



ТЕМАТИЧЕСКОЕ ДОСЬЕ: Бассейн Средиземного моря — новый региональный комплекс безопасности?

THEMATIC DOSSIER: Mediterranean Sea Basin — New Regional Security Complex?


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A Mediterranean Region? Regional Security Complex Theory Revisited

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Abstract. This article argues that the shift from the bipolar structure of the Cold War international system to a more polycentric power structure at the system level has increased the significance of regional relations and has consequently enhanced the importance of the study of regionalism. It makes a case for a Mediterranean region and examines various efforts aimed at defining what constitutes a region. In so doing, it investigates whether the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) can be utilized to define a Mediterranean region and argues that the patterns of amity and enmity among Mediterranean states are necessary but not sufficient to identify such a region. It suggests that economic, energy, environmental, and other factors, such as migration and refugee flows should be taken into consideration in order to define the Mediterranean region. It also claims that the Mediterranean security complex includes three sub-complexes. The first is an eastern Mediterranean sub-complex that revolves mainly — albeit not exclusively — around three conflicts: the Greek-Turkish conflict, the Syrian conflict, and the Israeli-Palestinian/Arab conflict. The second is a central Mediterranean sub-complex that includes Italy, Libya, Albania and Malta and which revolves mainly around migration with Italy playing a dominant role due to its historical ties to both Libya and Albania. The third is a western Mediterranean security sub-complex that includes France, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Spain and Portugal. This sub-complex is centered around France, the migration question and its associated threats, such as terrorism, radicalism, and human trafficking. In conclusion, it is concluded that the Mediterranean security complex is very dynamic as there are states (i.e. Turkey) that seem eager and capable of challenging the status quo thereby contributing to the process of the complex's internal transformation.

Key words: Mediterranean, security complex, security complex theory, regionalism, sub-complexes, eastern Mediterranean sub-complex, central Mediterranean sub-complex, western Mediterranean security sub-complex

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Средиземноморский регион? Пересмотр теории комплекса региональной безопасности

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Аннотация. Переход от биполярной структуры международной системы времен холодной войны к более полицентрической структуре на системном уровне повысил значимость региональных отношений и изучения регионализма. Приводится пример Средиземноморского региона и рассматриваются различные усилия, направленные на определение того, что представляет собой данный регион. Исследуется вопрос, можно ли использовать теорию комплекса региональной безопасности (ТКРБ) для определения Средиземноморского региона, и утверждается, что признаки сотрудничества и соперничества между средиземноморскими государствами необходимы, но недостаточны для определения такого региона. Предполагается, что для определения Средиземноморского региона следует учитывать экономические, энергетические, экологические и другие факторы, такие как миграция и потоки беженцев. В целом средиземноморский комплекс безопасности включает в себя три подкомплекса. Первый — это восточно-средиземноморский подкомплекс, который вращается в основном — хотя и не исключительно — вокруг трех конфликтов: греко-турецкого, сирийского и израильско-палестинского/арабского. Второй — центрально-средиземноморский подкомплекс, который включает Италию, Ливию, Албанию и Мальту и сосредоточен в основном вокруг миграции, при этом Италия играет доминирующую роль из-за ее исторических связей как с Ливией, так и Албанией. Третий — западно-средиземноморский подкомплекс безопасности, который включает Францию, Алжир, Тунис, Марокко, Испанию и Португалию. Этот подкомплекс сформирован вокруг Франции, миграционного вопроса и связанных с ним угроз, таких как терроризм, радикализм и торговля людьми. В заключении сделан вывод, что средиземноморский комплекс безопасности очень динамичен, поскольку есть государства (например, Турция), которые, похоже, стремятся и способны бросить вызов статус-кво, тем самым содействуя процессу внутренней трансформации комплекса.

Ключевые слова: Средиземноморье, комплекс безопасности, теория комплекса безопасности, регионализм, подкомплексы, восточно-средиземноморский подкомплекс, центрально-средиземноморский подкомплекс, западно-средиземноморский подкомплекс

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Introduction

The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) was initially developed by Barry Buzan (1983; 1991) and was later revised by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap De Wilde (1998) and Barry Buzan and Ole Waever (2003). RSCT reflects Buzan's dissatisfaction with the inability of theorists to devise a theory of regionalism that would prescribe the way in which a region could be defined in order to identify its members and then analyze it. Currently, due to the increasing significance of international relations in the Mediterranean area, almost all scholars have taken it for granted that there exists a

Mediterranean regional security complex and, therefore, a Mediterranean region without any effort to demonstrate why this is so. This is despite the fact the Buzan himself has rejected the idea that such as security complex exists and has placed the states of the south and eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea in the Middle East security complex while the states on the north shore are placed within the European security complex.

Yannis Stivachtis (2019) has attempted to tackle this issue by pointing to the need of revisiting Buzan's Regional Security Complex Theory. This article represents a continuation of

Stivachtis' efforts. Its purpose is to address the level of analysis between individual states surrounding the Mediterranean Sea and the international political system as a whole by inquiring whether there is a 'Mediterranean region.' This is very important to do for four reasons.

First, in order to analyze regional dynamics in the Mediterranean area, we need to know which countries our analysis should include; second, unless we know which countries should be included in our analysis of the Mediterranean region, we cannot adequately identify the political, economic, military, geographic, cultural and historic factors that we need to incorporate in our investigation; third, a complete analysis of regional dynamics and relations requires that the Mediterranean region is viewed and examined from different levels (sub-state, state, regional, and international/global); and finally, unless we know which countries constitute the Mediterranean region, we cannot adequately identify the various geostrategic (geopolitical and geo-economic) and security implications related to that region and what it can do to address them. The last reason has significant implications for policy-making at the national, regional and international levels, as well as for regional institutional development.

Current interest in the Mediterranean region, stems primarily from the fact that there has been a shift from the bipolar structure of the Cold War international system to a more polycentric power structure at the system level and which has had profound consequences for regional security (Litsas & Tziampiris, 2019). This shift has partly led to the diffusion of power to the regional states and partly to the involvement of a larger number of great powers in the Mediterranean region.

The Case for a 'Mediterranean Region'

The Mediterranean Sea and, as an extension, its surrounding lands have been of major geostrategic importance for centuries (Roucek, 1953a; 1953b). Therefore, it is not surprising that there is currently a major interest in the political developments in that part of the world (Gaiser & Hribar, 2012). The Mediterranean Sea has represented a common ground for Asian,

European and African political communities. It has also served as a political and commercial gateway to the Indian sub-continent, the political communities of East Asia, and a sea window to world oceans for Russia.

The Mediterranean basin's most important geostrategic points have been the natural straits of Gibraltar, Bosphorus, and Dardanelles as well as the Suez Canal. The latter represents the shortest seaway from East Asia and Middle East to Europe as well as for some African states to Europe. For example, the Suez Canal route from the Far East to the Western countries is about three times shorter than sailing across the Cape of Good Hope. This geographical feature has made money, route, time and operating costs lower. Thus, the Suez Canal has been, for example, viewed as a key attribute for the British Empire to have an open access to India. Due to its geostrategic importance, it has, therefore, been a strategic imperative for the international community for the Suez Canal to be an open, safe and reliable shipping route.

Due to its geostrategic features, the Mediterranean Sea has multiple decisive meanings in international geostrategic planning. The Mediterranean Sea gained its main geostrategic importance during the Second World War when the Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union saw it as a tool towards regional and further world supremacy (Parker, 1997, pp. 139—145). The Mediterranean Sea maintained its importance during the Cold War era with the United States (U.S.) seeking to play a primary political role in Middle East and North Africa (MENA), as well as in southeastern Europe and particularly in Greece and Turkey. It is, therefore, no surprising that the Mediterranean region has been a central feature in the post-World War II American strategic thought and practice.

The role of the European Economic Community (EEC) / European Union (EU) also increased in the MENA region after 1970 when the European Political Cooperation framework came into existence. Since then, major efforts have been undertaken by the EEC/EU Member States through various institutional frameworks to construct for political and economic reasons

close relations with the MENA countries, such as the Global Mediterranean Policy (1972—1992), the Euro-Arab Dialogue (1974—1989; 1989 — present), the Renewed Mediterranean Policy (1992—1996), the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (1995—2006), the European Neighborhood Policy (2004 — present), and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) (2008 — present). To these efforts, one may add the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue that was introduced in 1994. It is worth adding that the Mediterranean region has featured prominently in the European Security Strategy¹, the 2016 EU Global Strategy² and the New Agenda 2021³.

The geopolitics of the Mediterranean region has changed dramatically in the 21st century, partly as a result of local state dynamics and partly as a product of transformational changes at the international level. As opposed to the Cold War era and early 1990s, the U.S. and the EU are no longer the dominant actors in the Mediterranean region and they now have to balance their regional policies and interests against the perceptible influence and actions of a range of major and regional powers, most importantly Russia, China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and Israel (Ehteshami et al., 2017). Yet, political, military, economic, environmental, energy, migration and other issues have contributed in making the Mediterranean basin an area of significant importance and therefore, a case can be made for a Mediterranean region.

¹ European Security Strategy: A Secure Europe in a Better World (Brussels, 12 December 2003) // Council of the European Union. URL: https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2004/10/11/1df262f2-260c-486f-b414-dbf8dc112b6b/publishable_en.pdf (accessed: 10.04.2021).

² Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy // European External Action Service (EEAS). June 2016. URL: https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf (accessed: 03.03.2021).

³ Renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood — A new agenda for the Mediterranean // European Commission, Brussels. February 9, 2021. URL: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/92844/joint-communication-southern-neighbourhood_en (accessed: 03.03.2021).

The Importance of Defining the Mediterranean Region

Region is a rather ambiguous concept which does not have a single and unified definition. For example, Bjorn Hettne and his colleagues (Hettne et al., 1999, p. 9) have argued that a region is a political subject with its own identity. Although it may develop in the future, it is difficult to imagine at this junction that there exists a shared identity among the coastal states of the Mediterranean basin that would provide the basis for defining a Mediterranean region. Michael Haas (1970; 1974) and Michael Brecher (1963) both made attempts to devise frameworks for subordinate subsystems based on fairly broad notions of what constitutes a region and treated regional relations as 'any subset' of the international system. But this approach is too broad to offer any guidance as to which countries should be included in the Mediterranean region. Bruce Russett (1967) has sought to define regional subsystems with reference to the existing degree and patterns of integration. However, as Louis Cantori and Steven Spiegel (1973) have pointed out, the search for regional foundations of integration has proved difficult to find in various parts of the world and this is particularly true at this point for the Mediterranean region.

Another definition of what constitutes a region has been provided by Graham Evans, Jeffrey Newnham and Richard Newnham (Evans et al., 1998, p. 472) who have argued that geographic proximity is of vital importance. This is true but how could we arrive to a comprehensive analysis of regional dynamics in the Mediterranean region without taking into account the role of great powers, such as the United States, Britain, Russia, and China which are external to the Mediterranean region and, therefore, the geographical proximity factor does not apply?

According to Steven Cohen (2003, p. 40), the term 'region' refers to geographic, political, cultural and military contiguity, that is closely connected by historic migrations and common historic background. According to this definition, one can certainly identify a Mediterranean region

since it has all the attributes mentioned above. But as it was noted previously, how could we have a complete analysis of regional relations without taking account of the role of great powers, such as Russia, the United States, Britain, and China which are external to the region?

A very interesting attempt to define regional subsystems, which could be of use in defining the Mediterranean region, is that of Cantori and Spiegel (1970), who have undertaken the task to devise a comparative framework for the study of regional international relations. Their scheme is suggestive on several fronts, including the importance of geographical proximity in establishing regions, and the role played by 'intrusive systems' (great powers) in regional relations.

The work of Mohammed Ayoob (1983/4; 1986; 1989), Barry Buzan and Gowher Rozvi (1986), Buzan and his colleagues (Buzan et al., 1990; Waever et al., 1993), Walter Little (1987), Raimo Väyrynen (1984; 1986) and Ole Waever (Waever et al., 1989) avoids many of earlier difficulties by defining regions in terms of security relations. These works provide a narrower and more manageable approach than the total framework of Cantori and Spiegel and one with stronger roots in the realities of regional relations than that of integrationists. In particular, the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) as developed by Barry Buzan (1983; 1991) and Barry Buzan and his colleagues (Buzan et al., 1998; Buzan & Waever, 2003) appears to offer a good basis for defining regions and studying interstate relations within them.

Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT)

Adopting and applying the 'proximity principle,' Buzan (1991, p. 188) has defined 'region' as "a distinct and significant sub-system of security relations that exists among a set of states whose fate is that they have been locked into geographical proximity with each other." The logic behind Buzan's approach stems from two facts: first, that international security is a relational matter and, therefore, the question of what constitutes a region is about how human collectivities relate to each other in terms of

threats and vulnerabilities; and second, the forces of interdependence are so powerful that the national securities of states cannot be seen independently from each other. In other words, the definition of regional systems, such as the Mediterranean region, is based on the existence of the mechanism by which threats, particularly political and military ones, are mostly felt when they are at close range. This implies that the Mediterranean region is composed by states which relate to one another in terms of threats and vulnerabilities.

Traditionally, the only sub-system idea with any potential for the purposes of security analysis has been the notion of local or regional balances of power (Bull, 1977, p. 102). Although local balances of power may operate and may be a significant feature of a regional security environment, they are not the only basis or the most reliable guide to security relations. According to Buzan (1991, p. 188), security is a broader idea than power, and it has the useful feature of incorporating much of the insight that derives from the analysis of power. Thus, in defining regional security, the principal element that Buzan adds to power relations is the pattern of amity and enmity among states (Buzan, 1991, p. 189). By amity Buzan means relationships ranging from genuine friendship to expectations of protection or support, while by enmity he means relationships set by suspicion and fear. Between the extremes of amity and enmity exists a broad band of indifference and/or neutrality, in which amity and enmity are either too weak to matter much, or else mixed in a way that produces no clear leaning one way or the other.

Balance of power theory would consider the patterns of amity and enmity as a product of the balance of power, with states shifting their alignments in accordance with the dictates of movements in the distribution of power. Buzan's view is that the historical dynamic of amity and enmity is only partly related to the balance of power, and that where it is related, it is much stickier than the relatively fluid movement of the distribution of power. In fact, enmity can be particularly durable when it acquires a historical character between peoples, as it has between Greece and Turkey or between Israel and the

Arab states. Therefore, by introducing the dimension of amity and enmity, one gets a clear sense of the relational pattern and character of insecurity than that provided by the raw abstraction of the balance of power view. Patterns of amity and enmity, according to Buzan (1991, p. 190), arise from a variety of issues that could not be predicted from a simple consideration of the distribution of power. These range from specific things such as border disputes and ideological alignments, to longstanding historical links, whether positive or negative.

Patterns of amity and enmity can, therefore, be used to define a regional security sub-system. The term ‘security complex’ is used by Buzan to label the resulting formation. A security complex is defined as “a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another” (Buzan, 1991, p. 190). Buzan’s choice of term has the advantage of indicating both the character of the attribute that defines the set (security), and the notion of intense interdependence that distinguishes any particular set from its neighbors. Security complexes emphasize the interdependence of rivalry, as well as that of shared interests.

It is worth noting that Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde (1998) have moved beyond the classical RSCT by taking an explicit social constructivist approach to understanding the process by which issues become securitized. They have thus defined a security complex “as a set of units whose major processes of securitization, desecuritization, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot be reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another” (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 201). The classical RSCT security addressed this issue in terms of patterns of amity and enmity, which entailed a more objectivist approach. The new approach makes the case for understanding security not just as the use of force but as a particular type of inter-subjective politics. Although they work from the perspective of securitization, Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde have still maintained that security interdependence is markedly more intense among the units inside

such complexes than with units outside them. Yet, they have still accepted that security complexes are about the relative intensities of security relations that lead to distinctive regional patterns shaped both by distribution of power and relations of amity and enmity.

The application of the security complex theory is particularly useful in identifying a Mediterranean region that consists of the states surrounding the Mediterranean Sea and whose national securities are interdependent. However, there are three questions. First, are the patterns of amity and enmity the only patterns of state interaction that could be used to define a Mediterranean region? Second, are the patterns of amity and enmity sufficient to define a Mediterranean region? Third, are security threats automatically the product of enmity among Mediterranean states or security threats spill-over from the domestic environment of states without any intention of those states of doing so? This are issues that will be addressed later on in this article.

The Reality of Regional Security Complexes

Security complexes are an empirical phenomenon with historical and geopolitical roots. In theoretical terms, they can be derived from both the state and the system levels. Looked at from the bottom up, security complexes result from interactions between individual states. They represent the way in which the sphere of concern that any state has about its environment interacts with the linkage between the intensity of military and political threats, and the shortness of the range in which they are perceived. Because threats operate more potently over short distances, security interactions with neighbors will tend to have first priority. Seen from the top down, security complexes are generated by the interaction of anarchy and geography. The political structure of anarchy confronts all states with the power-security dilemma, but the otherwise seamless web of security interdependence is powerfully mediated by the effects of geography. Unless capabilities of transportation and communication are very unevenly distributed, all states will tend to be thrust into closer contact with their neighbors than those further afield.

According to Buzan (1991, p. 192), the reality of security complexes lies more in the individual lines of amity, enmity and indifference between states, than in the notion of self-aware sub-system. Like a balance of power, a security complex can exist and function regardless of whether or not the actors involved recognize it. States will certainly recognize the particular lines of threats which bear on them, for if they do not, the whole idea of security complexes would be void. But they may well not see, or appreciate fully, the whole pattern of which they are a part. Typically, states will be much more aware of the threats that others pose to them than they will be of the threat they pose to the others. Though recognition of the security complex, as with the balance of power, is not a necessary condition for its existence, if recognition occurs, it may well influence the policies of the actors involved by making them more conscious of the larger relational context underlying their specific policy problems. As far as the Mediterranean area is concerned, this issue is of at most importance for policy-making at the national, regional and international levels, as well as for regional institutional development.

The dominance of particular amity/enmity relationship over awareness of the whole complicates the process of identifying a Mediterranean security complex in scientific terms. The individual lines of security concern can be traced quite easily by observing how states' fears shape their foreign policy and military behavior. For example, Greece worries more about Turkey than about its other neighbors. The same applies to the relationship between Israel and Lebanon or Israel and Syria. But assessing the overall pattern formed by those lines, and particularly finding concentrations of interaction within the pattern which are strong enough to constitute a complex, may be a matter of controversy.

The Boundaries of Regional Security Complexes

The task of identifying a Mediterranean security complex involves making judgements about the relative strengths of security

interdependence among different Mediterranean countries. In some places these will be very strong, in others relatively weak. In some places the interdependence will be positive, as between Lebanon and Syria, while in others negative, as between Israel and Syria. Usually, they will arise from local relationships, but when very large powers, such as the United States, Russia, China, and the European Union are involved a different set of relations may arise as a result.

Within the overall seamless web of security interdependence, one can, thus, expect to find patterns shaped by the different intensities of the lines of amity and enmity. According to Buzan (1991, p. 193), a security complex exists where a set of security relationships stands out from the general background by virtue of its relative strong, inward-looking character, and the relative weakness of its outward security interactions with its neighbors. Security interdependence will be more strongly focused among the members of the set than they are between the members and outside states. The boundaries between such sets will, thus, be defined by the relative indifference attending the security perceptions and interactions across them. The strong security links between Israel and Syria and between Greece and Turkey put them clearly within the same complex, while the relatively weak links between Israel and Pakistan suggest the existence of boundaries between complexes. But are Israel, Syria, Greece and Turkey in the same security complex? Actually, in Buzan's analysis the countries of the south and eastern coast of the Mediterranean constitute a sub-complex within the Middle East security complex when Greece and Turkey are viewed as part of the European security complex. Therefore, revisiting the Regional Security Complex Theory becomes necessary if a Mediterranean region is to be defined.

Buzan (1991, p. 19) draws a distinction between a lower and a higher-level security complex. A lower level complex is composed of local states whose power does not extend much, if at all, beyond the range of their immediate neighbors. A higher-level complex, by contrast, contains great powers whose capabilities extend far beyond their immediate environment and

whose power is sufficient to impinge on several regions. The dominant position of the United States in the North American security complex is indicative. According to this distinction, it seems that the Mediterranean region constitutes a high-level security complex as it includes states, such as France and Israel with significant power capabilities that extend beyond their immediate neighbors. The Mediterranean security complex also involves external actors (great powers), such as the United States, Russia and China whose capabilities extend far beyond their immediate environment and whose power is sufficient to impinge on the Mediterranean region.

The distinction between lower and higher-level complexes becomes important when all levels of security analysis (domestic, regional, super-regional and global) are reintegrated. Given the large power differentials between the lower and higher levels, one expects unequal intervention from higher to lower level complexes to be a normal feature of the system. One could easily observe how this applies to the Mediterranean region which experiences a significant outside involvement of great powers. The question then becomes not a dispute about the boundaries of a security complex, but about the relative weight of local security dynamics in relation to those pressing on the region from outside. One major advantage of the security complex idea is precisely that it provides an insight into regional level security dynamics that shape and mediate such intervention.

It is an empirical question whether the relative strength of different lines of security interdependence is sufficient to establish the location of boundaries that distinguish one security complex from another. Measuring variables like amity and enmity, is not a precise function. Sometimes this is a fairly straightforward exercise. But this is not always the case. There are cases where the security complexes are hard to find and cases where the correct placement of boundaries is not obvious. The Mediterranean case is not an exception as it has been difficult to determine whether all the Mediterranean states belong to the same security complex or different ones (i.e. Middle East, Europe, and Africa).

There are two general conditions that explain why a security complex may be hard to find (Buzan, 1991, p. 197—198). The first is that in some areas local states are so weak that their power does not project much, if at all, beyond their own boundaries. These states have domestically directed security perspectives, and there is not enough security interaction between them to generate a local complex. However, this is not the case with the Mediterranean states. The second condition is far more complicated. It occurs when the direct presence of outside powers in a region is strong enough to suppress the normal operation of security dynamics among the local states. This condition is called by Buzan ‘overlay.’ It normally involves extensive stationing of armed forces in the overlain area by the intervening great powers, and is quite distinct from the normal process of intervention by great powers into the affairs of local security complexes. Intervention usually reinforces the local security dynamics, while overlay subordinates them to the larger pattern of major powers rivalries, and may even obliterate them. Under overlay, one cannot see with any clarity what the local security dynamics are, and therefore cannot identify a local complex. Nevertheless, it is still possible to identify a Mediterranean security complex despite the involvement of outside great powers, such as the United States, Russia, and Britain.

Three conditions explain why it can be difficult to locate the boundaries of security complexes whose existence is not in doubt (Buzan, 1991, p. 198—199). The first is simply that the boundary between two security complexes is dissolving in a major change in the pattern of regional security dynamics. This is the case with the states of southeastern Europe (Greece and Turkey) and the Eastern Mediterranean (Libya, Egypt, Israel, Syria, Lebanon, and Cyprus) whose security dynamics stemming from energy-related issues bring them together thereby affecting the boundaries of the European and the Middle East security complexes.

The second condition involves the existence of the lopsided security interdependence that occurs when higher and lower level complexes

are physically adjacent. The point is that such relationships should not be ignored or discounted by being defined out of the security complex, but that the best place to deal with them is when looking at the interaction between the higher-level complex at the system level, and the lower-level one rooted in particular regions. The issue is then about the relative autonomy and interaction between the dynamics at the two levels. The picture, in other words, comes clear when all of the levels in the security analysis from domestic to global are reassembled into a complete picture. However, this condition does not apply to the Mediterranean area.

The third difficulty in identifying the boundaries of complexes is caused by situations in which two or more nodes of security interdependence exist within a group of states (i.e. military security, energy security, economic security, environmental security, etc.), which there are also grounds for thinking of as a single or separate complex. For example, one may argue that various nodes of security interdependence (other than military) are factors that help to define a single Mediterranean security complex, while due to energy security concerns, the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean form a separate security complex rather than a sub-complex within the overall Mediterranean security complex.

The Structure of Regional Security Complexes

Security complexes are subsystems — miniature anarchies — in their own right, and by analogy with full international systems they have structures of their own. Since security complexes are durable rather than permanent features of the overall anarchy, seeing them as sub-systems with their own structures and patterns of interaction provides a useful benchmark against which to identify and assess changes in the patterns of regional security.

Essential structure is the standard by which one assesses significant change in a classical security complex. The three key components of essential structure in a security complex are the arrangement of units and the differentiation among them; the patterns of enmity and amity;

and the distribution of power among the principal units (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 16). Major shifts in any of these components would normally require a redefinition of the complex. This approach allows one to analyze regional security in both static and dynamic terms. If security complexes are seen as structures, one can look for outcomes resulting from either structural effects or process of structural change.

Four structural options are available for assessing the impact of change on a security complex: maintenance of the *status quo*, internal transformation, external transformation and overlay (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 18). Maintenance of the *status quo* means the essential structure of the local complex (its distribution of power and pattern of hostility) remains fundamentally intact. This outcome does not mean no change has taken place. Rather, it means the changes that have occurred have tended, in the aggregate, either to support or not seriously to undermine the structure.

Internal transformation of a local complex occurs when its essential structure changes within the context of its existing outer boundary. Such change can come about as a result of regional political integration, decisive shifts in the distribution of power, or major shifts in the pattern of amity and enmity. *External transformation* occurs when the essential structure of a complex is altered by either the expansion or contraction of its existing outer boundary. Minor adjustments to the boundary may not significantly affect the essential structure. The addition or deletion of major states, however, is certain to have a substantial impact on both the distribution of power and the pattern of amity and enmity. *Overlay* means one or more external powers moves directly into the regional complex with the effect of affecting and sometimes suppressing the indigenous security dynamic.

Because security complexes are in part geographical entities, they will often include by default a number of minor or 'indifferent' states. Due to their relative low power or interest in comparison with their neighbors, these states may have little impact on the structure of the complex. The position of Albania, Montenegro,

Bosnia and Herzegovina and even Croatia in the Mediterranean security complex is illustrative.

Some states occupy insulating positions between neighboring security complexes. Turkey is a very clear example of this role between Europe and the Middle East. These insulators may exist in relative isolation from the security dynamics on either side, or they may face both ways on the edges of neighboring complexes with or without linking them. For example, Turkey links the European security complex and the Balkan security sub-complex with that of the Middle East. However, a case can be made that all Mediterranean states, which compose the Mediterranean security complex serve at the same time as insulators separating the Mediterranean security complex from the Middle East, African, European and Eurasia security complexes.

Regional Security Complex Theory Revisited

Three questions were raised in a previous section. First, are the patterns of amity and enmity the only patterns of state interaction that could be used to define a Mediterranean region? Second, are the patterns of amity and enmity sufficient to define a Mediterranean region? Third, are security threats automatically the product of enmity among Mediterranean states or security threats spill-over from the domestic environment of states without any intention of those states of doing so?

Despite his preference for applying the patterns of amity and enmity to identify regional security complexes, Buzan himself has recognized that these patterns may not be sufficient to define a region. This is the reason for which Buzan and his colleagues have moved beyond classical RSCT by opening the analysis to a wider range of sectors instead of privileging the political and military sectors. For example, economic, energy, environmental, migration and refugee issues have proved to be important in defining regional security complexes, such as the Mediterranean one.

According to Buzan and Waever (2003) and Buzan, Waever and de Wilde (1998), there are two possible ways of opening security complex

theory to sectors other than the military and political ones and to actors other than states.

First, it may be done through homogeneous complexes. This approach retains the classical assumption that security complexes are concentrated within specific sectors are, therefore, composed of specific forms of interaction among similar types of units. This logic leads to different types of complexes that occur in different sectors. For example, military complexes made up predominantly by states, a societal complex of various identity-based units, etc.

Second, it may be done through heterogeneous complexes. This approach abandons the assumption that security complexes are locked into specific sectors. It assumes that the regional logic can integrate different types of actors interacting across two or more sectors (states + nations + firms + confederations interacting across the political, economic, and societal sectors).

Heterogeneous complexes have the advantage of linking actors across sectors, thus enabling the analyst to keep entire picture in a single frame and also to keep track of the inevitable spill-overs between sectors (military impacts on economic development and like). A similar logic might be applied to the Mediterranean region, where the security complex contains states, as well as nations, such as the Kurds and the Palestinians.

Homogeneous, or sector-specific, security complexes require the construction of separate frames for each sector. They offer the possibility of isolating sector-specific security dynamics, but they also present the challenge of how to reassemble the separate frames into a holistic picture and the danger that linkages across sectors will be lost or obscured. Looking at security complexes sector by sector, one might find patterns that do not line up. For example, patterns of amity and enmity may define one type of Mediterranean security complex, energy security may define another, and migration may define a third. Then the question is how to bring all these different frames together.

Unlike Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde who have opted for the homogeneous, sector-specific approach, this article adopts a heterogeneous approach. To this end, it argues that in addition

to the necessary patterns of amity and enmity, one should add other patterns of relations emerged by the presence and operation of various forces and factors (i.e. economic, energy, migration, terrorism, etc.).

The question of whether ethno-cultural and religious ties should be a factor in identifying security complexes is an interesting one. It seems not unlikely that shared cultural and religious characteristics among a group of states would cause them both to pay more attention to each other in general, and to legitimize mutual interventions in each other's security affairs in particular. This holds true for different sets of Mediterranean states, which may be seen as constituting sub-regional security complexes. For example, the Muslim states of the North Africa as forming a Mediterranean sub-complex. However, due to religious and cultural differences among the Mediterranean states, these ties do not serve to cement a Mediterranean security complex.

Another way in which security complexes can be identified is with reference to the role of economic factors. In looking for the sets of states that constitute security complexes, one is primarily concerned with the military, political and societal dimensions of security. The reason for which these sectors are the most relevant to the patterns of threat and amity / enmity that define the set is because economic relations are not nearly so much conditioned by geographical proximity, as are the military and political ones. Consequently, the problem of economic security is likely to have a quite different relational dynamic from that of military and political security. In the Mediterranean region, where local political and military interdependence is strong, economic relations follow a much more wide-ranging pattern that has little to do with region. Under such conditions, the economic security of the states concerned does not depend primarily on their relationship with the other states within the complex.

Economic factors, however, do play a role determining both the power of states within their local complexes, and their domestic stability and cohesion as actors. For example, economic factors play a very important role in the

Mediterranean as they have a significant impact on domestic political stability. For example, economic stagnation and economic instability in the southern Mediterranean states have caused domestic political upheaval and have increased domestic insecurity. They have also provided the fertile ground for violent extremism, radicalization, terrorism and arms proliferation. Yet, economic problems and domestic instability have led to migration and refugee flows which have affected the northern Mediterranean states. Therefore, it is not surprising that the 2003 and 2016 EU strategy have focused on the Mediterranean region and have called for actions to address security threats stemming, among other things, from economic factors.

Economic factors may also play an important role in motivating the patterns of external interest in the local complex. And they can affect the prospects for regional integration, which can influence how a given security complex involves. So, economic factors need to be taken into account in defining and analyzing a security complex.

Political, social, energy, environmental and migration questions are also important factors to consider. The reason is that energy security and the securitization of migration and refugee flows play an important role in bringing the Mediterranean countries together. For example, energy security questions bind Turkey, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Cyprus, Syria, Egypt, and Libya together while the migration and refugee flows bind close together the two sides of the Mediterranean.

As a Conclusion: A Mediterranean Security Complex

This article has argued that there is a need to expand the factors that play an important role in defining a Mediterranean security complex and, as an extension, a Mediterranean region. This has led to the need to revisit the Regional Security Complex Theory. This article has also shown that security threats are not necessarily the product of enmity among states or the result of a state's foreign policy but they can also be the result of domestic political and economic

instability facing Mediterranean states. These threats bind the Mediterranean countries together to the extent that one can speak of a ‘Common Security in the Mediterranean Region’⁴. Such threats include, among other things, violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism and arms proliferation; cultural and religious intolerance that necessitates the undertaking of interfaith and intercultural dialogue; irregular migration and refugee flows that necessitate the regulation of migration and the protection of refugees; migrant smuggling and human trafficking that requires enhanced regional cooperation in criminal matters; and economic stagnation that requires new models of development and creates demand for regional economic cooperation schemes. This list is not exhaustive and all these factors help to define a Mediterranean security complex.

The Mediterranean security complex includes three security sub-complexes. The first is an eastern Mediterranean sub-complex that revolves around three conflicts: the Greek-Turkish conflict, the Syrian conflict, and the Israeli-Palestinian/Arab conflict. Consequently, this sub-complex includes Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Israel, the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and Libya. The second is a central Mediterranean sub-complex that includes Italy, Libya, Albania and Malta. This revolves mainly around migration with Italy playing a dominant role due to its historical ties to both Libya and Albania.

⁴ Security in the Mediterranean Region: Challenges and Opportunities. Vienna: Organization for Security & Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 2015.

The third is a western Mediterranean security sub-complex that includes France, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Spain, and Portugal and which revolves mainly around migration and its associated threats (i.e. terrorism, radicalism, human trafficking, etc.). Due to its significant power capabilities and its traditional ties (political, cultural, and linguistic) with the countries of the northwestern Africa (Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco), France is the dominant actor in this sub-complex.

The Mediterranean region constitutes a high-level security complex as it includes states, such as France, Israel, and Turkey with significant power capabilities that extend beyond their immediate neighbors. The Mediterranean security complex also experience a significant degree of ‘overlay’ though the involvement in regional affairs of great powers, such as the United States, Britain, Russia, the EU, and lately China whose capabilities extend far beyond their immediate environment and whose power is sufficient to impinge on the Mediterranean region.

Finally, as far as its essential structure is concerned, the Mediterranean regional complex is anarchic in nature as no state dominates the region. Within that complex certain patterns of amity and enmity remain constant while the distribution of power favors states like France, Turkey, and Israel. Yet, the Mediterranean security complex is very dynamic as there are states (i.e. Turkey) that seem eager and capable of challenging the *status quo* thereby contributing to the process of the complex’s internal transformation.

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