

TRANSACTIONAL INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS OF SECURITY DEFINING HIERARCHIES

Silviu PETRE, Ella Magdalena CIUPERCĂ

‘Mihai Viteazul’ National Intelligence Academy, Bucharest, Romania

***Abstract:** Analyzing a set of punctual cases from the world modern history we highlight that states behave differently according to their international status on a certain security relationship. We also noticed a gap in the theory of security studies: the lack of a proper definition of security status of states. Therefore this article aims to ring a bell for the need to clarify a few overused but theoretically neglected concepts of the security studies. From here we aim to emphasize the importance of a clearer definition of concepts such as security producer and security consumer trying to identify theoretical criteria that allow a proper conceptual delimitation.*

***Keywords:** security producer, security consumer, international division of labor*

1. INTRODUCTION

As international relations become more transactional (Aceves, 1996, Menotti, 2017, Chong, 2017, Kurlantzick, 2018), the rhetoric of value is replaced by material cash-value interests. Alliances are redefined and allies are searched according to the concrete yield they may have on short term. At the same time economic metaphors pervaded the common parlance of security studies and diplomacy bearing the peril that the initial denotation of certain notion is twisted. Paradoxically, the study of international relations grew apart from the other social sciences to the extent it developed a rather autistic setting concentrating on its own tradition while neglecting much else (Kennedy, 2000, 476-479). The result would not be a new synthetic language bridging business, governance and military fields, but a flashy cacophony full of buzzwords with little use. In this article we shall direct our attention towards two notion in need of better clarification, namely <security producer> and <security consumer>. Easily employed across a wide range of analysis, from MA dissertations and press open editorials to much more serious academic studies, surprisingly, both of them lack a proper definition, being somehow taken for granted. More so, those who used them do not seem to ponder the possibility that a state might be at the same time producer, facilitator and consumer of different security items. To mend such shortcoming we endeavor to work

and define several notions pursuing in the background a more intimate dialogue between international relations theory and classical sociology. The design of our research is rather policy orientated and unfolds from several case-studies out of each a new taxonomy is laid down to come to terms with the reality of the XXI century geopolitics.

2. INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF WORK IN SECURITY AFFAIRS

Kenneth Waltz's highly influential Theory of International Politics describes states as equivalent on the map, all of them heaving the same function: to shepherd and defend the needs of their population. Even though he uses Durkheim to uphold his arguments, Waltz did not use the division of labor concept to its fullest potential. Against such classical view, this article believes that states specialize themselves on the international scene just like regular individuals in the field of economics.

Given such premises this chapter will follow several dyadic relationships in order to demonstrate how defense or security tasks are distributed among political actors.

2.1 India-USA: a difficult eco-system between world's biggest and world's greatest democracy. After a tenuous relationship for almost the entire period of the Cold War, India and the United States

found a common ground after 1991 and grew more intimate ever since. Without being a frictionous entanglement, both Washington and New Delhi managed to appeal to their similarities in order to be mutually useful by articulating a balance of power for the XXI century. Even though from a strictly military angle both capitals aim to set limits to Chinese hegemonic ambitions, their dialogue entails many topics.

Former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta described India as a “linchpin” of U.S. policy in Asia, whereas former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel dubbed India a security provider “from the Indian Ocean to the greater Pacific” (Weitz, 2017, xiii, 2). So, is India really a security provider given the fact that it has been the largest arms importer in the world while its domestic defense industry still lags in appropriate capabilities and the internal apparatus gasps when confronting various terrorist groups? Not to mention Southasian chronic problem with a bloated corrupt bureaucracy, a perverse outgrowth of British high civil service. If we are to speak of conventional weaponry, US arms exports towards India lags on second place (15%), far behind Russia (62%), both of them followed by Israel (11%) (Pandit, 2018). However, American martial hardware going to India has increased by 550% between 2013-2017 compared to the previous five years (SIPRI, 2018).

What is really at stake in the strategic partnerships between world’s biggest democracies is the nuclear factor; New Delhi covets it so as to deterrence against Pakistan and China and also to become one of the pillars of a multipolar international system. Washington is needed to help legitimize and vouch for Indian desire. At the same time, White house and Pentagon hope that by signing the 2008 Civil nuclear deal, it will shape India’s rise to the peak and also gain an ally against Extreme Orient’s changing dynamic in the decade to follow.

There is another side to matter where India is the producer while US stand as client: highly qualified workforce. From a meager group of immigrants among many others, today’s Indian Americans compound a 2 million strong community of “younger, richer and more likely to be married and supremely well educated” as compared to other groups, says The Economist (Chakravorty, Kapur and Singh, 2016). A quarter million work in IT industry and make the backbone of Silicon Valley while another significant quotient own motels (Chakravorty, Kapur and Singh, 2016). In 2003 Indian origin researchers made up

2,5% of US research workforce, whereas in 2013 their percent rose to 3,3% (Koshy, 2016).

2.2 US-Japan: recycling enemies to become your creditors. A good example would be the relationship between Japan and the United States after 1945, when Washington was the one who secured the safety of Japan from a military point of view, while the former imperialist nation had been banned from investing in defense; still from a financial point of view, Japan helped the first Gulf War through its banks. Therefore, the US played the role of security supplier on military dimension, while Japan became a security supplier for the US on the economic dimension.

Tokyo also assumed the role of one of the most substantial international donors, with Japan contributing \$5 billion to the reconstruction of Iraq by 2013. This is how Japan consistently practiced the status of an economic security supplier. The contrast between the huge Japanese financial and technological potential and its war capabilities were condensed in the expression 'Japan, a military dwarf and an economic giant', but this phrase is about to become history. In the last few years have been discussed and written about the remilitarization of the country of the rising sun. The Prime Minister Shinzo Abe directs the country to a military status able to discourage what it is perceived as the interference of China and North Korea. We are the witness of a process of transforming the north-east Asian monarchy from an economic security supplier into a potential military security producer – one more reason to assume that the wealth of a country is a predictor of its security capabilities.

In addition, it remains to be discussed to what extent the dyad Washington-Tokyo still embodies a win-win relationship since lately street protests have asked the dismantling of US military bases, starting with the one of Okinawa.

2.3 US-Saudi relationship: when oil greases the incompatibility of values. Security producer - security consumer relationship. Another interesting example brings together the United States and Saudi Arabia. From an energetic point of view, the Saudi nation is an energy security producer at planetary level, with the ability to influence the oil market, as it did, in the early 1970s. From a military point of view, Riyadh manifests a special interest in acquiring American weapons, having a status of semi-peripheral consumer or even the broker of security in case of American interventions in the area (operations against

Saddam Hussein (1990, 2003) started from Saudi territory). Lately, the monarchic state is trying to move to a new stage, that of a military security producer. In May 2017, the country's Public investment fund announced the creation of a government-owned armament company with an initial capital of 14 billion riyals (3.7 billion \$) which will provide 40,000 jobs by 2030. The new company will be called Saudi Arabian Military Industries (SAMI) and it is hoped that it will create around it a constellation of new dependent firms. As part of its vision Saudi Arabia 2030, the prince and also defense Minister Mohammed Bin Salman announce an additional 6 billion riyals that will be invested in research and development of new technologies.

2.4. Security Suppliers. In the field of military security, the F-16 fighter aircraft, produced by the United States, was bought by Romania, but not directly from the strategic partner – i.e. the Americans, but from the Portuguese who had already used those planes. Therefore, Lisbon played the role of a supplier between Washington and Bucharest.

2.5 Brokering security: cases of Norway or Romania as mediators. At international level there are very difficult files such as civil wars. Although local, they end up in the attention of the public opinion. Of particular importance in solving these dossiers are certain types of countries that can play the role of brokers, honest states easily accepted as referees? Brokers can be big power or poor states. One example is that of the Nordic countries, which are models of prosperity and respect for human rights that have taken seriously the posture of good Samaritans, to cite the title of a book by Alyson Brysk. Norway involved in the Sri Lanka Civil: opposing the Sinhalese majority to the Tamil minority, the inter-ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka (1983-2009) lasted an entire generation. The mediator's involvement led to a ceasefire agreement (February 2002) and the Oslo communiqué (December 2002) that explored the idea of a federal division of the island. The failure of Norwegian mediation can be interpreted according to our criteria as an example when a political player does not necessarily have the resources to stop a conflict, but it possesses the will to change a crisis. To be an honest, but unarmed intermediary, can be sometime an advantage.

Another notable example involves Romania behavior after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in

August 1968, when Nicolae Ceausescu thought to take advantage of international events to depart from Moscow and seek new allies. Observing the Sino-Soviet rift and the American attempts to have good offices with Beijing, Ceausescu and Bucharest diplomacy have offered to intermediate between the two poles of power. Beyond the external prestige, Bucharest was considering two goals: a) the friendship of the United States and b) obtaining nuclear technology.

The analyzed dyad meets all the criteria: communist Romania was a developing state and became a mediator on the security issues between two geopolitical giants. Compared to the conflict situation in Vietnam, Bucharest has helped to reach a peace agreement between the US and North Vietnam. At the same time, it hoped to obtain as a reward the status of security consumer status of American nuclear technology, initially for civilian purposes and then defensively. If he had managed to fabricate the nuclear weapon, then Romania would have increased its status inside the Warsaw Pact and the region, becoming perhaps a security producer for the smaller countries that would want to break away from Moscow.

A brief glance at the literature reflects a surprising reality. The security producer and the security consumer have, from a semantic point of view, an axiomatic status. International relations specialists have lent the meaning of the economic field without reflecting on the appropriateness of the loan and without questioning themselves: Have readers a common key to understand such concepts in the absence of an appropriate definition?

Up until now, the given examples talk about the relationship between United States, world's hegemonic actor and different other great powers. However, the stake to measure one's status within the international society accurately is most important for those middle nations, caught in between giants and dwarfs.

In this regard we suggest a dialogue between Kenneth Waltz and Immanuel Wallerstein so as to fulfill the promise of bringing together IR theory and classical sociology. On the one hand, Kenneth Waltz is one of the most preminent authors whose pioneering work describes states similar to firms-rational agents always calculating profit and lost in their quest for survival. Such a Hobbesian desire for survival makes them fear one another preventing a better cooperation:

Although states are functional similar units, they differ to a large extent on their capabilities. From such differences arises something like division of

labor (...) The Division of labor between nations is, however, meaningless, compared to the extremely articulate process of division of labor within them. (...) Although it is often discussed about the integration of nations, it rarely happens. Nations could enrich each other, dividing further not only the work that the production of goods involves, but also some of their other tasks, such as political leadership or military defense. Why couldn't be produce their integration? The structure of the international political system imposes limits on member cooperation... (Waltz, 2006, 150).

On the other hand, Immanuel Wallerstein, also a Durkheimian, describes inter-state interaction laid down on a hierarchy made up of three layers: center, semi-periphery and periphery. His version of the World System Theory analyses modern geopolitical dynamics as an international division of labor and power. Apart from Waltz, he considers nations do specialize and acquire certain skills.

In our perspective, a dialogue between Waltz and Wallerstein should emphasise that nation-states are both rational, largely self-aware but at the same time prone to work in collective groups, even if they have a minor, discriminatory position. Our explanatory framework is largely aimed towards what Wallerstein calls semi-peripheral states, namely those middle powers from common parlance. More is, we endeavor to apply it to the security producer-supplier-consumer scheme.

The concept of semi-peripheral state has been refashioned by other authors, especially after 1990-2000, when the importance of superpowers has left room for analyses related to regional powers, geostrategic pivots, emerging nations and their alliances. A generational fellow of Wallerstein, the Italian Giovanni Arrighi (1937-2009) defines semiperipheral states according to their contribution to world capital, in particular to transnational corporations (CTN). Arrighi concludes that the central areas are notable for hosting the management structures of CTN, while the peripheral areas contain mainly executive mechanisms while the semi-periphery may contain intermediate elements of a corporation (as regional directors). We consider that GDP can be a very good indicator of the degree of development of a nation. Without being a perfect analytical tool, it can provide information about other indicators such as: income equality, social stratification, child mortality and life expectancy, corruption or innovation (Bai, Jayachandran, Malesky and Olken, 2014).

In this point, it is important to formulate a definition of security which can satisfy both the philosophy of the world system as well as Waltzian

structural realism. In this key, we propose defining security so as to emphasize both the political institution and the socio-professional classes:

Security is the state of safety that the individual lives as a result of the relative harmony between social classes and internal and international division of labor."

Corollary: "Inter-state security represents that state of safety that arises between several states as a result of a mutually satisfactory division in the defense issue.

This formula satisfies the criterion of legitimacy that Wallerstein spoke of. In other words, as long as collective inequality (either on domestic or on the international scene) is bearable and implies certain satisfaction of the basic needs, then the dominated classes will not revolt, but will be integrated within the division of labor. On the second level, a win-win alliance is likely if the national interests of the actors involved are synchronized. Determining the conceptual sphere of the notions security producer vs. security consumer is only possible by reporting them to the economic area from which they originate. That is why we believe that only by addressing security in close interdependence with the economic sphere, we will be able to build valid conclusions for the formulated questions. Having in mind that the notions listed below are relational (having value only in interaction with someone else), we develop the following taxonomy based on three criteria:

1. the resources states allocate for security,
2. the will of the state,
3. the need of state for security.

Therefore we obtained a new taxonomy:

Security Producer: a state that has the necessary resources¹ and the will to increase the degree of security of another state or of other states without having cardinal security needs that it can not satisfy by itself.

Security Supplier: a state with security needs that primarily has the will and possibility to mediate the relationship between a security producer and an environment in need of security.

Security Mediators: a subtype of the vendor and is considering an honest broker who does not actually provide any security resources but brings together the producers and consumers, thanks to the prestige they have in international community.

¹ Through the "necessary resources" we understand a set of institutional, financial, technological, demographic, geographic factors necessary to attain the national interest.

Security Consumer: a state that needs the help of others to resolve threats to its own security.

Marginal state: those states of the world that do not fit into any of the above categories. Here we can include the political actors of Lilliputian territory who do not take part in the existing tensions, the balance of power, humanitarian interventions or arms transfers. Their status should not be seen as immutable, as it can change.

It is important to underline that the status of a security producer does not mean the political actor is invulnerable (i.e. the terrorist attacks on September 11 in the US or those in the Russian Federation, France and the United Kingdom). Our phrase <cardinal security needs> should be read in terms that the country cannot be kneeled by another state or by a non-state actor without the attacker suffering massive retaliation. This is primarily the case for the five permanent United Nation Security Council members holding nuclear arsenals (and, eventually, Israel and India).

3. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we can say that the concept of security is currently being addressed in a generous manner, offering a wider conceptual umbrella than defense, which allows specialists from several sciences to contribute to shaping and conceptualizing the domain. Unfortunately, with the widening of the sphere of significance, the new term is also even vaguer, exposing unclear or contradictory formulations from a logical point of view. The diagnosis must not induce pessimism, but on the contrary, the impetus to link once again the concern for <international> with sociology and the great family of social sciences (Rosenberg, 1994, Albert and Buzan, 2013, Besnik and Stivachtis, 2017).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Aceves, William J. (1996). AW: Transaction Cost Economics and the Concept of State Practice. *Journal of International Economic Law*. 17 (4).
2. Albert, Mathias & Buzan, Barry (2013) International Relations Theory and the “Social Whole”: Encounters and Gaps Between IR and Sociology. *International Political Sociology*. 7. 117–135.
3. Bai, Jie; Jayachandran, Seema; Malesky, Edmund J. & Olken, Benjamin A. (2014). Does Economic Growth Reduce Corruption? Theory and Evidence from Vietnam. *American Economic Association Papers and Proceedings*. No.1. 1-63.
4. Besnik, Pula & Stivachtis, Yannis A. (2017), Historical Sociology and International Relations: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Large-Scale Historical Change and Global Order. *International Studies*. November.
5. Chakravorty, Sanjoy; Kapur, Devesh & Singh, Nirvikar (2016). How Indians triumphed in America, Book Review: The Other One Percent: Indians in America. *The Economist*. 26 November.
6. Chong, Alan. (2017). Portents of transactional diplomacy in US–Southeast Asia relations. *East Asia Forum*. 10 November.
7. Dombrowski, Peter & Reich, Simon. (2017). Does Donald Trump have a grand strategy? *International Affairs*. 93 (5).
8. Galtung, Johan. (1969). Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*. 6 (3). 167-191.
9. Kennedy, Paul. (2011). *Ascensiunea și decăderea marilor puteri. Transformări economice și conflicte militare din 1500 până în 2000*. Iași: Polirom.
10. Koshy, Jacob. (2016). Indian engineers, scientists in U.S. nearing one million, *The Hindu*. January.
11. Kurlantzick, Joshua (2018). Shifting U.S.-Indonesia Relations to a Transactional Approach. *Council of Foreign Relations*. February 20.
12. Menotti, Roberto (2017) Trump’s transactional problem. *Aspenia online*. January 17.
13. Pandit, Rajat (2018). With 12% of global imports, India tops list of arms buyers: Report. *The Times of India*. March 13.
14. Rosenberg, Justin (1994). The International Imagination: IR Theory and ‘Classic Social Analysis’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 23 (1). 85-108.
15. ***. (2018). Asia and Middle East lead rising trends in arms imports, March 12. *SIPRI* [online]. URL: <https://www.sipri.org/news/press-release/2018/asia-and-middle-east-lead-rising-trend-arms-imports-us-exports-grow-significantly-says-sipri>
16. Waltz, Kenneth N. (2006). *Teoria politicii internaționale*. Iași: Polirom.
17. Weitz, Richard (2017). Promoting U.S.-India Defence Cooperation: Opportunities and Obstacles. *Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press*, June.