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“Jackal Middle Power”: Rethinking Indonesian Middlepowermanship

Dion Maulana Prasetya^{*}, Suyatno Ladiqi^{**},
and Mohd. Afandi Bin Salleh^{***}

Abstract

This present study examines Indonesian foreign policy behavior, especially its role as a middle power. It is essential to (re)consider revisionist tendencies in Indonesia’s middlepowermanship since it has not always supported the established world order. However, most international relations scholars have failed to accurately depict the nature of Indonesian middlepowermanship, often arguing that Indonesia only supports the liberal world order. This article attempts to escape from the prevailing analysis by bringing revisionist-like foreign policy behaviors back into Indonesia’s middlepowermanship analysis. To achieve this, it adopts Randall Schweller’s concept of “Jackal

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bandwagoning,” which can be observed through specific behavior patterns such as dissatisfaction with the status quo and an inclination to bandwagon with rising powers.

Keywords: Indonesia; middle power; revisionist; status-quo;
Jackal middle power

I. Introduction

Indonesia has recently attracted scholars' attention. Geographically, Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic state, as well as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation. It is also considered the world's third-largest democracy after India and the United States.¹ Economically, Indonesia is rapidly developing. In 2016, Indonesia's GDP ranked 8th and was projected to be the fourth largest by 2050, according to PwC.² Meanwhile, Indonesia's military expenditure enjoyed a significant increase, rising by 105% between 2006 and 2015,³ in an attempt to achieve a “Minimum Essential Force” by 2024.

The roles and behavior of Indonesia have also been subject to scholarly research. In the era between the late 1960s and 1970s, Indonesia was often seen as a ‘natural leader’ or *primus inter pares* (first among equals) in the region, even though it was not fully supported by neither actual military nor economic capability. Additionally, it can be considered that Indonesia played the role of middle power – as a mediator. This role is clearly evident in Indonesia's initiatives towards the

¹ “Indonesia - the World Factbook.” CIA, May 5, 2022.

<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/indonesia/>.

² “The World in 2050.” PricewaterhouseCoopers, February, 2017.

<https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/research-insights/economy/the-world-in-2050.html>.

³ “SIPRI Military Expenditure Database | SIPRI 2018.” SIRPI, accessed June 7, 2021. <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>.

Malaysia-Philippines dispute over Sabah in 1968 and the Cambodia-Vietnam conflict between 1979 and 1991.⁴

In the post-reformation period, Acharya believes that Indonesia's rise as an emerging power rests on democracy and regional engagement rather than solely on economic growth and military spending.⁵ This argument is based on a comparison between Indonesia and other emerging powers that are either significant militarily or economically. What makes Indonesia interesting is its active role as a mediator and facilitator despite not being a dominant actor in terms of military and economic capability. Acharya asserts that Indonesia has performed these roles more actively than other regional major powers, such as China, India, and Japan. Despite its incomplete and sectoral forms of leadership,⁶ Indonesia's active mediation in regional conflicts has contributed to its status as a regional leader. Similar views are also expressed by G. Thies and C. Sari⁷ and Karim,⁸ who define

⁴ Christopher B. Roberts and Erlina Widyaningsih. "Indonesian Leadership in ASEAN: Mediation, Agency and Extra-Regional Diplomacy," in *Indonesia's Ascent: Power, Leadership, and the Regional Order*, Christopher Roberts, Ahmad Habir, and Leonard C. Sebastian, eds. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan (2015): 264-286. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137397416_13.

⁵ Amitav Acharya. *Indonesia Matters: Asia's Emerging Democratic Power*. Singapore: World Scientific, (2014).

⁶ Ralf Emmers. "Indonesia's Role in ASEAN: A Case of Incomplete and Sectorial Leadership," *The Pacific Review* 27, no. 4 (2014): 543-62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2014.924230>.

⁷ Cameron G. Thies and Angguntari C. Sari. "A Role Theory Approach to Middle Powers: Making Sense of Indonesia's Place in the International System," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 40, no. 3 (2018): 397-421. <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs40-3c>.

Indonesian foreign policy by examining the roles it plays, which include being a supporter of multilateralism, a good international citizen, a supporter of the international order, a voice for developing countries, a regional leader, an advocate of democracy, and a bridge-builder.

This present study aims to examine Indonesian foreign policy behavior, especially its role as a middle power. It is essential to (re)consider revisionist tendencies in Indonesia’s middlepowermanship since it has not always been a supporter of the established world order. However, most international relations scholars have failed to accurately depict the nature of Indonesian middlepowermanship, often arguing that Indonesia only supports the liberal world order. The problem is, empirically, middle powers perform not only as supporters of the established order but also as autonomous actors in relation to major powers.⁹ In other words, middle powers should not be overgeneralized as mere supporters of the status quo.

The problem occurred when scholars attempted to understand middle powers from wealthy and democratic countries

⁸ Moch Faisal Karim. “Role Legitimation in Foreign Policy: The Case of Indonesia as an Emerging Power under Yudhoyono’s Presidency (2004–2014),” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 17, no. 3 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/orab010>.

⁹ Robert W. Cox. “Middlepowermanship, Japan, and Future World Order,” *International Journal* 44, No. 4 (1989): 823. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002070208904400405>.

such as Canada and Australia.¹⁰ This inevitably led to an overgeneralization of the concept of middle power, which encompassed only those Western democratic and affluent countries that deliberately supported the established American world order. Today, as the number of middle power countries continues to increase, the concept of middle power has expanded to include “emerging middle powers,” denoting unstable or newly democratized and developing states such as Argentina, Brazil, Nigeria, Malaysia, South Africa, and Turkey.¹¹ However, Jordaan is convinced that “middle powers do not challenge or threaten the global status quo” despite any discord that may arise with major powers. Additionally, Jordaan eliminates the revisionist countries, or, using his term, “states that deviate from hegemonic orthodoxy.” His more recent article suggests “to say goodbye” to the concept of “emerging” or “Southern” middle powers from the dictionary while simultaneously advocating that we “stop classifying middling states with counter-hegemonic tendencies as middle powers.”¹²

¹⁰ Andrew Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal. *Relocating middle powers: Australia and Canada in a changing world order*, Vancouver: UBC, (1993).

¹¹ Eduard Jordaan. “The concept of a middle power in international relations: distinguishing between emerging and traditional middle powers,” *Politikon* 30, No. 1 (2003): 165-181. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0258934032000147282>.

¹² Eduard Jordaan. “The emerging middle power concept: Time to say goodbye?” *South African Journal of International Affairs* 24, No. 3 (2017): 395-412. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10220461.2017.1394218>.

The existing literature on Indonesian middlepowermanship, unfortunately, is also dominated by the status quo analysis while neglecting the country’s resistance to the established world order. The majority of the studies suggest that Indonesia follows common patterns of foreign policy behavior, closely related to specific roles such as order-maker,¹³ supporter of multilateralism,¹⁴ democracy promoter,¹⁵ and bridge-builder.¹⁶ This article attempts to escape from the prevailing analysis by bringing revisionist-like foreign policy behaviors back into Indonesia’s middlepowermanship analysis. To achieve this, it adopts Randall Schweller’s concept of “Jackal bandwagoning,” which can be observed through specific behavior patterns such as dissatisfaction with the status quo and an inclination to bandwagon with rising powers.¹⁷

To substantiate the argument, we organize the article into seven sections. Following the introduction, we provide a brief overview of the theoretical debates on middle power and the issue of status quo bias. Subsequently, we review current studies on

¹³ I Gede Wahyu Wicaksana. “The family state: a non-realist approach to understanding Indonesia’s foreign policy,” *Asian Journal of Political Science* 27, No. 3 (2019): 308-328. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02185377.2019.1686997>.

¹⁴ Thies and Sari. “A Role Theory Approach to Middle Powers,” 397-421.

¹⁵ Moch Faisal Karim. “Role conflict and the limits of state identity: the case of Indonesia in democracy promotion,” *The Pacific Review* 30, No. 3 (2017): 385–404. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2016.1249908>.

¹⁶ Acharya, *Indonesia Matters*.

¹⁷ Randall L. Schweller. “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In,” *International Security* 19, No. 1 (1994): 72-107. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539149>.

Indonesian middlepowermanship, which are also overshadowed by status quo analysis. The next section involves an examination of revisionist middle powers. The following section discusses the examination of Indonesia's middle power revisionist tendencies. The final section concludes the study.

II. Literature Review

In the practical realm, the concept of middle power has been widely defined as “states that are neither great nor small in terms of international power, capacity, and influence and demonstrate a propensity to promote cohesion and stability in the world system.”¹⁸ In terms of behavior, middle powers often opt for multilateralism and practice “niche diplomacy” to achieve specific foreign policy objectives in alignment with their limited power capabilities.¹⁹

Eduard Jordaan has made a significant contribution by categorizing middle powers into two groups: traditional and emerging middle powers.²⁰ According to Jordaan, traditional middle powers are wealthy, egalitarian, and well-established democracies, primarily consisting of Western states like Norway, Canada, The Netherlands, Sweden, and Australia. In contrast,

¹⁸ Jordaan, “The Concept of a Middle Power in International Relations,” 165–81.

¹⁹ Şuhnaz Yilmaz. “Middle Powers and Regional Powers,” *Oxford Bibliographies Online Datasets*, (2017).
<https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780199743292-0222>.

²⁰ Jordaan, “The Concept of a Middle Power,” 165-181.

emerging middle powers differ significantly. They face income inequality issues, possess unstable democracies, and often come from non-Western backgrounds. Some examples of emerging middle powers include Argentina, Brazil, Nigeria, Malaysia, South Africa and Turkey. Their behavior is distinct as well. Emerging middle powers are seen as “reformists” within the international system, while the traditional middle powers tend to be “status-quo” seekers. To simplify the classification of the concept, the inclusion of specific multilateral groups, such as MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia), can serve as a convenient reference point for middle powers.²¹

While classifying middle power in the practical realm may appear simpler and less debatable, the same cannot be said for the academic field. Scholars have engaged in disputes over the concept from various perspectives. Conventional approaches often rely on materialistic views when classifying middle powers. They attempt to approach the concept similarly to what Morgenthau,²² Organski,²³ Kenneth Waltz,²⁴ and others did with great powers – placing primary emphasis on tangible elements of

²¹ Andrew F. Cooper and Emel Parlar Dal. “Positioning the Third Wave of Middle Power Diplomacy: Institutional Elevation, Practice Limitations,” *International Journal: Canada’s Journal of Global Policy Analysis* 71, no. 4 (December 2016): 516–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702016686385>.

²² Hans J. Morgenthau. *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: A.A. Knopf, (1948).

²³ A. F. K. Organski. *World Politics*. New York: Knopf, (1969).

²⁴ Kenneth N. Waltz. *Theory of International Politics*. Boston: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, (1979).

power while still considering the role of national morale. This school of thought is typically referred to as the “positional” or sometimes “hierarchical” approach.

The position approach focuses on material factors like gross domestic product (GDP), population, military size, and defense spending to create a quantifiable ranking of state size.²⁵ To provide a similar perspective, Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal²⁶ suggested that middle powers are those that occupy “the ‘middle’ point in a range of bigness to smallness - usually measured by reference to such quantifiable attributes as area, population, size, complexity and strength of economy, military capability, and other comparable factors.” Another “physical” consideration in this concept examines the importance of a state’s geography. This category includes “a state physically located ‘in the middle’ between the system’s great powers.” There are two types within this variant: the first consists of states that are influential within their geographic region – or often referred to as regional powers,²⁷ and the second type includes states that occupy a “middle” position, ideologically, standing between polarized great powers – Indonesia might be the best example within this category.

²⁵ Andrew Carr. “Is Australia a Middle Power? A Systemic Impact Approach,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 68, no. 1 (2013): 70–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2013.840264>.

²⁶ Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal, *Relocating Middle Powers*.

²⁷ Yilmaz, “Middle Powers and Regional Powers”.

The hierarchical approach was most prominent during the Cold War and was used to categorize wealthy Western states, as classified by Jordaan as “traditional middle power,” such as Canada, Australia, Sweden, and the Netherlands. These states were considered the “fittest” category of middle powers in terms of economic and military size. Despite their smaller populations, they did not fall into the category of small states. As Thomson confidently stated, “No matter how you look at it, from a military perspective, we’re a middle power behaving like a middle power. Our military capacity broadly accords with our population and economic weight, and we use that capacity on an unexceptional scale, which is proportionately somewhat smaller than our key Anglo allies.”²⁸

Defining middle power in an “objective” manner does not always lead to simplicity, and criticisms have arisen to challenge this approach. Some argue that the positional approach has failed to predict or explain the behavior of states classified as middle powers.²⁹ In response to this criticism, the liberal or “behavioral” approach has emerged, aiming to offer an alternative definition that focuses on how middle powers act. This is by no means providing prescriptive analytics of what middle powers “should

²⁸ Mark Thompson. “Punching above Our Weight? Australia as a Middle Power,” *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*, (2005): 1–13.

²⁹ John Ravenhill. “Cycles of middle power activism: Constraint and choice in Australian and Canadian,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 52, No. 3 (1998): 309-327. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357719808445259>.

be” doing, yet rather offering “what type of diplomatic behavior they do, or could, display in common.”³⁰ The next question then becomes: what kinds of behaviors do middle powers typically perform? Wood provided a clear answer, stating that they have “their tendency to pursue multilateral solutions to international problems, their tendency to embrace compromise positions in international disputes, and their tendency to embrace notions of ‘good international citizenship’ to guide their diplomacy.”³¹

Middle powers engage in certain behaviors because they have limited capabilities to play active roles in global affairs, unlike great powers. Cooper introduces the concept of “niche diplomacy” to describe how middle powers’ foreign policy targets specific areas that have not been adequately addressed by major powers.³² This type of middle power diplomacy is well-described by Janice Gross Stein, who once wrote about Canadian foreign policy: “Canada cannot be everywhere and do everything. If it attempts to do so, it risks dissipating its resources and sliding into policies of mediocrity. Canada must define its priorities, identify areas of comparative advantage, develop ‘niche’ policies, and

³⁰ Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal, *Relocating Middle Powers*, 19.

³¹ Bernard Wood. *The Middle Powers and the General Interest*. Ottawa: North South Inst, (1988): 20.

³² Andrew F Cooper. *Niche Diplomacy*. London: Macmillan, (1997).

focus its resources so that Canada contributes distinctively across the broad spectrum of common security.”³³

The limited capabilities that middle power possesses shape a distinct pattern of middle power behavior. Middle powers tend to act collectively through multilateral institutions to create a systemic impact on specific issues. As noted by Robert O. Keohane in his article, “A middle power is a state whose leaders consider that it cannot act alone effectively but may be able to have a systemic impact in a small group or through an international institution.”³⁴ Another salient feature of middle powers is their role as a “bridge-builder” between great powers. They fill a void by attempting to reduce tensions between great powers, especially when it comes to defusing internal conflict caused by rivalry among great powers in a particular state.

In the post-Cold War era, middle powers have expanded their roles within international politics, engaging in a more diverse and multifaceted type of diplomatic behavior. Their leadership and initiative-taking are not solely based on structural power but are “associated with the energetic and creative use of their diplomatic talents.”³⁵ In line with this, Australian Prime Minister Kevin

³³ Janice Gross Stein. “Canada 21: A Moment and a Model,” *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 2, no. 1 (1994): 9–13.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/11926422.1994.9673019>.

³⁴ Robert O. Keohane. “Lilliputians’ Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics,” *International Organization* 23, no. 2 (1969): 291–310.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/s002081830003160x>.

³⁵ Cooper and Dal, “Positioning the Third Wave,” 516-528.

Rudd introduced a new foreign policy concept known as “creative middle power diplomacy,” which hinges “on the will to reenergize and redefine Australia’s foreign policy into proactive global engagement.”³⁶ To be more practical, Rudd’s doctrine aims to establish “new global and regional institutions, the reinvigoration of nuclear disarmament, and the successful negotiation of a new instrument to address climate change.” By adopting such a style of foreign policy, as suggested by Baba & Kaya, Australia can play an active role in the international arena as a “regional power prosecuting global interests.”

Finally, there is the constructivist or identity approach, which differs significantly from the two “objective” approaches mentioned earlier because it takes a constructivist perspective. In contrast to their rationalist counterparts, constructivists argue that normative or ideational structures are as significant as material structures, whether they are manifested through military or economic capabilities. As Alexander Wendt notes, “material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded.”³⁷ Furthermore, non-material structures not only influence states’ identity but, in turn, also their actions. This is something that

³⁶ G. Baba and T. O. Kaya. “Testing the Creativity of Kevin Rudd’s Middle Power Diplomacy: EU-Australia Partnership Framework versus the Asia-Pacific Community,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 14, no. 2 (2014): 239–69. <https://doi.org/10.1093/irap/lct025>.

³⁷ Alexander Wendt. *Constructing International Politics*. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press, (1995), 75.

rationalists see as nothing important to find the source of preferences but take it for granted and only focus on the “strategic domain” of the state’s foreign policy.³⁸

Based on the basic notions of constructivism above, this approach looks at how a state has constructed its image as a middle power, how this self-perception has been projected in its foreign policy behavior, and if other actors view the state as a middle power.³⁹ As Hurrell argues, middle power should not be defined by “some set of objective attributes or by objective geopolitical or geoeconomic circumstances, but rather as a self-created identity or ideology.”⁴⁰ By way of this view, he adds, middlepowermanship “becomes an embedded guiding narrative, a particular foreign policy ideology that can be traced historically, that is rooted within and around particular parts of the bureaucracy, and that can be perhaps related to broader trends or tendencies in the domestic politics of the country.”

To sum up, each approach offers unique insights into explaining middle powers in international politics. However, it is

³⁸ Christian Reus-Smith. “Constructivism,” in *Theories of International Relations*, ed. Scott Burchill. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, (2009).

³⁹ Sarah Teo. “Middle Power Identities of Australia and South Korea: Comparing the Kevin Rudd/Julia Gillard and Lee Myung-Bak Administrations,” *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 2 (2017): 221–39.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2017.1371210>.

⁴⁰ Andrew Hurrell. “Some Reflections on the Role of Intermediate Powers in International Institutions,” in *Paths to Power: Foreign Policy Strategies of Intermediate States*. Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, (2000): 1–11.

notable that many studies suffer from status-quo bias. This bias refers to a research preference towards a country's foreign policy behavior, which primarily focuses on its status-quo mode, such as its inclination towards multilateralism and liberal democracy. By focusing mainly on a country's status quo behavior, scholars aim to identify common patterns of middlepowermanship. Nonetheless, as states joining the group of middle power continue to proliferate recently, the attempt has led to a "dead-end," as suggested by Hurrell:

*"There are, then, few, if any, common patterns of behavior as to how a particular group of middle or intermediate powers will behave internationally because of the variation in the types of states involved, the categories of power that they possess, and the arenas within which they operate are all so various."*⁴¹

To address this puzzle, instead of looking for general patterns in diverse middle power behavior, a group of scholars have shifted their focus to common behavioral patterns of middle powers, which, by coincidence, all tend to be supporters of the status quo.⁴² It is problematic that most scholars only consider "status-quo middle powers" to construct a coherent conceptual

⁴¹ Hurrell, *Some Reflections on the Role of Intermediate Powers*.

⁴² Jordaan, "The concept of a middle power," 165-181; Jordaan, "The emerging middle power concept," 395-412.

framework while simultaneously citing earlier works on middle powers – which, naturally, did not distinguish between those closely related to the status quo or revisionism. For instance, the work of Bartolus of Sassoferrato in grading ancient Italian states, which put Venice and Florence as examples of ‘middle powers’ in 14th-century Europe,⁴³ is frequently cited by modern scholars when attempting to conceptualize contemporary middle powers. However, what they often overlook is the fact that Venice and Florence behaved quite differently – with Florence and its allies inclined towards the status quo, while Venice, on the other hand, was a revisionist power.⁴⁴ To be fair, scholars using the behavioral approach should have also critiqued Bartolus or, at the very least, included a critical note regarding the classification of Venice as a middle power.

This “trend” has also had some impact on research regarding Indonesian middlepowermanship. We have conducted a review of current research related to Indonesia as a middle power and its behavior in international politics. Using VOSviewer analysis on titles and abstracts from 1,618 articles indexed on Google Scholars, with the keywords “middle power,” “middle-power,” and “middle powers,” we found that Indonesia has not received

⁴³ Carsten Holbraad. *Middle powers in international politics*. London: Macmillan, (1984): 11.

⁴⁴ Francesco Guicciardini. “The History of Italy,” in *Basic Texts in International Relations the Evolution of Ideas about International Society*, Evan Luard, ed. London: Macmillan, (1992) 380-383.

much attention in scholarly analysis.⁴⁵ Between 1980 and 2000, Indonesia was not the primary focus of discussions on “middle power” issues in the titles and abstracts of 618 articles (see Figure 1). In other words, Indonesia was not yet considered middle during this period. In contrast, Canada and Australia were the main subjects of scholarly research on middle power, followed by Japan and India, representing Asian powers (see Figure 2).

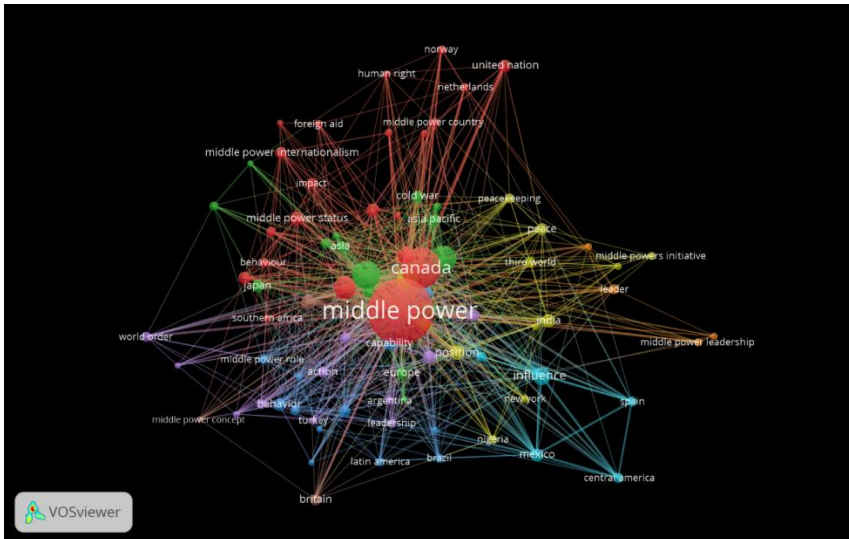


Figure 1. A network visualization of studies on middle power between the years 1980-2000 using VOSviewer

⁴⁵ We used minimum five (5) co-occurrences of a term to be assumed that the term is the main or among the main subjects written in a couple of articles.



Figure 2. A density visualization of studies on middle power between the years 1980-2000 using VOSviewer

However, using the same method and parameters, it is evident that between the years 2000 and 2020, the term “Indonesia” appeared 42 times in 1,000 articles indexed by Google Scholars. Moreover, Indonesia falls under the largest cluster of “Middle Power” alongside other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, such as Australia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam (See Figure 3). Meanwhile, the term “Indonesia” is closely associated with other concepts such as “middle power status,” “middle power diplomacy,” “middle power state,” “middle power concept,” “regional middle power,” and “niche diplomacy” (See figure 4). This data indicates that Indonesia

behavioral patterns that reflect support for the established liberal world order, whereas, in fact, middle powers “do not have a common attribute as functionalists or of being good international citizens or of having a preference for multilateralism, and they cannot be identified by their behavior alone.” In light of this, Ping concludes that Indonesia, as a natural middle power, behaves as a “natural” revisionist power, with its style encompassing “self-serving, anti-hegemonic, bad international citizenship, threats, rogue behavior, blackmail and thuggery.” The present article, while generally echoing Ping’s argument, takes a slightly different stance by proposing that Indonesia is not a “full” revisionist power but rather a “limited-aims” revisionist state, which will be explored further in the following section.

There are two common patterns in the current studies on Indonesian middlepowermanship: firstly, scholars tend to overlook the historical part of Indonesia’s foreign policy under President Sukarno, a period where Indonesia represented itself as a revisionist middle power; secondly, selective cases of Indonesia’s middlepowermanship supporting the status-quo are often exaggerated. When discussing Indonesia’s activism in the international arena, scholars seem to start with the dawn of the New Order era while ignoring the country’s revolutionary

expression of foreign policy during Sukarno’s era.⁴⁷ The study conducted by Thies and Sari,⁴⁸ for instance, while covering Indonesia’s roles as a middle power throughout its historical trajectory, deliberately excludes the Sukarno era. By doing so, it is assumed that general patterns of Indonesian roles, as a supporter of multilateralism, a good international citizen, and a supporter of the international order, can be established. Thies and Sari acknowledged the challenge of classifying middle powers based on specific roles, given that Indonesia displayed different styles under different presidents. However, instead of reconciling with this diversity, they “kicked” Indonesia under Sukarno out of middle power status, as they suggested:

“...countries like Indonesia may sometimes fulfill the expectations of a middle power while at other times they will not... Sukarno was unable to fulfill the role of a supporter of multilateralism. Subsequent Indonesian presidents vacillated with this auxiliary role, thus casting some doubt about Indonesia as a fully established middle power.”⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Rizal Sukma. “Domestic Politics and International Posture: Constraints and Possibilities,” in *Indonesia Rising: The Repositioning of Asia’s Third Giant*, Anthony Reid, ed. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, (2012): 77-92.

⁴⁸ Thies and Sari, “A Role Theory Approach,” 397-421.

⁴⁹ Thies and Sari, “A Role Theory Approach,” 413.

Similarly, a study conducted by Wicaksana suggests a general pattern of Indonesia's foreign policy characterized as an "order-maker."⁵⁰ Once again, Indonesia's foreign policy under Sukarno is overlooked since it does not align with the role proposed in the article. Sukarno is indeed not a suitable example of an "order-maker" as he pursued foreign policies in a contradictory manner. Instead of creating a stable regional order, Sukarno chose to "shake the calm water" by conducting *Konfrontasi* against Malaysia in 1963.⁵¹ Indonesia's revisionism under Sukarno is considered an anomaly since, in most cases, Jakarta has played the role of a good international citizen obedient to international order, especially when it comes to resolving international disputes in the region. It seems that the history of Indonesia's foreign policy, particularly as a middle power, is often seen as beginning with the triumph of Suharto and the establishment of a multilateral organization known as ASEAN in 1967.⁵² Before that, Indonesia was often viewed as a "status-less" regional giant power with problematic behaviors.⁵³

⁵⁰ Wicaksana, "The family state," 2.

⁵¹ Joseph Chinyong Liow. *The politics of Indonesia-Malaysia relations: one kin, two nations*. New York: Routledgecurzon, (2004): 98.

⁵² Mark Beeson, Alan Bloomfield, and Wahyu Wicaksana. "Unlikely allies? Australia, Indonesia and the strategic cultures of middle powers," *Asian Security* (2020): 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14799855.2020.1846525>.

⁵³ Dewi Fortuna Anwar. "Indonesia and the ASEAN outlook on the Indo-Pacific," *International Affairs* 96, No. 1 (2020): 111–129. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiz223>.

Another way to come up with a solid concept of Indonesian middlepowermanship is to selectively choose specific cases under particular presidents that coincidentally exhibited a status quo supporting role. Indonesia can be described as a status-quo middle power, particularly during President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s (SBY) administration. During SBY’s leadership, Indonesia was observed to play certain roles, such as that of a democracy promoter.⁵⁴ Within this role, Indonesia appeared to push ASEAN towards becoming a more rules-based organization, especially in two key areas: democratization and the promotion of human rights. Studies conducted by Acharya⁵⁵ and Grzywacz⁵⁶ covered a wide range of Indonesia’s multilateral tendencies in its foreign policy. By doing so, Indonesian presidents, especially SBY, aimed to position the state as an exemplar of a “good international citizen,” which was reflected in SBY’s slogan of “a million friends and zero enemies.” Emmerson argued that, rather than following an analyst’s suggestion to shift toward a more bilateral approach to pursue its national interests, SBY preferred

⁵⁴ Karim, “Role conflict,” 385–404.

⁵⁵ Acharya, *Indonesia Matters*.

⁵⁶ Anna Grzywacz. “The authoritarian turn of middle powers: changes in narratives and engagement,” *Third World Quarterly* (2021): 1-22.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2021.1960159>.

to “envision a tactful, eclectic and multilateralist foreign policy that offered all things – good things – to all people.”⁵⁷

This case reveals, as Cooper said, the “definitional sleight of hand,” which methodologically equals the analogy he mentions in his article: “walking into a bar, designating everyone with blonde hair who is drinking red wine as a discretionary subset of the broader blonde category, and then studying only this subgroup to explicate the causal relationship of blondeness and drinking behavior, having first speculated that blondes inherently tend to favor red wine!”⁵⁸ The methodological bias in middle power theorizing will be explored in the following section.

III. Bringing back revisionist middle powers

During the Cold War, international relations scholars predominantly focused on the foreign behavior of great powers. Some of the earliest works on great powers include the studies by Segal and Harkavy,⁵⁹ which examined the competition between China, the Soviet Union, and the United States. Other works

⁵⁷ Donald K. Emmerson. “Is Indonesia Rising: It Depends,” in *Indonesia Rising: The Repositioning of Asia’s Third Giant*, Anthony Reid, ed. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, (2012): 49-76.

⁵⁸ David A. Cooper. “Challenging Contemporary Notions of Middle Power Influence: Implications of the Proliferation Security Initiative for ‘Middle Power Theory,’” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7, No. 3 (2011): 322.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1743-8594.2011.00140.x>.

⁵⁹ Robert E. Harkavy. *Great power competition for overseas bases: the geopolitics of access diplomacy*. New York: Pergamon Press, (1982).
<https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-025089-2.50007-2>.

sought to understand international relations by analyzing wars through the lens of great power rivalry.⁶⁰ It was only with the work of Organski that a framework for comprehending states' foreign policy tendencies in a hierarchical system was provided. In this framework, states are categorized into two groups: satisfied (status quo) and dissatisfied (revisionist).⁶¹ At the top of this hierarchical order is the satisfied dominant power, which holds the greatest amount of power. Below it are the great powers, which are generally considered supporters of the status quo, although some may challenge the international order. Following the great powers are the middle and small powers. Even during peaceful and stable times, there can still be dissatisfied states among the group of middle powers, depending on their degree of satisfaction with the international order.⁶²

It's important to note that the presence of more status-quo middle powers doesn't mean that revisionist middle powers are entirely absent. History has shown that even some of the greatest great power rivalries, like the one between Sparta and Athens

⁶⁰ See for example the works of Jack S. Levy. *War in the modern great power systems, 1495-1975*. Lexington (Ky.): University Press of Kentucky, (1983); H. W. Koch. *The Origins of the First World War*. London: Macmillan, (1984); Paul Kennedy. *The Rise and Fall of The Great Powers: economic change and military conflict from 1500-2000*. London: Unwyn Hyman, (1989), and John J. Mearsheimer. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton & Company, (2001).

⁶¹ Organski, *World Politics*.

⁶² Jack Kugler and A.F.K. Organski. "The power transition: A retrospective and prospective evaluation," in *Handbook of War Studies*, Manus I. Midlarsky, ed. London: Routledge, (1989): 171-194.

from 431 to 404 BC, can be viewed from the perspective of status quo versus revisionist rivalry. Furthermore, these rivalries often involved not only the major powers but also middle powers, such as Corinth and Corcyra, which were eventually “compelled” to ally with either Sparta or Athens and took on either a status quo or revisionist stance.⁶³ Similarly, the “local” balance of power in 14th-century Italy was also characterized by a rivalry between two poles of middle powers – status-quo Florence and revisionist Venice. In modern European international relations, numerous great power rivalries have involved “middle powers” that played roles as either status-quo or revisionist supporters.⁶⁴

The problem now is to understand the nature of the revisionism that middle powers perform. Since middle powers fall below great or major powers, their revisionist tendencies are also confined to areas in which they have the capability to exert influence. For the purpose of the study, we refer to Schweller’s typology on revisionist states, which is divided into two categories: unlimited-aims (revolutionary) and limited-aims revisionist.⁶⁵ Unlimited-aims revisionist states are typically great powers that seek to gain more power. Highly dissatisfied, they

⁶³ Thucydides, Richard Crawley, and Robert B. Strassler. *The landmark Thucydides: a comprehensive guide to the Peloponnesian War: a newly revised edition of the Richard Crawley translation with maps, annotations, appendices, and encyclopedic index*. New York: Free Press, (2008).

⁶⁴ Graham Allison. *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’s Trap?* New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, (2017).

⁶⁵ Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit,” 72-107.

aim to overthrow the established international order. On the other hand, limited-aims revisionist states are often middle powers that are somewhat dissatisfied with the status quo but have little intention and certainly lack the capability to change it. As Schweller suggests, “While all revolutionary states are dissatisfied, not all dissatisfied states are revolutionary.”⁶⁶ When the status quo still provides benefits, even if they are dissatisfied, limited-aims revisionist states would prefer to preserve and, in some cases, even strengthen the established order rather than disrupt it. These types of revisionist states are referred to as “Jackals,” as they perform certain characteristics of a “secondary” predator:

“Jackals are states that will pay high costs to defend their possessions but even greater costs to extend their values. Like wolves, jackals are dissatisfied powers, but they value their possessions, and so as expanders, they tend to be risk-averse and opportunistic... While jackals are often found trailing wolves (revisionist leaders), they will also trail lions (status-quo leaders) who are on the verge of victory.”⁶⁷

By borrowing Schweller’s model of “Jackal” revisionist states, we propose “Jackal middle power” to describe Indonesian

⁶⁶ Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit,” 29.

⁶⁷ Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit,” 103.

middlepowermanship. This attempt would relieve the conceptual bias proposed by the behavioral approach and bring revisionist states back to middle power theory. Additionally, this attempt would also alleviate conceptual incoherence from the behavioral approach by eliminating exhausting efforts in defining middle power – “traditional” vs. “emerging” middle powers, or the “first,” “second,” and “third” waves of middle powers.

Bringing back Indonesia’s revisionist tendencies is essential to capture the whole picture of its foreign policy, particularly in the context of its middlepowermanship. This raises a significant question, echoing Gareth Evans: if Indonesia ceases to behave as a status-quo supporter, does it also cease to be a middle power? More specifically, during Sukarno’s leadership, when anti-colonialism and contra-hegemony strongly influenced the state’s foreign policy, does this mean Indonesia was not a middle power at that time? If not, then what category of power would Indonesia fall into? While it is clear that Indonesia under Sukarno was not a great power, considering its size, population, and military strength,⁶⁸ it raises the question of whether it can be classified as a small power solely because it was a revisionist state.

⁶⁸ In the early 1960’s Indonesia was considered as the strongest sea power in the southern hemisphere. With the military support from Soviet, Indonesia managed to deter the Dutch navy and settling the Western Papua issue through dialogue rather than direct military confrontation. See Daoed Joesoef. *Studi Strategi: Logika Ketahanan dan Pembangunan Nasional*. Jakarta: Kompas Media Nusantara, (2014): 104-105.

IV. Indonesia as “Jackal middle power”

This section delves into the “other side” of Indonesian middlepowermanship, specifically its revisionist foreign policy tendencies. These tendencies can be examined through two variables borrowed from Schweller’s Balance of Interest theory: dissatisfaction with the status quo and an inclination towards bandwagoning with the rising powers. We call Indonesia’s middlepowermanship “Jackal middle power,” which denotes opportunistic revisionist-like foreign policy behaviors driven primarily by national interest, as Schweller suggests. Within this framework, Indonesia has never been a “fully” or revolutionary revisionist power, primarily due to its middle-ranked economic and military capabilities. Similar to the niche diplomacy of status-quo middle powers, Indonesia’s limited-aims revisionist foreign policy has not aimed to confront the status-quo leaders directly or change the established order, as that typically falls under the purview of unlimited-aims revisionist powers. Instead, it involves filling the “niche” left by revisionist leaders to advance its national interests.

Indonesia under Sukarno serves as the most suitable example of a “Jackal middle power.” Two key issues will be emphasized: Sukarno’s ideas of “Jakarta, Phnom Penh, Hanoi, Peking, and Pyongyang” anti-imperial axis, and *Konfrontasi* policy directed towards a new state of Federation of Malaysia. Sukarno’s idea of

building an anti-imperial axis of Jakarta, Phnom Penh, Hanoi, Peking, and Pyongyang was a result of his (re)reading of Indonesia's "Independent" foreign policy. According to him, "Independent" from the "Independent and Active" foreign policy did indeed mean not taking sides between two poles during the Cold War, yet it also did not hinder from "firmly choosing the side of the progressive, anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, anti-neocolonialist forces."⁶⁹ Sukarno, inspired by the success of Eastern European "people democratic" states in breaking free from imperial entanglements with the assistance of the Soviet Red Army, advocated for the establishment of the revisionist axis mentioned earlier. He referred to the revisionist powers as New Emerging Forces (NEFOS) while labeling the Western status-quo powers as Old Established Forces (OLDEFOS). Sukarno's revisionist stance was rooted in the belief that joining the stronger side of the status-quo powers was not only undesirable but also dangerous, and thus, aligning with the NEFOS offered a more promising alternative. This highlights Sukarno's commitment to challenging the established order and advancing the interests of emerging and revisionist powers. As he implied from a speech in Belgrade, "The safety of the world is always threatened by the Old Established Order."⁷⁰ That is why, for Sukarno, being neutral was not the essence of "Independent" foreign policy, yet, on the

⁶⁹ Franklin B. Weinstein. *Indonesian foreign policy and the dilemma of dependence: from Sukarno to Soeharto*. Jakarta: Equinox, (2007).

⁷⁰ J. D. Legge. *Sukarno: A Political Biography*. Singapore: Archipelago, (2004).

contrary, the violation of the principle, just as Weinstein suggested:

“Because the NEFOS were by definition opposed to exploitation, siding with them was seen not as a violation of the independent policy, but on the contrary as the only way to be truly independent, a policy that forced Indonesia to remain neutral in the struggle between NEFOS and OLDEFOS would mean acceptance of the exploitative status quo [emphasis added].”⁷¹

Another significant revisionist action undertaken by Sukarno was the *Konfrontasi* policy directed toward the Federation of Malaysia. This policy was driven by various motives;⁷² one of the primary ones was Sukarno’s desire to replicate the success of deterring the Dutch from taking West Papua. In 1963, Sukarno declared his intention to “liberate” the people of Malaysia from what he perceived as neo-imperialism. He believed himself to be the leader of post-colonial nations and saw it as his noble duty to eliminate the remnants of European imperialism from Southeast Asia.⁷³ From the perspective of NEFOS-OLDEFOS dynamics, the formation of the new Federation of Malaysia was viewed as a

⁷¹ Weinstein, *Indonesian foreign policy*, 167.

⁷² Liow, *The politics*.

⁷³ John Subritzky, *Confronting Sukarno: British, American, Australian and New Zealand diplomacy in the Malaysian-Indonesian confrontation, 1961-5*. New York: St. Martin Press, (2000).

move that would bolster the presence of status-quo powers in the region. Sukarno saw this development as a potential threat to his nationalism-based agendas. He expressed his intention to “crush Malaysia” (*ganyang Malaysia*) because, in his view, it was Malaysia that was provoking the confrontation, and this was perceived as a direct “confrontation against the Indonesian Revolution.”⁷⁴ Sukarno also believed that Malaysia’s alignment with the status-quo powers could trigger a “domino effect” in the region. This would not only place Indonesia in the middle of an OLDEFOS alliance but also undermine its position as the leader of NEFOS. Faced with this situation, Sukarno felt compelled to take a stance, and aligning with the status-quo powers was not even considered an option for him. His revisionist stance was deeply rooted in his commitment to preserving Indonesia’s interests and challenging the established order.

The current Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, is considered to bring back Sukarno-style foreign policy.⁷⁵ Although not as aggressive as Sukarno’s approach, experts have noted a shift in Jokowi’s foreign policy compared to his

⁷⁴ Legge, *Sukarno*, 369.

⁷⁵ David Camroux. “Executions signal a return to Sukarno-style foreign policy in Indonesia,” *East Asia Forum*, May 12, (2015).

<https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/05/12/executions-signal-a-return-to-sukarno-era-foreign-policy-in-indonesia>.

predecessor.⁷⁶ One of the most noticeable changes was the abandonment of SBY’s foreign policy slogan, “a thousand friends, zero enemies,”⁷⁷ in favor of a foreign policy that places a greater emphasis on state sovereignty and maritime development.⁷⁸ SBY’s slogan was regarded as “impractical” and “helpless” when it came to managing the interests of a nation in competition with great powers. Consequently, at the East Asia Summit in Nay Pyi Taw in 2014, Jokowi outlined his vision for Indonesia as the “world maritime axis,” based on five main pillars: rebuilding Indonesia’s maritime culture, guarding and managing maritime resources, with a focus on building marine food sovereignty; giving priority to the development of maritime infrastructure and

⁷⁶ See Prashanth Parameswaran. “Between Aspiration and Reality: Indonesian Foreign Policy After the 2014 Elections,” *The Washington Quarterly* 37, No. 3 (2014): 153-165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2014.978441> ; and Aaron L. Connelly. “Sovereignty and the Sea: President Joko Widodo’s Foreign Policy Challenges,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 37, No. 1 (2015): 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs37-1a>.

⁷⁷ SBY used the term ‘a thousand...’ and ‘a million...’ interchangeably.

⁷⁸ Icha Rastika. “Wapres JK: Diplomasi ‘Zero Enemy’ Itu Mustahil [Vice President JK: “Zero Enemy” Diplomacy is Impossible],” *Kompas*, March 5, 2015.

<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2015/03/05/06531511/Wapres.JK.Diplomasi.Zero.Enemy.Itu.Mustahil>.

connectivity, strengthening maritime diplomacy, and establishing a maritime defense force.⁷⁹

Just as Sukarno's, Jokowi's revisionist "gestures" are primarily shown in the forms of inclination towards unilateral acts and bilateral foreign relations. Those tendencies are observable when it comes to maritime disputes with neighboring countries. When Indonesia perceives a threat to its national identity as a maritime nation, it tends to prioritize unilateral actions over multilateral approaches.⁸⁰ Two cases of maritime disputes illustrate this approach: the territorial dispute with Malaysia in Ambalat waters and the maritime rights dispute with China in the South China Sea concerning the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). During Jokowi's administration, the Ambalat issue did not receive as much media attention as it did under the previous president, SBY. This was largely attributed to Jokowi's firm stance on defending Indonesia's territorial integrity, which included deploying military forces to the border areas of North Kalimantan,

⁷⁹ Sekretariat Kabinet Republik Indonesia. "Pidato Presiden RI Joko Widodo Pada KTT ke-9 Asia Timur, di Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar [Speech of Indonesian President Joko Widodo at the 9th East Asia Summit in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar]," November 14, 2014.

<https://setkab.go.id/pidato-presiden-ri-joko-widodo-pada-ktt-ke-9-asia-timur-di-nay-pyi-taw-myanmar-13-november-2014/>.

⁸⁰ Dion Maulana Prasetya, Peggy Puspa Haffsari and Heavy Nala Estriani.

"Identity Matters: Indonesia's approach towards territorial disputes in South-east Asia," *Maritime Affairs* 16, No. 2 (2020): 89-105.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09733159.2020.1836775>.

including the Ambalat waters.⁸¹ Jokowi’s inclination toward a unilateral approach was evident when Indonesian Navy warships were sent to protect the construction of a lighthouse in the Karang Unarang waters.⁸² This assertive policy was intended to send a strong message to Kuala Lumpur that Indonesia, under Jokowi’s leadership, would not be “soft” in addressing territorial disputes, in contrast to the previous administration.⁸³

Similarly, Jokowi’s assertive stance in the South China Sea dispute shows a sign of revisionist tendency. This is not to argue that confronting China in the sea is a form of balancing against Beijing. The argument is that Indonesia’s revisionist tendency is shown by the approach that it chose, which is more likely to avoid the multilateral approach. While the multilateral dialogue between ASEAN and China had been slowly progressing during SBY’s government, Jokowi’s administration has shown impatience with China’s claims in the South China Sea. This is demonstrated by

⁸¹ Emirza Adi Syailendra. “A Nonbalancing Act: Explaining Indonesia’s Failure to Balance Against the Chinese Threat,” *Asian Security* 13, No. 3 (2017): 11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14799855.2017.1365489>.

⁸² Sukoco. “TNI AL: Tentara Laut Malaysia Bayang-bayangi Suar Karang Unarang [Indonesian Navy: The Malaysian Navy haunts the shores of Karang Unarang],” *Kompas*, July 13, 2017. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2017/07/13/01455221/tni-al--tentara-laut-malaysia-bayang-bayangi-suar-karang-unarang->.

⁸³ Liputan 6 SCTV. “Pembangunan Mercusuar Karang Unarang Dihentikan Sementara [The construction of the Karang Unarang lighthouse has been temporarily halted].” March 6, 2005. <https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/96983/pembangunan-mercusuar-karang-unarang-dihentikan-sementar>.

Indonesia's potential consideration of bringing the case to the International Criminal Court⁸⁴ and building up a more advanced military base in the Natuna Islands.⁸⁵ This unilateral stance taken by the Jokowi administration can be seen as a significant shift in Indonesia's foreign policy. While the previous government worked hard to ensure the success of the multilateral channel, the current government seeks a new approach that does not compromise Indonesia's national interests. Although Indonesia still normatively places ASEAN as the cornerstone of its foreign policy, there is a clear indication that Indonesia is moving toward a "post-ASEAN" foreign policy.⁸⁶ As progress on the ASEAN Code of Conduct (CoC)⁸⁷ appears to be stalling, member states,

⁸⁴ The statement was originally said by the former coordinating minister for political, legal, and security affairs, Luhut Pandjaitan. He himself said that Indonesia may potentially bring the case to the International Criminal Court, while he actually meant the International Court of Justice or even the Permanent Court of Arbitration. See Shannon Tiezzi. "Would Indonesia Actually Challenge China's Nine-Dash Line in International Court?" *The Diplomat*, November 13, 2015.

<https://thediplomat.com/2015/11/would-indonesia-actually-challenge-chinas-nine-dash-line-in-international-court/>; Donald E. Weatherbee. "Re-Assessing Indonesia's Role in the South China Sea," *ISEAS Perspective* 18 (2016): 1-13.

⁸⁵ John McBeth. "Indonesia boosts its military presence in the Natuna Islands," *The Strategist*, January 29, 2019.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/indonesia-boosts-its-military-presence-in-the-natuna-islands>.

⁸⁶ Sukma, "Domestic Politics and International Posture," 77-92.

⁸⁷ Code of Conduct is a multilateral norms building aimed to bring unity between ASEAN's claimant and non-claimant member states and to restrain China's assertive behaviour in the South China Sea. See Leszek Buszynski. "ASEAN, the Declaration on Conduct, and the South China Sea," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 25, No. 3 (2003): 250-251.

including Indonesia, are exploring unilateral approaches to address China’s assertive behavior in the disputed area.⁸⁸

Jokowi’s stance on the South China Sea issue, including his statements during the 2014 presidential debate, reflects a shift away from relying on ASEAN as the primary multilateral channel to address the conflict. During the debate, Jokowi downplayed Indonesia’s involvement in the territorial disputes in the South China Sea, emphasizing that Indonesia has no territorial dispute with China in the area. He also suggested that the disputes mainly involve China and the Philippines.⁸⁹ This shift has become more evident during Jokowi’s presidency, and Indonesia’s ASEAN chairmanship in September 2023 didn’t yield significant progress toward the Code of Conduct (CoC) in the South China Sea. Indonesia also chose to remain relatively silent about the China Coast Guard’s provocative actions toward Vietnamese vessels and the Philippines Coast Guard in August and September, indicating

⁸⁸ Viet Hoang. “The Code of Conduct for the South China Sea: A Long and Bumpy Road,” *The Diplomat*, September 28, 2020. <https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/the-code-of-conduct-for-the-south-china-sea-a-long-and-bumpy-road/>.

⁸⁹ “Fatal Jokowi Tak Paham Konflik Natuna Di Laut China Selatan [Fatal, Jokowi Does Not Understand the Natuna Conflict in South China Sea],” *Merdeka.com*, June 23, 2014. <https://www.merdeka.com/politik/fatal-jokowi-tak-paham-konflik-natuna-di-laut-china-selatan.html>.

a reluctance to confront China through multilateral diplomacy.⁹⁰ These actions further emphasize Indonesia's move toward a more unilateral approach in addressing the South China Sea issue, which aligns with its revisionist-like foreign policy tendencies.

Yohanes Sulaiman's argument regarding Jokowi's foreign policy approach toward China in the South China Sea as an underbalancing act is a valid interpretation based on Schweller's neo-classical realism. Sulaiman suggests that Indonesia's response to China's actions in the region falls short of effectively countering the perceived threat.⁹¹ In contrast, this article takes a broader perspective and interprets Indonesia's bilateral strategy toward China as an abandonment of multilateralism in resolving international disputes, particularly in the context of the South China Sea. The key distinction lies in the approach to conflict resolution. Multilateral channels, such as ASEAN, require consensus among member states, making decision-making complex and often difficult to achieve. In contrast, bilateralism provides more flexibility, as decisions can be made directly by the president, thus circumventing the need for consensus among multiple parties. This shift toward bilateralism suggests a

⁹⁰ Chetra Chap. "ASEAN Remains Divided over China's Assertiveness in South China Sea," *VOA*, September 12, 2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/asean-remains-divided-over-china-s-assertiveness-in-south-china-sea/7264923.html>.

⁹¹ Yohanes Sulaiman. "What Threat? Leadership, Strategic Culture, and Indonesian Foreign Policy in the South China Sea." *Asian Politics & Policy* 11, No. 4 (2019): 606-622.

departure from Indonesia’s previous multilateral approach and aligns with the country’s revisionist-like foreign policy tendencies. The replacement of Susi Pudjiastuti from her position as the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries during the second term of Jokowi’s presidency can be seen as a clear sign that Indonesia is placing more emphasis on economic cooperation rather than maintaining an aggressive stance in its behavior toward China in the disputed areas, such as the South China Sea. This shift in approach was accompanied by several notable developments. For instance, Vice President Jusuf Kalla and the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs publicly expressed their disagreement with Susi’s “seize and sink” policy in the North Natuna Sea. This policy was perceived as potentially damaging to Indonesia’s good relationships with neighboring countries, including China.⁹² It is not even surprising, considering the fact that China is the biggest source of foreign direct investment in Indonesia, just below Singapore and Hongkong, as well as the largest trading partner with growing imports from Indonesia by 34.2% in the first half of 2022.⁹³

⁹² Moh Nadlir. “Wapres Minta Menteri Susi Hentikan Penenggelaman Kapal [Vice President Asked Minister Susi To Stop Sinking Vessels].” *Kompas*, January 9, 2018.

<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2018/01/09/17501971/wapres-minta-menteri-susi-hentikan-penenggelaman-kapal?page=al>.

⁹³ “China, Indonesia hail “win-win” cooperation after rare Beijing summit,” *Reuters*, July 26, 2022.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/chinas-xi-hold-talks-with-indonesia-s-jokowi-rare-visit-2022-07-26/>.

It is the economic advantages from China's growing investment in Indonesia rather than the "indirect threats" posed by China in the South China Sea that make Jakarta overlook its former role as a status-quo supporter. As a "Jackal" middle power, Indonesia perceives that bandwagoning with China for economic profits is preferable to strengthening multilateral cooperations and answering the threat by balancing Beijing. This is visible when we see how close the bilateral relations between Indonesia and China are, marked by more than ten times both official and non-official meetings since Jokowi took office in 2014.⁹⁴ Jokowi's recent visit to Beijing, seen as a rare event due to the limited high-level international travel amid the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights the importance of Indonesia's relationship with China. Jokowi's visit to China, along with other world leaders like Putin, underscores the significance of their bilateral ties. Taking a closer look at this, another clear signal can be seen from The Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment, Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan's visit to Beijing, proposing a new megaproject of food estate on April 4, 2023.⁹⁵ Additionally, Luhut also claimed to bring back a US\$560 million loan from the

⁹⁴ Chandra Asmara. "Bukti Mesranya Jokowi - Xi Jinping, Bukan Cuma Sering Ketemu!" *CNBC Indonesia*, July, 25 (2022).
<https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20220725134505-4-358306/bukti-mesranya-jokowi--xi-jinping-bukan-cuma-sering-ketemu>.

⁹⁵ Mahinda Arkyasa. "Indonesian Minister Luhut Visits China for Collaboration in Food Estate," *Tempo*, April 11, 2023.
<https://en.tempo.co/read/1713444/indonesian-minister-luhut-visits-china-for-collaboration-in-food-estate>.

China Development Bank (CDB), which some part will be used to cover the cost-overrun of the high-speed railway project.⁹⁶ It is very clear to see that Jokowi, at the end of his leadership, extremely needs economic development as a means to materialize his ambition to make Indonesia the fourth most powerful country and the fifth biggest economy by 2045.⁹⁷ And to make this dream come true, we argue, Indonesia chose to bandwagon with China, the rising power, rather than keep it close to the declining superpower.

V. Conclusions

This study does not offer a new theoretical framework for Indonesia's middlepowermanship. Instead, it fills the gap by problematizing status-quo bias in existing studies and explores Indonesia's revisionist tendencies within its middlepowermanship. Moreover, it does not argue that Indonesia is a revisionist middle power per se. Instead, Indonesia's foreign policy has never been “black and white” – it has always swung like a pendulum between status quo and revisionist power. Another study regarding the

⁹⁶ The Jakarta Post. “Luhut Brings Back Deals on Railways, Industrial Park from Beijing Trip,” *The Jakarta Post*, April 11, (2023). <https://www.thejakartapost.com/business/2023/04/11/luhut-brings-back-deals-on-railways-industrial-park-from-beijing-trip.html>.

⁹⁷ Friski Riana. “Jokowi's Vision for Indonesia: World's Largest Economy by 2045,” *Tempo*, May 9, (2022). <https://en.tempo.co/read/1203633/jokowis-vision-for-indonesia-worlds-largest-economy-by-2045>.

theorization of Indonesian middlepowermanship still needs to be conducted in the future – particularly in explaining how and when Indonesia transitions between a status quo stance and a revisionist one. Applying Alastair Iain Johnston’s concept of strategic culture may be suitable for elucidating the changes in Indonesian middlepowermanship over time.⁹⁸

The findings suggest that while adopting a status-quo stance has been a dominant aspect of Indonesian middlepowermanship, its revisionist tendencies should not be disregarded, as they have played a role in shaping and continuing to shape Indonesian foreign policy. However, it’s important to note that Indonesia’s revisionist tendencies should not be analyzed through the lens of ‘revolutionary’ revisionist states. As Indonesia is a middle power with limited material capabilities, its revisionist actions are also confined to specific areas of interest or geographical contexts. In other words, feelings of dissatisfaction are likely to arise when the status quo threatens Indonesia’s territorial integrity or fails to provide a security umbrella against ‘predatory’ states with intentions of violating Indonesia’s territory. However, in situations where the status quo still offers advantages, despite their dissatisfaction, as Schweller suggests, limited-aims revisionist states tend to preserve and, in some cases, even strengthen the established order rather than attempting to disrupt it.

⁹⁸ Alastair I Johnston. *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, (1995).

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On International Anarchy and Women: The Case for Neorealist Feminism

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Abstract

This article connects neorealist and feminist approaches to International Relations. I claim that neorealism's main assumption, anarchy, and its main variable, the distribution of power, can offer insights into women's and gender-related problems. First, I argue that neorealism's core concepts and theories (anarchy and the balance of power) can help explain how culture forms, how international politics impact women's lives, and even have predictive power concerning the feminist movement itself. Second, I theorize how and when balance-of-power politics may influence women's societal position and introduce a few examples to support my case. Hence, this paper proposes a neorealist feminist synthesis and is an

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attempt at inter-paradigm dialogue that could prove fruitful for International Relations theory at large.

Keywords: Balance of Power and Gender, Feminism, International Relations Theory, Neorealism, Power Politics

I. Introduction

Few International Relations (IR) approaches look more irreconcilable than feminism and neorealism. Cross-fertilization is close to nil. Neorealists are primarily interested in the distribution of material power, while feminists focus on gender, and both sides usually have few occasions to cross paths. Yet, this article attempts to show that feminism and neorealism can profitably mix to produce new insights. In other words, neorealism's core assumption (anarchy) and independent variable (the distribution of power) can help shed light on feminism's main research focus — gender. Therefore, this paper makes a case for a new neorealist feminist approach.

Writes Wohlforth, “much of the modern history of international relations scholarship can be written as a sustained argument between realists and their critics.”¹ Indeed, feminism and critical theories at large emerged as major IR approaches at the turn of the 1980s and primarily took aim at realism.² Hoffman notices that “internally, the development of critical theory was driven by a reaction to the rearticulation of Realism in Kenneth

¹ William C. Wohlforth, “Realism and Great Power Subversion,” *International Relations* 34, no. 4 (2020): 460, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117820968858>.

² A history of IR feminism is Eric M. Blanchard, “Gender, International Relations, and the Development of Feminist Security Theory,” *Signs* 28, no. 4 (2003): 1289–1312, <https://doi.org/10.1086/368328>.

Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*.”³ IR feminism has been critical of neorealism since its inception. Runyan and Peterson denounce the “patriarchal ideology of realism,”⁴ while Whitworth sees “little in realism that seems conducive to theorising about gender.”⁵ Shepherd summarizes that “the critiques of IR offered by feminist scholars are grounded in a rejection of neo-realism/realism as a dominant intellectual framework for academics in the discipline and policy makers alike.”⁶ However, a few instances of realist-feminist rapprochements exist.

True posits that neoclassical realism can accommodate feminist concerns.⁷ Nevertheless, neoclassical realism is not a neorealist theory per se but an eclectic approach that combines neorealism's top-down structural explanations with bottom-up,

³ Mark Hoffman, “Critical Theory and the Inter-Paradigm Debate,” *Millennium* 16, no. 2 (1987): 236, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298870160022801>.

⁴ Anne Sisson Runyan and V. Spike Peterson, “The Radical Future of Realism: Feminist Subversions of IR Theory,” *Alternatives* 16, no. 1 (1991): 67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030437549101600103>.

⁵ Sandra Whitworth, “Gender in the Inter-Paradigm Debate,” *Millennium* 18, no. 2 (1989): 267, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298890180020201>.

⁶ Laura J. Shepherd, “Gender, Violence and Global Politics: Contemporary Debates in Feminist Security Studies,” *Political Studies Review* 7, no. 2 (2009): 215–216, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-9299.2009.00180.x>.

⁷ Jacqui True, “Feminism and Realism in International Relations,” in Annette Freyberg-Inan, Ewan Harrison, and Patrick James, eds., *Rethinking Realism in International Relations: Between Tradition and Innovation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 219–232.

domestic-level variables like liberalism.⁸ Sjoberg tries to bring neorealism and feminism closer by associating the neorealist focus on structure with feminist arguments.⁹ But this attempt remains mostly a critical work that does not propose a workable theory of international politics.

First of all, definitions of feminism and neorealism are in order. The primary interest of feminism is gender inequality — gender being the cultural construction of masculinity and femininity.¹⁰ These gender constructions are formed and maintained through social discourses. Feminists point out that masculinity is often discursively associated with concepts such as

⁸ Kevin Narizny, “On Systemic Paradigms and Domestic Politics: A Critique of the Newest Realism,” *International Security* 42, no. 2 (2017): 155–190, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00296; and Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, and Steven E. Lobell, *Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁹ Laura Sjoberg, “Gender, Structure, and War: What Waltz Couldn’t See,” *International Theory* 4, no. 1 (2012): 1–38, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S175297191100025X>; also, Laura Sjoberg, *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); and Laura Sjoberg, “The Invisible Structures of Anarchy: Gender, Orders, and Global Politics,” *Journal of International Political Theory* 13, no. 3 (2017): 325–340, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1755088217711458>. Another of such attempt is Jean Bethke Elshtain, “Woman, the State, and War,” *International Relations* 23, no. 2 (2009): 289–303, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117809104640>. Note that ‘realist feminism’ has been used to designate the work of Laura Sjoberg: Sara Meger et al., “Gender and Politics: A Discussion of Laura Sjoberg’s *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*,” *Perspectives on Politics* 12, no. 1 (2014): 168–180, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1537592713003459>.

¹⁰ Marysia Zalewski, “Well, What Is the Feminist Perspective on Bosnia?” *International Affairs* 71, no. 2 (1995): 340–342, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2623438>.

rationality, science, and strength, while femininity is associated with emotion, kindness, and vulnerability.¹¹ Also, masculinity occupies the public sphere while femininity is pushed back to the private sphere. Masculinity dominates the fields dealing with international relations (like diplomacy, the military, or academia) and puts power politics and aggressive foreign policies at the forefront. To feminists, thusly aggressive and militaristic states threaten other states and even their own population, especially the female citizenry.¹²

There are several streams of feminism. Among them, one can be called ‘constitutive feminism’ (to borrow Sjoberg’s wording) and is considered as either a critical or constructivist approach — meaning that the concepts of discourse and identity are central.¹³ Some may favor calling it postmodern feminism. Another one is

¹¹ Carol Cohn, “Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals,” *Signs* 12, no. 4 (1987): 687–718, <https://doi.org/10.1086/494362>.

¹² J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), chap. 1.

¹³ Laura Sjoberg, “Introduction to *Security Studies*: Feminist Contributions,” *Security Studies* 18, no. 2 (2009): 195, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636410902900129>; also, J. Ann Tickner, “You Just Don’t Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists,” *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (1997): 614–615, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2478.00060>. A criticism of the proximity between constructivism and critical approaches is J. Samuel Barkin and Laura Sjoberg, *International Relations’ Last Synthesis? Decoupling Constructivist and Critical Approaches* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). For the opposite view: Richard Price and Christian Reus-Smit, “Dangerous Liaisons?: Critical International Theory and Constructivism,” *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 3 (1998): 259–294, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066198004003001>.

feminist empiricism. It differs from constitutive feminism primarily due to its commitment to positivism and theory-building.¹⁴ To feminist empiricists, gender serves as a research variable.¹⁵ In contrast, for constitutive feminists, gender is more a lens or a focal to observe the world through because “post-positivist critiques do not offer ‘the answer’ but insist upon and provide new spaces for the rethinking required ‘to deal with

¹⁴ Marysia Zalewski, “Feminist Standpoint Theory Meets International Relations Theory: A Feminist Version of David and Goliath?” *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 17, no. 2 (1993): 15–16, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45288849>; also, Cynthia Weber, “Good Girls, Little Girls, and Bad Girls: Male Paranoia in Robert Keohane’s Critique of Feminist International Relations,” *Millennium* 23, no. 2 (1994): 337–349, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298940230021401>. A review of the gender hypothesis-testing literature is Dara Kay Cohen and Sabrina M. Karim, “Does More Equality for Women Mean Less War? Rethinking Sex and Gender Inequality and Political Violence,” *International Organization* 76, no. 2 (2022): 414–444, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818321000333>.

¹⁵ For instance: Valerie M. Hudson et al., “The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States,” *International Security* 33, no. 3 (2009): 7–45, <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2009.33.3.7>.

the enormous issues of praxis that we confront in global life’.”¹⁶ Three main constitutive feminist criticisms of realism stand out.¹⁷ The two firsts emanate from traditional liberal and constructivist criticisms, while the last originates more clearly from critical studies.

State centrism. Realism is an approach centered on the state. It ignores many phenomena like civil society, non-governmental

¹⁶ V. Spike Peterson, “Transgressing Boundaries: Theories of Knowledge, Gender and International Relations,” *Millennium* 21, no. 2 (1992): 186, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298920210020401>; also, Molly Cochran, “Talking with Feminists About What We Can Know in IR,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 12, no. 2 (1999): 46–56, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557579908400241>; Robert O. Keohane, “International Relations Theory: Contributions of a Feminist Standpoint,” *Millennium* 18, no. 2 (1989): 248–250, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298890180021001>; and Elisabeth Prügl, “Feminist Methodology Between Theory and Praxis,” *Review of International Studies* 46, no. 3 (2020): 304–314, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210519000482>. An overview of feminist methodology is J. Ann Tickner, “What Is Your Research Program? Some Feminist Answers to International Relations Methodological Questions,” *International Studies Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (2005): 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0020-8833.2005.00332.x>.

¹⁷ Gülşen Aydın, “Feminist Challenge to the Mainstream IR,” *European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies* 1, no. 5 (2016): 63–64, <https://doi.org/10.26417/ejms.v2i1.p62-69>; Johanna Kantola, “The Gendered Reproduction of the State in International Relations,” *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 9, no. 2 (2007): 270–283, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2007.00283.x>; Christine Sylvester, “Feminists and Realists View Autonomy and Obligation in International Relations,” in V. Spike Peterson, ed., *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 155–177; and J. Ann Tickner, “Hans Morgenthau’s Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation,” *Millennium* 17, no. 3 (1988): 429–440, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298880170030801>.

organizations, and the importance of the individual because it focuses only on states. Therefore, realism participates in sustaining an international life that ignores many essential levels of analysis, notably human beings themselves, especially women.

Faulty definition of the national interest. Realism defines the national interest in a too-narrow fashion. It overlooks gender inequalities in society by focusing exclusively on the international balance of power. Also, the numerous social, economic, and environmental issues that plague the international community pushed states away from a competitive balance-of-power focus towards a more cooperative society of states.

Gender blindness and support for patriarchy. The realist discourse leaves no place for women, their experiences, and concerns. The earmark realist concept of ‘rationality’ is masculine-centered rationality that excludes women. Therefore, realism is not a mere descriptive theory but the discourse that enables the international system we live in. It justifies oppressive

state power and militarism and helps maintain masculine domination.¹⁸

Although many strands of realism exist, I focus here on the two main types of neorealism: defensive and offensive realism.¹⁹ Beyond their differences, both theories tell, to an extent, a similar story. Under anarchy, no world government ensures the survival of the states, which are reduced to self-help. States are unsure of the intentions of the other states, which all possess military capabilities. Therefore, they have an obvious incentive to build formidable military forces because it is the safest way to survive. Maintaining a balance of power is essential since a rival stronger

¹⁸ I do not discuss here Fukuyama's 'feminine peace theory' because it has fallen out of fashion in contemporary feminist scholarship. Francis Fukuyama, "Women and the Evolution of World Politics," *Foreign Affairs* 77, no. 5 (1998): 24–40, <https://doi.org/10.2307/20049048>; also, J. Ann Tickner, "Why Women Can't Run the World: International Politics According to Francis Fukuyama," *International Studies Review* 1, no. 3 (1999): 3–11, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.00162>; and Sandra Whitworth, *Feminism and International Relations: Towards a Political Economy of Gender in Interstate and Non-Governmental Institutions* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 16–20.

¹⁹ For defensive realism: Charles L. Glaser, *Rational Theory of International Politics: The Logic of Competition and Cooperation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); and Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Boston: Addison-Wesley, 1979); for offensive realism: John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, updated ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2014). Other schools are neoclassical realism: Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell, *Neoclassical Realist Theory*; hegemonic realism: Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and classical realism: Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations* [Peace and War Among Nations] (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2004); and Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973).

than oneself is an existential threat. These tendencies imposed by the international state of anarchy are called systemic incentives. Neorealism's core causal variable is material power. No realist would argue that only material power exists on the international scene. Economic intercourse, cultural connections, or environmental issues are important, and power is rarely a state's sole and unique concern. But because power underpins the state's survival and ability to act, it is never far from decision-makers' minds and permeates all other matters. Thus, neorealism takes the liberty of ignoring all other potential pursuits and focuses instead on relative power for the sake of theory-building.

Neorealism has the further advantage of eschewing classical realism's pessimistic ontology. Many feminist scholars are bothered by the seeming commitment of realist theories to a pessimistic ontology. The main issue at hand is the grounding of classical realism into Hobbes's "war of all men against all men."²⁰ This point is important because feminists are often committed to a transformative approach, which cannot bode well with classical

²⁰ Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 12; also, Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Edwin Curley trans. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 76. Actually, Hobbes himself did not believe most people to be evil in nature. Bernard Gert, "Hobbes and Psychological Egoism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28, no. 4 (1967): 503–520, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2708526>; and Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, 11.

realism's static and pessimistic view of the human condition.²¹ However, a preeminent neorealist scholar recently threw Hobbes out the window. Mearsheimer argues that people naturally bond to form tribes, cities, and eventually nations because human beings are inherently social creatures.²² The theoretical implications are clear: neorealism works well without assuming human malevolence or fundamental egoism.²³ That answers those who believe the evil-human-nature assumption remains buried under neorealism's structural argument.²⁴ By explicitly removing any potential rest of human-nature assumption, Mearsheimer disposed

²¹ Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Reflections on War and Political Discourse: Realism, Just War, and Feminism in a Nuclear Age," *Political Theory* 13, no. 1 (1985): 39–57, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591785013001004>. A recent discussion of pessimism and feminism is Caron E. Gentry, *This American Moment: A Feminist Christian Realist Intervention* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

²² John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), chap. 2.

²³ Aron made a similar point before: Raymond Aron, "The Anarchical Order of Power," *Daedalus* 95, no. 2 (1966): 481–483, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20027309>; also, Aron, *Paix*. See, also, Davide Fiammenghi, "'Anarchy Is What States Make of It': True in a Trivial Sense; Otherwise, Wrong," *International Politics* 56, no. 1 (2019): 17–32, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-018-0169-6>.

²⁴ Neta C. Crawford, "Human Nature and World Politics: Rethinking 'Man'," *International Relations* 23, no. 2 (2009): 271–288, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117809104639>; Annette Freyberg-Inan, "Rational Paranoia and Enlightened Machismo: The Strange Psychological Foundations of Realism," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9, no. 3 (2006): 247–268, <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jird.1800093>; and Annette Freyberg-Inan, *What Moves Man: The Realist Theory of International Relations and Its Judgment of Human Nature* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).

of ontological pessimism for good.²⁵ This salutary move leaves room for convergence between feminist and neorealist approaches. Indeed, both tell the story of generally well-intentioned people encountering a power structure that often imposes less-than-ideal outcomes on them.²⁶

The remainder of this article unfolds into two parts. In the first part, I associate neorealist insights with feminist concerns to increase both approaches' explanatory and predictive power. I claim that one of the main focuses of feminism, social and cultural militarization, finds its necessary precondition in the international anarchy. Also, feminism itself, as a movement and a scholarship, is deeply affected by the balance of power. In the second part, I theorize that power competition may impact women's condition, positively or negatively, depending on the balance of power. Therefore, the main contribution of this article is to show that neorealism can serve to theorize about gender and that further research promises intriguing results.

²⁵ For a defense of neorealism against this criticism: Zhichao Tong, "State of Nature Versus States as Firms: Reassessing the Waltzian Analogy of Structural Realism," *International Relations*, advance online publication (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1177/00471178221140086>.

²⁶ Jennifer Sterling-Folker and Rosemary E. Shinko, "Discourses of Power: Traversing the Realist-Postmodern Divide," *Millennium* 33, no. 3 (2005): 637–664, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298050330031801>. For a discussion of realism's proximity to critical theories: Rodger A. Payne, "Neorealists as Critical Theorists: The Purpose of Foreign Policy Debate," *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 3 (2007): 503–514, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592707071514>.

II. Neorealist insights and feminist concerns

A. Anarchy and gender

This section argues that anarchy influences how culture, and thus gender, forms. This assertion allows envisioning neorealist theories of gender outcomes in international politics. Constructivism and other discursive theories usually assume the contrary: discourses shape practices. Indeed, for Wendt, “the realist-rationalist alliance denies or brackets the fact that competitive power politics help create the very ‘problem of order’ they are supposed to solve — that realism is a self-fulfilling prophecy.”²⁷

Yet, the constructivist argument leads to a puzzle. Most leaders worldwide have despised realist and balance-of-power thinking as immoral and outdated for decades.²⁸ Realism is largely unheard of in public discourses.²⁹ Although realism is arguably an influential school within academia, it is nearly absent in the mouths of policymakers, contrary to liberalism. Most

²⁷ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 410, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300027764>; also, Freyberg-Inan, *What Moves Man*, chap. 8.

²⁸ Discussions of realist ethics are Duncan Bell, “Political Realism and the Limits of Ethics,” in Duncan Bell, eds., *Ethics and World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 93–110; and Joseph S. Nye, “What Is a Moral Foreign Policy?” *Texas National Security Review* 3, no. 1 (2019): 96–109.

²⁹ Heather-Leigh Kathryn Ba and Timothy McKeown, “Does Grand Theory Shape Officials’ Speech?” *European Journal of International Relations* 27, no. 4 (2021): 1218–1248, <https://doi.org/10.1177/135406612111012060>.

Western foreign policy elites consider that power politics has been relegated to the museum since at least 1991 and that we live in the age of the “international community.” As asserted by Bill Clinton, in our era, “the cynical calculus of pure power politics simply does not compute.”³⁰ Chinese leaders similarly claim that balance-of-power politics is nothing more than “Cold War mentality.”³¹ Among the great powers, only Russia speaks overtly in realist terms.³² Logically, a minority scholar discourse is unlikely to shape the destinies of the world.³³ Therefore, in opposition to discursive approaches, realists believe that what they say matters little in the grand scheme of things. Although prominent realists often intervene in policy debates to attempt damage control (generally against unnecessary commitments and wars), they believe most states behave in realist ways when vital

³⁰ New York Times, “The 1992 Campaign; Excerpts from Speech by Clinton on U.S. Role,” October 2, 1992, <https://www.nytimes.com/1992/10/02/us/the-1992-campaign-excerpts-from-speech-by-clinton-on-us-role.html>.

³¹ CNBC, “China Sees ‘Cold War Mentality’ in U.S., British, Australia Security Pact,” September 15, 2021, <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/09/16/china-sees-cold-war-mentality-in-us-uk-australia-security-pact.html>.

³² Sumantra Maitra, “Realism in Russian Foreign Policy: The Crimean Case,” *CLWS Journal* 8, no. 2 (2014): 116–128.

³³ Brian C. Schmidt and Michael C. Williams, “The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Neoconservatives Versus Realists,” *Security Studies* 17, no. 2 (2008): 191–220, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636410802098990>.

national interests are involved, whatever the dominant foreign policy discourse is.³⁴

The difference between constructivist or critical and neorealist structures is that the former is socially *created* while the latter is *uncreated*. In other words, neorealism posits a spontaneous order: “all international systems have been an-archival, in the strict sense of the term: they have not been subjected to an *archē*.”³⁵ According to Johnson and Thayer, prehistoric humans and even chimpanzees exhibit ‘realist’ behaviors.³⁶ War reoccurs regardless of time, place, and social constructions. Whatever the nature of the actors, anarchy tends to

³⁴ States are of course free to totally ignore systemic incentives, but they will be ‘punished’ over the long run. The lack of well-crafted foreign and defense policies will ultimately lead to bullying, attacks, decline, and sometimes destruction. Waltz, *Theory*.

³⁵ Aron, “The Anarchical Order,” 483.

³⁶ Dominic D. P. Johnson and Bradley A. Thayer, “The Evolution of Offensive Realism: Survival Under Anarchy from the Pleistocene to the Present,” *Politics and the Life Sciences* 35, no. 1 (2016): 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1017/pls.2016.6>.

produce similar results.³⁷ It appears unlikely that the Assyrians, the Aztecs, or the Romans received much inspiration from the realist discourses of Morgenthau, Waltz, and Mearsheimer.³⁸ People were debating security statecraft and great power competition in ways that would be familiar to today's readers already one millennium before Thucydides.³⁹ For neorealists, power politics would continue unabated even if their theory was

³⁷ Jack Snyder, "Anarchy and Culture: Insights from the Anthropology of War," *International Organization* 56, no. 1 (2002): 7–45, <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081802753485124>; also, Dylan Motin, "Great Power Politics in World History: Balance of Power and Central Wars Since Antiquity," *Korean Journal of International Studies* 20, no. 2 (2022): 175–212, <https://doi.org/10.14731/kjis.2022.08.20.2.175>. Contrary to a widespread misconception, realists are not solely concerned with modern, 'post-Westphalian' states, because "it does not matter what kind of political units make up the system, as long as it is anarchic and the threat of violence is ever present." Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion*, 270, n. 52. As put by Waltz, "states with every imaginable variation of economic institution, social custom, and political ideology have fought wars. More strikingly still, many different sorts of organizations fight wars, whether those organizations be tribes, petty principalities, empires, nations, or street gangs." Waltz, *Theory*, 66.

³⁸ Arthur M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Barry L. Isaac, "The Aztec 'Flowery War': A Geopolitical Explanation," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 39, no. 4 (1983): 415–432, <https://doi.org/10.1086/jar.39.4.3629865>; and Stuart J. Kaufman and William C. Wohlforth, "Balancing and Balancing Failure in Biblical Times: Assyria and the Ancient Middle Eastern System, 900–600 BCE," in Stuart J. Kaufman, Richard Little, and William C. Wohlforth, eds., *The Balance of Power in World History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 22–46.

³⁹ Alex Ilari Aissaoui, "Was There a Balance of Power System in the Ancient Near East?" *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 30, no. 3 (2019): 421–442, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2019.1641916>; and Paul Edgar, "Diplomacy Shaken not Stirred," *War on the Rocks*, August 20, 2021, <https://warontherocks.com/2021/08/diplomacy-shaken-not-stirred/>.

totally erased from human knowledge. Hence, the disappearance of realism would not lead to the end of power politics and war.

Anarchy and the universality of the alternation of war and peace throughout world history can serve to theorize about gender. States must always prepare for the fateful moment of war, the ultima ratio of interstate relations, or the system will punish them. This is why the same patterns of interactions recur endlessly throughout history.⁴⁰ Yet, as Enloe remarks, “notions of masculinity are not identical across generations or across cultural boundaries.”⁴¹ While gender relations differed in each civilization, war is a universal phenomenon. Few, if any, societies were spared by it. Gender identities in B.C. Assyria, fifteenth-century Mesoamerica, and twentieth-century Europe were obviously unlike. Yet, all these regions experienced the alternate between war and peace. If power competition is a historical constant, but gender is not, a research program explaining its variations is warranted.

⁴⁰ Herbert Butterfield, “The Tragic Element in Modern International Conflict,” *Review of Politics* 12, no. 2 (1950): 147–164, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0034670500044983>.

⁴¹ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 31.

B. Social impact of anarchy or anarchy as a necessary variable

This part claims that neorealism can help explain phenomena of interest to feminists. As suggested above, anarchy profoundly influenced how states, and thus societies, have evolved through time. Writes Waltz, “so long as anarchy endures, states remain like units.”⁴² International anarchy affects states like the market affects companies; it forces them to adopt ‘best practices’ by imitation and socialization. This explains why most states have developed since millennia forms of government able to extract resources from society to generate military power. International competition profoundly shaped political history and the human experience in general.⁴³

Anarchy affects cultural patterns deeply by forcing the costs of power politics and war on societies. The “armament culture” experienced through movies, video games, books, and language is deeply connected to it.⁴⁴ The armament culture may not be a *necessary* outcome, but it is at least a *logical* outcome of

⁴² Waltz, *Theory*, 93.

⁴³ For example, Ernesto Dal Bó, Pablo Hernández-Lagos, and Sebastián Mazzuca, “The Paradox of Civilization: Preinstitutional Sources of Security and Prosperity,” *American Political Science Review* 116, no. 1 (2022): 213–230, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000305542100071X>.

⁴⁴ Robin Luckham, “Armament Culture,” *Alternatives* 10, no. 1 (1984): 1–44, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030437548401000102>; also, Cohn, “Sex and Death.”

anarchy.⁴⁵ Anarchy does not force filmmakers and game designers to create war-related content. It does not compel toy companies to sell replicas of assault rifles. However, anarchy makes war an ever-present possibility and exerts such a toll on generation after generation that the armament culture has become deeply ingrained into the human mind and the world's cultures.⁴⁶

Consequently, coupling neorealist and feminist insights is more straightforward than many may assume at first. The extensive effects of anarchy on gender issues are implicit throughout a big part of the IR feminist scholarship. For example, Enloe's *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, a precursory text of IR feminism, describes many instances where power politics appears as a necessary precondition — the need to possess military bases abroad — for understanding the fate of women embroiled in security competition. Enloe's object of inquiry would not exist if there were no security competition and no bases abroad in the first place. In her study, women's fates are tied to power politics.

Similarly, Moon's *Sex Among Allies* explains that the Korean government used Korean prostitutes as assets to reinforce its

⁴⁵ For example, Steve Carlton-Ford et al., "Guns and Butter: Child Mortality and the Mediators of Militarization," *Armed Forces & Society* 45, no. 1 (2019): 177–197, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X18758288>.

⁴⁶ For example, Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Sovereignty, Identity, Sacrifice," in V. Spike Peterson, ed., *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 141–154; and Nicole Wegner, "Ritual, Rhythms, and the Discomforting Endurance of Militarism: Affective Methodologies and Ethico-Political Challenges," *Global Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1093/isagsq/ksab008>.

alliance with the United States.⁴⁷ In that case, the existential threat from North Korea and the Soviet Union pushed South Korea and the United States to ally. Since Cold War South Korea could hardly have survived without American support, it was ready to use all means necessary to bolster U.S. military commitment. Hence, balance-of-power calculations directly impacted many Korean women's lives.

Neorealism also helps comprehend why man and woman leaders behave similarly. Data show that women and men leaders tend to use armed force in similar proportions.⁴⁸ The authors argue that women 'turn realist' because they evolve in decision-making environments dominated by men who see violence favorably and thus brandish force to gain their support. Yet, a more straightforward interpretation of this result is possible: men and women face the same international system and the same incentives and thus act in similar ways to safeguard the national interest, regardless of gender.

The absence of women aboard submarines in many navies of the world illustrates how systemic incentives interact with gender

⁴⁷ Katharine H. S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

⁴⁸ Madison Schramm and Alexandra Stark, "Peacemakers or Iron Ladies? A Cross-National Study of Gender and International Conflict," *Security Studies* 29, no. 3 (2020): 515–548, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2020.1763450>.

issues.⁴⁹ Anarchy and security competition explain why states field navies, while the details of the balance of power explain why some states procure submarines. Military forces are always looking for the highest efficiency of their personnel to maximize their strength, not unlike companies striving for the highest productivity of the workforce. This is the system-induced part of the problem. Then enters a domestic-level societal influence: the belief that integrating women aboard submarines could lead to friction and tension among the crew.⁵⁰ Systemic incentives impose on the naval forces to strive for efficiency; gender images lead to thinking that women on board would diminish efficiency. Feminist insights are integrated as an intervening variable.⁵¹ Thus, many navies do not employ women aboard submarines (see *Figure 1*).

⁴⁹ Lindal Buchanan, "A Few Good (Wo)Men: Integrating the US Submarine Force," *Rhetoric Review* 35, no. 1 (2016): 35–48, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07350198.2016.1107826>; and Heather D. Hellwig and Paulette T. Cazares, "Women, Ships, Submarines, and the US Navy," in Elspeth Cameron Ritchie and Anne L. Naclerio, eds., *Women at War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 120–133.

⁵⁰ On the larger issue of the absence of women in the military: Joshua S. Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁵¹ Elias Götz, "Neoclassical Realist Theories, Intervening Variables, and Paradigmatic Boundaries," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 17, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/oraa026>.

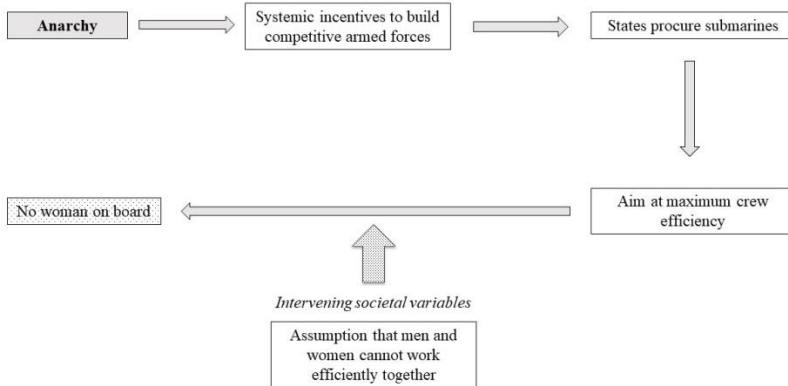


Figure 1. Systemic incentives and gender. Source: The author.

This approach has the merit of reconciling neorealism and feminism in a single framework. Feminism has little to say about why states field navies and submarines and strive for efficiency aboard vessels. Neorealism cannot explain why women could not board submarines. Therefore, a research program that describes the interaction between international structural incentives and gender representations will likely yield intriguing outcomes. Indeed, evidence supports this argument. For instance, Kang and Kim find that states under a direct foreign threat are more likely to have male than female leaders.⁵² Voters' gender stereotypes encourage them to believe that men will be 'tougher' and more capable on defense issues than women. International threats push

⁵² Alice J. Kang and Nam Kyu Kim, "Territorial Threat and Women's Legislative Representation," *Democratization* 27, no. 2 (2020): 340–358, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2019.1700953>.

voters to elect efficient, competent leaders, while societal gender images lead them to favor male leaders. Going one step further, one could even couple neorealist and feminist insights to make predictions about women's lives.

Consider Moon's argument that a state can improve the working conditions of prostitutes around foreign military bases to push the foreign government to maintain its military presence and prevent abandonment.⁵³ Adding that insight to realism's predictive power would allow for forecasting. The United States maintains forces most notably in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Yet, changing balances of power are forcing Washington to refocus its military efforts towards Asia and China, the pacing threat. Because there is no great power competitor in the Middle East, the Americans are constantly under pressure to reduce their presence there. Europe has a great power competitor, Russia, but it appears too weak to inflict a decisive, catastrophic defeat on NATO and thus is a lesser priority than China. Knowing that, European and Middle Eastern states have a deep-seated interest in pushing the Americans to maintain their security guarantees despite their growing focus on China. In that case, Moon's findings would suggest that European and Middle Eastern governments will try hard to improve and sanitize the conditions of the prostitutes living around U.S. bases to entice American forces to remain. Conversely, most Asian governments face less

⁵³ Moon, *Sex Among Allies*.

such incentive since U.S. forces are likely to stay regardless of the prostitutes' condition.

C. Feminism itself as an outcome variable

In that section, I suggest that neorealism's predictive power can give clues about the future of feminism. Indeed, the ultimate test for a theory is to predict the future successfully. For example, Mearsheimer predicted in his 2001 volume that as China grew economically, it would pour more money into its military. Consequently, tensions would rise throughout Asia, and the United States would fear a potential Chinese regional hegemony. Many Asian states would coalesce around the United States, and intense security competition with China would ensue.⁵⁴ There is little doubt that this prediction came to be, while almost all other IR approaches predicted greater China-U.S. cooperation due to economic interdependence and common global challenges.⁵⁵

The distribution of power can be either a permissive or hindering factor for feminism as a movement and a scholarship.

⁵⁴ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), chap. 10; also, Denny Roy, "Hegemon on the Horizon? China's Threat to East Asian Security," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 149–168, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539151>. To the contemporary reader, this may appear as obvious and common-sensical expectations. However, one needs to remember that discussions on how power politics had disappeared and benign great powers would lead the world for the better were mainstream during the 1990s and 2000s.

⁵⁵ John J. Mearsheimer, "The Inevitable Rivalry: America, China, and the Tragedy of Great-Power Politics," *Foreign Affairs* 100, no. 6 (2021): 48–59.

This allows for a level of predictive insight into the future of feminism. Feminists are naturally interested in great power politics because great powers are the states setting the trajectory of global politics. Between 1991 and the mid-to-late 2010s, the United States was the sole great power and a liberal democracy. This liberal unipole offered a permissive environment for feminist (and many other) voices to express themselves. Nevertheless, this changed during the 2010s because China and Russia (re)emerged as great powers. Great powers always want to secure themselves by gaining predominance in their regional neighborhood. The sole successful regional hegemon of the modern era is the United States, which has dominated the Western Hemisphere since the nineteenth century. Neighboring states living under the shadow of a regional hegemon will tend to amend their policies to appease it. The hegemon will orient its neighbors' foreign, defense, and economic policies to maximize its security and extract additional resources from them.⁵⁶ Thus, a regional

⁵⁶ Elbridge A. Colby, *The Strategy of Denial: American Defense in an Age of Great Power Conflict* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021), 6–15; Jennifer Lind, “Life in China’s Asia: What Regional Hegemony Would Look Like,” *Foreign Affairs* 97, no. 2 (2018): 71–82, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44822082>; Dylan Motin, *Bandwagoning in International Relations: China, Russia, and Their Neighbors* (Wilmington: Vernon, 2024), chaps. 1–2; and Dylan Motin, “Not in My Backyard, But in Yours: Containment Realism, Restraint Realism and China-US Competition,” *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 33, no. 1 (2022): 27–47, <https://doi.org/10.1353/isia.2022.0024>. Also, Michael A. Allen, “The Influence of Regional Power Distributions on Interdependence,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 5 (2018): 1072–1099, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002716669809>.

hegemon could undermine, purposefully or not, feminist movements or ideas by several mechanisms.

1. When intervening in the internal affairs of its neighbors, a hegemon that dislikes feminism may compel them to repress feminist movements and voices.

2. When intervening in the internal affairs of its neighbors, a hegemon is, *ceteris paribus*, likely to favor political parties or forces that resemble its own ruling elite.⁵⁷ Therefore, if the hegemon dislikes feminism, it will tend more or less consciously to support non-feminist forces.

3. Neighbors may wish to avoid potential friction with the hegemon by anticipating its preferences and preventively reining in feminism.

4. Regional states will have privileged relations with the hegemon on every level. Thus, they will tend to replicate through socialization the hegemon's approach to feminism.⁵⁸

Apart from the United States, there exists for now only two great powers, and both are well-positioned to claim regional hegemony in their respective neighborhoods: China and Russia.

⁵⁷ David R. Cameron and Mitchell A. Orenstein, "Post-Soviet Authoritarianism: The Influence of Russia in Its 'Near Abroad'," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 28, no. 1 (2012): 1–44, <https://doi.org/10.2747/1060-586X.28.1.1>.

⁵⁸ Daniëlle Flonk, "Emerging Illiberal Norms: Russia and China as Promoters of Internet Content Control," *International Affairs* 97, no. 6 (2021): 1925–1944, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiab146>.

Russia maintains by far the largest military in Europe. It has renovated its armed forces while most European states demilitarized or moved slower. Also, the U.S. focus on China and Asia has offered leeway to Moscow. Without the rise of China, the United States would likely have met resurgent Russia head-on at every corner. However, with the Americans busy in Asia, West European states have neither the will nor the capabilities to confront Russia directly on its own borders.⁵⁹ On its side, China translated its newfound wealth into a formidable military. Although its neighbors followed suit, no other Asian state is capable of resisting China on its own. That is why the United States is putting together a balancing coalition to contain Beijing.⁶⁰

These balances of power will have consequences for the future of feminism. The Chinese and Russian governments have a grudge against feminist movements and voices, seen as threats to their goals, their moral strength, and as agents for foreign

⁵⁹ Hugo Meijer and Stephen G. Brooks, "Illusions of Autonomy: Why Europe Cannot Provide for Its Security If the United States Pulls Back," *International Security* 45, no. 4 (2021): 7–43, https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00405.

⁶⁰ Colby, *The Strategy of Denial*.

powers.⁶¹ One can predict that the prospects for feminism throughout the post-Soviet area are bleak. In the Chinese sphere — Cambodia, Pakistan, maybe Myanmar — it is unlikely that feminism develops much either. If China or Russia eventually reach regional hegemony in Asia or Europe, feminism will probably decline in both regions.

III. Theoretical proposition for a neorealist feminism

A. Theoretical proposition

In this part, I propose a basic theory on how and when security competition is likely to affect women. Neorealism is a theory of the interactions between functionally undifferentiated states. For the theory to remain coherent, states cannot vary in identity or interest; “domestic factors must be integrated into realism as components of structure, like capabilities. They cannot

⁶¹ Leta Hong Fincher, “China’s Feminist Five,” *Dissent* 63, no. 4 (2016): 84–90, <https://doi.org/10.1353/dss.2016.0078>; Janet Elise Johnson and Aino Saarinen, “Twenty-First-Century Feminisms Under Repression: Gender Regime Change and the Women’s Crisis Center Movement in Russia,” *Signs* 38, no. 3 (2013): 543–567, <https://doi.org/10.1086/668515>; Oleg Riabov and Riabova Tatiana, “The Remasculinization of Russia? Gender, Nationalism, and the Legitimation of Power Under Vladimir Putin,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 61, no. 2 (2014): 23–35, <https://doi.org/10.2753/PPC1075-8216610202>; and Cai Wilkinson, “Mother Russia in Queer Peril: The Gender Logic of the Hypermasculine State,” in Swati Parashar, J. Ann Tickner, and Jacqui True, eds., *Revisiting Gendered States: Feminist Imaginings of the State in International Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 105–121.

shape actor preferences.”⁶² Integrating a focus on women into neorealism must occur through capabilities, the sole varying causal variable.

Security competition yields some influence over political and societal evolutions.⁶³ In a dangerous, anarchic world, states have the incentive to extract as many resources as possible from their society to maintain or increase their share of world power. Therefore, states adopt best practices and reject inefficient ones.⁶⁴ States that fail to learn and stick to their old ways get punished by the system. The stronger the level of security threat, the more states will learn and be ready to give up harmful practices.⁶⁵

For example, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO) leadership learned that feminization could bolster its fighting efficiency and thus pushed for it.⁶⁶ The Cold War incentivized the 1960s U.S. government to fight racism to unify the country against the Soviet threat. During wartime, previously powerless people mobilized for service or work usually gain new recognition; it is no coincidence that many extensions of the right

⁶² Narizny, “On Systemic Paradigms,” 163.

⁶³ Peter Gourevitch, “The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics,” *International Organization* 32, no. 4 (1978): 881–912, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s002081830003201x>.

⁶⁴ Waltz, *Theory*, 127–128.

⁶⁵ Ionut C. Popescu, “Grand Strategy vs. Emergent Strategy in the Conduct of Foreign Policy,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 3 (2018): 451, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2017.1288109>.

⁶⁶ Heidi Hardt and Stéfanie von Hlatky, “NATO’s About-Face: Adaptation to Gender Mainstreaming in an Alliance Setting,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 5, no. 1 (2020): 136–159, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogz048>.

to vote in the United States happened during post-war periods. It is also no coincidence that British and French women were enfranchised during the last months of World War I and World War II, respectively. Indeed, research shows that war generally accelerates women's empowerment.⁶⁷

I propose that structural incentives can push a state towards feminization — understood here as the quantitative increase of women in civilian or military employment. I do not discuss feminization in the qualitative sense — for example, in terms of perceptions or culture — because this would require more elaboration than possible here. Therefore, I only approach feminization as a material phenomenon and do not touch upon gender issues directly. Nevertheless, from a purely logical standpoint, the more women participate in the economy or public service, the more women and men should tend toward equality. Balance of power-induced feminization appears through two mechanisms.

⁶⁷ Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion*, 72–74; and Kaitlyn Webster, Chong Chen, and Kyle Beardsley, “Conflict, Peace, and the Evolution of Women’s Empowerment,” *International Organization* 73, no. 2 (2019): 255–289, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818319000055>. However, combat itself usually has a terrible impact on women. H. Patricia Hynes, “On the Battlefield of Women’s Bodies: An Overview of the Harm of War to Women,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 27, no. 5–6 (2004): 431–445, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2004.09.001>.

1. *Quantitative increase.* If a state lacks troops for its military or workers for its economy, it should tend to boost feminization.

Security competition is a labor-intensive activity. Thus, population is one of the necessary building blocks of military power.⁶⁸ Traditionally, states mostly rely on men to staff their military forces. But if there are not enough male recruits to staff the military, a logical remedy is to rely instead on female recruits. Accordingly, “the crucial determinant of the number of women brought into the armed forces is whether the supply of men meets the number needed to fulfill the military’s mission(s).”⁶⁹ Also, wealth is essential to sustain military power. This logic can thus extend to the economic sphere, too. States with higher rates of women’s economic participation will likely generate more wealth. Therefore, we can predict that states populous enough will have little incentive to pursue feminization actively. On the contrary, states that lack people-power compared to their competitors will tend to push feminization harder.

2. *Qualitative increase.* If a state has incentives to boost the efficiency of its economy or its military, it should tend to push for feminization.

⁶⁸ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy* (2014), chap. 3.

⁶⁹ Mady Wechsler Segal, “Women’s Military Roles Cross-Nationally: Past, Present, and Future,” *Gender and Society* 9, no. 6 (1995): 766, <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124395009006008>. To the best of my knowledge, Segal’s theoretical proposition is the most similar to mine.

A state may want to mobilize the abilities of the female population to increase its capabilities.⁷⁰ In many developed countries, women receive, on average, higher education than men.⁷¹ Therefore, states are interested in pushing for feminization in the economy and the public service to benefit from this educated people-power and increase its economic and administrative potential. For instance, World War II had a noticeable impact on the employment of higher-educated women in the United States.⁷²

In addition, weapon systems have significantly increased in complexity throughout the last few decades. For example, 1960s-designed F-5 and A-7 jets only required around 20 person-hours of maintenance per flight hour. 1970s design F-14 and F-15 jets required approximately 48 person-hours of maintenance per flight hour, while the newest F-35 jet requires

⁷⁰ Frank Grass, "Female Citizen Soldiers and Airmen: Key Contributors to Worldwide Peace and Security," *Prism* 6, no. 1 (2016): 46–57, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26470431>.

⁷¹ Abigail Johnson Hess, "For the First Time in History, Women Are Better Educated Than Their Husbands—but Men Still Earn More," *CNBC*, November 21, 2017, <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/11/21/women-are-better-educated-than-their-husbands-but-men-still-earn-more.html>.

⁷² Claudia Goldin and Claudia Olivetti, "Shocking Labor Supply: A Reassessment of the Role of World War II on Women's Labor Supply," *American Economic Review* 103, no. 3 (2013): 257–262, <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.103.3.257>.

around 50.⁷³ Such complex machinery needs the work of numerous specialists to remain operational. Hence, contemporary militaries must recruit large numbers of educated personnel, often women.⁷⁴

In a nutshell, states should tend to push for feminization when they lack in total population but also if they lack not in total population but in educated or trained personnel. On the contrary, following the same logic, a state that does not lack personnel or is not engaged in an intense security competition has little incentive to push toward feminization. In the next section, I do not attempt a systematic demonstration and limit myself to a few examples to show that this thesis is plausible.

B. A few examples

States like China and India have large enough populations to sustain almost any level of military effort deemed necessary. These states have little structural incentive to push for feminization. Conversely, Russia deals with NATO on its west and China on its southeast, and both entities are largely more

⁷³ Giovanni De Briganti, "Navair Sees F-35 Requiring Up to 50 Maintenance Hours per Flight Hour," *Defense-Aerospace.com*, December 5, 2016, <https://www.defense-aerospace.com/navair-projects-f-35-to-need-50-maintenance-hours-per-flight-hour/>; and Joshua M. Epstein, *Measuring Military Power: The Soviet Air Threat to Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 19.

⁷⁴ Saskia Stachowitsch, "Military Gender Integration and Foreign Policy in the United States: A Feminist International Relations Perspective," *Security Dialogue* 43, no. 4 (2012): 305–321, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010612451482>.

populous than itself. Based on our theoretical expectations, Russia would feel the structural incentive to feminize its military despite being a conservative nation on women and gender issues. Indeed, the Indian military counts around three percent of women, and the Chinese military stands at five percent. But the Russian military reaches ten percent of women.⁷⁵ The Orthodox Church profoundly influences the Russian polity from the higher levels of the state down to military units.⁷⁶ In this background, it is a fair claim that women's military participation could be lower than it is without international political motives.

The nascent Soviet Union accepted women for the Red Army because it lacked people-power in its civil war (1917–1922). Then, after sustaining massive losses to the German onslaught in 1941–1942, the Red Army started to put women in front units. Women were found in numbers in air defense, sniper, and tank units. During the war, 76 women were nominated 'Hero of the Soviet Union'. By the war's end, the Soviet military comprised around 10 percent of women. Actually, Britain and Germany during World War II also pushed significant numbers of women toward military service, while the United States did not. Indeed,

⁷⁵ Army Technology, "Women in the Army: Female Fighters in the World's Seven Biggest Armies," November 30, 2018, <https://www.army-technology.com/uncategorised/women-in-the-army/>.

⁷⁶ Dmitry Adamsky, "Russian Orthodox Church and Nuclear Command and Control: A Hypothesis," *Security Studies* 28, no. 5 (2019): 1010–1039, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2019.1662483>; and Yulia Prozorova, "Religio-Political Nexus and Political Imaginary in Russia," *Social Imaginaries* 5, no. 2 (2019): 105–139, <https://doi.org/10.5840/si20195216>.

Washington suffered less from shortages of men recruits, and the war was a less existential threat than for European powers, thanks to geographic distance. Although the Cold War Soviet Union did not conscript women, it planned to mobilize them in case of a major war. Soviet girls had to take basic military training like boys to prepare for this eventuality.⁷⁷ Although actual recruitment policies remain unclear, women appear poised to play a growing role in the Russian military to compensate for the casualties taken following the 2022 Ukraine invasion.⁷⁸

The neighbors of today's Russia in Eastern and Northern Europe are states with smaller populations and limited defense capabilities.⁷⁹ Estonia imposes compulsory military service only for men but is now actively trying to entice more women to join voluntarily. Latvia is one of the NATO member states with the

⁷⁷ D'Ann Campbell, "Women in Combat: The World War II Experience in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and the Soviet Union," *Journal of Military History* 57, no. 2 (1993): 301–323, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2944060>; and Chris McNab, *The Great Bear at War: The Russian and Soviet Army, 1917–Present* (Oxford: Osprey, 2019), 48, 89, 160.

⁷⁸ Interfax-Ukraine, "Russian Invaders Start to Mobilize Women — AFU General Staff," December 12, 2022, <https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/877888.html>; and Moscow Times, "Wagner Boss: Women Should Also Get Early Jail Release to Fight in Ukraine," December 21, 2022, <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/12/21/wagner-boss-women-should-also-get-early-jail-release-to-fight-in-ukraine-a79768>.

⁷⁹ Dylan Motin, "Geography, Military Balance, and the Defence of NATO's Borderlands," *Journal on Baltic Security* 6, no. 1 (2020): 52–57, <https://doi.org/10.2478/jobs-2020-0002>.

highest proportion of women soldiers.⁸⁰ Sweden reacted to the resurrection of Russian power by re-enacting conscription in 2017 (after a seven-year hiatus), this time for both men and women.⁸¹ Ukraine's military counted in 2008 only around 1,800 women. Ukraine faced an existential military threat after Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 and intervened in the Donbas. The number of enlisted women jumped fifteenfold to enlarge its military rapidly, reaching 27,074 in 2019. The number of women in the Ukrainian armed forces exceeded 60,000 during its war with Russia, with many in combat roles.⁸²

Israel is a small state surrounded by more populous neighbors, notably Egypt and Syria. Consequently, Israel has levied both men and women for military service since 1948. Also, Israel's social and economic feminization level is higher than its

⁸⁰ Baltic News Network, "Latvian Army — the Most 'Feminine' in NATO," January 3, 2012, <https://bnn-news.com/latvian-army-feminine-nato-45619>; and LRT, "Estonian Military Launches Campaign to Attract Female Conscripts," March 24, 2021, <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1372075/estonian-military-launches-campaign-to-attract-female-conscripts>.

⁸¹ Adam Chandler, "Why Sweden Brought Back the Draft," *Atlantic*, March 3, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/03/sweden-conscription/518571/>.

⁸² 112 Ukraine, "Number of Women in Ukraine's Armed Forces Increased by 15 Times for Ten Years," September 19, 2019, <https://112.international/society/number-of-women-in-ukraines-armed-forces-increased-by-15-times-for-ten-years-43702.html>; and Nicholas Kristof, "Ukrainian Women Fight for Their Own Liberation," *New York Times*, December 3, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/03/opinion/ukraine-women.html>.

Arab neighbors.⁸³ North Korea also presents a similar pattern. Its population and economy pale compared to the South Korean-U.S. alliance. North Korea, too, instituted women's conscription. Although Pyongyang has an abysmal record for violating women's rights, the North Korean military comprises women at around 40 percent.⁸⁴

Since the mid-2010s, the United States has refocused its foreign policy on competing with rival great powers, namely China and Russia. Hence, concerns about both the relative size and the quality of the U.S. military have surfaced. The U.S. mobilization system only registers men as draftable for mobilization, and whether or not to include women as mobilizable has become a political issue.⁸⁵ Traditionally, military aircraft's cockpits were conceived to suit male physiology. However, the U.S. Air Force now requests new planes to accommodate better female physiology. As an Air Force official explained, the United States notably faces China, a state with well-trained and educated soldiers who could soon outnumber the U.S. Air Force. Therefore,

⁸³ Idit Shafran Gittleman, "Female Service in the IDF: The Challenge of an 'Integrated' Army," *Lawfare*, February 28, 2018, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/female-service-idf-challenge-integrated-army>.

⁸⁴ Army Technology, "Women in the Army"; and Sea Young Kim and Leif-Eric Easley, "The Neglected North Korean Crisis: Women's Rights," *Ethics & International Affairs* 35, no. 1 (2021): 19–29, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0892679421000010>.

⁸⁵ BBC, "Should Women Be Eligible for US Military Draft?" April 26, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52274164>.

Washington needs to build aircraft that accommodate everyone if it wants to remain competitive:

*All well and good when you're a country that's going to face a country with a population that's four times your own by the end of this decade. But if we begin with a recruitment population that we've artificially halved because of how we design our cockpits and workstations, we've just doubled our work, and now we make every operator in the seat have to be eight times better than the counterpart they will face in a nation like China.*⁸⁶

Once again, this part is no full-fledged case study but just impressionistic evidence that supports my point. Also, numerical

⁸⁶ Valerie Insinna, "To Get More Female Pilots, the Air Force Is Changing the Way It Designs Weapons," *Air Force Times*, August 20, 2020, <https://www.airforcetimes.com/news/your-air-force/2020/08/19/to-get-more-female-pilots-the-air-force-is-changing-the-way-it-designs-weapons/>.

feminization may not necessarily lead to gender equality.⁸⁷ But one could use that theoretical proposition to make predictions. For example, South Korea's extremely low birth rate will impede its economic development and military strength for the foreseeable future. Therefore, due to its enduring standoff with North Korea and the rising threat from China, the Korean government will face enormous pressure to increase the participation of women in both civilian and military sectors quickly.⁸⁸ Taiwan also confronts a quickly declining pool of male recruits while the Chinese capabilities are growing by the day. Thus, Taipei recently allowed

⁸⁷ On the topic: Jacklyn Cock, "Women and the Military: Implications for Demilitarization in the 1990s in South Africa," *Gender and Society* 8, no. 2 (1994): 152–169, <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124394008002002>; Cynthia Enloe, "Women — the Reserve Army of Army Labor," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 12, no. 2 (1980): 42–52, <https://doi.org/10.1177/048661348001200206>; and Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex During World War II* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987). I pay little attention to civil wars here. For an introduction to the issue: Marie E. Berry, *War, Women, and Power: From Violence to Mobilization in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); and Jocelyn Viterna, *Women in War: The Micro-Processes of Mobilization in El Salvador* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁸⁸ Timothy W. Martin and Andrew Jeong, "South Korea's Military Is Shrinking and Some Say Women Must Answer the Call of Duty," *Wall Street Journal*, June 3, 2021, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/south-koreas-military-is-shrinkingsome-say-women-must-answer-the-call-of-duty-11622727598>.

women to volunteer as reservists and will likely soon be hard-pressed to recruit more women in the military.⁸⁹

IV. Conclusion

This article attempted to fill the gap between feminism and neorealism. The first part argued that neorealist theory applied to IR gender research, and ultimately to feminism itself, could create new insights. The last part proposed a basic theory on why and when security competition creates momentum for feminization. Overall, the article tried to show that neorealist insights can shed new light on existing research puzzles and generate new theories. The rise of new great powers and the collapse of the liberal international order throughout recent years forced a renewed interest in realist teachings. Meanwhile, feminism emerged during the last decades as one of the main IR approaches. Yet, few scholars tried to associate both despite the potential benefits. Such

⁸⁹ Wayne Chang, "Taiwan to Allow Women into Military Reserve Force Training as China Fears Grow," *CNN*, January 18, 2023, [https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/18/asia/taiwan-women-military-reserve-intl-hnk-ml/index.html#:~:text=Taiwan's%20military%20on%20Tuesday%20rolled,the%20democratic%20self%20ruled%20island](https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/18/asia/taiwan-women-military-reserve-intl-hnk-ml/index.html#:~:text=Taiwan's%20military%20on%20Tuesday%20rolled,the%20democratic%20self%20ruled%20island;); and Eric Cheung, "Taiwan's Military Has a Fertility Problem: As China Fears Grow, Its Recruitment Pool Shrinks," *CNN*, December 17, 2022, [https://edition.cnn.com/2022/12/16/asia/taiwan-fertility-rate-security-risk-invasion-intl-hnk/index.html#:~:text=Taiwan's%20military%20has%20a%20fertility,grow%2C%20its%20recruitment%20pool%20shrinks&text=A%20military%20cadet%20graduates%20in%20Taipei%2C%20Taiwan%2C%20in%202018.&text=Taiwan%20has%20noticed%20a%20hole,budget%20or%20buying%20more%20weapons](https://edition.cnn.com/2022/12/16/asia/taiwan-fertility-rate-security-risk-invasion-intl-hnk/index.html#:~:text=Taiwan's%20military%20has%20a%20fertility,grow%2C%20its%20recruitment%20pool%20shrinks&text=A%20military%20cadet%20graduates%20in%20Taipei%2C%20Taiwan%2C%20in%202018.&text=Taiwan%20has%20noticed%20a%20hole,budget%20or%20buying%20more%20weapons.).

association forces realists to ask new questions while it offers feminism more explanatory and predictive power.

Therefore, associating feminism and neorealism opens the way for potentially fruitful research. Future works could investigate potential links between external threats and evolutions in gender images or relations. One could also inquire how changes in the balance of power influence women's lives. For example, Wildenthal connects Imperial Germany's accession to world power to the experience of German women.⁹⁰ Furthermore, a state's mobilization intensity significantly influences women's private lives.⁹¹ One could hypothesize that China's international rise impacted the lives of Chinese women worldwide by either enhancing their status or, conversely, turning them into potential national security threats. How defeat in the Cold War fragilized the status of Russian women both in Russia and abroad could also be a valid question.

Further research could compare the performance and endurance of states with different levels of feminization amid power competition. Gender explanations of international politics can also explain what realism cannot. For example, most realists consider the Vietnam War an anomaly because it was not waged

⁹⁰ Lora Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire, 1884–1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

⁹¹ Victoria M. Basham and Sergio Catignani, "War Is Where the Hearth Is: Gendered Labor and the Everyday Reproduction of the Geopolitical in the Army Reserves," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 20, no. 2 (2018): 153–171, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2018.1442736>.

for sound strategic reasons.⁹² Dean comes to the same conclusion and instead explains that the gender ideology of the then-U.S. leaders made them fear looking weak and cowardly, making it hard for them to remain out of the war.⁹³

Going beyond the man-woman binary, one could inquire how international competition affects sexual minorities.⁹⁴ The logic of neorealism may also apply to understanding multi-ethnic and multiracial states. For example, according to Eckstein, the Roman Republic developed a formidable military and eventually overpowered its opponents because, contrary to them, Rome had a unique ability to digest and integrate the diverse people it conquered thanks to its citizenship system.⁹⁵ The possibilities for combining the realist method with new outlooks are vast.

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⁹² Lorenzo Zambarnardi, "The Impotence of Power: Morgenthau's Critique of American Intervention in Vietnam," *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 3 (2011): 1335–1356, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510001531>.

⁹³ Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).

⁹⁴ Terrell Carver and Laura Lyddon, *Masculinities, Gender and International Relations* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2022); and Cynthia Weber, *Queer International Relations: Sovereignty, Sexuality and the Will to Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁹⁵ Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy*, chap. 7.

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**The Pseudo Integration of former
British Cameroons and its Impact
on Recurrence of Conflicts (1961-2018)**

**Joseph Bonglo Kingsley, Suffian Mansor,
and Azlizan Mat Enh***

Abstract

This study focuses on the nature of integration in the former British Cameroons after the United Nations Plebiscite of 1961. This work analyses the nature of the integration by closely examining the socio-economic and political developments during the post plebiscite period. The paper argues that it was the source for the recurrence of conflicts in the former British Cameroons, particularly Sardauna and Kurmi Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Taraba State, and the Northwest Region of Cameroon. The effect included the destruction of lives and property and colossal humanitarian crises involving Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees. The study uses the qualitative-cum-historical

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method of research involving the descriptive collation and analysis of historical data to come out with its findings. The data sources consulted comprised of primary, secondary and tertiary or internet materials. However, the findings of the study revealed that the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period planted the seed of disenchantment due to the outright violation of promises and treaties by the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain and the United Nations (UN). Similarly, the study indicates that this resulted in lack of meaningful development, political apathy, disunity, and violence. This created impact such as protest, violence, intellectual and legal approaches. The implications this has included the comprehension gap, wrong placement of trust and the search for solutions are some of the implications for Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN. In conclusion, the study theoretically was able to shade more light and awareness on how the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period culminated in pseudo integration and its impact and implications for the former British Cameroons. For practitioners it entails that researchers interested in the study area should adequately explore existing and new sources of data in order to exhume and reconstruct the real history causing recurrence of conflict in the study area. While policy makers are enjoined to pursue a genuine and sincere policy formulation and implementation in tandem with regulated motivations regarding

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integration policies in the study area as the pathway way to effectively mitigate the prevalence of conflicts.

Keywords: Cameroon, Conflict, Nigeria, Post Plebiscite, Pseudo Integration.

I. General Background

Taking a retrospect of events and applying historical binoculars tells so much about the British Cameroons. The territory which was located along west and central Africa is sandwiched between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Cameroon. Past antecedent reveals that the British Cameroons was initially a part of the German colony from 1902. But after it was defeated during the First World War (WWI) 1914-1919, the colony became a mandate territory of the League of Nations in 1922.¹ The territory was overseen on behalf of the League under the mandateship system by Britain and France. Britain and France decided to divide the territory into two namely, the West Cameroons and the East Cameroons and administered it separately. Sankem pointed out that Britain administered the Western portion, alongside its colony of Nigeria (Figure 1).² While France administered the Eastern portion, alongside its colony of Central Africa. Meanwhile, the outbreak of the Second World War 1939-1945 led to the collapse of the League of Nations and gave birth to the United Nations Organization (UNO) in 1945.³ As a result, the mandateship system was transformed to

¹ Herbert Leonard Peacock. *A History of Modern Europe 1789-1970*. United Kingdom: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, (1971): 294.

² Makem Yusuf Sankem. *The Politics of Chamba & Other Minorities in the Former Trustee (Kasah Amana): The Role of Gang Philip Makem II*. Nigeria: Tebish, (2005): 183.

³ Harold W. Temperley and Author J. Grant. *Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (1789-1950)*. China: Longman, (1927): 410.

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trusteeship council. Incidentally, a new chapter began when colonialism started losing its grip on the continent of Africa and giving way to self-determination during the 1950s and 1960s. This development made Britain to consider granting independence to its colony of Nigeria on October 1, 1960. Similarly, France also proposed granting independence to its colony of Central Africa and East Cameroons on January 1, 1960.

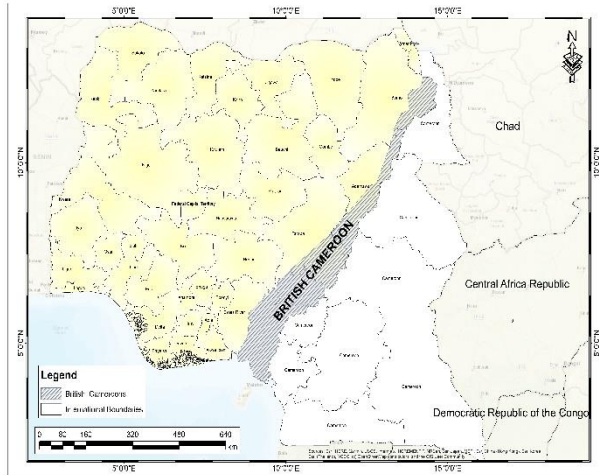


Figure 1: Map showing the British Cameroons. Source: Modified after Kirk-Greene, 1969.

Meanwhile, Tata stated that the above development made the Pan-African Movement to mount pressure on the UN concerning the future of the trust territories.⁴ Britain had earlier informed the United Nations of its intention to end its trusteeship of the

⁴ John Nacatious Tatah. "A Memorandum submitted to the Judicial Commission of Inquiry in to the Gembu Riot of September, 1982." (1986): 6-7.

Cameroon after its colony of Nigeria gains independence by October 1, 1960. This made the UN General Assembly to resolve that the people of the trust territory be granted the right to self-determination.⁵ Consequently, during a special session of the trustee council meeting of the UN General Assembly in New York it was decided that a plebiscite be held in Northern Cameroon by November 11, 1959, to ascertain the wishes of the people (Figure 2).

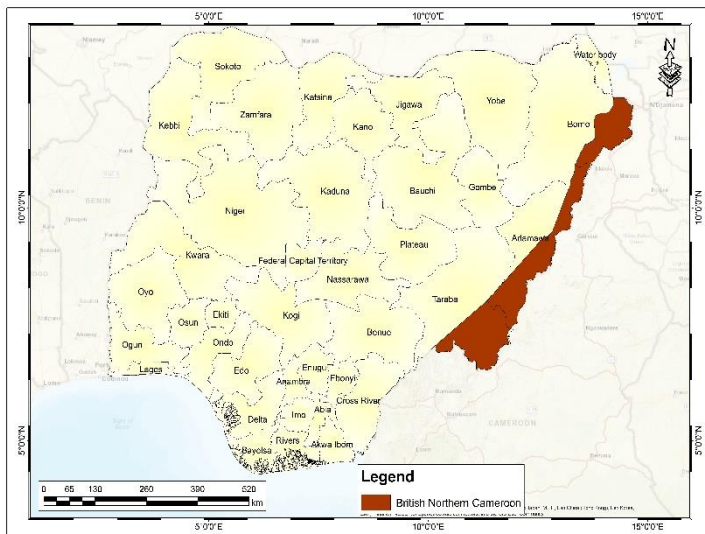


Figure 2: Map showing British Northern Cameroons. Source: Modified after Kirk-Greene, 1969.

⁵ Tatab, "A Memorandum submitted to the Judicial Commission of Inquiry," 5-7.

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The UN appointed a plebiscite commissioner Dr. Djalal Abdoh who with his team conducted the plebiscite. The two options presented to the electorates were: (i) Do you wish the Northern Cameroons to be part of Northern Region of Nigeria when the Federation of Nigeria becomes independent on October 1, 1960? (ii) Are you in favor of deciding the future of Northern Cameroons at a later date? The result expressed the wishes of the people of the territory as follows: 42,788 voted for Nigeria and 70,546 voted against Nigeria.⁶

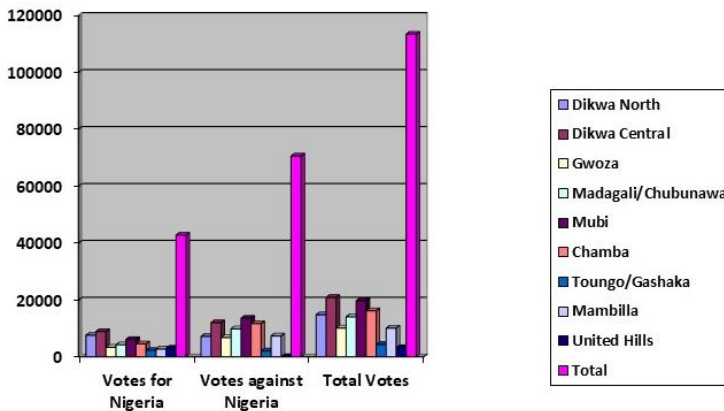


Figure 3: The result of the 1959 plebiscite in Northern Cameroons. Source: Trusteeship Committee Report on the Plebiscite of 1959 (U.N document T/1491 of November 1959).

⁶ Anthony Hamilton Millard Kirk-Greene. *Adamawa Past and Present: An Historical Approach to the Development of a Northern Cameroons Province*. London, Cambridge University Press, (1969): iii-vi.

Meanwhile, the United Nations cancelled the plebiscite of 1959 and proposed that another be conducted in 1961. The reasons for the cancellation were because: (i) The result of the plebiscite was petitioned by the Emir of Adamawa (who is the traditional ruler) Province and Sir, Ahmadu Bello, the Premier of Northern Nigeria. (ii) The UN consulted the leaders of the different political parties in Southern Cameroons to take the decision.⁷ Based on these reasons the UN resolved that another plebiscite should be conducted in the trust territories on February 11, 1961 (Figure 3). Under the leadership of Dr. Djalal Abdoh and his team the second plebiscite was successfully conducted. The questions tabled before the electorates were (a) Do you wish to attend independence by joining the Republic of Cameroon? or (b) Do you wish to attend independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria? The outcome shows that in the Northern Cameroons 146,296 voted for Nigeria, while 97,659 voted for Cameroon (Figure 4).⁸ The result clearly indicates that the wishes of the people favored Nigeria during the plebiscite of 1961. On the other hand, Southern Cameroons choose Cameroon with a vote of 233,574, while those who voted Nigeria were 97,741 (Figure 6).⁹ The result indicates that the wishes of the people of

⁷ Kirk-Greene. *Adamawa Past and Present*, v-x.

⁸ Kirk-Greene. *Adamawa Past and Present*, iii-v.

⁹ Bongfen Chem-langee. *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons under United Kingdom Administration: The Search for Identity, Well-being and Continuity*. New York: University Press of America, (2004): 174-175.

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Southern Cameroons favored the Republic of Cameroon with a wide margin.

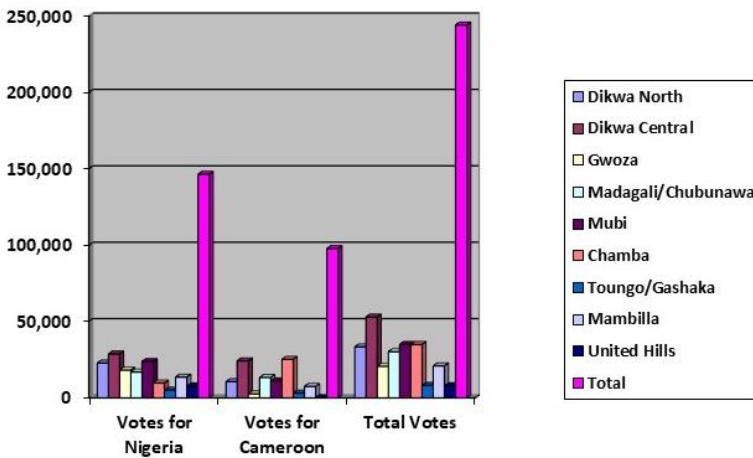


Figure 4: The result of the 1961 plebiscite in Northern Cameroons. Source: Trusteeship Committee Report, United Nations Document T/1556 of April 1961.

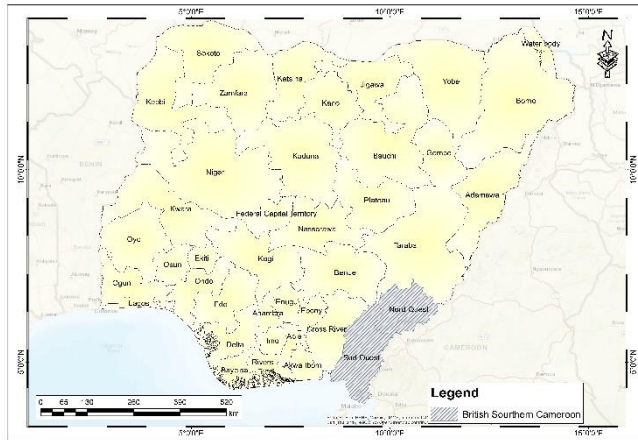


Figure 5: Map showing British Southern Cameroons. Source: Modified after Kirk-Greene, 1969.

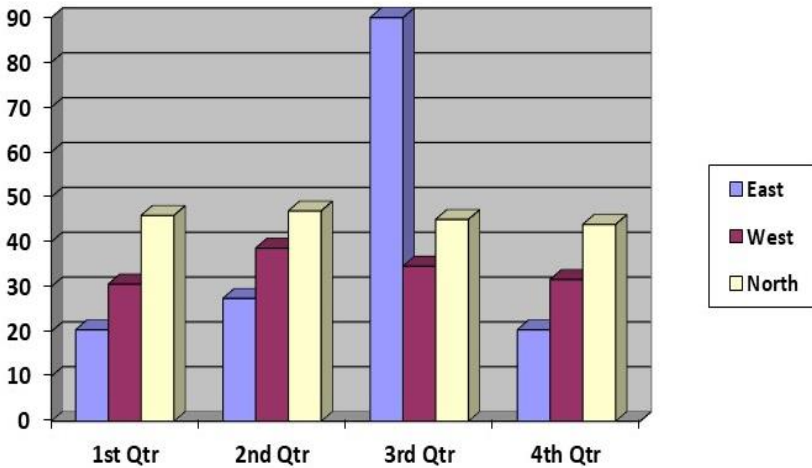


Figure 6: Showing the result of the 1961 in Southern Cameroons. Source: Adopted from “The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in

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the Cameroons under United Kingdom Administration: The Search for Identity, Well-being and Continuity,” 174-175.

The Republic of Cameroon protested the result of the plebiscite held in the Northern Cameroons stating that it was marked by irregularities and took it before the International Court of Justice (ICJ). When it could not make any head way, the UN General Assembly unanimously endorsed the result of the plebiscite on April 21, 1961.¹⁰ Therefore, the termination of trusteeship in Northern Cameroons was on June 1, 1961, and in Southern Cameroons on October 1, 1961. The territory was formally handed over to Nigeria at Mubi and to the Republic of Cameroon at Buea. But Britain and the UN failed to attend the talks and negotiations in Foumban (Cameroon) where authority was to be formally handed over to the leaders of the Republic of Cameroon President Ahmadu Ahijo and the Prime Minister of Southern Cameroons, Mr. John Foncha.¹¹ President Ahijo subsequently took advantage and detected the tone of the meeting as it pleased him. While this brought about the disappearance of the erstwhile British Cameroons, it transformed Nigeria and Cameroon in no small measure. The result was not only seen in the increased in the size of the territory, population and mineral

¹⁰ Tatab, “A Memorandum submitted to the Judicial Commission of Inquiry,” 7.

¹¹ Jonathan N. Sezah. *The Ambazonia Movement and its Political and Security Implications to Nigeria*, (M.A. dissertation, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria, 2000): 89-93.

resources, but also socio-culturally, politically and economically. However, the way Nigeria and Cameroon handled the gains indicates that they were gaps and teething issues in the post plebiscite period. The issues manifested themselves as symptomatic pseudo integration palaver.

The purpose of the study is to analyze whether the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons had impact upon the recurrence conflicts. In the light of the above this study attempt to address three key questions. Firstly, how was the nature of the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons? Secondly, what were some of the socio-economic and political development in the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons? Thirdly, what are the impact and implications of the socio-economic and political development in the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons? and then conclusion.

II. Literature Review

The literature review was based on the objectives of this study. The literature review therefore addressed the following themes. Firstly, the nature of the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons. The works reviewed under this theme included P. Paglia (2007), N. E. Lenshie and A. Johnson (2012),

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N. E. Lenshie and A. S. Inalegwu (2012), A. Fonkem (2012), M. J. Njie (2019) and M. L. Ntesang (2015). However, these pieces of literature identify and agree that poor integration was a post plebiscite/independent problem in the study area and other parts of Africa. Therefore, the authors mostly narrated and highlighted the consequences of poor integration. But this research seeks to trace and comprehend why there was the problem of integration particularly in the study area?

Secondly, on some of the socio-economic and political development and their effect during the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons the following works were reviewed: A.H.M. Kirk-Greene (1969), J. C. Anene, (1970), Y. M. Sankem (2005), J. N Sezah (1984), N. J. Tatah (1983), J. N. Sezah (2000), J.N Sezah (1985), K. B. Joseph (2017), and C. A. Ebini (2019) among others. These literatures reveal there were certain episodes being witnessed by the people of the former British Northern and Southern Cameroons which affected them negatively. However, this research neatly and carefully paints the clear picture of the stages which explains the trends and how they affected the citizens of the study area. The third theme, the impact and implications of the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons looked at the following literatures: A.H.M. Kirk-Greene (1969), K. B. Joseph (2000), N.W. Ngah Louis (2001), and S.P. Anuye (2016), H. Kam Kah (2019), M.J. Njie (2019), and G. Akwen

(2021). These literatures disclose that there were various impact on the people of the study area. The goal of this study is to analyze the impact of the responses of the citizens of the former British Northern and Southern Cameroons to the concern authorities, Britain, and the UN.

Based on the above, it is clear and certain that there was a considerable dearth of literature on this theme. Similarly, it is this concern that shaped the perspective of this study. In seeking to fill this gap the study took a departure from previous research to address pseudo integration in the former British Cameroons by tracing its origin, examining the trends and effects, as well as the responses and impact.

III. Hypotheses

This research upholds the following hypotheses:

- (i) The prevailing socio-economic and political developments in the former British Cameroons is a consequence of the pseudo integration policy generating persistent crises and conflicts.
- (ii) The prevailing socio-economic and political developments in the former British Cameroons is not a consequence of the pseudo integration policy generating persistent crises and conflicts.

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IV. Theoretical Framework

The social identity theory¹² is the analytical tool for this study. The theory is appropriate because the citizens of the former British Cameroons are confronted with socio-economic and political barriers after deciding during the UN plebiscite of 1961 to joined Nigeria and Cameroon. This theory was developed by a British social psychologist, Henri Tajfel, and his team in the early 1970's. The goal is to 'specify and predict the 'circumstances' during which individuals think of themselves as individuals or members of a group as well as the consequences for the individual perceptions and the group behavior. The brain behind the social identity theory was for group membership to help and enable people to instill meaning in social situations or actions. The result was that group membership help people to define themselves and to determine how they relate with others.¹³ In addition the social identity theory was conceived as an integrative theory that aims to connect cognitive processes with behavioral motivations. The primary focus of the theory at the beginning was on intergroup conflict and intergroup relationship, which made it to be referred to as the 'social identity theory of intergroup relations.' Meanwhile, the three psychological processes that explain how

¹² Naomi Ellemers. "Social Identity Theory." Britannica, last updated February 16, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/social-identity-theory>.

¹³ Ellemers, "Social Identity Theory."

individuals create and define their place in society are: social categorization, social comparison, and social identification.

The above analytical tool is very important in viewing and comprehending the dynamics of the integration palaver of the former British Cameroons. The intergroup relations between the citizens of the former British Cameroons (English-Speaking Cameroonians or Nigerians by Plebiscite) and Nigeria (Nigerians by birth) and Cameroon (French-Speaking Cameroonians) are based on circumstance that specify and predict the individual thinking of members of the respective groups. For example, the interrelations between the 'French-Speaking and English-Speaking Cameroonians' or 'Nigerians by birth and Nigerians by Plebiscite' is defined by some circumstances resulting from the perception members of the groups hold of each other. This entails that such a perception help explain the nature of the intergroup relations and why it affects integration.

Similarly, cognitive processes are deeply involved in giving meaning to social situations. In other words, the intergroup relations between the French-Speaking and English-Speaking Cameroonians and Nigerians by birth and Nigerians by Plebiscite were shaped by social categorization, social comparison, and social identity. The first stage upholds that group members consider themselves with others 'as relatively interchangeable groups' and not 'separate, unique individuals.'¹⁴ This means that

¹⁴ Ellemers, "Social Identity Theory."

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intergroup relations are developed using interchanges or exchanges between individual or members of a group. This suggest that the situation of the former British Cameroons could be explored, and the respective individual and group members be guided to instill meaning in the social situation based on a proper context.

The second stage was associated with a group's "relative value or social standing" or its members.¹⁵ The relative value of a group or its members is the interpretation obtained from being compared with other groups or its members. In the case of the citizens of the former British Cameroons, this was an absurd situation because they were being seen as second-class citizens compared to their other counterparts. Therefore, such a situation was abnormal, and provided the opportunity and need for a redress.

The third stage social identification portrays the attitude that people generally fail to perceive social situations or actions as separate observers.¹⁶ This is so because the sense of who they are and how they relate with other groups inherently influences or becloud how they see individuals or members of the other group living around them. However, this reflects the position of the dominance of the French-Speaking Cameroonians and Nigerians by birth, who have continued to exercise undue influence and

¹⁵ Ellemers, "Social Identity Theory."

¹⁶ Ellemers, "Social Identity Theory."

become intolerant of the citizens of the former British Cameroons thereby resulting in socio-economic and political conflict. Therefore, for lasting peace to reign in the former British Cameroons, this situation needed to be addressed in tandem with the context of a proper social situation or identification.

In order to comprehend and appreciate the nature of the integration it is pertinent to link or connect the above cognitive processes with the behavioral motivation. The social identity theory postulates that social behavior is determined by the character and motivations of a person as an individual (interpersonal behavior) and by the persons group membership (intergroup behavior).¹⁷ Based on the social behavior, most people often assumed a positive image of their groups. But as a result of the cognitive process, they pay more attention on the 'positively valued traits, attitude and behaviors' considered as the prominent features of the group. This situation had the tendency to cause members to downplay or focus less on the important characteristics of other groups. Similarly, this could affect the distribution of materials or outcome between groups. The situation in the former British Cameroons reflect these behavioral motivations between the French-Speaking and the English-Speaking Cameroonians and the Nigerians by birth and Nigerians by Plebiscite. Therefore, the behavioral motivations needed to be properly studied and understood. For it would help

¹⁷ Ellemers, "Social Identity Theory."

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the authorities guide or moderate such motivations. In short, the authorities of Nigeria and Cameroon need to strike a balance because during the plebiscite Nigeria and Cameroon campaigned for the citizens of the former British Cameroons to join them. However, the failure to checkmate the behavioral motivations and strike a balance had a probability of generating crisis or conflict.

V. Conceptual Clarification

The concept Pseudo Integration could be view from possibly three broad perspectives. The first is the sematology combination of *pseudo*, an adjective, and *integration*, a noun. Etymologically *Pseudo* is derived from the Greek *pseudes* or *pseudein* meaning false or to lie.¹⁸ Meanwhile according to the Collins Dictionary of English Language *integration* is a derivative from Latin *integrare* meaning parts.¹⁹ Therefore, a combination of “false or to lie” and “parts” connotes quite a number of things. However, three key issues could be deduced. Firstly, it suggests that a part or section sees the incorporation or amalgamation by plebiscite with either Nigeria or Cameroon as some false situation or lies because of what it anticipated from the union which unfortunately could not come to fruition. In other words, based on expectations or promises and the reality, a part feels it was falsehood and lies that were on the campaign trail of the leaders who made a lot of

¹⁸ Patrick Hanks. *The Collins Dictionary of English Language*. Great Britain, Collins & Sons, (1985): 759.

¹⁹ Hanks, *The Collins Dictionary of English Language*, 759.

unfulfilled promises during the plebiscite of 1961. Secondly, it implies that the perception of falsehood or lies was not discern early before the decision or action was taken to go into the amalgamation by plebiscite with Nigeria or Cameroon. This means that a part or section of the union or amalgamation only became aware of deceit after accepting or agreeing to join either Nigeria or Cameroon. Thirdly, it portrays the consciousness or awareness that a part perceives the union or amalgamation by plebiscite possibly to have been based on some tricks and deceit that it joined either Nigeria or Cameroon and which amount to a mere loss and not ready to concede.

A second view of Pseudo Integration could be derived from the opposite meaning of integration. In this sense it is the *de facto* act of not including a part or section when taking decisions and actions which are considered very important. This further suggest that the union or amalgamation by plebiscite to either Nigeria or Cameroon did not really or practically convey a sense of acceptance to a part or section over time. It is important to note that such a perception might probably had far reaching and unpleasant consequences for Nigeria and Cameroon.

Meanwhile in an ideal situation it was expected that integration should either take the form of acculturation or evolving deliberate government policies to ensure or promote genuine proper unity and peaceful co-existence for mutual benefits. But this was not so for sections of Northern and

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Southern Cameroons which joined Nigeria and Cameroon respectively. The reasons stated by Abubakar and Joseph might have been due to the following, unfulfilled promises and breach of agreements made by Nigeria and Cameroon, neglect of the area in terms of socio-political and economic development and lack of deliberate government policies to foster genuine integration.²⁰ However, despite the fact that it has now mark sixty-one years that the union or amalgamation by plebiscite took place, yet you still hear comments from highly place citizens of both Cameroon and Nigeria which calls for a rethink and also heart felt concern to rationale minds with milk of human kindness. In other words, the utterances and comments convey or indicate that pseudo integration seems to have been what was achieved in the study area. For example, Honorable Joseph Wirba a Cameroon parliamentarian quoted the statement made by a Cameroon State Minister who described the makeup of Cameroon hilariously and inhumanely portraying the size and power of the Francophones over the Anglophones. According to him, the Minister asked the question “what can few cubes of sugar do to a full bucket of water.” It was then the parliamentarian asked the Minister “who

²⁰ Ahmadu Adi Abubakar and Kingsley Bonglo Joseph. “United Nations Decolonization in the Trusteeship Territory: A Case Study of the former Northern Cameroons.” (Paper Presented at the Historical Society of Nigeria (HSN) Zonal Conference, Department of History and Archaeology, Taraba State University TSU, Jalingo), (2012): 3-4.

was the water and who was the cube of sugar?”²¹ Similarly, Kam Kah stated that Francophones often used the following denigrating terms to describe Anglophones: “Biafrans” “enemies in the house” “come no go” and others.²² He pointed out that this contributed to more tension and distrust in the country.

Furthermore, in Nigeria the former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar was taken to court by the Attorney-General of Nigerian, Abubakar Malami alleging that he was not a Nigerian citizen by birth and that he cannot contest in the 2019 presidential election.²³ Recently, the minister made a public statement that those who join Nigeria after 1960 are not the same with other Nigerian citizens. Statements of this nature are not only fallacious but send a lot of negative feelings and segregate against citizens who are from the affected areas. However, it is imperative to note that this parts that are sideline and belittled are very strategic and significant to both Nigeria and Cameroon as already noted. The effect of this attitude is that it reconfirms not only the veracity but also reinforces the pseudo integration phenomenon in the study area.

²¹ “Honorable Wirba in 2016.” *Cameroon News Agency*, October 1, 2021.

<https://www.facebook.com/CAMEROONNEWSAGENCY/videos/honorable-wirba-in-2016/549501582953872/>.

²² Henry Kam Kah. “Come-No-Go/Le ennemi... dans la Maison’ Reflecting on on the Lingoes in Cameroon’s Urban History.” *Journal of Modern African History, Politics and Culture* 7, no. 1, (2019): 13-14.

<https://doi.org/10.26806/modafr.v7i1.185>.

²³ Linda Ikeji. “Abubakar Atiku is not qualified to run for President, he’s not a Nigerian by Birth.” (2019). <https://www.lindaikejisblog>.

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Thirdly, pseudo integration could be view as a form of neocolonialism by Nigeria and Cameroon with the de facto approval of the United Nations. This is because Nigeria and Cameroon made promises and treaties that they will fulfill with the United Nations as the umpire. Unfortunately, these agreements and promises were being violated in different ways and yet the umpire decided to deliberately be mute or ignore. Is this not an indication that the United Nations was condescending to the misnomer that national sovereignty is a cloak for allowing the violations of international law by nation states? However, several evidence abound which suggest that the United Nations has slept off or turned a blind eye being as an international watchdog. For instance, when Cameroon decided to scrap the Federal structure in 1972 (just 11 years after the plebiscite) which breach the agreement that gave birth to the Federal United Republic of Cameroon.²⁴ Furthermore, this brought into effect a Unitary constitution by fraudulent means purposefully to benefit the Francophones over the Anglophones. Yet the United Nations was silent about these grave issues. Meanwhile, Nigeria also breaches the promises and agreement made to Northern Cameroons just fifteen years after the plebiscite.²⁵ For example, Nigeria unequivocally went contrary to its promise and in 1976 abolished the regional system and created twelve states (12) and

²⁴ “The Two Alternative: a Southern Cameroons Gazette.” *Southern Cameroons Gazette*, (1960): 3-4.

²⁵ Sankem, *The Politics of Chamba*, 34.

deliberately split Northern Cameroons Province (known as Sardauna Province) into four states in Nigeria. This includes Bornu, Adamawa, Taraba, and Benue States.²⁶

At this juncture, it is pertinent to note that the long period of insensitivity and negligent to resolved pseudo integration by the concern authorities and the UN paved ways for the recurrence of crises and conflict in the study area. In addition, the inability and failure to effectively mitigate this menace over time has made the area a cesspool for the recurrence of deadly crises and conflicts. Some of the notable crises and conflict witnessed in the area include: - the 1982, 2001 and 2017 conflicts in Sardauna Local Government Area (LGA) of Taraba State in Nigeria, the 1996 Kurmi demonstration in Kurmi LGA of Taraba State in Nigeria, the 1984 Matatsine uprising in Bornu and Adamawa States and the recent Boko Haram insurgency in Bornu State and part of Adamawa State (former Northern Cameroons). In the same vein, the 1991 political demonstrations witnessed heavy repression in the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon and now the ongoing armed conflict between the Ambazonian separatists and the government of Cameroon since 2017 (former Southern Cameroons).

²⁶ Sankem, *The Politics of Chamba*, 35.

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From the foregoing, this study therefore views pseudo integration as the act of negligence, pretense, and outright failure to fulfill promises, agreements and treaties by nation states or international organizations to its citizens or members which could probably result to crisis or conflict culminating in both short- and long-term consequences if not fully resolve and mitigated on time using acceptable methods for mutual cooperation and peaceful co-existence.

VI. Data and Research Method

This study employed the qualitative-cum-historical method of research involving the descriptive collation and analysis of historical data and the primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources of data consulted comprised of oral interviews, memorandums, legal reports, and archival materials. The importance of oral interview in this study was to corroborate with documented sources to ascertain the historical veracity of the event being considered from the present generation of some prominent individuals from the study area. The interviewees are from the study area and some even participated prominently in the plebiscite of 1961 which decided the fate of the Northern and Southern Cameroons. Some have held important positions in the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon and vividly witnessed the signs and symptoms of the theme under consideration. Therefore, their statements are from experiences and not armchair

altercations. The secondary sources of data used included documented materials like journals, periodicals, newspapers, magazines, conference papers, books and the tertiary or internet materials. Focusing on this theme, therefore, the research adopted the content analysis method in analyzing the data to come out with the findings of the study.

VII. Analysis and Findings

A. Reasons for the Partition of the former British Cameroons into Two (Northern and Southern Cameroons)

The British colonialist were the architects behind the partition of the former British Cameroons into two namely the British Northern Cameroons (BNC) and British Southern Cameroons (BSC). The development was informed by the proximity of the territory with the British colony of Nigeria when Britain assumed the administration of the territory as a mandate territory in 1922.²⁷ The reasons given by Britain was due to the differences in history and socio-cultural composition and for administrative convenience.

On the former, the British colonial officials who spearheaded the evolution of the Nigerian colony from the “southern and the northern protectorates” disclosed that the situation in the British

²⁷ Sankem, *The Politics of Chamba*, 183.

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Cameroons was similar to Nigeria.²⁸ In other words, the coastal influence which marked the societies in the south was different from the far-removed hinterland communities in the north. The conclusion arrived at by the British officials was that southern Nigeria, particularly in the southeast, shared many similarities with BSC, while northern Nigeria had much in common with BNC.²⁹ Therefore, it was important to maintain the differences.

Based on the above, the latter purpose was pursued by the British officials. The reason advanced by them was that annexation of southeast Nigeria with BSC and northern Nigeria with BNC was administratively convenient and cost effective since they were lacking in manpower.³⁰ This development encouraged the movement of people across the two regions significantly and weakened the international boundary between Nigeria and the British Cameroons. Similarly, local administrative officers for the territory were mostly recruited from northern and southern Nigeria.³¹

²⁸ Joseph C. Anene. *The International Boundaries of Nigeria: The Framework of an Emergent African Nation*. London: Longman, (1970): 94–99.

²⁹ Chem-langee, *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons*, 11-12.

³⁰ Chem-langee, *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons*, 36.

³¹ Chem-langee, *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons*, 37.

B. Colonial Legacies in the former British Cameroons

In a broader perspective this entire work represents the colonial legacies in the former British Cameroons. However, some of the specific colonial legacies include: the colonization by three (3) colonial powers, particularly witnessing of different colonial administrative, economic and educational policies. The colonization of the former British Cameroons by three (3) different colonial powers marks out the territory from the rest of Africa. This comprised of the Germans 1884-1914, Britain 1914-1961 and French 1914-1961.³² Each of this colonial power left a mark on the territory. The German policy of administration was the paternalism. The reign was associated with the establishment of plantation economy which greatly boosted the general agricultural productivity, particularly in the southern Cameroons. This equally resulted in the construction of road networks, railways, airports, and general infrastructural development.³³ Similarly, more schools were open, and funding was provided for the mission schools.

The British adopted the indirect rule policy of administration in the territory from 1922 based on the Native Authority Ordinance of 1914 which was already in used in northern

³² Wongbo George Agime, *European Colonisation in Cameroon and its Aftermath, with Special Reference to Southern Cameroon, 1884-2014*. (M.A. thesis, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, 2016): 57-96.

³³ Agime, *European Colonisation in Cameroon*, 75-77.

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Nigeria.³⁴ However, it was more successful in the BNC. But the BSC was administered by a Governor of the Southern Province and a Senior Resident.³⁵ Unlike the Germans who invested in the agriculture of BSC, the British deliberately neglected the growing economy which they inherited, and it dwindled and affected many who were beneficiaries. Equally, Britain inherited German schools but turned them to English schools by introducing the English system of education.³⁶

The French colonialist oversee the eastern Cameroons as earlier pointed above. Its administrative policy was the assimilation and association. The most superior official at the regional level was the High Commissioner who supervise all other sections.³⁷ Economically, the French auctioned the asset inherited from the Germans. But improve the roads, railway, air services, enlarge the Doula seaport and encourage the production of cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, palm produce and others. Because of this the trade increase between 1922-1939 was about 500 percent.³⁸ In the education section, the French continued the foundation laid by the Germans and provision of subsidies to schools who operated in line with the accepted curriculum. They

³⁴ Verkijika. G. Falso, *Cameroon History for Secondary Schools and Colleges. Vol. 2, The Colonial and Post Colonial Periods*. London: Macmillan (1989): 84.

³⁵ Agime, *European Colonisation in Cameroon*, 95.

³⁶ Agime, *European Colonisation in Cameroon*, 81-82.

³⁷ Agime, *European Colonisation in Cameroon*, 88-89.

³⁸ Agime, *European Colonisation in Cameroon*, 88.

also permit the non-French schools to operate in the area and added more primary, secondary, and technical schools.³⁹ Indeed, education witnessed significant improvement in the French Cameroons.

In addition, the religious belief systems were also impacted on by the colonial activities. Initially, the inhabitants were pagans or animist⁴⁰ based on their traditional way of life. But external influence introduced new form of religious beliefs. During the precolonial period Islam infiltrated the area through the Sokoto Jihad (Holy War) which began in Hausa land in 1804. The jihad spread to other places and throughout northern Nigeria. As a result, the Adamawa Emirate (AE) was established in 1809 from where series of campaigns were launched on the pagan or animist tribes for them to accept Islam.⁴¹ Because of the success recorded the AE expanded and covered the entire area. Therefore, Islam replaced the pagan or animist way of worship for the majority of the people. For the southern Cameroons the situation was different for it moved from the initial traditional religion to Christianity. This change was however the effort of the early of missionary who most resided at the shores of the Atlantic Ocean.

C. The Nature of the Socio-economic and Political Development during the Post Plebiscite Period in the

³⁹ Agime, *European Colonisation in Cameroon*, 87.

⁴⁰ Kirk-Greene. *Adamawa Past and Present*, 5.

⁴¹ Abubakar Saad. *The Lambe of Fombina: A Political History Adamawa 1809-1901*. Kaduna: Ahmadu Bello University Press. (1979): 1-4.

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former British Cameroons

To properly and vividly understand the nature of the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons, it will be important for us to have a germane historical context. This will not only enable us picture unfolding events in their proper sequence, but also give an insight of the reasons why such occurred. Moreover, this will also erase the supposition ignorantly held by some that the plebiscite was an end and not a means to an end. Indeed, it constituted a serious misnomer and anachronism in the historical spectrum of the study area.

Historically, one could possibly trace the inception and clear picture of pseudo integration in the British Cameroons by carefully taking a look at the evolution or formative stages of the socio-economic and political development of the area. The period of the beginning of colonial rule provides a unique and better purview for which to situate this discourse. The socio-economic and political state of the Northern Cameroons was considerably at a very low ebb under the Germans. This was largely due to the inability of the Germans to understand the historical configuration or events in the territory, prior to their possession of the colony. In other words, the wrong perception of the Germans on the autochthonous was the first grope into darkness. They strongly held the view that since the Fulani were in authority, they were the aboriginal rulers of the area. This assumption made the

Germans to believe that partnership with the Fulani was pivotal for them to fully succeed in governing the area. This mindset of the Germans has been clearly captured by Chem-Langee in these words:

...they perceived an apparently unified, extensive, and well organized quasi-feudal system ruled by the Fulani princes. This misperception was the basis of the German Adamawa administrative creed: to gain the loyalty of the Fulani princes, one must recognize their authority and rule through them... Also, German resident commissioners were instructed not to interfere with the internal management of local affairs but to confine themselves to maintaining German rule and keeping the peace between the non-Fulani and the Fulani in the region.⁴²

It is very obvious from the above statement that the Germans were putting the cart before the horse which was quite an impossible task. For example, the Fulani rulers were involved in dire slave raid of the non-Fulani and non-Muslims groups. In effort to promote peace the Germans gave guns to Fulani who instead use it to wreck more havoc on the non-Fulani and non-Muslims communities. Therefore, the tension was only

⁴² Chem-langee, *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons*, 40.

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getting worse until the outbreak of the First World War when Britain took over the area. It is however instructive to note that lack of stability hindered any meaningful project and development in the region. But what became the situation with the coming of Britain?

Meanwhile, it should be noted that both Britain and the United Nations had earlier expressed their intention for the Trust Territory when the Trusteeship Council took effect in 1947. Kirk-Greene quoted the aims and goals of the report at the opening session indicating that:

...a practical, workable system of international supervision of the administration of the Trust Territories...The United Nations and the Administering Authorities now solemnly join hands in the great venture of reassuring, by deeds, the inhabitants of the Trust Territories as to their future political, economic, social, and educational advancement, the ultimate realization of their aspirations towards self-government or independence.⁴³

The above statement sounded so inspiring and hope assuring for the people of the trust territory, but in relative terms, it yielded little or no result. The British officials after taking over the

⁴³ Kirk-Greene, *Adamawa Past and Present*, 45.

Northern Cameroons barely did only very little to develop the area. Besides the system of administration which brought the non-Fulani and non-Muslims to rule at the grassroots, which won the goodwill of the locals, they could not really do much in the areas of education, social policy, and economic development. Chem-Langee described the poor state of the education level in these words:

In 1949, the British Representative on the Trusteeship Council declared that illiteracy in the remote northern part of the region was almost 100 percent. In 1958, when the United Nations was seriously considering independence for the Cameroons, Northern Cameroons had only 3 primary schools, 1 teacher training college at Mubi, several mission elementary schools, 2 holders of undergraduate diplomas in administration and native treasury accounts, and 1 university graduate with a B. Sc. Hon.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, it could be deduced from the above facts that the Northern Cameroons was still seriously lacking and lagging behind in terms of any socio-economic and political development haven being a Mandateship and also Trusteeship Territory for 42

⁴⁴ Chem-langee, *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons*, 4-6.

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years. In addition, Britain made matters more complicated by diplomatically administering the region jointly with its Nigerian colony and equally evading financial burden. The result was that it obliterated the Anglo-German international boundary which divided the area; a development which made the Northern Native Authority (NNA) reminiscent of Jihadist victory which also elicited the tendency to remake history again. Sankem, asserts that it was the backwardness and outright neglect from both the Native Authority and Britain that made the people of the region to vote not to join Nigeria in the 1959 plebiscite.⁴⁵ Unlike Northern Cameroons, the Southern Cameroons was slightly different and more advanced under the German rule. Chem-Langee admitted that the Germans carried out a number of economic activities when he pointed out that:

They developed an intra-regional trade system, carried out experiments on and developed cocoa, kolanuts, palm kernels, palm oil, ramia, rubber, and tobacco. They also established a botanical garden, constructed many buildings, roads, railroads and seaports, and provided a telegraph line, except between Government

⁴⁵ Sankem, *The Politics of Chamba*, 190-103.

*offices and the military airfields remained the dream of the German General Staff.*⁴⁶

Considering the above statement, it is clear that Germany was able to get things right in the Southern Cameroons compared to the Northern Cameroons and established a good number of beneficial economic activities. Nevertheless, the British could not reasonably add to the effort made above. This is evidence in the report of the U N visiting mission in 1949 which described the state of the roads as “poor, inadequate and unsatisfactory.” In the educational aspect Southern Cameroons did not have adequate facilities but did fairly better than Northern Cameroons. For by 1938 it only had 6 Government, 19 Native Authority and 228 mission primary schools while only 53 were recognized, the Roman Catholic Mission opened the first secondary school in 1939 and the second in 1949 and it also had 6 elementary teacher training colleges and Government Trade Centre at Ombe.⁴⁷

From the foregoing, it is very clear that Britain and the United Nations did not demonstrate enough sincere commitment to advance the socio-economic and political development to prepare the inhabitants of the Trust Territories to achieve self-government or independence. To make matter worse, both Britain and the U N evaded financial burdens. In other words,

⁴⁶ Chem-langee, *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons*, 50-56.

⁴⁷ Chem-langee, *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons*, 54.

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unlike Germany which invested in the territory, Britain did not invest and neglected to manage what Germany had put in place, a situation that affected the general development of the territory significantly. In such a situation one should have expected that the U N visiting missions to called on the General Assembly to replace Britain or take any better measure that would enable it fulfilled it goals in the Trust Territories. Unfortunately, that was not done.

Moreover, it was under these deplorable conditions that the plebiscite took place. This implied that they were quite enormous challenges in the Trust Territory. Equally, it could also be inferred that the same wishy-washy attitude shown by Britain and the UN seems to have been copied by Nigeria and Cameroon after they later assumed the administration of the territory. It is therefore against this background that we shall carefully examine some socio-economic and political development of the post plebiscite period in the Northern and Southern Cameroons.

D. Some Socio economic and Political Development and their Effect during the Post Plebiscite Period in the former British Cameroons

The major and dominant feature of the post plebiscite period was the failure of Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN to perform their responsibilities. While Nigeria and Cameroon may be held liable for failing to fulfill their promises and agreements,

Britain and the UN could also be liable for the abandon and unfinished business which affected the consolidated process of the plebiscite.⁴⁸ Since it was upon these promises and agreement reached that the people of Cameroons voted during the plebiscite of 1961. The expectations of the inhabitants were that Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN would honor their part of the agreements or promises. In other words, the high expectations held by the inhabitants of the Northern and Southern Cameroons were so firm and strong knowing fully well that they had the basis. For instance, here is the promise made by the Premier of Northern Nigeria late Sir Ahmadu Bello, who said that:

*My government has guaranteed that if you return to Nigeria, your country will continue to be a separate province, equal in all respects to all the other 12 provinces of the Northern Region. Both the Nigerian Federal Government and British Government have agreed to act as witnesses to this guaranteed. You the people of the Northern Cameroons have been informed of this guarantee.*⁴⁹

Tata also ascribed this statement to the Premier after the result of the plebiscite of 1961 “We assure them that their trust will never be betrayed. And the promises given to them by my

⁴⁸ Sezah, *The Ambazonia Movement*, 14-16.

⁴⁹ Kirk-Greene, *Adamawa Past and Present*, iii-vii.

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government before the plebiscite will be honored.” Furthermore, the Premier while celebrating the victory of Nigeria during the official handover of the territory at Mubi, welcome and assured the people of the Northern Cameroons in these words:

*I most sincerely welcome you to Nigeria and assure you at all times of the friendship of my government. The journey was long, but thanks to God that we have reached the end. Our brothers and sisters of the Trust Territory will now rejoin us in peace and unity.*⁵⁰

Indeed, all the promises above and assurances made to the people of Northern Cameroons never saw the light of the day. In other words, the people of Northern Cameroons unexpectedly had their hopes dashed by Nigeria and Britain. This situation seems to suggest that the plebiscite was the end and any other thing after did not matter. Putting oneself in the shoes of people of the former Northern Cameroons it is clear that the situation obtainable is not in accordance with the spelled-out terms and conditions. Put differently, is the former Northern Cameroon a Province or State in Nigeria today as was promise and assured? No. Is the Federal government of Nigeria and Britain playing any role as guarantors to ensure the promises are fulfilled? No. This undoubtedly amounts to violation of conditions upon which the plebiscite was

⁵⁰ Oje Oriere. “The Secession of the Southern Cameroons,” *Headline News*, May, (1981): 3-4.

promised, and it was for this motive Northern Cameroons join Nigeria.

The situation in the former Southern Cameroons appears gloomier. This is because it was an independent territory exercise authority as a quasi-autonomous state.⁵¹ Similarly, the agreement which produced the Federal United Republic of Cameroon after the plebiscite clearly described the coming together of Republic of Cameroon and Southern Cameroons as a ‘union of two states. This was also admitted by President Ahmadu Ahijo during his speech at Buea, while celebrating the handover of the territory by the British commissioner. According to Ahijo the coming together of the two sides would be “laboratory test for an African union of states speaking English and French.”⁵² Sezah pointed out the effect when Britain and the UN failed to attend the agreed negotiation at Fouban which was to finally sealed the union agreement also transfer power to the leaders of the Republic of Cameroon, President Ahmadu Ahijo and the Southern Cameroon, Prime Minister Mr Foncha.⁵³ However, a passionate Parliamentarian Mr Thamson had earlier blame the British government for neglect, but also suggested the steps to take in

⁵¹ “Southern Cameroons Independence Constitution,” Federal Survey Department, Nigeria, 1958.
<https://www.ambazonia.org/media/pdfs/Southern%20Cameroons%20Independence%20Constitution.pdf>.

⁵² Oriere, “The Secession of the Southern Cameroons,” 5.

⁵³ Sezah, *The Ambazonia Movement*, 14-16.

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order to avert any gloomy future for the Southern Cameroons when he stated that:

“One is bound to come to the conclusion that the Government have failed to take the problem of the Southern Cameroons sufficiently seriously...I suggest that even at this late stage the Government should send to the talks which are to be resumed in a day or so between the Cameroun Republic, the Southern Cameroons and Her Majesty’s Government, not a civil servant, but a Minister...but the situation demands the personal attention of a Government Minister to make sure that the necessary sense of urgency is given to trying to make a proper arrangement between the Cameroun Republic and the territory of the Southern Cameroons.”⁵⁴

Despite the call by this sage and British statesman the government ignored it and refused to attend this stage to consolidate the union arrangement. Incidentally, President Ahijo took the opportunity as a *de facto* head to detect the outcome as it

⁵⁴ “Southern Cameroons Hansard.” UK Parliament, August 1, 1961. https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1961/aug/01/southern-cameroons?__cf_chl_f_tk=r0L20EoKFtL4m8FULW01E7CHXMQFByen23zHgs.jycg-1710163940-0.0.1.1-1770.

please him. This possibly may be the reason for his subsequent actions and decisions. In other words, the failure of Britain and the UN to attend the talks between President Ahmadu Ahijo and Prime John Foncha is possibly what paved way for all that has taken place in the territory to this very moment. In addition, to still point out another case of violation one should pose this question. Is Cameroon presently still a Federal Republic of Cameroon as was documented in the Gazette? No.

The activities of Britain and the UN also glaringly contributed to the hurly-burly and derailment process in the Trust Territory. Measuring the antecedents which marked the territory from after the First World War when it became a Mandate and later Trust Territory after the Second World War and the assurances and role of Britain and the UN it is obvious that a betrayal or some treacherous activities occurred. This is buttressed in a reconsideration and close re-examination of the statement made by Kirk-Greene. This however implies that the implications of the plebiscite for UN and Britain were grave. Kirk-Greene succinctly reported the assurances by the UN and supported by Britain that:

...a practical, workable system of international supervision of the administration of the Trust Territories...The United Nations and the Administering Authorities now solemnly join hands in the great venture of reassuring, by

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*deeds, the inhabitants of the Trust Territories as to their future political, economic, social, and educational advancement, the ultimate realization of their aspirations towards self-government or independence.*⁵⁵

From the above statement, the facts are certainly clear that Britain and the UN are to be blame for the episode in the Trust Territory not only for the post plebiscite period but before and during the plebiscite. Similar, the above statement assured the people of self-government or independence and not plebiscite. It could be deduced therefore, that some shenanigans snaked in from the corner with the option of plebiscite. Unfortunately, even the General Assembly could not discern the wrong writing on the wall but embraced and celebrated it as the right solution to the Trust Territory.

Therefore, it could be observed from the above scenario that the citizens of the former Trust Territory were full of high expectations and hope based on the promises and treaties/talks made by Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN. This also suggest that it was the turn of Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN to fulfill the promises and agreement made to the citizens of the Northern and Southern Cameroons since they had carried out their part of the agreement during the plebiscite of 1961. In other

⁵⁵ Kirk-Greene. *Adamawa Past and Present*, 54-57.

words, after the pomp and pageantry was over, the reality gradually began to dawn on the people of the former Trust Territory revealing to them the consequences of the choices they made.

In addition, the Northern and Southern Cameroons suffered neglect from both the Nigeria and Cameroon governments. This was much seen in the lack of provision of basic infrastructures and amenities like schools, hospitals, roads, pipe born water, electricity etc. This simply implied that like Britain did (as seen above) so also did Nigeria and Cameroon followed suit by not deliberately making effort to provide basic infrastructures in the study area. This sad situation was likely to make the inhabitants of the former Trust Territory to be full of disappointment, regret, and frustration. Similarly, it means that the people were still faced with a lot of untold hardship and suffering after participating in the plebiscite with high hopes. This dominant feature of the post plebiscite period was properly captured by the late Ambassador Emmanuel Njiwa in these words:

“After the plebiscite Saradauna Province was abandon for long by Nigeria, since it was not connected to other parts of the country. This

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*made the area to continue to carry out its
activities with Cameroon as before”⁵⁶*

The above statement indicates the poor state and condition of basic amenities and infrastructure during the post plebiscite period in the study area. This also suggest that the failure of Nigeria and Cameroon governments compelled the people of the border communities to revisit their pre-plebiscite ties in order to meet their basic needs for survival.

Poor integration process was another dominant theme that featured prominently in the post plebiscite period. Just like the way promises made were not fulfilled, and the area suffered neglect, so also was the integration process neglected. Expectedly formal steps should have been taken by the government of Nigeria and Cameroon through making some deliberate policies with specific goals to promote integration and unity among the people of the two states in order to achieve an enduring togetherness and peace. Ngah, admitted that the inhabitants had to struggle to fused themselves into the socio-cultural, economic and political *milieu* a process which made them to be vulnerable to

⁵⁶ Joseph Bonglo Kingsley. *A History of Trans-Border Economic Relations between Sardauna Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria and the Northwest Province of Cameroon 1961-1991*. (M.A. thesis, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria. 2017): 46.

device discrimination and setbacks.⁵⁷ Suffice it to say that integration was merely captured as statements on paper. But the effective implementation was missing and did not create a positive sense of understanding and togetherness after the plebiscite. For instance, it was only in the 1963 Constitution of Nigeria that make mention of the issue of citizenship for those who participated in the plebiscite of 1961.⁵⁸ Other versions of the Nigerian Constitution are silent about this important event. Ordinarily one would expect that a clause should be enshrine concerning the plebiscite in order to balance the different foundations that make up Nigeria. Similarly, integration suffered a major setback in the Republic of Cameroon because the government discarded the federal structure which brought the two sides together. According to Ebini, this development made some leaders of Southern Cameroons to ceased to see the union with Cameroon as legal union since the government violated the

⁵⁷ Joseph Ngah, field researcher interview by the researcher on “Conflict Mediation on part of the northern borderland of Nigeria and Cameroon” March 13, (2021). Audio. He is 120 years, Retired Headmaster and pioneer Teacher from the Mambilla Plateau, Sardauna LGA. He participated in the United Nations plebiscite of 1961 in the Northern Cameroons as the Returning Officer. He is one of those who open the first Primary School in the area in 1954. He is honored with the traditional title of Dan-Masani Panso by the Panso Traditional Council.

⁵⁸ “The 1963 Constitution of Nigeria,” Global Citizenship Observatory. <https://data.globalcit.eu/NationalDB/docs/1963%20Constitution%20of%20Nigeria.pdf>.

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agreement by replacing it unilaterally.⁵⁹ In addition, since, the government of Cameroon could not make it well known to its citizens, the Francophones termed the Anglophones with all sort of denigrating names such as Biafran, Come no go and enemies in the house and many others. It is therefore certain that such development could only be sending the message of pseudo integration or citizenship.

Another theme which unfolded during the post plebiscite period was the problem of second-class citizenship. The issue was more or less noticeable when one considered such things as some actions of the two governments, attitude of some highly place government officials and also the general attitude of citizens who are ignorant.⁶⁰ Where the two governments were guilty was when you compared the socio-economic and political development in terms of provision of the necessary basic infrastructures and amenities as well as political appointments in the study area with those of the rest of the country. Nonetheless, the issue would have expectedly been addressed during the pre-plebiscite period through public education and enlightenment of citizens and to later consolidate it. In addition, the provision and implementation of integration policies by governments of Nigeria and Cameroon would have nib such issues in the bud.

⁵⁹ Chritain A. Ebini. *Policy Alternative for the Cameroon Conflicts with View on Abolishing the Federation*. Ph.D. dissertation, Walden University, 2019): 27.

⁶⁰ Ikeji, "Abubakar Atiku is not qualified to run for President."

It is obvious that the above enumerated issues had various consequences on people of the study area. Some of the effect include the following: - Absence of meaningful development in the study area. This was probably because of the long ill precedence of lack or poor development inherited from Britian.⁶¹ Unfortunately, this same precedent was also adopted by Nigeria and Cameroon after the plebiscite. For it is pointed out elsewhere that after the plebiscite, the area suffered neglect from Nigeria and Cameroon. In other words, the lack of development which plague the study area from the period of British take over in 1915 perpetually affected the general development pattern of Northern and Southern Cameroons.

Similarly, general political apathy and despondency was also another consequence of the post plebiscite period. This was probably due to the attitude of the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon in failing to fulfill the promises and treaties made before the plebiscite.⁶² Such attitude also had the tendency to reinforce the pseudo integration perception among the citizens of the study area. In other words, the attitude of Nigeria and Cameroon governments possibly affected the trust and confidence of citizens of Northern and Southern Cameroons negatively, hence despondency for people of the former British Cameroons.

⁶¹ Chem-langee, *The Paradoxes of Self-Determination in the Cameroons*, 60-64.

⁶² Sankem. *The Politics of Chamba*, 195.

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Furthermore, disunity and violence were also the effect of the post plebiscite period in the study area. For example, in Cameroon, the situation promoted and deepens division and discrimination between the Francophones and the Anglophones.⁶³ However, by the 1990s they were political violence in Northwest and Southwest Province of Cameroon. In addition, the ongoing activities of the Ambazonian separatists have also dealt a blow to the socio-economic and political live of Southern Cameroon. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the result was that the interior areas, came under the control of the separatists for most government officials fled away to the divisional or regional headquarters for safety.⁶⁴ This also disrupted the normal social life, for the schools are close down, stay at home orders were issued to the inhabitants, markets did not open frequently and night clubs and beer parlors do not operate freely. The conflict also displaced so many people from the region, as IDPS and refugees to Nigeria. The number of IDPS were about 2,000,000 and the refugees were about 1000,000.⁶⁵

Unfortunately, violence from the Boko Haram sect also broke out in parts of the Northeast Nigeria, which was the former

⁶³ Kam Kah, "Come-No-Go/Le ennemi...dans la Maison," 15.

⁶⁴ UNOCHA Report. "Cameroon a Peaceful Protest that Turned into a Crisis, UN Humanitarian." May 13, (2019). www.unocha.exposure.co.

⁶⁵ Kelvin Mkwei, Field research interview by the researcher on "Conflict Mediation on part of the northern borderland of Nigeria and Cameroon" March 15, 2021.

Northern Cameroons. However, it should be noted that Boko Haram violence was motivated by other factors which do not suggest they were seeking for self-government or independence for the former Northern Cameroons from Nigeria. The goals of the group were more or less revolving on social grievances and Islamic religion issues.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, the violence situation has greatly affected Bornu and parts of Adamawa States in Nigeria. Besides the loss of lives, it fueled mass displacement of population within and across the international borders of Nigeria. It scattered Nigerian refugees to two countries, namely the Far North of Republic of Cameroon and the Republic of Chad. The UNOCHA report stated that about 120,000 Nigerian refugees were in the area and also that the number of security incidents linked to Non-State Actors Groups (NSAGs) in the Far North region increased by 90 per cent to 400 events in 2019.⁶⁷ It also attributed that most of the security incidents occurred in the areas bordering Nigeria and Mayo-Tsanaga division in Cameroon. This possibly suggest that the NSAGs may be from Nigeria or not.

Meanwhile, the post plebiscite period further slowdown the process of development of bond of genuine togetherness which was pivotal for citizens of Northern Cameroons and Nigeria and

⁶⁶ Gabriel T. Akwen. *Human Rights Consequences of Boko Haram Terrorism and Nigerian Government Counterterrorism Approaches*. (Ph.D. dissertation, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2021): 23-30.

⁶⁷ UNOCHA Report. "Cameroon Situation Report for 2021." <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/cameroon/>

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also Southern Cameroons and Cameroon.⁶⁸ This resulted from the inability of the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon to evolved deliberate integration policies and ensure the implementation of it. Unfortunately, the process was left to chances and became largely confronted by divisional tendencies which in effect hindered the bond of togetherness. In short it appears that this opportunity was not harness appropriately by Nigeria and Cameroon to build lasting unity and realised the gains associated with genuine national bond.

Carefully considering the situation above, it is evidently clear that the post plebiscite period was ladened with issues which seriously called for the attention and intervention of the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon, but they instead stayed aloof. This suggests that Nigeria and Cameroon might have thought that plebiscite was the end of everything and therefore soon went on to sleep. If that was the case, what happened to citizens of Northern and Southern Cameroons?

E. The Impact and Implication of the Socio-economic and Political Development of the Post Plebiscite Period in the former British Cameroons

Haven examined in detail the picture of the episode in the study area by viewing at the plebiscite process, what constituted the nature of the socio-economic and political development

⁶⁸ “Honorable Wirba in 2016.”

during the post plebiscite period and some socio-economic development thereafter, that brings us to the issues and trends which suggests or indicates the responses of citizens or indirectly linked to the former British Cameroons as well as their impact. It is important to note that even though the citizens of the former Northern and Southern Cameroons suffered various disabilities under the Nigeria and Cameroon authorities, yet the degree of response varied. But certainly, the common denominator for both was the clear yearning for the unfulfilled promises and treaties. This seems to be the gun powder upon which the territory is seating and manifesting symbolic signs and symptoms. It is against this background, that this section highlights on the activities expressing the responses of citizens of the former British Cameroons. Some barrage of the worse cases of recurrences of conflict with gruesome consequences have been witnessed in the territory. Parts of what was formerly Southern Cameroons before joining Cameroon in 1961 has been punctuated by series of thundering crises and conflict such as the 1991 political demonstrations which saw loss of lives, imprisonment of members of opposition party and heavy repression cases in the Northwest and Southwest Regions. Perhaps the most worrisome and intractable in the same Regions is the ongoing armed conflict between the Ambazonian separatists and the government of Cameroon since 2017. Similarly, sections of what was formerly Northern Cameroons before becoming part of Nigeria has equally come under the claws of gruesome recurring crises and conflict.

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They comprised of the 2017, 2001 and 1982 conflicts in Sardauna Local Government Area and the 1996 Kurmi demonstration in Kurmi Local Government Area of Taraba State in Nigeria. Others include the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno State and parts of Adamawa State. See figure 1.4.

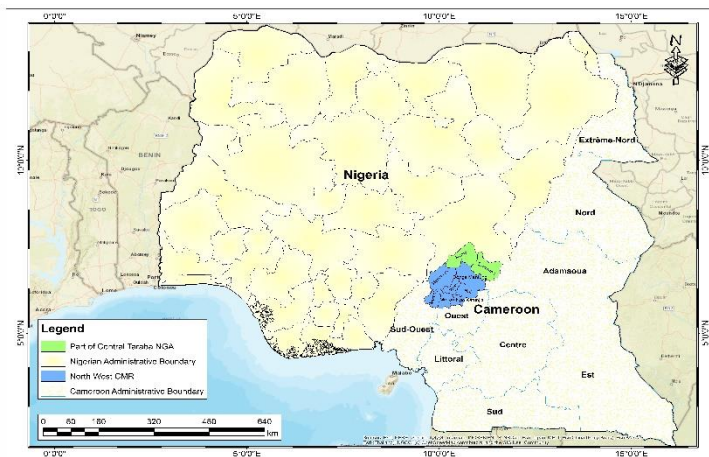


Figure 4: Map showing Taraba State's Sardauna and Kurmi LGAS and Northwest Region within their border location in Nigeria and Cameroon. Source: Nigerian Dataset 2014.

The first impact from the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period was that some inhabitants of the area employed protest against Nigeria and Cameroon authorities. For instance, in Cameroon some dissatisfied Anglophones continued to mark the October 1, 1960, as Independence Day and held match passes, a celebration which the government was against. Furthermore, with the launching of

the All Anglophone Conference in 1990 government security agencies began to clamp down on members of the group, but other new groups kept springing up.⁶⁹ For Nigeria, the inhabitants of United Hills particularly Kurmi Local Government Area (LGA) mounted a demonstration due to negligence and lack of development in 1996 and hoisted the Cameroon flag and burn down the police station.⁷⁰ However, Isa added that the youths also issued a quick notice declaring that all the Nigerian security agencies should leave the territory within twenty-four (24) hours. Nigerian government hurriedly adopted the necessary peaceful measures and listened to the demands of the protesters. In order to resolve the issue Nigerian government granted the area the status of a Local Government Council and it became known as Kurmi Local Government Area of Taraba State.⁷¹ It is instructive to note that the above are indications that there were issues that Nigeria and Cameroon needed to address or else it could probably degenerate if not properly look into.

Besides, violence was another impact of the socioeconomic and political development in the study area. For instance, this

⁶⁹ Fonkem Achankeng. "The Southern Cameroons Nationalist Conflict: A Destiny in the Shadow." *African Peace and Conflict Journal*, 5 no. 2, (2012): 45.

⁷⁰ Adamu Isa, Field research interview by the researcher on "Conflict Mediation on part of the northern borderland of Nigeria and Cameroon" October 28, (2022). Audio.

⁷¹ Solomon Musa, field research interview by the researcher on "Conflict Mediation on part of the northern borderland of Nigeria and Cameroon" October 29, (2022).

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began to unfold when the government of Cameroon refused to listen and address the demands of the inhabitants of the area and the situation became very precarious to handle. Meanwhile, the current armed conflict in Cameroon, started when Anglophone Lawyers and Teachers observed that the government of Cameroon was transferring Francophone Lawyers and Teachers to the Region who did not know the common law which was in use in the area.⁷² Similarly, the Francophone Teachers could not speak English Language at all. Therefore, the union of Anglophone Lawyers and Teachers wrote to the government, but they were given deaf ears. It was then they decided to organize a peaceful protest which was clamped down by the military with a lot of fatalities. In other words, the military gun down armless civilians without any remorse. This callous and unprofessional action attracted the attention of the commercial motorcycle riders, taxi drivers, motor park touts and the general commoners. They began to use stones against the military and later graduated to cutlasses but when they saw the situation was getting worse, they took double barrel guns. As the Ambazonians forces hijack the movement they are now carrying A. K. 47 and rocket launchers against the Cameroon military.⁷³ Perhaps if the Cameroon government had chosen peaceful diplomacy rather than gun boat

⁷² Isaac Manjo, field research interview by the researcher on “Conflict Mediation on part of the northern borderland of Nigeria and Cameroon” July 17, (2021).

⁷³ J. M. Njie. “Is the Conflict in Anglophone Cameroon an Ethno national Conflict?” (2019) <https://www.e-it.info/2019/08/26/>.

diplomacy may be the situation could not have degenerated to the present level. In short, the armed conflict has lasted for nearly seven (7) years.

Furthermore, intellectual response is another impact resulting from the socio-economic and political development in the study area. Many books, articles, newspapers, magazines and researches materials have been written on the study area thereby exhuming a lot of issues. Some of the books which have vividly captured the entire episode and some top government classified information which has been banned by the government include: C. Ewumbue-Monono (2018) *Delicate Negotiations for Reunification: A Tribute Cameroon Budding Diplomacy 1959-1963*, K. M. Abang (2020) *Southern Cameroons Negotiating an Existence*, G. A. Obiozor (1984) article *Political Development in the United Republic of the Cameroun* and others.⁷⁴ This has continued to create awareness and sensitization on the various activities that possibly took place and resulted in the present state. In addition, the major international media houses particularly BBC, CNN and *AL-jazeera* have attracted a lot of interest in covering the development in the study area more particularly Southern Cameroon. Because of the conflict situation in Southern Cameroons which has caused great humanitarian crises and attracted the attention and presence of international

⁷⁴ Mark Lokong, field research interview by the researcher on “Conflict Mediation on part of the northern borderland of Nigeria and Cameroon” July 23, (2021).

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humanitarian organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Another impact of the socioeconomic and political development is the legal action. Some citizens of the area have instituted court suit against the Republic of Cameroon and Britain. For example, the leaders of the Southern Cameroons instituted a court case in a Federal High Court in Nigeria to ascertain whether it was legally right for Southern Cameroons to seek for self-determination. However, the court ruling indicates that the pronouncement of the court favored the Southern Cameroons' leaders.⁷⁵ Similarly, the African Commission for Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) also listened to the case brought before it by leaders of the Southern Cameroons. Finally, the Commission advice the two parties on ways to resolve the dispute but the Cameroon government ignore it.⁷⁶ Moreover, Mr. Makweley Lysongo also instituted a legal action against the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Government of La Republique Du Cameroun in September 2017. The claimant reason was to seek "relief against Her Majesty's Government and the Republic of Cameroon on the basis of wrong alleged to have been done by the

⁷⁵ Court Ruling by Abuja High Court on the Right of Southern Cameroons to Self-Determination, (March 5, 2002).

Source: Kevin Mgwanga Gunme et al v. Cameroon, ACHPR Decision 266/03. African Human Rights Analyzer, May 27, 2009.

<https://caselaw.ihrda.org/en/entity/tlr2ip4iug?page=1>.

⁷⁶ "African Commission for Human and Peoples Rights ruling, Southern Cameroons: The Banjul Communique." Unrepresented Nations & Peoples Organization, May 23, 2005. <https://unpo.org/article/2534>.

United Kingdom to the people of the former British Southern Cameroons (BSC).” The ruling by the High Court of Justice in Britain however stroke out the case on the grounds that the court lacks the jurisdiction to listen to the case.⁷⁷ In addition, the UNO State group led by Professor Martin Chia not having been to court are also alleging that the failure of the Britain to domestic the result of the Plebiscite in accordance with the United Nations Charter as an instrument in the UN Secretariat made the plebiscite of 1961 illegal under international law. Based on this premise the group is calling for the UN regularization and reinstatement of independence for the Northern and Southern Cameroons.⁷⁸

Looking at the above responses, it is very clear that they indicate and convey a message of disenchantment and clamor for a change by the citizens of the former Northern and Southern Cameroons. If Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN are quick to revisit the promises and treaties made before the plebiscite, it could settle the squabble being manifested above. But if the concerned parties deliberately ignore the responses and maintain the apple cart, then it is possible that they might be taken aback in the future by what they considered inconsequential and immaterial.

⁷⁷ Thomas Reuters, “Complaint Over 1961 Plebiscite:United Kingdom’s Court gives Verdict.” *Cameroon Tribune*, November 25, 2018.
<https://www.cameroon-tribune.com...>

⁷⁸ Martins Chia Ateh. “Cameroon-UNO State Steering Workshop Paper,” (2011): 4-6.

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Some of the possible implications that the socio-economic and political development of the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons has for Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain and the United Nations are as follows:-First and foremost, since Nigeria, Cameroon Britain and the UN perceived the plebiscite of 1961 to have been an end rather than a means to an end, this entails that they is a gap between them and the citizens of the former Northern and Southern Cameroons. This is a pointer that potential chaos was looming and that there was no guarantee of lasting peace or future togetherness created by the amalgamation through plebiscite. It also means that the solution of plebiscite was wrongly prescribed by British, and the United Nations based on the manifested signs and symptoms.

Furthermore, the inability of Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN to astutely manage the post plebiscite period intelligently on a clean score sheet left a deep negative impression on the integrity test for the concerned parties. It holds therefore that the citizens of the study area place their trust to the wrong partners, a situation which is reflected in the forms of responses shown by them in possibly searching for a true solution.

Similarly, the degeneration of situation in Southern Cameroons resulting to armed conflict implies that if Nigerian government go the wrong direction in addressing the demands of the citizens of the study area, the situation in the Northern Cameroons might also degenerate and become unpredictable.

Equally important is the fact that negligence by Nigeria and Cameroon to squarely address citizenship status of the inhabitants of the study area constitutionally, implies that the inhabitants of the study area are not Nigerians and Cameroonians. In short this gives room for the citizens to make a case challenging and claiming outright denial of citizenship as an alibi to ferment greater trouble, thereby indicating upsurge in instability.

In addition, the choice by the United Nations and United Kingdom to violate and ignore the aberrations as well as crises and conflict in the study area suggest not only that they are living in self-denial but also betrayed the fundamental principles upon which the UN was founded. This presupposes the fact that the study area may also chose to take the steps deemed fit to solve its problem a situation which could be quite inhumane but necessary if respite is not made available.

Meanwhile, from the available evidence it is crystal clear that the last minutes careless rush from the activities of Britain and the UN is the catalyst which triggered all the bizarre episode being witnessed in the study area presently. It means therefore that in order to cure the wounds caused by this act, they must take responsibility by admitting their fault to the people of the former British Cameroons and then chat a better course.

Finally, since there is no more a hiding place for Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN, before the international community, it means that the unfinished business should be

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revisited again. This implied that the concerned parties should come together in a sincere talk and commitment to identify the grave spots and resolve the ceaseless torrents of crises and conflict in the study area.

VIII. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has carefully examined the phenomenon of pseudo integration of the former British Cameroons and its impact upon conflict by particularly looking at the Sardauna and Kurmi LGAs of Taraba State, Nigeria, and the Northwest Region in Cameroon. This was carried out under three themes: (i) the nature of the socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons. (ii) some socio-economic and political development during the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons. (iii) the impact and implication of the socio-economic and political development of the post plebiscite period in the former British Cameroons. Findings of the study on the first theme indicates that the socio-economic and political development of the area from the colonial period suffered negligence from the various colonial authorities especially under the Britain administration. This was evidence in the fact that the territory witnessed some level of development particularly in the Southern Cameroons. The German colonialist developed an intra-regional trade system, carried out experiments on and

developed cocoa, kolanuts, palm kernels, palm oil, ramia, rubber, and tobacco. They also established a botanical garden, constructed many buildings, roads, railroads, and seaports. But under the British the situation was different. In the same vein, during the post plebiscite era, Nigeria and Cameroon governments also followed the same path as Britain regarding the socio-economic and political development of the area. On the second theme, the findings revealed that the issues which were witnessed and affected the people included: - the failure to fulfilled promises and treaties made by Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain and the UN, negligence from Nigeria and Cameroon, poor integration process and the problem of second-class citizenship. Some of the chain effects of the above were absence of meaningful development, apathy and despondency and recurrence of violence among others. From the third theme, the findings show that this had impact and implications such as: protest against Nigeria and Cameroon authorities, use of violence against authorities, intellectual responses and legal approach.

Similarly, the relationship indicates that the authorities of Nigeria and Cameroon were living in forgetfulness or denial of the circumstance which brought English-Speaking Cameroon to join Cameroon and Northern Cameroons to be part of Nigeria. This situation however, relegated the citizens of former British Cameroons to second class citizens and denial them the rights which they were promise during the plebiscite of 1961. This difficult situation was made waste by the fact that the authorities

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of Nigeria and Cameroon did not do anything to checkmate the motivation from the Nigerians by birth and the Cameroonians by birth. This often made the Nigerians by Plebiscite and the Cameroonians by Plebiscite to exercised or claim their rights which could result to conflict or crisis and amounting to social disorder or chaos.

Therefore, summing up the above trends the study identified the implications this has on the study area based on the roles of Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN. The implications comprised of the following: - firstly, the perception of the plebiscite as an end and not a means by the concern parties created the avenue for tension and the recurrence of crises and conflict. Secondly, the ongoing armed conflict in Cameroon was a lesson to the government of Nigeria. That is to employ sincere and credible approach in addressing issues in the former Northern Cameroons or go contrary wise and trigger another intractable reaction. Thirdly, the disappointment experience from Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN created a negative impression in the minds of people of the study area. Fourthly, it is also clear that citizenship questions were still unresolved comprehensively, an indication that this provided an *alibi* for a lot of unpredictable actions from people of the study area. Fifthly, the silence of the UN over the various violations by Britain, Nigeria and Cameroon was as endorsement of illegality. This had the possible effect of compelling the inhabitants of the territory to take the laws in to

their hands and chat out their future which could be disastrous and unlawful. The sixth issue remains that since the last minutes rush to end the Trusteeship by Britain and the UN was the pandora's box for the present situation in Southern Cameroon, reasoning demands that Britain and the UN should take responsibility by admitting their fault. The seventh is that as the roles of Britain, UN, Nigeria, and Cameroon in the former British Cameroons is revealed to the international community, it behooves that calls be made for a high-power delegation and committee be constituted at the UN to revisit the unfinished business with serious commitment in order to end the atrocities going on in the Southern Cameroons.

Based on the above findings it is clear that if the signs and symptoms identified are timely address, this will improve the peace building process in the study area. This could also impact positively, on the socio-economic fortunes of the area. But if they are ignored then, it possibly suggests a nose diving in the peace building process, a situation which could breed a lot of devastation and uncertainty in the future. Some of the recommendations made by this study in order to resolve the complex issues in the study area are as follows: -

To turn around the table of the broken promises by Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN, and to commence a treatment of the wounds caused, all the parties must admit their limitations. It

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is only through this way a demonstration of sincere and fresh commitment could be evolved in the former British Cameroons.

A high-power delegation and committee should be constituted at the UN Security Council and General Assembly to investigate the situation of the former British Cameroons from the pre-plebiscite to the post plebiscite period.

The UN Security Council should invoke its powers to ensure a call for cease fire in the ongoing armed conflict in Southern Cameroon to bring to an end the civil atrocities being committed by the government forces and the Ambazonian separatists.

A mediation committee to ensure a round table discussion between the Government of Cameroon and the Ambazonian separatists should be formed by the UN in collaboration with the African Union (AU) and other key international partners and regional groups in order to have a balance perspective and to resolve the ongoing armed conflict.

Other members of the international community should emulate the European Parliament and join their voices in efforts to ensure that the undemocratic actions and policies of the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Britain, and the UN in the study area are condemned.

The government of Nigeria and Cameroon must give priorities to comprehensively address the issues on citizenship, promote socio-economic development by providing the necessary

infrastructures and amenities. In addition, the Parliaments of Nigeria and Cameroon should make laws that should restrain government officials and their citizens from actions and statements which suggest and reinforces pseudo integration.

African Union should constitute a high-power delegation to call the authorities of Nigeria and Cameroon to order regarding their responsibilities to the people of the former British Camerons and take serious measures against them, where changes were not being notice.

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Non-Kinetic Warfare and Technological Advancements: An Overview

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Abstract

The paper argues that, in light of the changing warfare dynamics and tactics globally, the concept of non-kinetic warfare has increased the significance of advanced technology in a country's defense sector. Using instances from the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis, the chapter further elucidates the emergence of non-kinetic warfare capabilities, particularly cyber warfare, as a new battlefield game-changer. Additionally, drawing

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inspiration from the technological progress in cyber warfare on a global scale, it is my argument that India should prioritize the development of non-kinetic warfare capabilities, considering the cyber dangers it encounters due to the China-Pakistan Nexus. In this context, a comprehensive, multifaceted strategy to counter threats posed by low-cost and low-tech to high-cost and specialized technologies is paramount for India. Against this background, the paper has been divided into four sections. The first reviews the existing literature about non-kinetic warfare. The second section examines the growth of non-kinetic warfare capabilities, with a particular focus on cyber warfare as a new battlefield game-changer. This analysis draws upon examples derived from the ongoing Russia-Ukraine issue, specifically highlighting Russia's utilization of cyber and information warfare capabilities against Ukraine. Given the global strides in cyber warfare, the third section focuses on the cyber threats faced by India because of the China-Pakistan Nexus. The final section represents the main conclusions.

Keywords: Non-kinetic warfare, Russia-Ukraine crisis, cyber warfare, China-Pakistan nexus, India.

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I. Introduction

The concept of non-kinetic warfare has been extensively discussed in contemporary discourse on warfare, particularly in relation to the ongoing Russia and Ukraine crisis. The term is captivating both in its semantic significance and the ramifications it entails, as it effectively accomplishes the same objectives normally associated with warfare without relying on conventional engagement methods. To provide a more comprehensive analysis, it is imperative to establish clear definitions and distinctions between the concepts of “Kinetic” and “Non-Kinetic.” Kinetic actions refer to acts that are executed using physical and material methods, such as bombs, bullets, rockets, and other forms of weaponry. Non-kinetic actions encompass “intellectual, electromagnetic, or behavioral strategies, such as conducting a computer network attack against an adversary’s system or implementing a psychological operation against enemy forces. Although non-kinetic acts possess a physical aspect, their impact primarily manifests in indirect ways, such as functional, systemic, psychological, or behavioral repercussions.”¹

The essay entitled “The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation (1989)” by William S. Lind² and his

¹ Teo Cheng Hang. “Non-kinetic warfare: The reality and the response.” *Pointer: Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces* 36, no. 2 (2010).

² William S. Lind, Keith Nightengale, John F. Schmitt, Joseph W. Sutton, and Gary I. Wilson. “The changing face of war: Into the fourth generation.” *Marine Corps Gazette*, (October 1989): 22-26.

colleagues presents a classification of the evolution of warfare into four distinct generations. The *first-generation warfare (1GW)* encompassed the methods and strategies employed in warfare during the period leading up to and specifically aligning with the conclusion of the “Peace of Westphalia”³ in 1648. It was characterized by the deployment of large armies organized in formations known as Lines and Columns on the battlefield. The Cavalry units were also an integral component, wherein the outcome of engagements was mostly contingent upon the numerical strength of the opposing forces. Subsequently, advancements in technology but a lack of innovation in tactics defined *second-generation warfare (2GW)*. The tactical approach employed in the operation consisted of a combination of linear fire and movement, complemented by the utilization of indirect artillery fire. The emergence of the maneuver approach marked the landscape of *third-generation warfare (3GW)*. Aerial combat became a significant component. The objective of this tactic was – *first*, to infiltrate hostile territory, bypass their defensive structures, and destroy their communication networks and logistical operations while reducing direct encounters and engagements with enemy force; and *second*, to disrupt the adversary’s system of forces using psychological dislocation. The German Blitzkrieg, often known as “Lightning Warfare,” during

³ *Peace of Westphalia, 1648*, ended the Eighty Years’ War between Spain and the Dutch and the German phase of the Thirty Years’ War. The peace was negotiated, from 1644, in the Westphalian towns of Münster and Osnabrück.

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World War II effectively exemplified the principles of the third generation of warfare (3GW). ***Fourth-generation warfare (4GW)*** emerged in the pre-Cold War era when global powers sought to maintain control over their colonies and conquered territories. The Non-State Actors (NSAs) (such as insurgents and militants) who opposed colonial powers faced significant difficulties in matching the state's military capabilities. Consequently, they employed a range of tactics across three distinct dimensions: the *physical dimension* encompasses actual combat operations, while the *psychological dimension* involves influencing the combatants' motivation to fight and their belief in achieving success. Lastly, the *moral dimension* pertains to the manipulation of cultural norms within the context of the conflict.

The emergence of the Internet in the current digital age has given rise to the onset of ***fifth-generation warfare (5GW)***, ***commonly referred to as non-kinetic warfare***. This form of warfare is distinguished by tactics such as social engineering, disinformation campaigns, and the utilization of advanced technologies such as Information Technology and artificial intelligence to initiate cyber-attacks. 5GW primarily revolves around the manipulation of perceptions and information. It encompasses not only military strategies but also cultural and moral dimensions. Further, it involves the manipulation of public perception to shape a distorted vision of the world and political affairs. Additionally, the fifth-generation warfare (5GW)

strategically leverages cultural icons and religious sentiments to achieve victory over an adversary. The utilization of various strategies to garner political backing from the general population might be considered a legitimate approach, akin to other techniques employed in military operations, such as the implementation of a troop surge in Iraq. Moreover, the efficacy of the Fifth-Generation battle (5GW) is contingent upon its disparity since it does not necessitate unity in its endeavors. The greater the dispersion of efforts in battle, the more resilient and efficient it becomes. Thus, the distinguishing characteristic of 5GW is its omnipresent battlefield and the utilization of both kinetic and non-kinetic force as opposed to relying solely on military might.

II. Literature Review

Throughout history, adversaries have long been involved in conflicts that do not involve direct military confrontation, a phenomenon widely referred to as non-kinetic warfare in the modern period. The concept is not novel within the realm of security discourse. Allusions to this form of warfare may be discerned in the works of various military strategists and thinkers within the domain of international relations. *Carol Von Clausewitz*,⁴ a prominent Prussian military strategist and theorist,

⁴ *Carl Philipp Gottfried (or Gottlieb) von Clausewitz* was a Prussian general and military theorist who stressed the “moral,” in modern terms meaning psychological, and political aspects of waging war. Clausewitz was a realist in many different senses, including *realpolitik*, and while in some respects a romantic, he also drew heavily on the rationalist ideas of the European

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expounds on the dynamic nature of warfare in his renowned publication “*Vom Kriege*”⁵ (also known as ‘On War’). He contends, “*War is not only a true chameleon because it changes its nature slightly in each concrete case, but it is also, in its overall appearance, about its inherent tendencies, a wondrous trinity. His trinity is composed of : primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force; the play of chance and probability, within which the creative spirit is free to roam; and its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to pure reason.*”⁶ In brief, Clausewitz’s formulation of the floating trinity encapsulates a conception of warfare that effectively conveys its inherent unpredictability and complexity.

Enlightenment. Clausewitz stressed the dialectical interaction of diverse factors, noting how unexpected developments unfolding under the “fog of war” (i.e., in the face of incomplete, dubious, and often erroneous information and great fear, doubt, and excitement) call for rapid decisions by alert commanders. He saw history as a vital check on erudite abstractions that did not accord with experience.

⁵ *Vom Kriege* is a book on war and military strategy by Prussian general Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831), written mostly after the Napoleonic wars, between 1816 and 1830, and published posthumously by his wife Marie von Brühl in 1832. It is one of the most important treatises on political-military analysis and strategy ever written, and remains both controversial and influential on strategic thinking.

⁶ Carl von Clausewitz. *On War*. M. Howard and P. Paret, ed. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, (1989).

Following Clausewitz's line of reasoning, *Sun Tzu*,⁷ a Chinese military leader, strategist, and philosopher, in his renowned work "*Sun Tzu Ping Fa*"⁸ (also known as "The Art of War") states, "*And as water has no constant form, there are in war no constant conditions.*"⁹ The assertion is imbued with a confluence of poetic metaphors, strategically employed to accentuate the intricate nature of warfare. According to Sun Tzu, there exist only five distinct musical notes, yet the sheer abundance of melodies they generate renders it unfeasible to apprehend them in their entirety. In a similar vein, it is worth noting that there exists a total of five fundamental colors, and despite their limited number, the potential combinations they can form are so vast that it becomes impossible to envision them in

⁷ *Sun Tzu* was a Chinese military general, strategist, philosopher, and writer who lived during the Eastern Zhou period of 771 to 256 BC. Sun Tzu is traditionally credited as the author of *The Art of War*, an influential work of military strategy that has affected both Western and East Asian philosophy and military thinking. Sun Tzu is revered in Chinese and East Asian culture as a legendary historical and military figure.

⁸ *Sun Tzu Ping Fa* is an ancient Chinese military treatise dating from the Late Spring and Autumn Period (roughly 5th century BC). The work, which is attributed to the ancient Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu ("Master Sun"), is composed of 13 chapters. Each one is devoted to a different set of skills or art related to warfare and how it applies to military strategy and tactics. For almost 1,500 years it was the lead text in an anthology that was formalized as the *Seven Military Classics* by Emperor Shenzong of Song in 1080. *The Art of War* remains the most influential strategy text in East Asian warfare and has influenced both East Asian and Western military theory and thinking and has found a variety of applications in a myriad of competitive non-military endeavors across the modern world including espionage, culture, politics, business, and sports.

⁹ Tzu Sun. *The Art of War*. J Clavell, ed. New York: Delacorte Press, (1983).

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their entirety. Similarly, while examining the realm of battle, it is possible to delineate two distinct classifications of forces: conventional and exceptional. Nevertheless, the vast array of possible combinations that arise from their fusion is limitless, making them inaccessible to the understanding of any solitary human. The two forces under consideration demonstrate a reciprocal process of reproduction, as their connection is continuously sustained, like the interlocking of rings. Who has the power to determine the boundary between the end of one entity and the beginning of another?

Tzu continued: *“To fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting...Your aim must be to take All-Under-Heaven intact. Thus, your troops will not wear out and your gains will be complete. This is the art of offensive strategy.”*¹⁰ While Sun’s notable contribution to the field of warfare mostly focuses on combat strategies, it is evident that he did not perceive kinetic activities as the most optimal path to achieve victory. Sun demonstrated a preference for achieving victory via the utilization of ideas and strategic planning, rather than relying on armed conflict, acts of violence, and the resulting devastation. In the event that kinetic activities were deemed required, it was crucial to ensure that their utilization was limited to the farthest extent possible. According to Tzu, in the pursuit of

¹⁰ Sun. The Art of War.

the ideal, all strategies would seek to attain triumph without engaging in physical conflict. Consequently, any approach that led to combat failed to meet the desired standard. From his perspective, a non-kinetic winning strategy was deemed superior to a kinetic plan.

The concept of non-kinetic warfare also references *Kautilya's Arthashastra* (Indian manual on the art of politics). According to Kautilya,¹¹ it is incumbent upon a king to safeguard their subjects from both internal and external perils. To achieve this outcome, the deployment of a military force is deemed necessary. The Mandala Theory,¹² as expounded by Kautilya, includes a discussion on some modern facets of non-Kinetic warfare, which he referred to as Kuta -Yuddha and Tusnim-Yuddha. While Kuta-Yuddha refers to a form of irregular warfare characterized by strategic tactics such as ambushes and raids conducted within the area of the enemy forces, Tusnim-Yuddha on the other hand includes covert operations such

¹¹ *Kautilya* also known as Chanakya or Vishnu Gupta was an ancient Indian polymath who was active as a teacher, author, strategist, philosopher, economist, jurist, and royal advisor. He authored the ancient Indian political treatise, the *Arthashastra*, a text dated to roughly between the fourth century BCE and the third century CE. As such, he is considered the pioneer of the field of political science and economics in India, and his work is thought of as an important precursor to classical economics.

¹² *The Mandala system* was a theoretical construction of states by Kautilya in his *Arthashastra*. The word "mandala" means circle in Sanskrit. It is a geographical concept of division of lands of the king (the *vijigishu*) and the neighboring kingdoms. It was perhaps the first theoretical work on an ancient system of kings, kingdoms, and empires in the intellectual history of mankind that can be considered to be analogous to a model of international relations.

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as sabotage, and targeted killings, and prioritizes cognitive abilities such as intelligence, foresight, psychological acumen, and ingenuity.

The Realist approach, as expounded by Kautilya, is similarly discernible in the works of contemporary neo-realist scholars such as *Kenneth Neal Waltz and John Joseph Mearsheimer*. They posit that in an anarchic world order, behaviors that are deemed unsavory, such as engaging in warfare, are indispensable instruments of statecraft. Consequently, leaders are obligated to employ these means when they align with the national interest. While both scholars commence their analysis with comparable assumptions, they ultimately arrive at divergent findings. Waltz posits that the attainment of security among nations is accomplished by upholding their relative power in relation to other states. The tendency may result in states demonstrating a steadfast dedication to upholding the existing condition of affairs, therefore aligning with the concept of security maximization. In contrast, Mearsheimer argues that the achievement of national security is dependent on the total eradication of significant opponents. Consequently, to achieve security, countries must strive to achieve global hegemony at the very least or regional domination at the very least without the presence of regional

hegemony elsewhere, therefore aligning with the concept of power maximization.¹³

According to Kenneth Waltz's defensive-deterrent theory, the probability of war is substantially diminished when weaponry is developed to impede conquest, dissuade pre-emptive and preventive warfare, and diminish the credibility of coercive threats. The instruments of non-kinetic warfare, such as nuclear deterrence, cyberattacks, information campaigns, and electronic warfare, readily fit within the classification of weapons. As per Mearsheimer, power is the currency of international relations. He posits that in a scenario where all states can inflict harm against one another, there is a strong motivation for them to amass as much strength as they can to deter potential attacks. Mearsheimer argues that the acquisition of power (regional hegemony) necessitates the implementation of certain techniques. First, *War* is the primary method by which power can be acquired, as long as the advantages of engaging in war are greater than the associated drawbacks. Second, *Blackmail* can serve to attain relative gains by coercively pressuring a competitor into accepting concessions. Third, *Bait and Bleed* is when adversaries are deceived into participating in a protracted conflict, enabling the initiating state to accrue relative power from a position of non-engagement. Fourth, the *Act of Balancing* serves to mitigate aggression by dissuading potential aggressors through the establishment of a

¹³ J.J. Mearsheimer. *The tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, (2001).

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robust internal military capability or the formation of alliances. Fifth, *Pass the Buck* is the act of passing responsibility to others, which is perceived as more favorable compared to maintaining a balance. In the event of a confrontation, the individual who passes the buck may choose to remain passive while the power dynamics move in their favor. Sixth, *Band wagoning* is a strategic approach that Mearsheimer characterizes as a recourse for entities of significant vulnerability.¹⁴ Therefore, in a nutshell, one can argue that to address uncertainties, potential miscalculations, and future surprises, both Waltz and Mearsheimer advocate the use of military force, incorporating technological advancements as the most efficacious approach to dissuade other countries from infringing upon international peace.

While neorealists explain international patterns and behaviors through “purely material forces, such as military equipment, strategic resources, and financial resources that they see as constituting power.”¹⁵ On the contrary, proponents of the *Constructivist* perspective contend that the formation of international politics is primarily influenced by ideas rather than tangible entities. The concept encompasses thoughts that are both intersubjective and institutionalized. Constructivists propose an

¹⁴ Peter Toft. “John J. Mearsheimer: An Offensive Realist between Geopolitics and Power.” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 8, (2005): 381-408. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jird.1800065>.

¹⁵ Stephen Blank. “Russia’s Unending quest for Security,” in *The Politics of Security in Modern Russia*, Mark Galeotti, ed. New York: Ashgate Publishing, (2016).

alternative theoretical framework for examining the often-overlooked role of social factors such as prestige and status associated with military capabilities in international relations. From a sociological perspective, they posit that military organizations and their weaponry can be conceptualized as fulfilling functions akin to flags, airlines, and Olympic teams. These entities are perceived by modern states as necessary components for establishing legitimacy and modernity.¹⁶ Further, the constructivists also believe that a country's normative disposition towards military capabilities is also rooted in its society's identity. The concept of identity as it pertains to the foreign policy decisions of a state reflects its position - competitive or accommodating, reclusive or inclusive, high, or low - in relation to other nations. This comparative identity manifests itself in the form of norms that influence the behavioral patterns guiding decisions related to foreign and nuclear policies.¹⁷

In brief, Constructivists argue that the analysis of global politics should involve an examination of how the interactions between actors contribute to the creation and maintenance of social structures, whether they are cooperative or conflictual. The

¹⁶ Scott D. Sagan. "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons?: Three Models in Search of a Bomb." *International Security* 21, no. 3 (1996): 54–86. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539273>.

¹⁷ Karsten Frey. "Nuclear Weapons as Symbols: The Role of Norms in Nuclear Policy Making." Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI) Working Papers, 2006. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep14184>.

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analysis should also consider how these social structures shape the identities and interests of actors, as well as the significance of their material conditions.¹⁸ The conceptual framework proposed by Alexander Wendt holds significant relevance in the context of non-kinetic warfare, particularly hybrid warfare and its civilian dimensions encompassing strategies like deception and propaganda. Thus, in the realm of non-kinetic warfare, conflicts are not limited to intra-state disputes but can encompass clashes between cultural groupings that extend beyond national boundaries and involve various organizations and individuals. In contrast to traditional forms of combat, non-kinetic warfare does not seek to undermine the integrity of a nation-state, nor does it intend to disrupt global peace and stability. In contrast, it exhibits a network-centric approach, instigating conflicts within communities and facilitating a transition from nationalist loyalty towards the state. This manifestation of warfare encompasses a combination of conventional and unconventional strategies, including guerrilla warfare, insurgency, and acts of terrorism.¹⁹

Additionally, the modern thinkers who are linked with the concept of Fifth Generation Warfare (5GW) include Daniel H. Abbott, Adam Herring, Mark Safranski, Purples Slog, and Curtis G. Weeks. Slog defines 5GW as, “the secret deliberative

¹⁸ Alexander Wendt. “Constructing International Politics.” *International Security* 20, no. 1 (1995): 71–81. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539217>.

¹⁹ Asmaa Patel. “Fifth-Generation Warfare and the Definitions of Peace.” *The Journal of Intelligence, Conflict, and Warfare* 2, no. 2 (2019): 15-28. <https://doi.org/10.21810/jicw.v2i2.1061>.

manipulation of actors, networks, institutions, states or any [0GW, 1GW] 2GW/3GW/4GW forces to achieve a goal or set of goals across a combination of socioeconomic and political domains while attempting to avoid or minimize the retaliatory offensive or defensive actions/reactions of 2GW, 3GW, 4GW powered actors, networks, institutions, and/ or states.”²⁰ Thus, in a nutshell, the concept of 5th Generation Warfare (5GW) also known as non-kinetic warfare revolves around the strategic engagement of perceptions and information. In 5GW, the utilization of violence is executed in an exceedingly covert manner, to the extent that the targeted entity remains oblivious to its status as a victim of warfare. The inherent clandestine nature of this form of warfare renders it the most perilous iteration in the annals of warfare. This warfare hides in the background, and “the most successful [fifth generation] wars are wars that are never identified.”²¹

III. Cyber Warfare: A Case of Russia-Ukraine Crisis

Since the advent of the 1990s, advocates of cyber warfare have touted it as a transformative phenomenon within the realm of military affairs, often describing it as the perfect instrument of conflict. In the domain of cyber warfare, three distinct Western schools of thought have been identified. First, *Cyber capabilities and wartime strategy* – it states that the discourse around strategic

²⁰ Daniel H. Abbot. *The Handbook of Fifth-generation (5GW): A fifth generation of war*. Ann Arbor, MI: Nimble Books, 2010.

²¹ Abbot, *The Handbook of Fifth-generation (5GW)*.

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cyber warfare in the 1990s saw it as an emerging battleground with the potential to pose a significant threat to contemporary society. One of the conceptual frameworks that influenced the analysis was the metaphorical concept of a “Cyber Pearl Harbor.” This metaphor suggests that with targeted cyber-attacks, it would be possible to disrupt the electrical grid, cause significant damage to essential infrastructure, and effectively paralyze entire economies, all without the reliance on conventional military tactics. Second, *Cyber capabilities on the battlefield* - since the mid-2000s, cyber warfare has been regarded as an ancillary capability that augments traditional capabilities. The strategic usage of cyber operations in a collaborative and coordinated fashion served as a catalyst and amplifier for traditional capabilities. Research indicates that military gear possesses numerous weaknesses that can potentially be exploited through cyber operations. However, in practical terms, the operationalization of such flaws poses significant challenges. For instance, “conventional attacks and disruptive cyber operations, have distinct planning times and operational tempos, making it difficult to achieve joint effects. Malware, for instance, has lifecycles: It must first be developed, tested, and deployed against adversary IT to produce effects until it is discovered and neutralized.”²² Third, *Cyber capabilities between peace and war*.

²² Matthias Schulze and Mika Kerttunen. “Cyber Operations in Russia’s War against Ukraine: Uses, limitations, and lessons learned so far,” *SWF Working Paper*, No. 23 (April 2023). <https://doi.org/10.18449/2023C23>

Since 2014, there has been a significant focus on the hybrid or grey zone characteristics of cyber capabilities. In this perspective, cyber activity is not viewed as a belligerent force in warfare, but rather as an intellectual rivalry wherein the central objective is not to incapacitate military forces but to undermine, capitalize on, and influence the cyber and information landscape.

This concept of hybrid warfare is further exemplified by Russia's military operations in Ukraine in 2014 which showcased several characteristics viz. – political subversion, proxy sanctuary, intrusion, coercive deterrence and negotiated violence. The post-annexation phase was also marked by a prolonged series of cyber assaults against critical Ukrainian infrastructure, orchestrated by organizations with ties to Russia. In November 2015, the Ukrainian electricity infrastructure was subjected to a cyber-attack, leading to a power outage that affected around 230,000 consumers located in Western Ukraine.²³ It was succeeded by the Not Petya ransomware attack of 2017, where the total cost of the attack was estimated at nearly \$10 billion globally.²⁴

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis, which began on February 24, 2022, is the fourth instance of the Kremlin

²³ "Cyber-Attacks during the Russian Invasion of Ukraine." Office for Budget Responsibility, July 7, 2022.

<https://obr.uk/box/cyber-attacks-during-the-russian-invasion-of-ukraine/#:~:text=The%20successful%20attack%20in%202015,cyber%2Dattack%20in%20history%E2%80%9D>.

²⁴ "Cyber-Attacks during the Russian Invasion of Ukraine. "

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employing military intervention against a bordering country in the period following the Cold War. Furthermore, this incident represents the eighth occurrence in which Moscow has utilized cyber operations, either as a component of a larger campaign or as a standalone means of exerting pressure on a nearby nation.²⁵ The precise tally of operations conducted during the Russia-Ukraine conflict remains uncertain. However, in August 2022, the Computer Emergency Response Team of Ukraine (CERT-UA) documented 1,123 cyberattacks during the initial six-month period of the war.²⁶ Another report released by CERT-UA in January 2023, indicated that it has addressed a total of 2,194 attacks.²⁷ The first pivotal onslaught occurred approximately one hour before the commencement of Russian troop incursion wherein the Viasat satellite communications network experienced disruption as a result of actions undertaken by Russian military intelligence. As to Viasat's official statement, "targeted denial of service attack was initiated by the Russian hackers [that] made it difficult for many modems to remain online... It also executed a ground-based network intrusion... to gain remote access to the trusted management segment of the

²⁵ Grace B. Mueller, Benjamin Jensen, Brandon Valeriano, Ryan C. Maness, and Jose M. Macias. "Cyber Operations during the Russo-Ukrainian: From Strange Patterns to Alternative Futures." CSIS, July 13, 2023.

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/cyber-operations-during-russo-ukrainian-war>.

²⁶ Schulze and Kerttunen. "Cyber Operations in Russia's war against Ukraine."

²⁷ Schulze and Kerttunen. "Cyber Operations in Russia's war against Ukraine."

network. There, the network issued destructive commands to many residential modems simultaneously.”²⁸

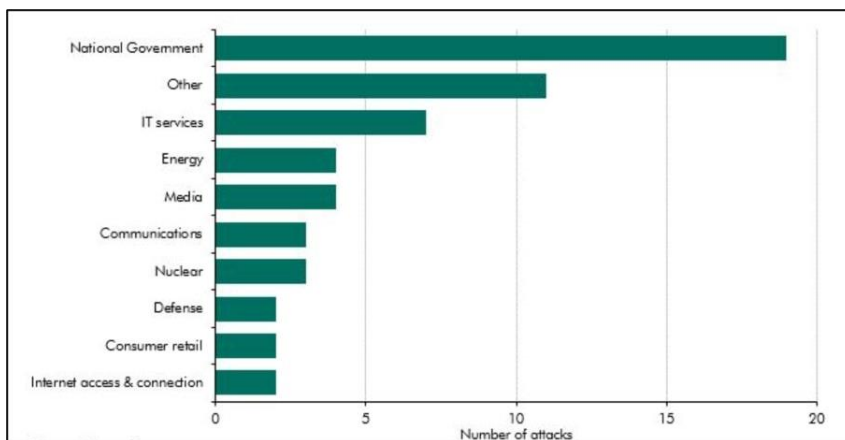


Figure 1: Sector-wise analysis of Cyber-attacks on Ukraine by Russia from February 2022-July 2022.

Source: Office for Budget Responsibility: Fiscal Risk and Sustainability 2022, https://obr.uk/docs/dlm_uploads/Fiscal_risks_and_sustainability_2022-1.pdf.

To gain a deeper comprehension of the cyber dimensions of Russia’s military intervention in Ukraine in 2022, it is imperative to consider the distinct way Moscow perceives cyber operations and strategically assesses achievements or setbacks inside the cyber realm. First, the term “cyber,” which is commonly used in

²⁸ Lawrence Freedman. “Russia and the New Language of War.” *New Statesman*, March 14, 2023. <https://www.newstatesman.com/world/europe/ukraine/2023/03/russia-new-language-war-cyber-attack>.

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the United States and the West to emphasize the technical integrity of networks, is not commonly seen in the official Russian strategic and military terminology. In contrast, Moscow employs the term “information warfare” to encompass a spectrum of activities, encompassing both technical and psychological aspects, involving the manipulation of code and content, which can be utilized against opposing systems and decision-making processes. Second, in relation to information warfare, it can be observed that Russian strategic culture does not adhere to the conceptual distinctions commonly made by Westerners between peacetime and conflict. The Ukraine incursion serves as an example of how the demands for velocity, influence, and authority in the realm of cyberspace significantly escalate during times of traditional warfare. In such circumstances, the developments occurring on the physical battleground, dictate the tactical and operational necessities. Put differently, cyber forces that are designed for continuous conflict are likely to be deficient in the ability to rapidly increase their capability during times of war.²⁹ Nevertheless, notwithstanding the inherent constraints, the 2023 Annual Threat Assessment issued by The Office of the Director of National Intelligence articulates “...Russia will remain a top cyber threat as it refines and employs its espionage, influence, and attack capabilities” and that, “...Russia is particularly focused on

²⁹ G Wilde. Cyber Operations in Ukraine: Russia’s unmet expectations, December 12, 2022. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/12/12/cyber-operations-in-ukraine-russia-s-unmet-expectations-pub-88607>.

improving its ability to target critical infrastructure, including underwater cables and industrial control systems, in the United States as well as in allied and partner countries, because compromising such infrastructure improves and demonstrates its ability to damage infrastructure during a crisis.”³⁰

³⁰ “Russia Cyber Threat Overview and Advisories: CISA.” Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency CISA, 2023.
<https://www.cisa.gov/topics/cyber-threats-and-advisories/advanced-persistent-threats/russia>.

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Table 1: List of Destructive attacks of Russia on Ukraine from January 2022 – January 2023

Months (January 2022 – January 2023)	List Of Destructive Cyber-Attacks of Russia on Ukraine	Number Of Cyber Attacks
January 2022	Whisper Gate	5
February 2022	S Delete, Fox Blade, Issac wiper	21
March 2022	S Delete, Fox Blade, Sonic Vote, Desert Blade, Fiber Lake, Caddy wiper	13
April 2022	Fox Blade, Caddy wiper, Industryoyer 2	5
May 2022	Sonic Vote, Caddy wiper	3
June 2022	S Delete, Caddy wiper	4
July 2022	S Delete, Caddy wiper	3
August 2022	-	0
September 2022	-	0
October 2022	Fox Blade, Ransomware, Caddy wiper	7
November 2022	Ransomware	3
December 2022	-	0
January 2023	Ransomware, Issa wiper	3

Source: Microsoft Threat Intelligence Report – A Year of Russian Hybrid Warfare in Ukraine.

https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/security/business/security-insider/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/A-year-of-Russian-hybrid-warfare-in-Ukraine_MS-Threat-Intelligence-1.pdf

IV. The Case of India

Russia's Special Military Operation in Ukraine since 2022 has played a crucial role in the examination and implementation of modern ideas about cyber security. The exact consequences of cyberattacks remain uncertain. Nevertheless, it is crucial for Indian officials to carefully monitor the course of the conflict to obtain substantial insights. According to the 2022 report titled "*Cyberthreats to Financial Organisations*"³¹ published by Kaspersky, a Russian cybersecurity company, India is positioned within the upper echelon of countries targeted for cyberattacks in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region, specifically about security breaches that encompass cyber espionage. India is particularly susceptible to Advanced Persistent Threats (APTs), which are highly sophisticated cyber-attacks that exploit vulnerabilities in cybersecurity defenses and remain undiscovered for a prolonged period.³² According to another recent analysis, it was observed that in the initial quarter of 2023, the average weekly cyber-attacks in India witnessed an increase of 18 per cent when compared to the equivalent time in 2022. Furthermore, it was found that each organization encountered an average of 2,108

³¹ "Cyber-Attacks during the Russian Invasion of Ukraine."

³² Business Standard. "Kaspersky Predicts Rise in Cyber Espionage for India in 2022." January 14, 2022.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/kaspersky-predicts-rise-in-cyber-espionage-for-india-in-2022-122011401057_1.html.

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weekly attacks during this period.³³ As per the report, Cybercriminals are employing tools such as ChatGPT to generate code, enabling less proficient threat actors to easily initiate cyberattacks. They are also engaging in supply chain attacks by Trojanizing the 3CXDesktop application, all to achieve harmful objectives. According to the Minister of State for Electronics and Information and Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, India experienced a total of 13.91 lakh cyber security incidents in the year 2022.³⁴ Nevertheless, there was a notable reduction in the frequency of reported cyberattacks in 2022, as seen by a decrease from 1.402 million incidents in 2021. Based on the official statistical data provided by the government, the number of reported occurrences in 2018 amounted to 208,000, whilst the documented attacks reached a total of 394,000 during the same year. In addition, it is worth noting that the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) was notified of a total of 1,158,000 cybersecurity incidents during the calendar year 2020.³⁵ The majority of these attacks emanate from Pakistan and

³³ Economic Times. "India Records 18% surge in weekly cyber-attacks in Jan-Mar 2023: Checkpoint." May 6, 2023.

<https://cio.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/digital-security/india-records-18-surge-in-weekly-cyber-attacks-in-jan-mar-2023-check-point/100026695>.

³⁴ Chetan Thathoo. "India Witnessed 13.9 Lakh Cybersecurity Incidents in 2022: Govt." Inc42 Media, February 13, 2023.

<https://inc42.com/buzz/india-witnessed-13-9-lakh-cybersecurity-incidents-in-2022-govt/>.

³⁵ Thathoo. "India Witnessed 13.9 Lakh Cybersecurity Incidents in 2022: Govt."

China, with a specific emphasis on infiltrating the systems that are being targeted.

Following the Galwan skirmish³⁶ (May 5, 2020 – January 20, 2021) along the Indo-China border, India has emerged as a recurrent subject of cyber offensives allegedly instigated by its unfriendly neighboring nation. Some recent instances of cyber-attacks purportedly linked to China, which have specifically targeted the critical infrastructure of India include – *first*, according to a report issued in 2021 by Recorded Future,³⁷ a cybersecurity firm based in the United States, it was discovered that the database of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) experienced breaches by Chinese hacking collectives during June and July in the same year. The investigation unveiled that the security breaches were manipulated using the malware Winnti, a tool commonly employed by Chinese Advanced

³⁶ Beginning on May 5, 2020, Chinese and Indian troops engaged in aggressive face-offs, and skirmishes at locations along the Sino-Indian border, including near the disputed Pangong Lake in Ladakh and the Tibet Autonomous Region, and near the border between Sikkim and the Tibet Autonomous Region. In late May, Chinese forces objected to Indian road construction in the Galwan river valley. According to Indian sources, melee fighting on 15–June 16, 2020, resulted in the deaths of Chinese and Indian soldiers. On September 7, for the first time in 45 years, shots were fired along the LAC, with both sides blaming each other for the firing. Partial disengagement from Galwan, Hot Springs, and Gogra occurred in June–July 2020 while complete disengagement from Pangong Lake north and south bank took place in February 2021.

³⁷ “Major Events and Trends in Cybersecurity in 2022.” Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, 2022.
https://idsa.in/system/files/ICCOE_Report_2022.pdf.

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Persistent Threat (APT) groups, typically associated with state-sponsored attackers. *Second*, as per another report published by Recorded Future, Chinese hackers used the trojan Shadow Pad and directed their efforts at seven Indian centers located in Ladakh in April 2022. These centers were responsible for executing electrical dispatch and grid control operations near the border region between the two nuclear-armed neighboring countries. *Third*, in December 2022, the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi reportedly experienced a suspected cyberattack, resulting in unauthorized access and potential compromise of personal health data belonging to a substantial cohort of patients. Notably, the attack specifically targeted the sensitive data of prominent individuals, including politicians and celebrities.

Thus, the proliferation of cyber threats within India's digital environment is predominantly marked by a significant volume of infiltrating attacks originating from both Pakistan and China. Furthermore, in recent years, there has been a discernible increase in the degree of collaboration between Beijing and Islamabad in the field of information technology. The incorporation of digital and cyber collaboration holds great significance in the context of the "Long-Term Plan for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (2017-2030)." This plan places considerable emphasis on the advancement of information and communication technology (ICT)-enabled strategies and the facilitation of electronic

commerce in Pakistan.³⁸ This growing China-Pakistan nexus in digital space poses a potential obstacle to the functioning of the Indian democratic system.

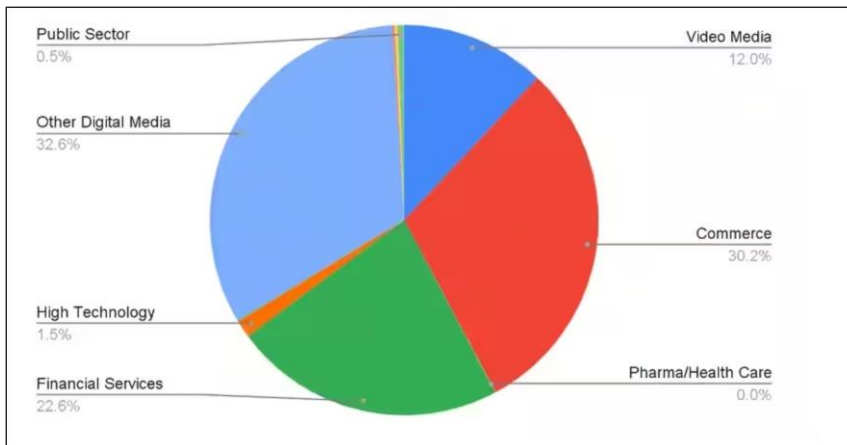


Figure 2: India's total Cyber-attacks by Vertical (between December 2021 and February 2022).

Source :

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/193510152-cyber-attacks-on-apis-in-india-between-december-21-and-april-22-akamai-8746771.html>

In response to the escalating cyber threats emanating from China and Pakistan, India has implemented the subsequent measures. *First*, the Chief of the Indian Army, General Manoj

³⁸ Aditya Bhan and Sameer Patil. "Cyber Attacks: Pakistan Emerges as China's Proxy against India." ORF, February 15, 2022. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/pakistan-emerges-as-chinas-proxy-against-india/>.

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Pande, during the Army Commanders Conference conducted in April 2023, declared the implementation of *Command Cyber Operations and Support Wings (CCOSW)* across the Indian Army. The major goal of these wings is to augment levels of preparedness and guarantee the safeguarding of communication networks in this field.³⁹ *Second*, another significant measure towards mitigating cyber dangers involves the implementation of the highly anticipated *Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023*, which aims to establish safeguards for the security of personal data and the preservation of persons' privacy. The legislation seeks to enhance the accountability and transparency of various entities, such as internet corporations, mobile applications, and businesses, about the collecting, storage, and processing of individuals' data, in alignment with the principles of the 'Right to Privacy.' Furthermore, the act suggests the creation of the *Data Protection Board of India*, which would be responsible for overseeing compliance, imposing penalties, instructing data fiduciaries to implement appropriate actions in the event of a data breach, and addressing concerns raised by individuals harmed by such violations. *Third*, the proposed *National Cyber Security Strategy of 2020* aims to establish a distinct legislative framework for cyberspace and the establishment of a central authority to effectively handle cyber threats, reactions, and complaints. The

³⁹ Hindustan Times. "Indian Army Raising New Units to Counter China, PAK in Cyber Warfare: Report." April 27, 2023. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/indian-army-raising-new-units-to-counter-china-pakistan-in-cyber-warfare-reports-101682581848934.html>.

objective is to establish a complete framework wherein both state-owned and private enterprises are required to adhere to cybersecurity protocols. *Additional steps* have been implemented, such as the establishment of the National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC)⁴⁰ and the Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre),⁴¹ to safeguard the nation's important information infrastructure.

V. Conclusion

In light of the above arguments, it is reasonable to conclude that considering the cyber threats faced by India because of the expanding China-Pakistan Nexus, New Delhi should give precedence to the enhancement of non-kinetic warfare capabilities,

⁴⁰ National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) is an organization of the Government of India created under Sec 70A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 (amended 2008), through a gazette notification on January 16, 2014, based in New Delhi, India. It is designated as the National Nodal Agency in respect of Critical Information Infrastructure Protection.

⁴¹ The Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre) is a part of the Government of India's Digital India initiative under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to create a secure cyber space by detecting botnet infections in India and to notify, enable cleaning and securing systems of end users so as to prevent further infections. It is set up in accordance with the objectives of the "National Cyber Security Policy", which envisages creating a secure cyber eco system in the country. This center operates in close coordination and collaboration with Internet Service Providers and Product/Antivirus companies. This center is being operated by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) under provisions of Section 70B of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

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particularly in the realm of cyber warfare. In this context, the policy framework must operate on two distinct levels. *At the national level*, the implementation of a comprehensive National Cyber Security Strategy should be undertaken to safeguard India's cyberspace, ensuring its security, resilience, and adaptability. Within the present framework, the recently implemented Digital Personal Data Protection Act of 2023 has the potential to initiate a significant transformation in India's data privacy landscape. Nevertheless, the implementation of this policy has faced scrutiny from members of the opposing party as well as various human rights organizations due to concerns regarding the extent of the exclusions provided.

At the international level, a unified cyber response among nations will bolster security protocols and serve as a strategy to counterbalance China's dominant presence in the digital domain. In this regard, the G20 Cyber Security Exercise and Drill, conducted during India's G20 presidency to promote collaborative endeavors in strengthening collective resilience against cyber-attacks serves as an exemplary initiative. Thus, in brief, one can contend that the adoption of a comprehensive International Cooperation Framework holds significant implications for India and other nations globally, as it facilitates the efficient reduction of various cyber threats originating from hostile states, which directly affect national security.

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