

the balance in foreign trade and direct investments.¹⁴ Mongolia's foreign policy strategy also includes maintaining good-neighbourly relations with Russia and China while making clear that independence, sovereignty and continuing development of the country can only be secured through diversification of its foreign policy. The country is thus attempting the difficult balancing act of engaging in bilateral and multilateral cooperation with economically strong democracies such as the EU, the USA and Japan¹⁵ in political, economic, cultural and humanitarian areas without alienating its large neighbours.¹⁶ Securing the country's existence is a central concern in all this, which mainly means preserving Mongolia's territorial integrity and the inviolability of its state borders.¹⁷

The country's efforts to diversify its foreign relations include its activities to further its bilateral relations with the USA, the EU, Japan and Kazakhstan as a representative of Central Asia. Diplomatic relations with the USA go back to 1987. The main objectives for the USA were initially the promotion of democracy and economic development. Investment and trade agreements were signed to this end. In 2013, the volume of U.S. exports to Mongolia contracted by 58 per cent (383 million U.S. dollars). Today, Mongolia's main significance for the U.S. is to be viewed in the context of the U.S. containment strategy against China. While Mongolian foreign policy adheres to the principle of the prohibition on foreign troops being stationed on its territory and its status as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, there are training agreements and modernisation programs in place that are funded by the USA. In the long term, the USA's interest in Mongolia has to do with the fact that radar stations on its territory can be used to monitor Russian and Chinese military movements.

The European Union has developed into Mongolia's third most important trading partner. As a liberal democracy, the country is an important partner for the EU in Asia. Most recently, this has brought about a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which was signed in 2013 during the visit by the EU High Representative.¹⁸ The purpose of this agreement is to extend cooperation to

14 | Cf. Institute for Strategic Studies, "National Security Concept of Mongolia" (unofficial translation), in: *National Security Concept of Mongolia: Challenges and Responses*, Ulaanbaatar, 2012, pp.82-109.

15 | Referred to as "third neighbour" in remainder of text.

16 | Cf. Institute for Strategic Studies, n.14, p.3.

17 | Cf. Sarlagtay, n.2., p.105.

18 | Cf. European External Action Service, "EU Relations with Mongolia", http://eeas.europa.eu/mongolia/index_en.htm (accessed 6 Apr 2015).

the sectors of energy, rural development, climate change and research. Regular political discussions are to be held at the same time. For Mongolia, the EU is not only an important partner because of such programs to boost its own economy but also within the context of its third neighbour policy. An agreement with the EU means recognition by and partnership with all 28 member states, which makes such agreements considerably more attractive than bilateral agreements.



Winners of a horse race: No other country in the world has so many horses proportional to its population. | Source: © M. Rutkiewicz, picture alliance/blickwinkel.

As the economic exchange between Mongolia and Japan is rather modest, Japan has been increasingly pursuing security interests in Mongolia. But for Mongolia, economic cooperation takes priority. Japan is also the largest provider of credit and funding in the area of development aid. In 2015, a trade agreement was signed that is intended to remove 90 per cent of customs tariffs between the two countries.¹⁹ On the international stage, Japan supports Mongolia at the UN. Both countries promote *détente* on the Korean Peninsula.

19 | Cf. Masaaki Kameda, "Japan, Mongolia sign economic partnership", *The Japan Times*, 11 Feb 2015, <http://japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/02/11/business/japan-mongolia-sign-economic-partnership> (accessed 2 Oct 2015).

The fact that relations between Mongolia and Kazakhstan have not progressed is mainly due to the latter's closeness to Russia.

There are several aspects Mongolia shares with Kazakhstan as the representative of Central Asia, namely the nomadic culture, the geographic location and the experiences from Soviet times. However, the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992 has not resulted in a deepening of economic and political relations. The trading volume amounts to a meagre 24 million U.S. dollars.²⁰ The fact that relations have not progressed further is mainly due to Kazakhstan's closeness to Russia, as Mongolia is intent on preserving its independence. The two countries have also moved further and further apart in the course of their respective transformation processes. That said, Mongolia does have an interest in Kazakhstan's technological edge in the energy sector and in wheat imports.

Besides bilateral relations, Mongolia is involved in numerous international initiatives and international organisations: UN, WHO, OSCE, ASEM, Freedom Online Coalition, IMF, World Bank, ADB, etc. One remarkable fact is that Mongolia has provided troops for a number of international peacekeeping missions under UN mandates since 2003: Iraq, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Western Sahara and DR Congo.²¹ Thanks to the successful peacekeeping missions, the Mongolian armed forces have asserted their *raison d'être* and gained public and political trust at the same time. The missions have demonstrated that the Mongolian military can fulfil an international remit. In addition, it has proved possible to build up and train the armed forces in peace time without unsettling the two neighbours. In addition, the peacekeeping missions represented a source of income to help with the urgently required modernisation of the armed forces.²² Mongolia is also involved in Asian cooperation activities, for example as a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum and as an observer at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.²³ In 2012, the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) with NATO further came into force.²⁴

20 | Cf. Brendan Miliate, "The steppes to the States", *East Asia Forum*, 30 Aug 2013, <http://eastasiaforum.org/2013/08/30/from-the-steppe-to-the-states> (accessed 28 Sep 2015).

21 | Cf. Udo Barkmann, "Die Mongolei und ihre dritten Nachbarn", *pmg Denkwürdigkeiten* 79, 2012, p. 12.

22 | Cf. Sarlagtay, n. 2, p. 109 ff.

23 | Cf. Barkmann, n. 21, p. 11 f.

24 | Cf. NATO, "NATO's cooperation with Mongolia", 23 Mar 2012, http://nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_85297.htm (accessed 23 Oct 2015).

Mongolia's diplomatic approach can be considered to have been successful. It is well-respected by the third neighbours. The country is considered a poster child for Western values where democracy and the free market economy are concerned, particularly given its geographic location. Despite misgivings on the part of China and Russia, Mongolia has been successful in establishing and expanding its international relations at a political level since independence – not least due to its geostrategically important location and its wealth of natural resources.

DISAPPOINTED ECONOMIC AND SECURITY-RELATED EXPECTATIONS

Despite the diplomatic achievements, Mongolia still has an issue in that its high standing among its third neighbours has not paid off in terms of enhanced security and economic cooperation. The third neighbour policy has not had a noticeable impact on the country's economic dependence on its large neighbours. Focusing its foreign trade activities on its neighbour China with its vast market demands was a logical approach to take and it has been crucial in helping to boost the economy.²⁵ At the same time, this approach meant that one clear economic objective of Mongolia's third neighbour policy was not achieved: direct investments by one nation should not make up more than a third of overall direct foreign investment.²⁶

The stagnation in the country's economic relations is partly self-inflicted, partly caused by the infrastructure problems as well as falling global market prices for raw materials.

Self-inflicted because new laws were adopted at the height of Mongolia's miraculous economic growth in 2011 (annual growth of 17.5 per cent),²⁷ which caused a reduction in

direct foreign investment.²⁸ The two laws with the largest impact were the windfall profits tax law and the law on foreign investments in strategic resources. In conjunction with other taxes, the windfall profit tax law produced an overall tax rate of 100 per cent

The two laws with the largest impact were the windfall profits tax law and the law on foreign investments in strategic resources.

25 | Cf. Jürgen Kahl, "Schnelles Ende der Bonanza. Ernüchterung folgt in der Mongolei auf die Euphorie", *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 24 Mar 2015, <http://nzz.ch/1.18508468> (accessed 13 Oct 2015).

26 | Cf. Institute for Strategic Studies, n. 14, p. 6.

27 | Cf. The World Bank, "Mongolia", <http://worldbank.org/en/country/mongolia> (accessed 2 Mar 2015).

28 | Cf. Jürgen Kahl, "Rohstoffreiche Mongolei. Monopoly um mongolische Bodenschätze", *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 2 Aug 2012, <http://nzz.ch/1.17426823> (accessed 13 Oct 2015).

on profits in mining. The law on foreign investments in strategic resources adopted in 2012 had been intended to prevent Chinese state-owned enterprises taking over Mongolian businesses. However, the law also affected all other foreign companies.²⁹ The laws were adopted by means of a fast-track procedure without employer associations being consulted. The lack of transparency of the legislative process and the high levels of taxation had the effect of driving investors away. Back in 2012, direct foreign investment amounted to 4.4 billion U.S. dollars; but by mid-2013, the figure had reduced by half to 2.1 billion U.S. dollars. According to estimates by the World Bank, only 0.9 billion U.S. dollars are likely to have flowed into the country in 2014.³⁰

It is also unlikely that the third neighbour policy has improved Mongolia's security situation. When one looks at it dispassionately, it was not to be expected either. The influence of external factors, such as the balance between the two major powers, will ultimately define Mongolia's security. Or put another way: Mongolian security policy has little chance of being independent.³¹

The country's use of foreign policy resources could probably be improved. Mongolia likes to offer its services for hosting international conferences, for instance, although these entail substantial organisational and financial challenges. People are looking forward to the 2016 ASEM Summit in Ulaanbaatar with some trepidation. The hosts are already worrying about whether there will be sufficient hotel capacity available for the guests of state. There is also some uncertainty about where the government planes will be accommodated. The new airport is not scheduled for completion until the following year.

In summary, Mongolia has remained rather insignificant in geopolitical and economic terms. As the third neighbour policy has not brought about the expected progress, the search is on for alternatives. There are basically only two: either Mongolia actively pursues cooperation with its large neighbours or it continues to

29 | Cf. U.S. Embassy in Mongolia, "2015 Investment Climate Statement", May 2015, <http://mongolia.usembassy.gov/ics2015.html> (accessed 28 Sep 2015).

30 | Cf. Germany Trade and Invest, "Wirtschaftsboom in der Mongolei kühlt ab", 16 Jan 2015, <http://www.gtai.de/GTAI/Navigation/DE/Trade/maerkte,did=1153750.html> (accessed 3 Mar 2015).

31 | Cf. Damba Ganbat, "National Security Concept of Mongolia: Basic Principle", *NIDS Joint Research Series* 11, 2014, p.92, http://www.nids.go.jp/english/publication/joint_research/series11/pdf/09.pdf (accessed 13 Oct 2015).

choose the onerous path of third neighbour policy. From a European perspective, the second is the preferable alternative, as some economic potential does exist and as Mongolian democracy could exert a positive effect on other Asian countries. There are already some Mongolian initiatives to further democracy in countries such as Myanmar and Kyrgyzstan. But for such efforts to be effective a greater willingness to engage in economic cooperation with Mongolia will be required, particularly on the European-German side as well as higher levels of reliability and investor protection on the Mongolian side. Currently, the Mongolian understanding of negotiations, contractual fidelity and project implementation do not conform to Western-European or international standards, a situation that has resulted in a loss of trust in the past. But as these problems are entirely of Mongolia's making, they can ultimately be overcome.



Political meeting in the "State Yurt": To support Mongolia's third neighbour policy a greater willingness to engage in economic cooperation on the European side is required. | Source: © Soeren Stache, picture alliance/dpa.

ALTERNATIVE ONE: TURNING BACK TOWARDS THE LARGE NEIGHBOURS

Mongolia's strengthening orientation back towards its large neighbours was illustrated symbolically by the two closely scheduled and well-choreographed state visits in 2014 by Xi Jinping (21 and 22 August) and Vladimir Putin (3 September). In April 2015, President Elbegdorj took stock of his foreign policy in a statement

made at the Mongolian parliament, stressing the importance of the two large neighbours. He stated that the focus of Mongolian foreign policy was not directed far into the distance but at the immediate neighbouring states. Relations with Russia and China therefore played the most important role in Mongolian foreign policy. The visits by Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin the previous year had been a great success. The numerous agreements now had to be implemented.³²

One fundamental point to remember in this context is that stronger cooperation with the large neighbours particularly in the economic area would virtually mean Mongolia relinquishing its independence. Chinese influence in particular is already enormous. For that reason alone and due to developments in Inner Mongolia as a part of China, the Mongolian population harbours substantial

Fears and prejudices of historical origin mix with apprehension about current developments, which many Mongolians regard as threatening.

feelings of resentment against China, which has occasionally resulted in physical attacks on Chinese people.³³ Although the two sides describe one another as friends and praise their good relations, these are anything but free from tension. Fears and prejudices of historical origin mix with apprehension about current developments, which many Mongolians regard as threatening. This unease includes, for instance, the fear of losing their own culture and their land through the increasing dominance of the overpowering neighbour. The fact that the majority of Mongolian commodities are exported to China strengthens the case of those who criticise the fact that the mineral resources are being sold off cheaply.

The fears on the Mongolian side are not unfounded. In the collective memory of the Chinese, "Outer Mongolia" is part of Chinese national territory. China also has sufficient population numbers to swiftly populate the territories of Mongolia, at least theoretically. Furthermore, Mongolia losing its independence would rob Russia of an irreplaceable strategic advantage. Mongolia would lose its buffer function against the population pressure exerted from China on Russia's Siberian territories that are rich in raw materials. One needs to bear in mind that the Chinese efforts to exert influence are fundamentally defensive and governed by the notion of wishing to save face. There are already clear indications of Chinese influence in the areas of business and infrastructure.³⁴

32 | Cf. press review of *Deutsches Radios Ulaanbaatar*, Issue 15, 2015, 17 Apr 2015.

33 | Cf. Kahl, n. 28.

34 | Cf. Barkmann, n. 21, p. 9.

Russia's reputation, by contrast, is somewhat more positive. This is remarkable insofar as the period spent as a de facto Soviet republic only dates back 25 years. To this day, people connect the country's modernisation with Russia's influence. The Soviet Union had built houses and schools and ensured a relatively high level of education, with the literacy rate rising to 96 per cent by 1990.³⁵ At that time, the disparities between rich and poor, which are increasingly manifest today, did not exist. One of the reasons in favour of turning towards Russia no doubt also lies in the fact that no adequate efforts have been made to come to terms with the country's own past. There has been no intensive public discourse. Nevertheless, the relationship between the two countries suffers from mutual distrust. As Russia is likely to experience problems in developing its Siberian territories for years to come, sovereign Mongolia will remain an important component in the Russian security concept. It is therefore in Russia's interest to strengthen Mongolia's independence and sovereignty.³⁶

One of the reasons in favour of turning towards Russia no doubt also lies in the fact that no adequate efforts have been made to come to terms with the country's own past.

One noteworthy point is that Mongolians cite Russia (72.3 per cent) rather than China (21.7 per cent) when asked which would make for a promising and reliable partner. The fact that connections with Europe are rated even lower (11.3 per cent) than those with China adds to the sobering image of the impact of the third neighbour policy.³⁷

The good intention of developing relations with the neighbours in a balanced manner has been undermined by China's dominance as a trading partner. Imports from Russia to Mongolia are almost exclusively limited to oil products. Russia is not above leveraging the dependence in this area to apply political pressure. Thanks to its own reserves of mineral resources, the Mongolian raw material wealth has not been sufficiently attractive.³⁸ This inevitably led to an imbalance developing in Mongolia's relations with its two neighbours. Re-orientation towards Russia and China therefore begs the question: which neighbour is Mongolia likely to prefer over the other? Misgivings about China and sympathy towards

35 | Cf. UNDP, "Human Development Report Mongolia", 1997, p. 9, <http://www.mn.undp.org/content/dam/mongolia/Publications/NHDSReports/mhdr1997eng.pdf> (accessed 28 Sep 2015).

36 | Cf. Barkmann, n. 21, p. 9.

37 | Cf. Study conducted by the Sant Maral Foundation. Average values from the period 2007 to 2014. Multiple answers were possible.

38 | Cf. Barkmann, n. 21, p. 13.

Russia can logically only result in Mongolia looking for stronger links with Russia in order to curb Chinese influence, in the areas of both the economy and culture.



Changing the wheels: The Trans-Mongolian Railway is part of the shortest railway from Moscow to Beijing. | Source: © Jeremy Hainsworth, picture alliance/AP Photo.

One opportunity may derive from the fact that Putin is focusing his attention increasingly on Asia due to the European sanctions resulting from the Ukraine crisis.³⁹ Mongolia's recent economic slump is also encouraging closer links between the two countries. During Vladimir Putin's visit in 2014, an agreement was made to intensify relations in areas including business, infrastructure, the military and technology. The aim is to develop the existing cooperation into a true strategic partnership through greater collaboration. The mutual visa requirement introduced in 1995 was lifted in January 2015 and replaced by a visa waiver for stays of up to 30 days.⁴⁰ Not only does this boost tourism, it also above all facilitates access to the Mongolian market for Russian businesspeople. While the volume of trade between the two countries fell by 16 per cent to 1.6 billion U.S. dollars from 2012 to 2013, it is forecast to rise to ten billion U.S. dollars by 2020.

39 | Cf. *ibid.*, p. 16.

40 | Cf. Embassy of Mongolia to the United States of America, "List of Countries and Regions without Visa", <http://mongolianembassy.us/list-of-countries-and-regions-with-no-visa-2> (accessed 28 Sep 2015).

ALTERNATIVE TWO: A MORE FOCUSED THIRD NEIGHBOUR POLICY

The problems and setbacks experienced with the third neighbour policy have been outlined. But there is no true alternative. As past experience shows, the power imbalance in the region threatens to make Mongolia once again the pawn of one of the two large nations. The large neighbours exerting even greater influence over it cannot be in Mongolia's interest. This would sooner or later result in a de facto loss of independence. However, a fundamental decision in favour of the third neighbour policy would require some changes in Mongolia's approach to its political, legislative and economic activities. Diplomatic efforts, for instance, should go hand in hand with economic initiatives to establish greater links between the economies of Mongolia and those of Western countries. This would simultaneously have a real impact in weakening the influence of both China and Russia. The fact that Mongolia has not been able to satisfy the mineral resource interests of Western industrialised nations – and particularly European ones – is due to Mongolia's poor infrastructure and unsatisfactory investor protection.

There is also a lack of alignment between individual policy areas. Diplomacy, economic cooperation and domestic policy could be better coordinated. The expropriation of foreign investors may be a pragmatic domestic policy decision, but it results in foreign investors becoming more cautious or even withdrawing completely. A holistic view taking in all the different policy areas could make for a more effective third neighbour policy.

The expropriation of foreign investors may be a pragmatic domestic policy decision, but it results in foreign investors becoming more cautious or even withdrawing completely.

It is similarly important to use the diplomatic resources, modest as they are in such a small country, to good effect. This will require clear objectives to be set for the country's foreign policy combined with an agenda on how to achieve these objectives. In principle, Mongolians consider all states other than Russia and China third neighbours. The third neighbours with which Mongolia maintains good diplomatic relations range from Germany to North Korea. The indiscriminate assignment of the term third neighbour does have the decisive advantage that the two large neighbours Russia and China are not at all concerned that Mongolia is aligning itself too much with the EU and NATO.

European countries also have an interest in Mongolia continuing with its third neighbour policy. Firstly, Mongolia can become an important partner in the future fight for natural resources. It would be a worst-case scenario for Europe if Mongolia were to overcome its problems in terms of infrastructure and investor protection, yet vast parts of its raw material deposits had already gone to China.

Despite deficits, Mongolia is making resounding commitments to democracy and the market economy and regularly requests support from the West with its development efforts.

Secondly, Mongolia can become an important beacon for European values in Asia. To date, the performance of Mongolian democracy has not come up to European standards.

Nevertheless, Mongolia is making resounding commitments to democracy and the market economy and regularly requests support from the West with its development efforts. If the European Union wants to be more than an economic union, namely a community of interests based on values, Mongolia can become an important poster child in Asia, promoting these values. This will, however, require Mongolia to continue on its present course and the European Union to honour these efforts to improve democracy and the rule of law in the country more strongly through economic cooperation initiatives as well.

Thirdly, Mongolia is of interest to the Western countries in terms of security because of its location between China and Russia and because of its proximity to the Islamic countries of Central Asia. For the EU and the USA, Mongolia offers the opportunity of gaining a foothold in a region that was closed to them until 1990. As recently as the 1990s, collaboration between NATO and Mongolia was out of the question. At that time, the fear that this may irritate one of its large neighbours was too great.⁴¹ Today, cooperation between NATO, the OSCE and the EU works well. There is still a danger, though, of arousing the concern of the large neighbours without ultimately enhancing Mongolia's security.

CONCLUSION

Because of the country's high dependence on its two large neighbours in the areas of commerce, infrastructure and security, Mongolian foreign policy is a difficult balancing act. On the one hand, there is a need for Mongolia to diversify its political and economic relations. On the other hand, it requires good cooperation with its two neighbours, despite the fact that both dominated Mongolia in the past. Mongolia's foreign policy is consequently coloured by

41 | Cf. Sarlagtay, n.2, p.111.

the fear that this may be the case again in the future. The third neighbour policy therefore represented a logical decision, and there is no alternative to it despite the economic and security-related expectations placed in it not yet having materialised. Having said that, there are numerous opportunities of making the third neighbour policy more effective and at the same time intensifying economic relations with Western democracies: improving investor protection, focusing more clearly on economically strong democracies in the third neighbour policy, and maintaining a high level of engagement with international organisations. President Elbegdorj recently brought into play one possible way of developing the third neighbour policy further and thereby protecting the country's independence for the long term. At the beginning of September 2015, he argued that Mongolia should adopt the status of a permanently neutral state.⁴² In doing so, he held out the prospect of further diversification in Mongolia's foreign relations. Maintaining neutrality in the sense of having good relations with all can secure a country's independence. But in that case, the diversification of political relations must be complemented by economic relations. In future, Mongolia's relations with its large and third neighbours will be defined by competition among those countries for the country's strategic resources. Ultimately, Mongolia must overcome the above-mentioned challenges and take advantage of the major powers competing for its raw materials for its own ends. That will offer Mongolia a chance of maintaining its national security and independence. Failing to overcome the challenges, by contrast, may mean an end to Mongolia's independence.⁴³

42 | Cf. President Tsakhia Elbegdorj, "Mongolia – Neutrality", *InfoMongolia.com*, 7 Sep 2015, <http://infomongolia.com/ct/ci/9695> (accessed 28 Sep 2015).

43 | Cf. Sarlagtay, n. 2, p. 107.

MICROSTATE AND SUPERPOWER

THE VATICAN IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

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At the end of September, Pope Francis met with a triumphal reception in the United States. But while he performed the first canonisation on U.S. soil in Washington and celebrated mass in front of two million faithful in Philadelphia, the attention focused less on the religious aspects of the trip than on the Pope's visits to the sacred halls of political power. On these occasions, the Pope acted less in the role of head of the Church, and therefore a spiritual one, and more in the role of diplomatic actor. In New York, he spoke at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit and at the 70th General Assembly. In Washington, he was the first pope ever to give a speech at the United States Congress, which received widespread attention. This was remarkable in that Pope Francis himself is not without his detractors in Congress and he had, probably intentionally, come to the USA directly from a visit to Cuba, a country that the United States has a difficult relationship with.



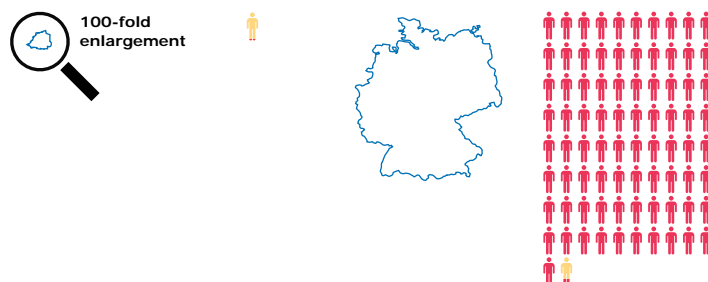
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Since the election of Pope Francis in 2013, the Holy See has come to play an extremely prominent role in the arena of world politics. The reasons for this enhanced media visibility firstly have to do with the person, the agenda and the biography of this first non-European Pope. The charismatic leadership by the head of the Church is indeed of great importance for the international agenda setting of the Holy See – and thereby an important prerequisite for the effectiveness of its foreign policy. However, based on its special role on the stage of world politics, the Holy See also has foreign policy resources and networks available that should not be underestimated. The Holy See has, in fact, been involved in central decision-making and events of world politics for a long time, acting patiently behind the scenes, particularly since the middle of the 20th century.

This article will attempt to shed some light on the phenomenon of Vatican foreign policy.¹ It will focus neither on the theological foundations nor the sources of legitimisation of the Holy See's foreign policy. Instead, the authors will seek to try to describe how Vatican foreign policy is shaped and what impact it has on the basis of some historical and current examples. We shall start by defining some key terms, to be used as the basis for subsequent explanations (I). In order to provide a better understanding of the current situation, we shall outline some features of Vatican foreign policy before the demise of the Papal States (II) as well as in the 20th century (III). Subsequently, we shall illustrate the Holy See's current foreign policy on the basis of five policy areas (IV) before attempting to draw some conclusions with respect to the resources and modes of operation of the Holy See's foreign policy (V).

Fig. 1

The Vatican in Comparison by Size



Vatican

Area: 0,44 km²

Population: 842

Germany

Area: 357,340.08 km²

Population: ca. 81.2 million

Source: Own illustration, © racken.

I. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

HOLY SEE, VATICAN CITY, CATHOLIC CHURCH, POPE

In everyday usage, the term *Vatican* usually refers to the territorially defined Vatican City State or the Roman Curia as its administrative apparatus (in the narrow sense also the buildings around Saint Peter's Square in Rome). But in foreign policy reporting, the term is also frequently used for the Holy See, which is the actual

1 | The scope covered must, however, remain limited, excluding the parallel diplomacy of the Catholic orders as well as the influence of the international Bishops' Conferences and only mentioning the foreign policy activities of the implementation organisations closely linked to the Holy See, such as Caritas, in passing.

subject in international law. "Vatican" is therefore a collective term. In this article, we only use it when we want to refer to the Holy See as an actor in international diplomacy, particularly in the context of "Vatican foreign policy".

As mentioned above, the *Holy See* is the actual subject of international law, not the territorially defined Vatican State. The term does, however, also refer to the episcopal see of the diocese of Rome and therefore in the narrow sense to the Pope himself, but in the wider sense also to his Curia. In 2007, the British newspaper *The Economist* described the Holy See as the "biggest non-governmental organisation in the world" and called upon it to renounce its "diplomatic status".² But to regard the Holy See exclusively as a political actor does not come easy. It is not only a civil society actor, in this case a religious-symbolic one (similar to the national churches), but also a

The Holy See is not only a religious-symbolic actor, but also a subject of international law, with full diplomatic recognition by the states of the world.

subject of international law, i.e. a state and government body with autonomy of action on the world stage and with full diplomatic recognition by almost all states around the

world, far more than just the states with a predominantly Catholic population.³ The Holy See itself has one of the most close-knit networks of foreign representations in the world: it is represented in 188 states by 176 nuncios, ten delegates and two representatives with special status. At the multilateral level, the Holy See further maintains diplomatic relations with the European Union and has permanent observer status at various organisations such as the United Nations, UNESCO, the WHO, the Council of Europe and the African Union.

In international law, the Holy See is a "non-governmental sovereign power", the only instance in international law where a natural person (the Pope) is accorded the status of a subject of international law by virtue of their current office, which is not derived from a higher-level subject of international law (such as a state). In international relations, the Holy See represents the secular *Vatican City State* – which is not identical to the historical Papal

2 | "Papal diplomacy: God's ambassadors", *The Economist*, 19 Jul 2007, <http://econ.st/JwPOu3> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

3 | Mariano Barbato, "Licht der Welt? Der Heilige Stuhl in der postsäkularen Weltgesellschaft", in: Ines-Jacqueline Werkner/Oliver Hidalgo (eds.), *Religionen – Global Player in der internationalen Politik?*, Wiesbaden, 2014, pp. 111-140. Only Afghanistan, China, Mauritius, Somalia and Saudi Arabia currently do not maintain diplomatic relations with the Holy See, Vietnam only to a limited extent.

States. The City State is an absolute elective monarchy, with the Pope as head of state and government. However, the Vatican City State does not appear on the political stage. Foreign diplomats are accredited directly to the Holy See. The purpose of the Apostolic Nunciatures is to represent the Holy See abroad and not the spiritual leadership of the Catholic Church or the territorial state of Vatican City with a potential claim to secular power. This City State is the world's smallest independent state with a mere 44 hectares of land area and a population of currently 842. Vatican City only has very limited financial resources, but enjoys enormous symbolic power at a religious, cultural and social level.

Vatican City only has very limited financial resources, but enjoys enormous symbolic power at a religious, cultural and social level.

This power is based on the territorial, historical, theological and political link between Vatican City and the *Catholic Church*. Particularly in the second half of the 20th century, the Catholic Church has developed into a true global player due to the strong global population growth. With the world population having doubled since the 1970s, the proportion of Catholics has remained stable in percentage terms as the membership of the Catholic Church has grown at a disproportionately high rate particularly in the Global South, balancing out the continuous fall in numbers in the Western world. Today, some 20 per cent of the world population are Catholic, 50 per cent of them living in North and South America, 25 per cent in Europe, over 15 per cent in Africa (with numbers rising) as well as a little over ten per cent in Asia.⁴ When one looks at those figures, one can say that the Catholic Church with close to 1.2 billion members represents the largest organisation in the world – which adds to the importance of the Vatican's foreign policy.

The hybrid role the *Pope* plays in foreign policy is due particular consideration. He fulfils several organisational, diplomatic and religious functions by holding a number of offices: head of state (of Vatican City), head of government and head of the government

4 | By comparison: 32 per cent of the world population are Christian (including Protestants and Orthodox), 17 per cent are Muslim. Cf. Segreteria di Stato (ed.), *Annuario Pontificio 2012*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2012. See also Giuseppe Nardi, "32 Prozent der Weltbevölkerung sind Christen, 84 Prozent gehören einer Weltreligion an", *Katholisches.info*, 20 Dec 2012, <http://katholisches.info/2012/12/20/32-prozent-der-weltbevölkerung-sind-christen-84-prozent-gehören-einer-weltreligion-an> (accessed 15 Oct 2015); Barbato, n. 3, pp. 120-121.

administration (the Curia), sovereign subject of international law (embodiment of the Holy See) and head of the Catholic Church (Papal Supremacy as Bishop of Rome). These roles are not always clearly distinguishable to outsiders because they tend to overlap in practice.



St. Peter's Square: Not only Catholics follow the performances and activities of the Pope. Through media coverage the Pope's message reaches also people of other religions and atheists worldwide. | Source: © Vandeville Eric, picture alliance/abaca.

II. BEFORE THE DEMISE OF THE PAPAL STATES: CLASSIC PROFILE OF INTERESTS AND SECULARISATION OF FOREIGN POLICY

The Investiture Controversy (1076 to 1122), which resulted in the definitive separation of Church and state in Europe, represented a step change, affecting the universal claim to power of the Holy See (also in foreign policy matters).⁵ However, for a better understanding of the foreign policy history, we need to take a look at an earlier process: the "territorialisation" of the Papal States underlying the Holy See's striving for secular power. The associated foreign policy interests and instruments had significant consequences for the relationship between Church and state powers and their projection within Italy, Europe and beyond.

5 | This is a key event in the European history of freedom. Cf. Heinrich August Winkler, *Die Geschichte des Westens. Von den Anfängen in der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, 4th edition, Munich, 2015.

Since their establishment in the 8th century,⁶ the Papal States had developed into a fundamentally typical territorial state with the corresponding interests (not least territorial) and instruments of power projection (not least military). The Holy See had thereby risen to become a political actor in the arena of medieval powers, albeit with the difference that its secular and spiritual powers were inextricably linked and reinforced each other.

The Holy See had risen to become a political actor in the arena of medieval powers, albeit with the difference that its secular and spiritual powers were inextricably linked and reinforced each other.

The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 established the concept of co-existing sovereign nation states; this had the effect of challenging the exclusive secular and spiritual mandate of the Holy See not only in domestic but also in foreign policy matters.

The loss of secular power from the middle of the 17th century as well as the limited power resources of the Papal States combined with the continued strengthening of the nation states caused the influence of the Holy See in matters of foreign policy to steadily diminish, forcing it increasingly onto the defensive. The French Revolution initiated a process that ultimately resulted in the demise of the actual Papal States.⁷ Particularly in the Napoleonic era, the Papal States suffered political and territorial losses. Despite various reforming endeavours, they were among the socio-economically most backward states in Europe.⁸ The territorialisation of the Holy See came to an end in the Italian *risorgimento*, which culminated in 1870 and saw the Papal States being absorbed into the new Italian nation state.

Ironically, this deterritorialisation shielded the Holy See from the ideological turbulences of the subsequent decades and centuries, thus ensuring the Vatican's survival. This is because the deterritorialisation of the Papal States entailed a desecularisation and, in this sense, depoliticisation of the Holy See. This prepared the ground for concentrating on the spiritual sphere, which then enabled the Holy See to exert a global influence for the very reason that it was no longer contaminated by secular compromises and political machinations in the arena of international politics. One could say: territorial limitation makes for greater scope for action.

6 | The deeds of gift of Pepin the Younger from 755 are considered the "deed of foundation" of the Papal States (*stato pontificio, stato della Santa Chiesa*).

7 | Ralph Rotte, *Die Außen- und Friedenspolitik des Heiligen Stuhls*, 2nd edition, Wiesbaden, 2014, p.34.

8 | Erwin Gatz, quoted in *ibid.*, p.35.

III. THE 20TH CENTURY: NEW DEFINITION OF FOREIGN POLICY AND GREATER EMPHASIS ON VALUES

The demise of the Papal States with their territorial claim therefore went hand in hand with the emergence of the Vatican as an actor focused on values with purely symbolic power. The end of territoriality saw an end to the classic profile of foreign policy interests: land seizure, military action, alliance forming and real-politik had become obsolete. It also entailed the end of domestic policy as there was no longer a population to speak of that needed governing. Issues relating to people's economic, social and political participation, which rocked the other European nation states on the path towards democracy no longer played a role for Vatican City and meant that the Holy See saw itself relieved from numerous administrative and political tasks. However, the Vatican faced new challenges. How could a state without a conventional power base now hold its own in the concert of powers? The Pope would have to take on the lead role.

In the 20th century, Catholic social teaching increasingly saw itself as the Third Way between liberalism and Marxism.⁹ And so the Holy See took up a clear position of opposition to the nascent (militantly atheist) communism in the political arena.¹⁰ Pius XII saw the outcome of the Yalta Conference predominantly in terms of the expansion of Soviet influence and advocated a position that was subsequently described as "containment" and "roll-back" in Cold War terminology. While not uncritical towards the West, that Pope can therefore be considered a Cold War warrior *avant la lettre*.¹¹ The Polish Pope John Paul II in particular was ascribed an important role in the collapse of communism, or at least in helping to accelerate the end of the Cold War.¹² This underscores the highly effective and powerful synergy between the political and spiritual dimensions of the Holy See's foreign policy activities.¹³ It also illustrates how the Holy See's power of action extends beyond the Church through the Pope's role as political spokesman.

9 | Mariano Barbato, *Pilgrimage, Politics and International Relations: Religious Semantics for World Politics*, Basingstoke, 2013, p. 48-50.

10 | Churchill once commented that the Pope had joined the fight against communism. Coppa, quoted in Ines-Jacqueline Werkner and Oliver Hidalgo (eds.), *Religionen – Global Player in der internationalen Politik?*, Wiesbaden, 2014, p. 125.

11 | Cf. Barbato, n. 3, p. 125.

12 | Otto Kallscheuer, "Der Vatikan als Global Player", *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 7/2005, 5 Feb 2005, p. 7-14 (printed edition), <http://bpb.de/apuz/29232> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

13 | Barbato, n. 9, p. 128.

The rise of the Holy See as an influential political actor in the international community of states after World War II was strengthened further by decolonisation. While the European powers had to withdraw from their colonies in Africa and the Caribbean, the Catholic Church and the Holy See under Pope John Paul II succeeded in extending their presence in the Global South. The nature of the Catholic Church as a global, living and growing religious community is one of the central symbolic and political power resources of Vatican foreign policy.¹⁴

During decolonisation, Pope John Paul II succeeded in extending the Holy See's presence in the Global South.

In this context, the Second Vatican Council (1962 to 1965) represents a milestone in the Holy See's endeavour to position itself in the international community of states. The signalling effect of the Council was and still is enormous, reaching far beyond the ecclesiastical or purely religious spheres. The Council sought to open "the windows to the world" and represented the first high point of the internal reforming movement in the Catholic Church (*aggiornamento*), codifying the separation of religious identity and political power for good.¹⁵ The Council and its key document, the encyclical *Gaudium et Spes*, must be seen in the context of the global movement of social renewal, the "global 68". In fact, the Second Vatican Council resulted in the conscious abdication of claims to power by the Church, while the papacy became a global supranational actor at the same time.¹⁶

With the development of liberation theology in the 1960s and 1970s, this dogmatic opening up and practical repositioning were complemented by a social-progressive change of focus towards the poor of this world. The liberation theology was a reaction to the political and social situation in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s in what was then the intellectual powerhouse of Catholicism ("Option for the poor"). Although it was initially opposed by the Holy See in Rome because it also employed some Marxist reasoning and terminology, liberation theology was subsequently

14 | It is estimated, for example, that six million people had cheered the Pope in Manila at the final mass of his trip to the Philippines in January 2015. "Rekordmesse von Franziskus in Manila: Komm zu Papa", *Spiegel Online*, 18 Jan 2015, <http://spon.de/aepPT> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

15 | The long disputed declaration "*Dignitatis humanae*" represented a key component in the opening up of the Second Vatican Council with respect to the modern concept of freedom, although it faced resistance from within the Church for a long time. Cf. Kallscheuer, n. 12.

16 | Ibid.

integrated into the magisterium.¹⁷ These two last examples also illustrate the large symbolic capital the Holy See acquires through the Catholic Church as an adaptable religious community.¹⁸ They also illustrate how an ethically founded leadership stance provides the Holy See with a power of action that can have an impact far beyond the realm of the Church.

The shuttle diplomacy of the Holy See succeeded in bringing the Argentinian-Chilean conflict about Patagonia to a peaceful conclusion.

The fact that this power of action can make an impact even in situations where there is little overlap with progressive social teaching but where there is deep respect for the head

of state and head of the Church instead was shown in the dispute about the Beagle Channel in 1978. Both Chile and Argentina had laid claim to this strategically important region of Southern Patagonia since gaining independence. An international court of arbitration was set up in 1971 to decide on the definitive boundaries and pronounced its judgement in 1977. However, Buenos Aires subsequently denied the court's legitimacy and began making preparations for a military occupation of the channel and the offshore islands in December 1978. This was the situation when, out of concern about a potential conflict in the Western camp, the Holy See under John Paul II decided to take the initiative and offer its services as mediator. The shuttle diplomacy undertaken by one of its representatives succeeded in bringing the conflict to a peaceful conclusion. This example illustrates the convening power of the Holy See, i.e. the ability to bring the competing sides in a conflict together by appealing to their common (in this case Catholic) world view. But the example also illustrates the prestige of the Holy See in international relations, which made such a mediator role possible in the first place.

17 | At the same time, the two last Popes distanced themselves from Marx and included the following elements in the catholic social doctrine: (1) a particular focus on the poor, (2) a turning towards the liberal-pluralistic social order without condoning the dominance of capital in the market economy, (3) a renewal of Church Law (nomination of bishops exclusively centrally, primacy of the Pope in the College of Cardinals) and a new catechism.

18 | However, religious community building increasingly deviates from Western and Northern traditions. A radical evangelical, charismatic "cultish" Protestantism of the Pentecostals and a theologically rather orthodox, yet socially engaged Roman Catholicism represent the two growth sectors in the Global South. Kallscheuer, n. 12, p. 14 (printed edition).

IV. SINCE THE END OF THE COLD WAR: CHANGED GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION AND FURTHER INCREASE IN INFLUENCE

With the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the ideological blocks, the Holy See's scope of action in international politics has widened significantly. The claim to political independence in Vatican foreign relations remains. Pope Francis (albeit reluctantly) thus recognised the Palestinian Territories as the state of Palestine in May, and he granted an audience to the autocrat Lukashenko in March on condition that political prisoners would be released in Belarus – which did indeed happen in August.¹⁹

As the East-West divide became less and less the lens through which to look at the global situation, however, and it became more and more a North-South divide, you get a different set of priorities. There were indications of this as early as the late 1960s under Pope Paul VI.²⁰ Today, Vatican foreign policy is showing increasing signs of moving its focus towards the message of universal peace, political and interreligious dialogue, the provision of humanitarian aid and the engagement for refugees as well as the preservation of the integrity of creation. The topic of disarmament may have originated in the Cold War, but it is taking on new relevance in the era of proliferating crises and technological advances. Whether it wants to or not, the Holy See cannot remain on the side-lines of the conflicts of this world.

Whether it wants to or not, the Holy See cannot remain on the side-lines of the conflicts of this world.

Policy of Peace

One current example of the Holy See's policy of peace is the rapprochement between Cuba and the United States, particularly since 2014. This rapprochement owes a great deal to the mediating efforts of the Holy See, which is seen as an honest broker by the two opposing sides. In 2014, Pope Francis wrote letters to both President Obama and Cuba's head of state, which not only dealt with humanitarian issues. Rome was aiming for "a new phase in relations". Direct U.S.-Cuban meetings in Canada

19 | Simone Brunner, "Lukaschenkos kleine Geste", *ZEIT Online*, 24 Aug 2015, <http://zeit.de/politik/ausland/2015-08/weissrussland-aleksandr-lukaschenko-opposition> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

20 | Robert McCahon, "The Pope's Soft-Power Push", interview with Kenneth Himes, Council on Foreign Relations, 17 Sep 2015, <http://on.cfr.org/lizGect> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

and in the Vatican followed, resulting in diplomatic relations being re-established. Papal diplomacy is continuing in its persistent efforts to have the sanctions against Cuba lifted and for Cuba to be integrated into the community of states.



Pope Francis and President of Cuba Raul Castro: In the recent rapprochement between the enemies USA and Cuba, the Holy See has played an important mediating role. | Source: © picture alliance/abaca.

As far back as 1998, during a visit by Pope John Paul II to Cuba, a precisely calculated charismatic offensive by the head of the Church had been complemented by negotiations about universal standards of religious, civil and political freedoms conducted professionally by Vatican diplomats. The shared experience of those negotiations served as an icebreaker between the communist (and atheist) Cuban government and the Holy See, which still maintained its anti-communist stance. During the negotiations, the two sides could refer back to the peace encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963), which had served as a conceptual basis for the rapprochement between the Holy See and the Soviet Union. The Holy See had been involved in a process of détente between West and East as far back as the period during and after the Cuban Crisis of 1952:

"The policy of peace of Pope John XIII during the Cuban Crisis not only [initiated] the Holy See's new policy towards the East, it also [enhanced] the course of détente in the East-West conflict. During the most dangerous phase of the Cold War,

this approach stood out as a model of public and behind-the-scenes diplomacy and underlines the special role of the Holy See, which is adept at leveraging its legitimacy as a religious power to exert diplomatic and political influence, which is also used by others.”²¹

Creating space for dialogue and diplomacy instead of military or political antagonism is a classic objective of the Holy See. Besides the power with which his office endows him, Pope Francis employs above all his charisma

Pope Francis employs his charisma and his strong conviction that it is possible to resolve political crises by appealing to Christian values and ethics of conciliation and non-aggression.

and his strong conviction that it is possible to resolve political crises by appealing to Christian values and ethics of conciliation and non-aggression. During his trip to the United States and to Cuba in September 2015, he used his symbolic power of action purposefully as well. Visiting both countries in the same trip can be seen as a political signal indicating that Pope Francis does not regard his important role of mediator in the most recent rapprochement between the former sworn enemies to be over. His visit was welcomed in both countries – despite the complicated bilateral relations between them. It was no coincidence that the White House announced a softening of the sanctions against Cuba shortly before the Pope was due to start his trip.

The Holy See also plays a peacemaking role in the Colombian peace process. It is acting as mediator in the rapprochement between the (Marxist) FARC guerrillas and the (secular) Colombian state. Ironically, Cuba is also involved in the peace process, namely as neutral ground for the negotiations between the opposing parties. In this case, the Holy See took on the mediator role at the invitation of the opposing parties. At the international level as in this case, the Holy See does not derive its power primarily from the uniting force of faith – although Catholicism is deeply embedded in Colombian society. Its soft power is based on its reputation as an honest broker, a role whose impact has been increasing since the end of the Cold War. Both are examples of the capability of the Holy See to actively influence the international agenda and to have a very practical impact in deescalating conflicts through the prestige the Pope enjoys.

Political Interreligious Dialogue

In the course of interreligious dialogue (during papal pilgrimages, for instance), the Holy See also deals with political topics. In the Middle East conflict, the Holy See's policy objectives are not restricted purely to peacemaking but also to ensuring the protection of the holy sites of Christianity. For this purpose, it uses its special relationship with Israel and with the Palestinian Territories. In 2014, for instance, both the Israeli President and the Palestinian President attended peace prayers in the Vatican Gardens at the Pope's invitation. Even though this did not bring about any progress in the negotiations, it still represented a diplomatic coup on the part of the Pope, where he openly deployed the moral authority of his role as the head of the Church in his personal fight for peace. In this particular case, the Franciscans play a special role in supporting and strengthening Vatican foreign policy as guardians of the Holy Sites.

In fact, the Pope's advocacy for interreligious dialogue in the Holy Land is fundamentally political. Once again, it is about conciliation instead of confrontation. In 2010 for instance, the German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* referred to Pope Benedict as "pope, pilgrim, politician" on the occasion of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land.²² Pope Francis similarly acted in the role of political mediator

The Vatican's peace policy is fundamentally strategic and does not depend on any particular personal configuration.

during his first trip to Israel in May 2014. He obviously sought to go beyond the confines of his religious office to change the world using the peace-promoting engagement of the Holy See. The Vatican's peace policy is therefore fundamentally strategic and does not depend on any particular personal configuration. When Pope Francis decided to not (only) stand at the Western Wall but to also make an unscheduled stop at the eight meter high concrete wall separating the Palestinian Territories from Israel in Bethlehem, this represented a brief yet telling manifestation of his political agenda. The photograph went around the world. There is therefore some doubt as to whether this was a "purely religious" pilgrimage to the Holy Land, as had been stated by the Holy See.²³

22 | Stefan Ulrich, "Nahost-Reise von Benedikt XVI. Der Papst als Pilger und Politiker", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 17 May 2010, <http://sueddeutsche.de/politik/1.458507> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

23 | Cf. also Peter Münch, "Friedensbotschaft aus dem politischen Minenfeld", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 May 2015, <http://sueddeutsche.de/politik/1.1974415> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

Benedict XVI also repeatedly pointed out in 2010 that there were more aspects uniting Jews, Christians and Muslims than separating them. He is said to have acted by providing "spiritual leadership on values in the interest of the world",²⁴ with the dialogue with Islam in the course of the pilgrimage considered particularly promising. Benedict thereby showed that moderate, tolerant cooperation with Islam is possible. Israel, on the other hand, was disappointed about his restrained, less personal comments on the Holocaust while still openly advocating a new Vatican Council. When Pope John Paul II visited the country on a pilgrimage in 2000, he went to the Holocaust memorial of Yad Vashem, where he offered a highly symbolic *mea culpa* for of the Church's past wrongdoing (the Inquisition, religious wars, the Holocaust). During the Holy Year, this was a personal confession of guilt by the Pope as a Pole and as a Christian. However differently the popes express their personal stance towards the Holocaust (or to Palestinian statehood), this does not have a permanent detrimental effect on the institutional relations between the Holy See and Israel and, respectively, the Palestinian Territories. This illustrates how robust these relations are – an important basis for the continued engagement of the Holy See in the Middle East conflict.

Like the popes preceding him, Pope Francis also uses his soft power rather than state sanctions or means of political pressure. He has a firm belief in the power of the word and explores every avenue to try and revive the negotiations between Israel and Palestine, which have recently stalled yet again, or to at least raise new hope. While Israelis and Palestinians shied away from talking face to face, the Pope invited Presidents Shimon Peres and Mahmud Abbas to jointly attend peace prayers in Rome. He called upon both parties to demonstrate courage to seek peace, keen to acknowledge both Israel's right to exist and the Palestinians right to statehood. How should one interpret his role and his self-image? While acknowledging the needs of both parties, Pope Francis calls for bridges to be built between the opposing parties and for the concrete wall in Bethlehem to be overcome. Interestingly, his engagement for the Holy Sites in Jerusalem does not represent an impediment in this context but a guarantee of the Holy See's intent to remain committed to the region and to finding a resolution to the conflict even under difficult circumstances.

Engagement for the Holy Sites in Jerusalem is a long-term guarantee of the Holy See's intent to find a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Disarmament Policy

Since the end of the Cold War, the Holy See's appeals for peace and diplomacy have been aimed mainly at the reduction in the arsenals of weapons of mass destructions. In his speech to the UN General Assembly in September 2015, the Pope advocated nuclear disarmament and the primacy of diplomacy. Currently, the most relevant issues in this context are the Iranian nuclear program and the wars in Ukraine and Syria.

The Iranian delegation to the Holy See is one of the largest. Encouraged by these intensive connections, three U.S. bishops met with four high-ranking ayatollahs in Iran in March 2014. The meeting was arranged to take place in Iran's spiritual center, at the Supreme Council of Seminary Teachers of Qom. With the backing of the Holy See and the blessing of the U.S. State Department, the attendees used the four-day meeting to establish a dialogue about nuclear weapons and the role of religious leaders in the process of diplomatic rapprochement.²⁵ While this was para-governmental diplomatic action in the narrow sense, such probing, informal contacts by non-diplomats can prepare the ground for more official cooperation, not least in the nuclear area. This illustrates the breadth and depth of the Vatican networks in the area of foreign policy as well.

Instead of backing the Ukrainian-Greek Catholic Church, Pope Francis transferred his nuncio from Kiev to Switzerland – apparently at Russia's request.

The Holy See has also intervened in the conflict in Ukraine, appealing to President Putin to find a resolution to the conflict. However, instead of backing the Ukrainian-Greek

Catholic Church, which maintains a strong anti-Russian stance, Pope Francis appealed against politicising the Church and transferred his nuncio from Kiev to Switzerland – apparently at Russia's request as he is considered an anti-Russian activist there.²⁶ By employing these de-escalating measures, Pope Francis is attempting to keep diplomatic channels to Russia open at a time when their number is dwindling and Russia is engaging increasingly in nuclear sabre-rattling. In doing so he demonstrates that he wishes to seek and create the conditions for dialogue and peace in his own camp as well.

25 | Victor Gaetan, "The Political Pope. How Francis Was Thrust Into The World's Most Intractable Conflicts", *Foreign Affairs*, 25 Sep 2015, <http://foreignaffairs.com/articles/2015-09-25/political-pope> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

26 | Ibid.

In addition to these issues, Pope Francis appealed to both Russia and the United States to find a non-military solution to the war in Syria while attending the G20 summit in Saint Petersburg. While the Russian intervention in Syria currently appears to make the situation on the ground worse, President

Obama had ultimately backed away from implementing his announcement of military intervention in Syria after the U.S. government had condemned the government of

The Holy See is currently attempting to bring together Iran, the USA and Russia for talks about Syria.

Bashar al-Assad for using chemical weapons. The Holy See is currently attempting to bring together Iran, the USA and Russia for talks about Syria. Despite the complexity of such conflicts, the Holy See is not giving up on its efforts to provide mediation in the region. Recently, Iran's Vice President for Women and Family Affairs Shahindokht Molaverdi, for instance, stated that Pope Francis "has the ability to bring nations closer together, and through this, perhaps he can influence governments".²⁷

Humanitarian Aid and Advocacy for Refugees

One important element of Vatican foreign policy is humanitarian aid, which involves providing assistance during conflicts and natural catastrophes in a non-bureaucratic manner, whatever the religion of the people affected. The most important implementation organisation is Caritas Internationalis, the umbrella association of the 165 national Caritas associations. The Holy See has direct (above all personal) rights of codetermination in this body. Further important actors of Catholic development cooperation are organised at a national level (in Germany, for instance, there are Misereor and Adveniat) and differ in their closeness to the Holy See. But the Churches fund most of their development cooperation work from their own resources and from donations.

Church-backed NGOs act below governmental level and frequently remain in trouble spots for longer than governmental development cooperation actors, as is currently the case in Syria. The Church relief organisations often still have some scope of action where governmental development cooperation actors are no longer able or permitted to act – particularly under adverse political conditions. Not only do humanitarian campaigns improve the situation on the ground, they also generate a great deal of international goodwill towards the Catholic Church and the Holy See, as well

as political capital locally – thereby in turn strengthening the Holy See's role as mediator in military conflicts.

In 2013, Pope Francis' first official trip outside Rome took him to the Mediterranean island of Lampedusa, where he spoke to refugees about their situation. He cast a wreath into the sea from the Italian coast guard vessel on which he arrived to honour the refugees who had drowned. He encouraged the Church to show greater involvement on behalf of refugees and migrants, which also needed to include a stronger political support. Before setting off for Cuba in 2015, Pope Francis met with a Syrian refugee family, whom he had arranged to be housed in a flat owned by the Vatican. The family of four, who are members of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church, had reached Italy on the very day that Pope Francis called upon all Catholic parishes to receive at least one refugee family. In the United States, the U.S. Episcopal Conference declared the reform of immigration legislation a priority. The vast majority of the migrants from Latin America are Catholic. The Holy See, however, clearly advocates for providing humanitarian aid to all those caught up in the current refugee crisis, whatever their religion. The rationale is that aid must be given to all those who are suffering, in this case the refugees.



Pope Francis with relatives of victims and survivors of the Lampedusa tragedy: More than 500 refugees drowned in 2013 off the coast of the small Mediterranean island. | Source: © picture alliance/AP Photo.

The efforts made by the Pope on behalf of the refugees represent an expression of his approach based on liberation theology, the "Option for the Poor", which focuses on the needs of the poor and considers poverty an injustice rather than a case of misfortune or adversity. According to an article in the magazine *Foreign Affairs*: "Humanitarian service, as opposed to political action, has been the Catholic Church's standard response to cataclysm. For Francis, though, the church should take a more proactive geopolitical role. With priests and religious leaders being kidnapped and murdered, while thousands of believers are forced to flee ancient communities in the cradle of Christianity, Vatican intervention is not optional."²⁸

Climate Change, Sustainability and Ecology

The most visible expression of the new focus of Vatican foreign policy on the topics of climate change, sustainability and ecology is the new encyclical *Laudato Si'*, which was published in June 2015 and was authored by Pope Francis himself. It derives a political mandate to take action to limit climate change and to protect the environment from the duty to preserve the integrity of creation and makes explicit mention of this duty requiring a rethink ahead of the upcoming climate summit in Paris. According to the Holy See, there is a need to finally acknowledge the anthropogenic causes of the warming of the climatic system and take appropriate measures at an international level, including binding contractual obligations on states to limit greenhouse gas emissions.²⁹

This position reflects the intensive involvement of the Holy See in environmental issues that already manifested itself in the 1960s, not least in the context of the United Nations, particularly at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the so-called "Earth Summit", in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro as well as the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in August/September 2002. Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI had also spoken out on environmental protection issues, but Pope Francis is the first head of the Church to speak up about such a topical and hotly disputed political topic as climate change at the highest diplomatic level. With its climate encyclical, the Holy See is conducting active climate politics. This has evoked some

Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI had also spoken out on environmental protection issues, but Pope Francis speaks up at the highest diplomatic level.

28 | Ibid.

29 | Migliore/Chuttlkatt, quoted from Rotte, n. 7, p. 344.

criticism from people who consider Pope Francis a left-leaning ideologist – particularly as it squares with his criticism of financial market capitalism expressed openly in the encyclical.³⁰

Pope Francis – already referred to as “Climate Warrior” and “Climate Pope” in the media³¹ – does not speak out against the market economy as such, but sees a connection between society’s focus on short-term profits, the consumer culture, the destruction of the environment and the technocratic paradigm that are currently dominating political and economic life. Consequently, the Pope sees a need for protecting the environment and providing support to those affected – particularly the poor and the developing countries. What is new about the Pope’s approach is not so much the fact that he draws attention to the issues, but the stridency of his tone.³² Placing these issues onto the global agenda and calling them to the attention of politicians follow on logically from Pope Francis’ reforming papal agenda – and once again illustrate the soft power approach of the Holy See.

V. CONCLUSION: OUTLINE OF A SPECIFICALLY VATICAN FOREIGN POLICY

At first glance, the Vatican is a microstate without massive resources. Be that as it may, it does have a great deal of symbolic power, not least thanks to it partially sharing its identity with a world religion, which makes it a superpower after all, religiously, culturally and socially. As we have seen, the Holy See’s hybrid function as a sovereign subject of international law and a transnational actor focused on values also gives rise to a number of special features of its foreign policy activities.

As could be seen from the above descriptions, the Holy See’s influence has increased steadily since World War I. It intervened regularly at decisive junctures during the course of the trans-

30 | Many conservatives in the USA, including some presidential candidates (Donald Trump, Rick Santorum), are climate change deniers and refute the argument that human activities have caused the earth to warm up. Cf. “Appell für Umweltschutz. Entwurf von päpstlicher Umwelt-Enzyklika enthüllt”, *ZEIT Online*, 16 Jun 2015, <http://zeit.de/politik/ausland/2015-06/papst-enzyklika-entwurf> (accessed 15 Oct 2015); Ruby Russell, “Papst Franziskus geht Klimawandel an”, *Deutsche Welle*, 16 Jun 2015, <http://dw.com/p/1Fhp4> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

31 | Cf. Gaetan, n. 25.

32 | Marco Ansaldo/Evelyn Finger, “Klimawandel auf Katholisch”, *ZEIT Online*, 16 Jun 2015, <http://zeit.de/2015/23/papst-enzyklika-oekologie-klimawandel-umwelt> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

formation of the conflict between East and West, developed its own anti-communist stance, yet became one of the preferred dialogue partners for the Eastern Block because it had distanced itself enough from the West as well. It had and still has an agenda that is independent of that of the West, and even under anti-communist Pope John Paul II it felt free to criticise military interventions by the United States and its allies. Pursuing such a "Third Way" between Marxism and liberalism gives the Holy See influence on the world stage today – particularly in the Global South – for the very reason that it does not make common cause with any of the globally dominating ideologies.

The Holy See has the oldest diplomatic service in the world. Only few other actors of international politics take a similarly clear and consistent stance with respect to global challenges. Also, no other religious community or secular world view has produced an institution that comes close to the Catholic Church in terms of durability, centralisation, global presence and membership.

To summarise, one can state that Vatican foreign policy is based mainly on unconventional resources of power:

- The Pope's political leadership role and its ethically founded claim to leadership on specific issues endow the Holy See with concrete power of action that extends far beyond the realm of the Church (soft power).
- Thanks to its peacemaking and mediating role, the Holy See also has convening power as well as prestige in international relations. This is a manifestation of the relational character of power, constituting "power by attribution".
- The Holy See can also leverage large amounts of symbolic capital through the Catholic Church as a faith community, which guarantees it global attention and credibility for its national and international agenda setting.

However, the papacy itself is the most visible and evident embodiment of Vatican foreign policy action. The influence exerted on world politics does depend greatly on the identity of the incumbent. Pope Francis' visible and activist profile has brought about a clear increase in the global political influence of the Holy See. While this type of charismatic leadership has been

Pope Francis' visible and activist profile has brought about a clear increase in the global political influence of the Holy See.

evident since the long papacy of John Paul II, Pope Francis is taking a more active role than his predecessors in the 20th century, intervening where he sees serious social ills. This focus on values originates directly from the Pope's biography. He is the first Jesuit and Latin American in the office, a circumstance from which he derives a claim to exerting political influence for the Catholic Church and the Holy See that goes far beyond pure religious (missionary) goals. The use of the moral authority of his office as head of the Church in the personal fight for peace (including social peace) in the world as well as a more modest Church, which has shifted its focus towards the poor and the excluded, represent mainstays of his reform papacy.



Pope Francis at the 70th UN General Assembly in New York on 25 September 2015: Few players in international politics take such clear and consistent positions on the global challenges of our time. | Source: © Michael Kappeler, picture alliance/dpa.

While the spirit of liberation theology of this papacy is new in its urgency, it fits seamlessly into the development of Vatican foreign policy over recent decades. It was only subsequent to the deterritorialisation that Vatican foreign policy lost its *realpolitik*

outlook. The Holy See has since developed increasingly into a purely "ideational actor". Since the Second Vatican Council, this "symbolic power of ideas" has come to increasingly override the "institutional power over Church members" since the Second Vatican Council.

Since the end of the Cold War, this development has intensified further with the focus on the message of universal peace and on the preservation of the integrity of creation. In the diplomatic arena, the Holy See appears as a value-focused rather than a religious actor. The influence of Vatican diplomacy should not simply be equated with the influence of the Catholic Church. One could go further and state that there are clear indications of efforts being made under Pope Francis' leadership to reach out beyond the faith by putting forward ethical-universal arguments rather than Catholic-moral ones. This points to a further intensification of the role of the papacy, with arguments based on universal ethics playing an ever greater role not only in interreligious dialogue but also in the dialogue with secularism itself. Consequently, the Holy See is developing into an informal authority on moral standards reaching far beyond the boundaries of Catholicism.

The number of high-ranking secular office-holders and dignitaries attending the inauguration of a pope is an indicator of the foreign policy achievements of the Holy See in its dual function as transnational actor focused on values and sovereign subject of international law. At the inauguration of Pope Francis on 13 March 2013, the diplomatic world assembled once again. Besides close to 200,000 faithful, a total of 132 government delegations from all around the world attended the event.³³ The (media) interest and the political attention were also an indication of the Pope's practical power of action, which is further enhanced by his popularity.

Today, we are seeing a globalising papacy,³⁴ which takes full advantage of the options offered by our networked world. While the foreign policy positions of the Holy See, which are derived from Catholic social teachings, have remained unchanged, there has been a degree of personalisation as well as an increase in the passion and effectiveness

While the foreign policy positions of the Holy See have remained unchanged there has been an increase in the passion and effectiveness of Vatican foreign policy activities.

33 | "Gleich nach Hollands Prinz war Merkel an der Reihe", *Die Welt*, 19 Mar 2013, <http://welt.de/114560725> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

34 | "A globalising papacy. Easter is for extroverts", *The Economist*, 5 Apr 2015, <http://econ.st/1VUzKRO> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

of Vatican foreign policy activities.³⁵ This development is set to increase further and should further enhance the power of the Holy See.

What underlies the power and worldwide influence of the Holy See?

- Firstly, it results from the professionalism of its institutional foreign policy apparatus. Besides the professional Secretariat of State, this particularly includes the well-informed nunciatures acting behind the scenes. Further sections in the Roman Curia provide support for the Vatican foreign policy activities, for instance the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.
- Secondly, acting in the role of moral spokesman, the Pope is currently one of the most popular global leaders, who derives his power from his personal charisma rather than from hard power.

It is precisely the fact that the Pope does not command any divisions³⁶ that gives him his strength. One could say that papal peacekeeping needs no tanks. If we take the role of the Holy See to be acting as an informal authority on moral standards even beyond the realm of the Church, the encyclical no longer appears to be an internal epistle but a key instrument of Vatican, or more precisely papal, foreign policy action. In this document, the author addresses the global public not just as head of the Church and head of state but as a moral authority. This directly produces symbolic and political capital, which the Holy See can then invest elsewhere. Furthermore, the Pope's charisma and the classic foreign policy institutions of the Holy See remain valuable assets to help fulfil the Vatican's mission of universal peace.

35 | Interview mit John L. Allen Jr., "Under Pope Francis, Vatican Flexes Its Global Political Muscle", *World Politics Review*, 21 May 2015, <http://worldpoliticsreview.com/trend-lines/15827/pope> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

36 | Cf. "How many divisions does the Pope have?", Stalin asked disparagingly at the Yalta Conference (1945). Cf. Berthold Seewald, "In Jalta machte sich Stalin über den Papst lustig", *Die Welt*, 3 Feb 2015, <http://welt.de/137067853> (accessed 15 Oct 2015).

ROLE OR RULE?

THE EVOLUTION OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN PAKISTAN 2014 - 2015

Zafar Nawaz Jaspal

INTRODUCTION

The Pakistanis celebrated the 67th anniversary of their country's independence amidst immense political bewilderment. The power appeared to be draining away from elected Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif. The celebration marking the anniversary of independence at the mid-night in front of the Parliament building on 14 August 2014 seemed a regime saving tactic. Notwithstanding, the smart political move to demonstrate that the Prime Minister enjoys complete trust and support of the military, the processes for political polarisation has been unleashed in the insecurity-ridden country by both Azadi March (freedom movement) led by cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan and Inqilab March (revolution movement) led by Canada-based Sunni cleric Tahir-ul-Qadri in Lahore on 14 August 2014. The demonstrators demanded the resignation of an elected Premier Sharif and fresh elections in the country. Imran Khan, chairman of Tehreek-i-Insaf,¹ questioned the legitimacy of the government by claiming that the 2013 general elections were rigged.² Khan's critics opined that he was being manipulated by the Military to try to bring down Premier Sharif or at least check him by questioning his political legitimacy. The accusation of rigging in general elections not only dented the legitimacy of elected government of Premier Nawaz Sharif, but also increased the role of the military in the Pakistani polity. Though a military coup was prevented, the aspirations for



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1 | Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf is the third largest party in the National Assembly (lower house of the Parliament of Pakistan), but with only 34 members in a house of 342.

2 | See the proceedings of Pakistan Parliament Joint Session held on 2 Sep 2014: "Don't lecture me about democracy, Imran tells parliamentarians", *Dawn*, <http://dawn.com/news/1129243> (accessed 7 Oct 2015).

the civilian control of the military in the civil-military relations in the Pakistani polity have been quashed.

The Premier Nawaz government has survived during the 2014 political crisis due to the "political fraternity", which emerged in the wake of the "Charter of Democracy" signed by Nawaz Sharif and the late Benazir Bhutto on 14 May 2006 in London. The Pakistan People Party (PPP), the leading opposition party in both the National Assembly and Senate, instead of supporting protesting Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), extended its unconditional support to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in the parliament. Although the support of the opposition played a critical role in thwarting the protester's agenda, it exposed the political amateurish attitude of the political parties in the joint session of the Parliament. The political leaders' speeches during the joint session of the parliament in August/September 2014 not only dented the credibility of the government, but also has degenerated the stature of the politicians in the society. Importantly, the reversion of political leaders' credibility had always been intelligently utilised by the military junta to justify its military coup in Pakistan.

Governance incompetence does endanger national security. The issues and problems relating to national security directly influence the civil-military relations in Pakistan.

The degeneration of civilian state institutions,³ global war on terrorism, economic mismanagement and absence of democratic customs/traditions in society have a negative impact on the governance of an elected government.⁴ The governance incompetence does endanger national security. The issues and problems relating to national security directly influence the civil-military relations in Pakistan. The political gridlock in August 2014 caused by Azadi and Inqilab movements, once again, accentuated the significance of Military in the political system of the country. For instance, the deployment of rangers and army under the Article 245 of the Constitution of Pakistan in Islamabad manifested the political incapacity of the elected government of Premier Sharif to resolve the political crisis in a timely manner, and the civilian law enforcement agencies powerlessness to handle a mob in the red-zone of Islamabad. These disadvantages of an elected government have created a space for the Chief of Army

3 | Cf. Abdul Manan, "Senior bureaucrats lack competence and initiative: PM", *The Express Tribune*, 9 Feb 2015, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/835479/senior-bureaucrats-lack-competence-and-initiative-pm> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

4 | Cf. Faiz Muhammad, "Asfandiyar sad at the sorry state of political affairs", *Dawn*, 5 Sep 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1129939> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

Staff General Raheel Sharif to intervene in the political affairs of the state.⁵



Violent protest in Islamabad: The clashes between anti-government protesters and police were a serious blowback to the elected Sharif government. | Source: © Muhammad Reza, picture alliance/AA.

The terrorist massacre in Peshawar school on 16 December 2014⁶ has further exposed the inability and incapacity of both the political elite and civilian institutions of Pakistan. A hasty amendment (21st amendment) to the 1973 Constitution on 7 January 2015 and changes to the Pakistan Army Act 1952 on 6 January 2015 resulted in the setting up of special trial courts under the military officers (military courts) in the major cities of Pakistan. The rationale for the creation of military courts is “to avoid criminals evading punishment due to weaknesses in the legal system”.⁷ The leader of the opposition in the National Assembly Syed Khursheed Shah opined: “The aim of setting up military courts is to ensure the speedy trial of terrorists, there are so many loopholes in our judicial system and it has failed to deliver.”⁸ This reflects judicial

5 | Cf. “From a czar-like prime minister to a deputy commissioner-type character”, *Dawn*, 20 Aug 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1126545> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

6 | The terrorists killed 149, including eight school teachers in their attack in Peshawar on an Army public school on 16 Dec 2014.

7 | On 24 Dec the Prime Minister announced to the nation in a televised address the National Action Plan (NAP) to deal with terrorism.

8 | “PM Nawaz Sharif Announces Anti-Terrorism Action Plan”, *Dailymail*, 24 Dec 2015.

incompetence and questionable performance.⁹ Precisely, the increased civilian dependence on the military creates an enabling environment for the military role in politics.

The Civil-Military relations subject in the politics of Pakistan has been immensely debated since the mid 1950s. Many analysts referred to Pakistan as a "garrison state" or "praetorian state". According to Daniel S. Markey, "Pakistan is a garrison state. The military has grown to control not only its own budgets and authorities but also to dictate national politics and a big slice of the economy as well".¹⁰ Chaitram Singh and Michael Bailey argued that "Pakistan has been a praetorian state in the sense that the military has played a prominent role in the system."¹¹ Hasan-Askari

In a "Praetorian State", the military hinders the evolution of the democratic political system in a state to check the civilian domination in civil-military relations.

Rizvi also opined: "Pakistan can be described as a praetorian state where the military has acquired the capability, will, and sufficient experience to dominate the core political institutions and processes."¹² Indeed, in a "Praetorian State",¹³ the military hinders the evolution of the democratic political system in a state to check the civilian domination in civil-military relations.¹⁴ The analysts who consider Pakistan to be a praetorian state seem convinced of a nexus between Imran Khan/Tahirul Qadri and the military during the August 2014 political crisis. Conversely, many concluded that political parties, civil society and non-military state actors have also let down the country by acting brashly and creating mayhem that gave the army an open invitation to intervene. This controversial debate

- 9 | Cf. Farrukh Saleem, "Military Courts", *The News International*, 11 Jan 2015, <https://shar.es/1uKsCv> (accessed 22 Oct 2015); Arif Nizami, "The Missing Narrative", *Pakistan Today*, 10 Jan 2015, <http://pakistantoday.com.pk/?p=384685> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).
- 10 | Daniel S. Markey, *No Exit from Pakistan: America's Tortured Relationship with Islamabad*, New Delhi, 2013, p. 30.
- 11 | Chaitram Singh/Michael Bailey, "Praetorian Democracy, Illiberal but Enduring: Pakistan as Exemplar", *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 35/2013, pp. 103-126, here: p. 112.
- 12 | Hasan-Askari Rizvi, *Pakistan: Civil-Military Relations in a Praetorian State*, Australian National University E Press, 2004, p. 88.
- 13 | Cf. Paul Staniland, "Explaining Civil-Military Relations in Complex Political Environments: India and Pakistan in Comparative Perspective", *Security Studies* 17, Feb 2008, p. 325; Khaled Abou el Fadl, "The Praetorian State in the Arab Spring", *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law*, Mar-Apr 2013, p. 306.
- 14 | Nordlinger has described praetorianism as the antithesis of civilian control and has argued that it arises when there is conflict between soldiers and civilian governors that leads to a breakdown of civilian supremacy. Quoted in David E. Albright, "Comparative Conceptualization of Civil-Military Relations", *World Politics*, Vol. 32, No. 4, Jul 1980, pp. 553-576, here: p. 555.

and prevalent pessimistic domestic political situation have raised two interlinked questions, i.e. why have the elected political elite failed to establish civil-dominance in the civil-military relations in Pakistan? Does Pakistan continue as a praetorian state? Though it seems a mere government's inefficacy or a political immaturity of the political elite resulted in 2014 political crisis, this may not be the entire anecdote. Perhaps PTI and PAT had tried to cash PML-N government's political vulnerabilities for narrow political ends in return for compromising on the gradual evolution of the civilian supremacy in the politics of Pakistan.

The primary objective of this study is to critically examine the constructs of civil-military relations and profess the role of Military in the politics of Pakistan in 2015. The following discussion, therefore, also includes both empirical and normative arguments about the civil-military relations in Pakistan. The following study is divided into five sections. The first section contains the theoretical analysis of the civil-military relations to identify the fundamental causes of the political elite's failure and military coups in Pakistan. It is followed by a brief overview of the civilian dominance in Pakistan. The third section contains the discussion on resurgence of the military-dominance. The fourth section precisely spells out the 2014 political crisis. The final section describes the prevalent trends in the political system of Pakistan.

CONSTRUCTS OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

The state maintaining strong military muscle for the sake of defense requires a rightful interplay between both the civilian and military institutions for the smooth functioning of polity. The disturbance in civil-military

relations, especially in a developing state, could result in the direct military intervention in politics entailing military dictatorship or coup in the country. The military coup not only hinders the modern democratic political institutions development but also obstructs the gradual transformation of subjective and parochial political cultures into a participatory political culture. Nonetheless, constructive modification in traditional political culture is essential for the modern democratic political system's evolution and stable functioning. Different kinds of political culture lead to different levels of civilian control. The sequential military intervention in polity establishes a military dominant model of policy-making at the cost of democratic (political) institutional development. Notably,

The disturbance in civil-military relations, especially in a developing state, could result in the direct military intervention in politics entailing military dictatorship or coup in the country.

lack of political institutionalisation facilitates the military's role in politics or the emergence of the military-dominance model of the policy in a state.

The military dominance in polity is always challenged by the civilian political elite in the developing states. The latter's struggle for supremacy in the decision-making processes of the state entails political movements and demonstrations. Indeed, the continuity of the cycle of such political activities and tussle for supremacy in civil-military relations is perilous for both political stability and economic prosperity. What is this relationship? Civil-military relations are comprised of a continuum between civilian controls on the one hand and military role or rule on the other.¹⁵ In simple terms, the civil-military relationship deals with "issues like a broad-based consensus on the operational norms of the polity, a general acceptance of a political formula for sharing and transfer of power, a widespread acceptance of the political institutions and processes, and public attachment to, and involvement in, political institutions are highlighted as the pre-requisites to a stable pattern of civil-military relations, with emphasis on civilian supremacy",¹⁶ or civilian control of the military.¹⁷ It means the military acceptance of the elected government's authority over a variety of political-decision making areas, rather than just the absence of military *coup d'états*. Aurel Croissant argued that: "[C]ivilian control in democracies means that only democratically legitimised civilian authorities and institutions possess the authority to make and implement policies."¹⁸ Thus, it is the civilian prerogative to determine which aspects of a particular policy the military could implement.

The supremacy of civilians in civil-military relations is viewed as an important factor for the political stability in the democratic developed world. The supremacy of civilians is directly linked with the legitimacy of the political system.¹⁹ G. Kennedy opined

15 | Cf. Aurel Croissant, "Civilian Control of the Military in Emerging Democracies: Theory and Empirical Evidence from Asia", *Journal of European Studies*, Vol. 30, No.2, Jul 2014, pp. 23-45, here: p. 24.

16 | Hasan-Askari Rizvi, "Civil-Military Relations and National Stability in South Asia", *Pakistan Horizon* 42, Feb 1989, pp. 47-78, here: p. 47.

17 | According to Huntington, "civilian control exists when there is [...] subordination of an autonomous profession to the ends of policy". On the one hand, the statesman acknowledges "the integrity of the [military] profession and its subject matter"; on the other, the military officer remains "neutral politically" and accepts "political guidance from the statesman". Quoted in Albright, n. 14, p. 554.

18 | Croissant, n. 15, p. 24.

19 | Rizvi, n. 16, p. 48.

that “[p]olitical systems suffering from a crisis of political legitimacy are vulnerable to successful or unsuccessful coups”. Paul Staniland also pointed out that strong institutions and civilian legitimacy could only discourage military intervention. He wrote, “the civilian control of the military can be both maintained and threatened in all threat environments, with strong institutions and civilian legitimacy constraining military intervention even when the military is internally oriented, and weak institutions and low legitimacy encouraging intervention even when the military is focused on external threats”.²⁰ Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner concurred the legitimacy of the argument, “[m]ilitary establishments do not seize power from successful and legitimate civilian regimes. They intervene in politics (whether by coup or by a more gradual expansion of power and prerogatives) when civilian politicians and parties are weak and divided, and when their divisions and manifest failures of governance have generated a vacuum of authority.”²¹ Aqil Shah opined that “[a]lthough different regimes have different levels of legitimacy, whether the military accepts a regime as legitimate can be crucial in its decision to intervene”.²² Hence, political legitimacy of the civilian ruling elite is imperative for instituting its supremacy in the policy-making or steering the state affairs.

The political history of Pakistan also substantiates the preceding discussion. For instance, during the second general elections (March 1977) Pakistan People’s Party victory raised strong doubts about the credibility of the election results. Consequently, despite having over two-thirds seats in the National Assembly, Premier Z. A. Bhutto did not sustain his government in the wake of the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) mass movement.²³ The 1977 coup by General Zia ul-Haq “occurred after it became clear that the party of Premier Z. A. Bhutto had engaged in electoral fraud, against a backdrop of mass mobilising protest against the regime led by both secular and Islamist parties”.²⁴ Thus, the credibility of the elections that bestow legitimacy to an elected government is imperative for the survival of

The credibility of the elections that bestow legitimacy to an elected government is imperative for the survival of civilian government.

20 | Cf. Staniland, n. 13, p. 322 f.

21 | Ibid., p. 328.

22 | The legitimacy deflations have provided the military an opportunity to intervene in many countries, including Brazil (1964), Chile (1973), and Turkey (1980). Cf. Aqil Shah, *The Army and Democracy: Military Politics in Pakistan*, Cambridge, 2014, p. 145.

23 | Ibid., p. 145.

24 | Staniland, n. 13, p. 353 f.

civilian government. Moreover, if an elected government is able to build consensus in a society, ensure political participation, guard the legitimacy of the political system through the institutionalisation of the electoral process, it can promote a constructive pattern of civil-military relations. Conversely, the inability of the elected ruling elite to cope with problems pertaining to consensus building, political participation and legitimacy give rise to primacy of the military over the civilians in civil-military relations.



Nawaz Sharif (I.) taking the oath in 2013: The Prime Minister faces the challenge to balance civilian and military influence in the country. | Source: © Justin Lane, picture alliance/dpa.

ENDEAVOR FOR CIVILIAN DOMINANCE

The 18th amendment to the 1973 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan had germinated optimism about the institutionalisation of the Westminster-style and truly Federal Parliamentary System of government in the country, which will increase manifold the responsibilities and powers of the Parliamentarians in general and the Prime Minister in particular.²⁵ The amendment also revamped Article 6 of the Constitution to “include suspension of the Constitution and putting it in abeyance among acts of high treason which no court will validate”. This amendment is important because it would include strictures against anyone justifying a military takeover, including the judiciary. It was an attempt to prevent the military coup and its subsequent legitimisation by

25 | The 18th Amendment repealed Article 58(2)(b) that empowered the president to dissolve the National Assembly.

the apex court of the country.²⁶ However, one cannot ignore the political parties and civilian institutions underdevelopment, which hinders the sustainability of civilian dominance in Pakistani polity. Hence, "Pakistan proved to be a most unexpected home for democracy, lacking nearly every favorable structural condition established in the democratisation literature".²⁷

This transfer of power in the aftermath of 2013 general elections marked the first peaceful transition from one civilian leader to another in Pakistan's 67-year history. The peaceful transfer of power and political fraternity between the leading political parties

The peaceful transfer of power and political fraternity between the leading political parties encourages the Premier Sharif to assert his constitutional stature and establish civilian paramount in the civil-military relations.

encourages the Premier Sharif to assert his constitutional stature and establish civilian dominance in civil-military relations. Importantly, the discretionary practice rather than the seniority principle prevailed in Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's appointment of General Sharif, third in line, as the new army chief.²⁸ The appointment of a new Chief of Army Staff and Chairman Joint Chief Staff Committee on 12 December 2013 generated an impression that the political elite had succeeded in establishing its dominance in political decision-making and was gradually expanding its influence in domestic politics and foreign policy. The Premier Nawaz Sharif government's decision to prosecute former Army Chief and President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf manifested that political leadership was endeavouring to set a precedent that would discourage military intervention in the politics of Pakistan in the future.

Premier Sharif recognised the significance of the engagement of the services chiefs in the formulation of national security policy. Therefore, he created a forum – Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS) – for civil-military consultation on 22 August 2013. The CCNS was constituted by redesigning the Defence Committee of the Cabinet and establishment of a secretariat of the Committee. The CCNS is chaired by Prime Minister and includes the ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Interior and Finance,

26 | Article 6 of the Constitution was violated twice by the two military generals – General Zia-ul-Haq in 1977 and General Pervez Musharraf in 1999 and their cohorts. Neither the previous successive democratic governments (1988 to 1999), nor the PPP government (2008 to 2013) had shown courage to execute Article 6.

27 | Michael Hoffman, "Military extrication and temporary democracy: the case of Pakistan", *Democratization* 18, 1/2011, pp. 75-99, here: p. 75.

28 | Cf. Najam Sethi, "A new beginning", *The Friday Times*, 29 Nov 2013, <http://thefridaytimes.com/tft/a-new-beginning> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

and the top military leadership including the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chiefs of Staff of the Pakistan Army, Navy and Air Force. According to the statement issued from the PM House: "The Committee will focus on the national security agenda with the aim to formulate a national security policy that will become the guiding framework for its subsidiary policies – defence policy, foreign policy, internal security policy, and other policies affecting national security."²⁹ The constitution of CCNS was viewed by many analysts to be an important initiative to combat the menace of terrorism. If the CCNS forum is utilised intelligently, it can certainly facilitate the synchronisation of the perceptions of both civilian political leadership and military elite regarding the National Security Policy. It seems a workable proposition so that both the decision makers and executors cooperate and work in harmony to quash the ambiguities about Pakistan's National Security Policy. Nevertheless, it has also provided more space to the military in national security policy formulations. The creation of CCNS was a constructive step to harmonise civil-military perspectives on the national security of Pakistan.

MILITARY DOMINANCE RESURGENCE IN 2014

The political confrontation between the political parties in August 2014 and worsening of internal security due to religiously radicalised extremists and terrorist groups have revived concerns about the conventional issue in the Pakistani politics i.e. competition for power between the military top brass and civilian political elite. Many analysts opine that the August 2014 political crisis had been started immediately after the 2013 general elections.

Every political party expressed its serious reservations on the 2013 general election's credibility. In addition to PTI, the PPP had first revealed that the 2013 general elections

Premier Sharif's governance style disappointed and alienated political forces in the country.

were massively rigged and fingers pointed to the role of returning officers (ROs).³⁰ Thus, the peaceful transfer of power on the basis of the 2013 general election failed to exhibit the efficacy of the ballot-box. Moreover, Premier Sharif's governance style disappointed and alienated political forces in the country. He did not attend National Assembly sessions for long periods and was also inaccessible to even his own party leaders, at times remaining

29 | "DCC to be reconstituted as Committee on National Security", *Dawn*, 22 Aug 2013, <http://dawn.com/news/1037613> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

30 | Zulqernain Tahir, "PPP sees 'third umpire' if crisis persists", *Dawn*, 16 Dec 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1151136> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

incommunicado to even some of his kitchen cabinet members.³¹ Premier Nawaz failure to respect the parliamentary system of government's norms undermined his legitimacy and gave the military an opportunity to increase its influence in civil-military relations.

Importantly, the conflict between the civil and military leadership is viewed by analysts as a major source of a political fiasco in 2014.³² They point to the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif government's handling of five issues: the former President Pervez Musharraf's treason trial, registration of criminal cases against serving military personal,³³ anti-military rhetoric,³⁴ Geo TV channel & ISI standoff over the former's senior anchor Hamid Mir firing accident,³⁵ and that relations with Afghanistan and India³⁶ have germinated immense mistrust between the ruling political elite and military leadership. The opponents of the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif sought to use this animosity to pursue their own political objectives and destabilise the elected government. Moreover, the PTI sustained protest in Islamabad for nearly four months and occasional political rallies in the other big cities of the country; and deterioration of the writ of the state, worsening the law and order situation have increased the role of military in political decision making, especially after the terrorist massacre

31 | Cf. M. Ziauddin, "A political tailspin?", *Express Tribune*, 20 Aug 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/750800/a-political-tailspin> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

32 | Cf. Zahid Hussain, "The real battle", *Dawn*, 3 Sep 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1129484> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

33 | "Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan", *PILDAT Monitor*, Apr 2014, p. 2; "President Mamnoon signs Protection of Pakistan Bill into law", *The Express Tribune*, 11 Jul 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/734099/president-mamnoon-signs-protection-of-pakistan-bill-into-law> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

34 | *Ibid.*; Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), press release, PR75/2014-ISPR, 7 Apr 2014, https://ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press_release&date=2014/4/7 (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

35 | "Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan", n. 33, p. 3; Hussain, n. 32; Ali Sidiki, "Geo's licenses suspended till May 28: PEMRA", *The Express Tribune*, 20 May 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/710817/geos-licenses-suspended-till-may-28th-pemra> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

36 | Hasan-Askari Rizvi, "Foreign policy dilemmas", *The Express Tribune*, 30 Nov 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/799815/foreign-policy-dilemmas-2> (accessed 22 Oct 2015); Aqil Shah, "Constraining consolidation: military politics and democracy in Pakistan (2007-2013)", *Democratization* 21, Jun 2014; "Nawaz's Delhi trip: At courtesy, India gives PM show cause", *The Express Tribune*, 28 May 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/714184/nawazs-delhi-trip-at-courtesy-call-india-gives-pm-show-cause> (accessed 22 Oct 2015); Farrukh Saleem, "Power Politics", *The News International*, 25 Jan 2015, <http://thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-298029-Power-politics> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

in the Army Public School at Peshawar on 16 December 2014. Theoretically speaking, “degraded civilian control is likely when both external and internal threats are high, and full-blown praetorianism occurs when internal threats are high but external threats low, since under these circumstances the military becomes ‘a serious contender for control of society’”.³⁷ During 2014/2015 both internal and external threats of Pakistan were high and both civilian leadership and civil-law enforcement institutions failed to address internal and external challenges effectively. Consequently the role of the military immensely increased in the political decision-making.

2014 POLITICAL CRISIS: INCREASING MILITARY ROLE

The ruling political elite’s failure to resolve the political crisis through the dialogue and civilian law enforcement institutions incapability to control the PTI and PAT mobilised crowd in Islamabad increased government’s dependency on Military to protect the state institutions under Article 245. The military troops were deployed in Islamabad for the assistance of Police to protect government buildings. Although General Sharif and the Prime Minister held many meetings, the General did not seek any role for himself.³⁸ On 28 August 2014, the government asked General Raheel to facilitate government negotiations with Mr. Imran Khan and Mr. Tahir ul Qadri to resolve the political crisis. Subsequently, both leaders were invited, separately, by General Raheel at the Army House in Rawalpindi for deliberations on the ongoing crisis. After the meeting, both leaders informed their supporters that “the army had promised to act as a guarantor and a mediator.” This development received a mixed response from the people of Pakistan. Many opined that Premier Sharif has conceded to the military role in the formation of domestic and foreign policy. This development, however, disappointed pro-democracy forces. Perhaps it further confirmed the argument that both parties protest was engineered by the military establishment, which was concerned with the gradual transformation in civil-military relations. The critics declared these meetings to be part of the “script” and a “soft coup”.³⁹ Conversely, Maj-Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa (DG ISPR)

37 | Staniland, n. 13, p. 327.

38 | Cf. Khawar Ghumman, “Army as ‘facilitator’ was Nisar’s brainwave”, *Dawn*, 30 Aug 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1128719> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

39 | Cf. Ejaz Hussain, “Has the military agency been constrained?”, *Daily Times*, 12 Sep 2014, <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/12-Sep-2014/has-the-military-agency-been-constrained> (accessed 22 Oct 2015); •

strongly rejected the rumors that the Pakistan Army was a script-writer of political crisis in the country on 12 September 2014.⁴⁰



Vigil in London for the victims of the Peshawar school attack: The terrorist act shocked Pakistan and exposed the incapability of the civilian law enforcement agencies to maintain law and order. | Source: Kashif Haque, flickr ©①③③.

The invitation of General Raheel to resolve the political crisis had dejected many members of the National Assembly. Senator, Raza Rabbani, while commenting on the meetings of Mr. Khan and Dr Qadri with COAS Gen Raheel Sharif said: "My head is down with shame after last night's development."⁴¹ The political leaders seem worried about the outcome, i.e. the involvement of the military would not only shift the balance of power in favor of the military in the nation's polity, but also shrink their political maneuvering space and dent the democratic political system. Senator Farhatullah Babar noted: "Indeed it is a moment of collective disgrace for the nation and more so for the parliament. It opens the possibility of permanent military intervention at the behest of a few thousand armed men and women made to gather mysteriously at the

Ayesha Siddiqa, "To Coup or not to Coup", *The Express Tribune*, 28 August 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/754389/to-coup-or-not-to-coup> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

40 | Cf. Maqbool Malik, "No part in political crisis, says army", *The Nation*, 13 Sep 2014, <http://nation.com.pk/national/13-Sep-2014/no-part-in-political-crisis-says-army> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

41 | Amir Waseem, "PPP to move cautiously after controversy over SOS to army", *Dawn*, 30 Aug 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1128755> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

gates of the federal capital.”⁴² Precisely this once again exhibited the incapability of the political elite to resolve the political crisis without the assistance of the Army Chief.

Premier Sharif denied the reports that he invited the military for mediation. On 29 August 2014, he stated: “Neither the army chief nor the Army were requested to act as a facilitator in the prevailing political situation.”⁴³ He claimed that Mr. Khan and Dr Qadri requested the Army Chief for an audience. He said, “General Raheel sought his permission to meet Imran, Qadri which was granted; can sacrifice his government 10 times; there can be no compromise on supremacy of parliament”.⁴⁴ Conversely, Khan said that neither Dr Tahirul Qadri nor he had asked the army to become a mediator to solve the political crisis.⁴⁵ The debate on the floor of the National Assembly had further multiplied the political confusion and ambiguity in the country and also raised a question as to whether the army could play the role of an honest broker or whether it was also a party to the conflict. Nevertheless, this controversy, once again, reinforced the decisive role of the Army Chief in the political affairs of the state.

Premier Sharif’s tactic to prevent political damage control in the National Assembly provoked the military to clarify the issue. ISPR press release maintained that the government had asked General Raheel to facilitate negotiations with the protesting parties.⁴⁶ The confusion and ambiguity further increased mistrust between the PM Sharif and Military junta. The eruption of fierce clashes between law-enforcers and protesters in Islamabad necessitated that the General Raheel convene an emergency meeting of the Corps Commanders to deliberate on the political situation in the country and to take the commanders into confidence over his meetings with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, PTI Chief Imran Khan and PAT Chief Tahirul Qadri on 31 August 2014. The Corps Commanders while reaffirming support to democracy remarked that

42 | Ibid.

43 | Muhammad Anis, “Govt didn’t ask army to mediate in crisis: Nawaz”, *The News International*, 30 Aug 2014, <https://shar.es/1uKGfQ> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

44 | Ibid.

45 | Cf. “90pc MPs are tax evaders and killers, claims Imran”, *The News International*, 30 Aug 2014, <https://shar.es/1uKcq5> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

46 | Cf. Baqir Sajjad Syed/Iftikhar A. Khan, “Govt on back foot as army looks to continue ‘mediation’”, *Dawn*, 30 Aug 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1128729> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

the use of force would only aggravate the problem.⁴⁷ The corps commanders support to the democratic system helped in allaying fears of military intervention in the crisis. Nevertheless, the 2014 political crisis resulted in the advantage of the Military within the context of the civil-military relationship. It exposed the political parties' leadership incapability to resolve the political fiasco through political tactics. The military once again gained ground at the expense of the Chief Executive and Parliament.⁴⁸



Pakistani troops on their way to North Waziristan in June 2014: Many political analysts argued that this operation was on the military's own initiative. | Source: © Rehan Khan, picture alliance/dpa.

MILITARY IN THE LEAD

The military launched Zarb-i-Azb to restore the writ of the state in the North Waziristan on 15 June 2014.⁴⁹ Many political analysts concluded that this operation was the military's own initiative because at that time the civilian leadership was optimistic about the dialogue.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Premier Sharif claimed full

47 | ISPR, press release, PR184/2014-ISPR, 31 Aug 2014, https://ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press_release&date=2014/8/31 (accessed 7 Oct 2015).

48 | Cf. "Siraj warns of 'third force' intervention", *Dawn*, 24 Aug 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1127351> (accessed 22 Oct 2015); Tahir, n. 30.

49 | Cf. Ishtiaq Ahmed, "The Pakistan Military: Change and Continuity under General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani", *ISAS Working Paper*, No.90, 2009, p.9.

50 | Cf. Hasan-Askari Rizvi, "Our faltering counterterrorism strategy", *The Express Tribune*, 8 Feb 2015, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/835110/our-faltering-counterterrorism-strategy> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

Though the military operation weakened the Tehrik-i-Taliban, the government has failed to completely eradicate the menace of terrorism.

responsibility for the military operation. The Armed forces had successfully destroyed the Tehrik-i-Taliban's operational sanctuaries located in North Waziristan. Consequently, the Taliban and their associates shifted in the neighboring provinces of Afghanistan. In short, the terrorists lost their hideouts, arms caches, stores, vehicles and above all their freedom of movement. Though the military operation weakened the Tehrik-i-Taliban, the government has failed to completely eradicate the menace of terrorism from the country.

The terrorist groups incapability to strike and destroy hard targets, such as law enforcement agencies, government installations, etc., resulted in the immense vulnerability of soft targets such as public and private educational institutions, common man processions,⁵¹ etc. On 16 December 2014, terrorists attacked the Army Public School in Peshawar and killed 132 children (students at the school in grades 1 to 10) and nine adults.⁵² This shocked the entire nation. Political and military leadership rushed to Peshawar. Three-day mourning was announced by the Federal Government. The Army Chief, instead of the Defense Minister or the National Security Advisor, visited Kabul on 17 December 2014.⁵³ He held separate meetings with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and General John F Campbell, ISAF commander.⁵⁴ Matters that came under discussion related to the security situation along the Pak-Afghan border region.

Realising the inability or the powerlessness of the police and judiciary, the entire political elite of the country agreed to the setting up of special military courts under the military officers for tackling terrorism cases in the country during the meeting of parliamentary leaders at the Prime Minister's House on 24 December 2014.⁵⁵ Although the military courts are not compatible with a

51 | Cf. Umer Farooq et al., "TTP splinter groups claim Wagah attack; 60 dead", *Dawn*, 3 Nov 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1142006> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

52 | Cf. Zahir Shah Sherazi et al., "Militants Siege of Peshawar School ends, 141 killed", *Dawn*, 16 Dec 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1151203> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

53 | ISPR, press release, PR277/2014-ISPR, 17 Dec 2014, https://ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press_release&date=2014/12/17 (accessed 7 Oct 2015).

54 | Ibid.

55 | Cf. Mateen Haider, "Political leaders reach consensus on military courts", *Dawn*, 25 Dec 2014, <http://dawn.com/news/1152909> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

constitutional democracy,⁵⁶ they were considered appropriate to respond the terrorist threats. The reasoning behind opting for military courts was two-fold, i.e. ensuring a quicker, more streamlined process for anti-terrorism trials, and lowering the threshold of evidence needed to secure convictions. The establishment of military courts exposed the incapability of the civilian judicial and legal system to adjudicate the arrested terrorists' cases.⁵⁷ Moreover, the inability and incapacity of the police force to combat the terrorists forced Interior Minister Nisar Ali Khan to recommend that all the provincial governments extend the cover of Article 245 to army operations inside the provinces. This did not only underscore the military role in combatting the menace of terrorism, but also exposed the civilian law enforcement agencies powerlessness.⁵⁸ These developments manifest the larger military role or military primacy in the internal and external affairs of Pakistan. Hence, the 2013/2014 civilian dominance order was completely compromised.

AN EVALUATION: DETERMINISTIC TRENDS IN 2015

Critical examination of the trends in the politics of Pakistan underscores that neither the military trust in the elected political ruling elite, nor are civilians confident about the subordinate role of military in the affairs of the state. Both sides, rhetorically, give an impression that the constitution is supreme and that every institution would work within its constitutionally defined framework. Ironically, every political leader talks about constitutionalism and democracy, but once a leader assumes power through an electoral victory, he/she wants to run the state like a personal fiefdom and does not accommodate those questioning his/her governance. Similarly, the military also, instead of influencing, seeks to chalk out the foreign and strategic policy of the state. This seems not abnormal due to the unsettled two borders of the country and imperativeness of maintaining strong armed forces to solidify Pakistan's defensive fence in the volatile and complex strategic environment of the region.

Every political leader talks about constitutionalism and democracy, but once a leader assumes power through an electoral victory, he/she wants to run the state like a personal fiefdom and does not accommodate

56 | "No other courts can be formed in presence of independent judiciary, says former CJP", *The News International*, 30 Dec 2014, <https://shar.es/1uKhuf> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

57 | Cf. Babar Sattar, "Time to introspect", *Dawn*, 19 Jan 2015, <http://dawn.com/news/1157894> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

58 | Cf. Ayesha Siddiqi, "Return of Nationalism", *The Express Tribune*, 25 Dec 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/811741/return-of-nationalism> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

Second, India-Pakistan strategic competition makes the military a legitimate stakeholder in Islamabad's India policy. Similarly, the state of affairs at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border since December 1979, has increased the military role in the making of the country's Afghanistan policy.⁵⁹ Thus, the military's dominant role in Pakistan's India and Afghanistan policy would continue until the settlement of the Kashmir issue as well as pacification of the civil war-like situation in Afghanistan.

The weakness of civilian institutions and governance has increased the military role in both national interest's conceptualisation and pursuit.

Third, the steady degeneration of the Civilian Bureaucracy and Civilian Administrative institutions facilitates the sustainability of the military's pre-eminence in the polity of Pakistan, especially in maintaining the writ of the state. Instead of these institutions' regeneration, the elected political elite's governance style has furthered this negative process.⁶⁰ Indeed, the gradual deterioration of the civilian institutions' performance and governance weakness has increased the military role in both national interest's conceptualisation and pursuit.

Fourth, since the mid-1950s, the contest for supremacy between the civilian and military elite within Pakistan has been taxing the political stability of the country. This contest continues even in 2014 and 2015 due to the weak Pakistani political institutions and immature democratic political culture.

Fifth, since August 2014, the political ruling elite have been considerably weakened at home and have also lost face abroad. The establishment of apex committees in all provinces to coordinate security matters to implement the National Action Plan on 3 January 2015,⁶¹ has made subservient the civilian elected political elite in its relations with the military in the domain of law enforcement. On 30 November 2014, U.S. Secretary Kerry opined that the

59 | Cf. Ikram Sehgal, "The making of history", *Daily Times*, 20 Nov 2014, <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/20-Nov-2014/the-making-of-history> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

60 | Cf. Ilhan Niaz, *Understanding and Addressing the Administrative Aspect of Pakistan's Civil-Military Imbalance*, New Delhi, 2015, p. 10; Anatol Lieven, "Military Exceptionalism in Pakistan", *Survival* 53, Apr 2011, pp. 53-68, here: pp. 55-56.

61 | Cf. "Apex committees formed in all provinces to implement NAP", *Pakistan Today*, 3 Jan 2015, <http://pakistantoday.com.pk/?p=38325> (accessed 22 Oct 2015); "Apex committees formed in all provinces to implement NAP", *The Express Tribune*, 3 Jan 2015, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/816591/army-chief-attends-meeting-on-formation-of-nap-committees> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

Pakistan Army is a real force keeping the country united.⁶² Moreover, General Sharif's foreign visits and meetings with foreign dignitaries marked the increasing role of Military in the external affairs of Pakistan.⁶³

Sixth, during the third quarter of 2014 and the first half of 2015, the pessimistic impression of the civilian political leadership has been used to boost the military stature in the Pakistani society.⁶⁴ The deplorable situation and cynical governance reflection in the media was used to the advantage of those who endeavor to establish military dominance in the civil-military relations of the country. Realistically, today, politicians are viewed as highly partisan, non-professional and corrupt, and unable to take firm decisions on critical issues. The negative image of the capabilities of the civilian elite to govern the country could further weaken elected leaders position in their relations with military elite to decide on the strategic matters in 2015/2016.

The deplorable situation and cynical governance reflection in the media was in the advantage of those who endeavor to establish the military dominance in the civil-military relations of the country.

Seventh, presently, Pakistan is facing a serious governance crisis. The political leaders have failed to establish and legitimise participatory institutions and processes since 2008. Instead of encouraging participatory political culture, the Political elite have been sustaining subjective culture within the political parties. This attitude of the political elite is to the advantage of the military because it generates apathy toward the alienation of the common man from the democratic political system.

Finally, Pakistan continues to be a "Praetorian State" in 2015. Perhaps the military possesses and is going to sustain capability, resolve, and sufficient experience to dominate the core political institutions and processes. Therefore, Premier Sharif needs the support and the blessings of the military during his remaining years in office. The dependency of the Prime Minister on the military for his continuity in office and restoration of the writ of the state guarantee the military's preponderant role in the polity. More precisely, Pakistan, today, fits within exactly the description,

62 | Cf. Wajid Ali Syed, "Pak Army a real force keeping country united: Kerry", *The New International*, 2 Dec 2014, <https://shar.es/1uK4Kc> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

63 | Cf. Saleem, n. 36.

64 | Cf. Humayun Gauhar, "Political + Judicial Failure = Military Courts", *Pakistan Today*, 24 Jan 2015, <http://pakistantoday.com.pk/?p=387871> (accessed 22 Oct 2015).

“where the military is like an octopus that has its tentacles in various aspects” and thereby the military is not going to limit itself to the barracks in the near future. Thus, today, the military seems comfortable with its decisive role instead of rule.

CONCLUSION

The Political elite in Pakistan have been endeavoring to institutionalise military subordination to the civilian elected ruling elite and the Army's non-involvement in active politics. The Pakistani political system and political culture do not seem mature enough for the emergence of the civilian-dominance model of the policy due to the vulnerability of the political system to military coup. The dichotomy between political elite rhetoric and practice reveals their incapability to establish the true supremacy of the elected elite. Importantly, Premier Nawaz expressed his commitment to establish civilian supremacy over the military, but he was dependent on the military for its assistance during the August 2014 political crisis and also needs its support in maintaining the law order in the state due to the deteriorating situation of civilian administrative institutions. The enforcement of Article 245 and formation of provincial apex committees for executing the National Action Plan manifest that the government conceded political space to military, which shifted the balance of power from Islamabad to Rawalpindi. The rampant political alienation and the accentuation of the crisis of legitimacy compromised Premier Sharif's political supremacy. To conclude, the political vulnerability and incapability of the civilian law enforcement agencies to maintain law and order have improved the bargaining power of the top brass of the military that found it convenient to expand its role in the polity, especially after the terrorist attack at the Peshawar Army Public School on 16 December 2014.

The opinions, findings and conclusion or recommendations expressed in this article belong to the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL AND POLITICAL ROLE OF AFRICA'S PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES

Paul Gifford

DEFINITION

Churches in sub-Saharan Africa have proliferated since the 1980s. Although the historic or mission churches continue to flourish, and still have more members overall, they have been joined by countless newcomers. Nor are the newcomers the old African Independent Churches, which are still evident in many countries but probably peaked around the 1960s. Categorising these new churches is not easy. Fundamentalist, charismatic, Pentecostal, Evangelical are all labels that have been used, but they are all labels taken from Western divisions of Christianity; it is not evident that the dynamics that gave rise to the labels in their original contexts are the same here. Also, one cannot ignore the variety among these churches. They range from wealthy mega-churches with thousands of members and hundreds of branches, to small family concerns. They range from sophisticated organisational structures to struggling storefront groups. Some have lasted years; others seem fairly transient. There are obvious differences in clientele: some cater for the educated and affluent and middle class, others for the uneducated and poor; some incorporate both. Urban churches are obviously different from rural ones. Nor can one presume that the phenomenon is uniform across the whole continent. One may well wonder whether any one label can do justice to their diversity. Nevertheless, I will argue here that there is sufficient uniformity to discuss them as one category, and since we must use labels, I will here call them all Pentecostal while admitting the term's inadequacy, and certainly not foreclosing the issue of their similarities and dissimilarities in regard to classical Western Pentecostalism. As will be obvious below, almost every generalisation about them can be disputed; what follows is a



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personal analysis, though I would argue it is perfectly defensible.¹ My argument is that although they do not understand themselves primarily as playing developmental or political roles, they do; and in general these roles are not invariably positive.

VICTORY

I would argue that it is the vision of *this-worldly victory* that is common to virtually all these new churches. This emphasis is evident in the names of the churches themselves ("Victory Bible Church", "Jesus Breakthrough Assembly", "Triumphant Christian Centre"). The titles and themes of conventions, crusades and conferences repeat this emphasis ("Living a Life of Abundance", "Taking your Territories", "Stepping into Greatness"). In talking to these Christians, attending their services, studying their sermons, testimonies, and literature, the winning motif is characteristic.

The six ways in which Christianity is linked to success and wealth are not necessarily incompatible. Many churches combine many, even all of them, often at the cost of some tension.

I have distinguished six different registers on which this success refrain is played out. The six ways in which Christianity is linked to success and wealth are not necessarily incompatible. Many churches combine many, even all of them, often at the cost of some tension. Other churches are more associated with one or perhaps two ways, less with others.

First, motivation. In these churches the emphasis is to get on, to succeed, to prosper, to be important, to take control. Moreover these things are your right and inheritance as a Christian, which you should expect and can demand. Sometimes a racial element enters into this: you can succeed like Whites, and being African does not mean subservience and poverty.

Second, entrepreneurship. In many churches, at least once every service you will be invited to turn to your neighbour and ask: "Have you started your own business yet?" Business skills are explicitly lauded, and in bigger churches businessmen's fellowships are formed, and workshops for businessmen provided, even business fairs. Established businessmen in the congregation can be asked to assist those starting out.

1 | The points broached here are more fully discussed in Paul Gifford, *Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa*, London, 2015.

Third, practical skills for personal living and business success – like hard work, commitment, assuming marital and family responsibilities, organising time, avoiding drink, integrity, budgeting, saving, investing.

Fourth, the faith gospel, or the belief that faith is all you need to share the victory Christ has already won for us over sin, sickness and poverty. In faith you simply claim what is already yours. This faith gospel swiftly became linked to the idea of “seed-faith”, that sowing seeds (essentially money) ensures your harvest and determines its size.

Fifth, the “anointing of the man of God”. Increasingly, success and prosperity are said to come through the special gifts of the “man of God”. Pastors now frequently make themselves indispensable. Many churches center on their leader’s “prophetic declarations” or “prophetic word” which bring about what they say. Testimonies of church members increasingly attribute blessings not so much to God as to the “Man of God”, or to God through the “anointing” of “his chosen servant”.

Sixth, defeating the spirits blocking one’s advance. For those operating with an “enchanted imagination” according to which spirits are pervasive and the primary causes of events and conditions in the natural world, churches counter the negative forces trying to undermine the success that should characterise a Christian.

DEVELOPMENT

For many observers it is almost axiomatic that African Pentecostalism is a major vehicle of modernity. For Peter Berger, the spread of Pentecostalism is probably the best thing to happen to the developing world. With its stress on motivation, entrepreneurship and discipline, this is the Protestant work ethic reaching the third world. This Christianity will do for the developing world what Calvinism did for Europe in the eighteenth century. Hence the revealing title Peter Berger gave to an article on third-world Pentecostalism: “Max Weber is alive and well and living in Guatemala.”²

2 | Peter L. Berger, “Max Weber is Alive and Well, and Living in Guatemala: The Protestant Ethic Today”, *The Review of Faith and International Affairs* 8, 2010, pp. 3-9.

Similarly David Martin can conclude his study of African Pentecostalism: "Pentecostalism in Africa is a collective raft pointed with determination towards modernity."³ Elsewhere he has spelt it out fully: "The lineage running from Pietism to Pentecostalism is linked positively to modernity in respect of the domains of gender, secular law, transnationalism, voluntarism, pluralism, the nuclear family, peaceability, personal release and personal work discipline, consumption, modern communication, social and geographical mobility – as well as changes in mediation, authority, and participation."⁴ In other words, in all these areas, from gender to law, from work ethic to exercise of authority, Pentecostalism is adapting Africa to the modern world.



A singer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God youth choir: This Pentecostal church is one of the largest in Africa. | Source: © Jessica Rinaldi, Reuters.

I am less positive. I think these optimistic assessments require that one focus on the first three of the six registers of victory outlined above. If one considers that the defining element of Pentecostal churches is their inculcation of motivation, entrepreneurship and personal life skills, the effects of Pentecostalism must of course be positive. Churches encouraging those qualities must inevitably form active, effective citizens of a modern polity. But these positive evaluations hardly advert to the fourth, fifth and

3 | David Martin, *Pentecostalism: the World their Parish*, Oxford, 2002, p. 152.

4 | David Martin, "Pentecostalism: a Major Narrative of Modernity", in his *On Secularisation: towards a Revised General Theory*, London, 2005, p. 144.

sixth of the registers I have distinguished, and which I regard as much more widespread and significant. To the extent that African Pentecostalism builds on the faith gospel, a pastor's anointing, and the enchanted religious imagination, the effects seem far less positive.

THE FAITH GOSPEL

Take the fourth register, that of the faith gospel. The faith gospel is pervasive in African Pentecostalism, especially its evolved form of the "seed faith" or "sow-so-you-may-reap" idea. This "seed-faith" theology is not an incidental or optional extra to Africa's Pentecostalism, but has been indispensable, for this has been the motor that has powered this explosion of churches. Of course, it is great to have overseas sponsors or partners, but for most churches this remains a dream. Yet all these buildings, programs, vehicles, musical instruments and sound systems have had to be paid for, in economically straitened circumstances. Moreover, although admittedly a good proportion of pastors are part-time, there has arisen an entire new class of religious professional or founder/leader/owner for whom the church is the means of livelihood. For this, seed-faith theology has proved extremely functional. Some churches take this "divine fund-raising" to extreme lengths, with the demand for money a prominent feature of services.

Although a good proportion of pastors are part-time, there has arisen an entire new class of religious professional or founder/leader/owner for whom the church is the means of livelihood.

Take one example, Nigeria's Winners' Chapel, founded by David Oyedepo in 1983 in Lagos and by 2013 boasting 6,000 branches in Nigeria, 700 branches in other African countries, and 30 in Europe and America. It claims that its mother church, just outside Lagos, is the biggest church auditorium in the world, seating more than 54,000. Oyedepo has spread his influence even more widely, through his books and TV programs (essentially films of his services).

Oyedepo presents himself as the quintessential entrepreneur, and he is effectively the CEO of a massive multinational enterprise which now embraces schools and universities as well as the church. Oyedepo stresses the need to work and even holds himself up as a model, working 18 hours a day, but victory and success in business, in getting jobs, in health and in life, do not depend on work. Success in these things is a supernatural gift of God. "Sweatless success" is not something to labour for.

"Sorrow-free kingdom prosperity" comes primarily from giving money to God; in Oyedepo's words, from being a "covenant practitioner". The determining measure of covenant wealth is "the law of seedtime and harvest". Oyedepo is listed in Forbes as Nigeria's richest pastor, with an estimated wealth of 150 million U.S. dollars. He is clear that the origins of his wealth are not in any capitalist dynamic but in a biblical one. Tithes and offerings to God (in effect, to his representative Oyedepo) is the motor for success. This is clear from testimonies of members; for example, a man increases his tithes, and thereby becomes "the general manager of a company, with over 200 staff under me... This was a job I didn't apply for!"⁵ Another hears Oyedepo calling for a sacrificial offering. "I brought my colour TV, video and sound system. These were the only things I had then... Two weeks after I gave the sacrifice, the Lord gave me another shop."⁶ This is the logic of the standard testimony at Winners' Chapel. It is unwarranted to equate such "covenant riches" resulting from tithes and offerings with the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism.



Service at Winners' Chapel: The church, just outside of Lagos, claims to have the biggest church auditorium in the world, seating more than 54,000. | Source: © Akintunde Akinleye, Reuters.

5 | David O. Oyedepo, *Signs and Wonders Today: a Catalogue of the Amazing Acts of God among Men*, Lagos, 2006, p. 440.

6 | Ibid, p. 173.

The example of Oyedepo illustrates the complexity of assessing the public effects of these churches. On the one hand Oyedepo is insistent that one work hard (so success through the second register noted above). Yet the centerpiece of his message is that success comes through giving to him (the fourth). Which of these two is the dominant message picked up by church members may depend on the individual member; but it is unsatisfactory to focus on the former exclusively.

PROPHETIC ANOINTING

This faith or prosperity gospel has come to be closely connected to the idea of the “prophetic anointing” of the special man of God. Oyedepo illustrates this point, too; he began his ministry as an exponent of the faith gospel, according to which success is the result of the biblical law of sowing and reaping, accessible to everyone obeying it. Yet in recent years, he has increasingly stressed his critical importance in the victorious living of his followers. His ministry actually brings this about. His “prophetic verdicts are divine verdicts... They are God’s commands given expression through mortal lips”.⁷ People are cured just by touching him. He claims “creative breath” which effects miraculous transformations. This enormous heightening of his importance has profound public effects. “Big Man Syndrome” is the curse of Africa. In August 2000, the same month as the president of Nigeria’s senate was impeached for, among other things, bringing the total of his official vehicles to 32, *Winners’* newsletter carried an article about Oyedepo’s acquisition of a private jet. Oyedepo now has four private jets, in 2011 adding a 35 million U.S. dollar Gulfstream V jet to his other three. One might argue that Oyedepo and his jets, for him proof of God’s faithfulness to those practising the covenant, is merely the Nigerian Big Man syndrome transposed onto a Christian plane. His message is that one can become truly rich only by obeying the Word of God (as interpreted by Oyedepo), which often amounts to donating huge sums to his enterprises. He reinforces his status with warnings: “Don’t curse God’s anointed. You have to follow them to the end, without any reservations.”⁸ And in some trepidation, since God has been known to kill those who dare challenge Oyedepo.⁹

7 | Ibid, p. 153.

8 | David O. Oyedepo, *Anointing for Breakthrough*, Lagos, 1992, p. 238.

9 | Cf. David O. Oyedepo, *All you need to have all your Needs met*, Lagos, 2004, pp. 105-107. A group opposed Oyedepo’s plan to move the church from its original site in Lagos to its present location at “Canaan Land” a little outside. Two adults in the ringleader’s family died in a short space of time, before God killed the ringleader himself in a car accident.

ENCHANTED IMAGINATION

Even more important is the sixth register outlined above. By enchanted religious imagination, I mean the vision, with its roots in Africa's pre-Christian and pre-Islamic religions, and indeed the religions of countless indigenous people throughout the world, that spirits pervade nature, and are ultimately responsible for our misfortunes, aberrations and setbacks. Admittedly this is a difficult point to deal with, for this understanding of the world as pervaded by spiritual forces has effectively disappeared in the West, where it is associated with words like superstition and backwardness. Because of this, one can easily seem dismissive, even contemptuous, of such believers. Yet in Africa this imagination deserves much more prominence than it is normally given. This

The Enchanted Imagination is the greatest single reason for the spread of the newer churches.

mindset persists, and is to be seen behind phenomena like the killing of albinos in Tanzania, the child-witch accusations in the Congo, penis snatching or causing genitals to disappear or shrink on physical contact. It is pervasive in African football. I would argue that this imagination is the greatest single reason for the spread of these newer churches. The mainline churches with their centers of gravity in the West and considerable involvement in development, are reluctant to cater for those who seek spiritual causes for everything; this has frequently led to the phenomenon of "dual allegiance", whereby many members of mainline churches go to church on Sunday but slip away during the week to have these needs met by healer-diviners. In these newer churches, there is no need for dual allegiance; one can have these needs met during the Sunday service.

For an example of this enchanted Christianity, consider Daniel Olu-koya's Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, founded in Lagos in 1989. It claims that its regular Sunday attendance of 200,000 at its headquarters church makes it the biggest single Christian congregation in Africa. It too has spread throughout Africa and Europe (in 2012 it claimed 83 branches in Britain alone). Olukoya too is known for his media involvement; his publicity in 2012 listed 220 of his books. If Oyedepo's Winners' Chapel is a thoroughgoing faith gospel or prosperity church, Olukoya puts almost exclusive stress on combating the spiritual forces determined to thwart our glorious destiny. These spiritual forces range from witches to marine spirits, from the Queen of Heaven to the curses and covenants that even remote ancestors incurred or entered into in the distant past. Witches are people in league with the devil, whose

evil manipulation can be detected wherever we fall short of the greatness God intended for us. Even more powerful are marine spirits, found widely in Africa's riverine areas, and particularly associated with sex and female beauty; they control commerce, trade and the economy, and the world of fashion. Again their presence can be detected anywhere there is failure. Spirit spouses, or wives and husbands in the spirit realm, also thwart our destiny; according to Olukoya, 90 per cent of African women are "trapped spiritually" by spirit husbands. These spiritual forces are so powerful, pervasive and cunning, that often a powerfully gifted pastor is needed to identify and neutralise them. Churches like Olukoya's are geared to achieving exactly this.



Didier Drogba playing for Ivory Coast: Enchanted imagination is pervasive in African football. | Source: © Themba Hadebe, picture alliance/AP Photo.

I argued above that Christianity with its stress on prosperity through tithes and offerings, evident in churches like Oyedepo's Winners' Chapel, is dysfunctional. Similarly, the Christianity dedicated to combating pervasive spiritual forces is dysfunctional,

though for different reasons. First, take the idea of human agency or responsibility. Oyedepo constantly talks of forces of which we have no knowledge (for example, only ten per cent of those spiritually married are aware of the fact; 90 per cent would remain unaware without someone like Olukoya to tell them). Witches, marine spirits and spirit spouses are merely the best known. There are countless others, including dream manipulators, satanic caterers, night-raiders, star-hunters, money swallows, progress arrestors, poverty activators, to name just a few. The forces against us are simply innumerable. How much moral responsibility can one have in such a universe? Despair or at least resignation to fate seems the most appropriate response.

Olukoya, founder of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, insists that most of the people who pretend to be our friends are hidden enemies. Their gifts are entry-points for malignant spiritual forces.

Second, this Christianity militates against any form of community or social capital. It breeds fear and distrust. Olukoya insists that most of the people who pretend to be our friends are hidden enemies. Gifts from others are often entry-points for malignant spiritual forces. Above all, his Christianity creates division within families; Olukoya teaches that most of our ills come from close relatives. Thirdly, this imagination seems incompatible with the scientific rationality that is required by modernity (this despite the fact that Olukoya claims to have a PhD in molecular genetics from Britain's University of Reading). Means-ends rationality or instrumental efficiency, the single-minded choice of particular means for given ends, seems to underpin the way the contemporary world operates. Olukoya's Christianity hardly encourages such thinking. For example for him, deaths in childbirth (all? some?) seem to be the work of spirit husbands.¹⁰ Also, "Most Caesarean operations which take place at the hospitals are the handiwork of spirit husbands"; and "The AIDS scourge... is nothing but punishment from the Queen of Heaven"; and "Deliverance leads to elimination of natural hazards because there are diverse wicked spirits that control the weather".¹¹ (Needless to say, Olukoya's Christianity reinforces the Big Man syndrome too; even if he does not promote himself to the extent of Oyedepo, it is understood that, prey as we all are to these myriad forces, we need a great man of God anointed with the gifts of discernment and spiritual power).

10 | Cf. Daniel Olukoya/Shade Olukoya, *Prayer Strategies for Spinsters and Bachelors*, Lagos, p. 52.

11 | *The Prayer and Deliverance Bible. The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments: authorized King James Version. Study Notes by Dr Daniel Olukoya*, Lagos, 2007, pp. 86, 145, 160.

POLITICS

Above, I have been considering effects in the area of development generally. If we turn to more narrowly political effects, it helps to distinguish these new churches from the Roman Catholics and the mainline Protestants. Catholics, for example, have both a sophisticated social teaching, as well as institutions like national bishops' conferences and pastoral letters to promote it. The mainline Protestants normally unite in Christian Councils that function similarly. Admittedly, one mustn't exaggerate the influence of these institutions. Catholic pastoral letters, for example, are often characterised by a level of generality and avoidance of specifics ("Let us once and for all eliminate corruption..."; "Selfishness and greed must stop...") that make them almost evasions. Similarly, sometimes their ineffectiveness is manifest; in 2010 the mainline churches led the opposition to approving Kenya's new constitution (on the grounds that it allowed abortion in limited cases, and allowed Muslims to keep their *kadhi* courts), which in spite of that was approved by a huge majority in a national referendum. Nevertheless, often these mainline-church institutions have considerable political muscle. For example, in Kenya in 2013 the Catholic Church sponsored 5,766 public primary schools out of the country's total of 19,059, and 1,894 secondary schools out of Kenya's total of 7,311. Similarly, the Zimbabwe Association of Church-Related Hospitals serves 126 church-related hospitals and clinics, often in rural areas where mission hospitals and clinics may well be all that exist. Few African governments would unnecessarily antagonise or alienate such bodies.

These mainline-church institutions often have considerable political muscle, for example through investment in education and involvement in the health sector.

By contrast, the new Pentecostal churches tend to have neither social theology nor institutions. Consider the theology of the two churches whose development role we have considered above. Olukoya's Christianity concerns the individual, and is geared to bring about the personal victory that should be his or hers. Beyond this, Olukoya has virtually nothing to say. His attitude to the world is typically summed up: "The kingdom of man is now running to a close. It is the kingdom of human beings. You can see how confused and disorderly it is. The economists are sweating under a system that is no longer obeying their rules. The politicians are confused; they do not know which system will work. Thieves are being released, justice is being murdered; this is the kingdom of man. It is there that one would find human beings fighting

each other, causing problems for each other and challenging the Almighty. That kingdom is closing. A lot of things will close with the realisation that *all man is struggling for here is vanity. It is of no value, as far as God is concerned.*"¹²



The message of David Oyedepo: One can become truly rich only by obeying the Word of God. | Source: © Akintunde Akinleye, Reuters.

Oyedepo, too, has little interest in addressing the challenges or structures of the modern world. Politics and economics simply don't matter for a "covenant practitioner" with "Kingdom immunity". "The environment is irrelevant... For the upright, no matter how terrible the situation around him may be, no matter how terrible the economic condition of that country, God will single him out for a blessing."¹³ "Your business is not failing because there is a slump in your nation's economy, but because there's a problem with your covenant walk!"¹⁴ Let there be no misunderstanding – for Oyedepo, that means you have failed to pay your tithe and make your offerings.¹⁵

12 | D.K. Olukoya, *Contending for the Kingdom*, Lagos, 2005, p. 20. Italics added.

13 | David O. Oyedepo, *Showers of Blessings: Rains of the Spirit*, Lagos, 1997, p. 57 f.

14 | David O. Oyedepo, *Commanding the Supernatural*, Lagos, 2006, p. 90.

15 | To the extent Oyedepo has a wider concern, it is for the triumph of the church over against the world; he sees this already occurring in the rise of wealthy mega-churches like his: "Soon the church will control the socio-economic life of the entire world." David O. Oyedepo, *Success Strategies: putting your Hand on the Scriptural Password to Unending Success*, Lagos, 2003, p. 44. This, though, is in my experience particular to Oyedepo and not characteristic of Pentecostal churches generally.

Institutionally, too, Pentecostal churches tend not to form blocs that can collectively exert political influence. Their independence (or fragmentation) makes it easier for them to be coopted by politicians, especially politicians prepared to make promises, either for society (like Frederick Chiluba's to declare Zambia a Christian nation if elected president in 1991), or more personal (like duty-free privileges for individual churches or their leaders). Moreover, in nearly all African countries the most prominent Pentecostal pastors have lifted themselves into the elite. Thus Oyedepo has had no difficulty bringing Presidents Obasanjo and Jonathan to speak at his church, opportunities which often enough they use as a platform for garnering political support. (I don't mean to imply that mainline churches are immune from such cooptation; in fact, their enormous role in development, with donor funds decreasing, means that they too increasingly make themselves vulnerable to dependence on politicians promising support).

COMPLEXITY

I began by highlighting the variety of Africa's Pentecostal Churches. I noted that their common element is the vision of this-worldly triumph, worked out on six different registers. If in this short article I have stressed the latter three (the faith gospel, the anointed man of God, countering adverse spiritual forces), this is because more usually scholars emphasise the first three, which easily leads to the positive appraisal of the entire phenomenon. I maintain that in fact the latter three are more significant. I have illustrated these qualities using Oyedepo and Olukoya as examples. I have chosen them because both are almost ideal types; they have taken their approach almost to its limit. Because of this, I do not claim that either is strictly representative, but do maintain that the elements they take to their limits are present in virtually all African's Pentecostal churches, on a scale from aggressively unavoidable to gently unobtrusive. (I do not accept the argument that these pastors' enormous success means they cannot shed light on the phenomenon at lower levels; precisely because of their success they are all the more imitated; something made possible by the considerable media outlay of both).

Looking into the last three registers of the this-worldly triumph reveals the less positive aspects of Africa's Pentecostal Churches.

Complicating the picture is the fact that the six registers come in all combinations and permutations – for this reason, a *priori* theorising about these churches can often be of limited value; only

extensive on-the-ground attention to the dynamics of particular churches permits a helpful assessment.

As is obvious, I have approached these churches from the side of their Christianity itself, its internal logic, if you like (though constantly alert that Weber's law of unintended consequences may also be operative). However, complicating things still further is the fact that the inherent logic of their Christianity may pull one way, while other more external factors pull in another. Thus even in an out-and-out prosperity church, with victory claimed to come through covenant tithing to the pastor, the fact that an individual may assume a function like deacon or cell leader, providing opportunity for leadership qualities never before given scope, may work positively towards development.

CONCLUSION

Primarily and immediately these churches are not aimed at development or politics; they are not NGOs or elements of civil society promoting the rights of a particular group, so it would be a mistake to judge them exclusively on criteria appropriate to such bodies. They are religious bodies, with religion understood in a traditional African as opposed to a "disenchanted" Western way. However, as I have shown, that does not mean they have no public effects, even considerable effects in the realms of development and politics. Among the enormous variety of Africa's Pentecostal churches, those that stress motivation, entrepreneurship and life-skills undoubtedly contribute to Africa's development. There are many such on the continent. However, even many of these churches combine those elements with a stress on the faith gospel, the anointing of the special man of God, and an understanding of the world as pervaded by malignant spiritual forces. And most have these latter emphases predominant or at least not far below the surface. To the extent that these Pentecostal churches promote the faith gospel, the spiritual Big Man, and our subjection to malign spiritual forces, their roles are far less positive.

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