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CURRENT PROBLEMS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО УПРАВЛЕНИЯ

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Research article

Impact of Regulatory and Enforcement Activities in Environmental Protection

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Abstract. Sociological surveys demonstrate that the public ranks environmental risks very high. Therefore, reforming regulatory and enforcement activities in the area of environmental protection is an important factor aimed at minimizing these risks. These efforts are undertaken in a broader context of regulatory and enforcement reforms aimed at minimizing risks to public values. The article evaluates the current status of regulatory and enforcement activities in the area of environment protection and compares this data with statistical and sociological sources. Based on this evaluation, the article concludes that regulatory and enforcement activities have limited effect on environmental protection, and there is a need for better targeting inspection activities to ensure minimization of environmental risks.

Keywords: inspections, effectiveness, environment, regulatory and enforcement reform, sociological surveys

Regulatory and enforcement reform was included in the *Main Directions of RF Government Activities till 2024* as a priority area aimed at decreasing excessive burden on businesses while ensuring protection of public values which could be both of personal nature, such as life, health, property, and of public nature (i.e. environment, historic and cultural monuments, public safety). This reform assumes, inter alia, implementation risk-oriented approach to inspection activities, stimulating voluntary compliance, focusing on risk prevention and mitigation. Notably, a recent sociological survey conducted by Levada center suggested that 48 percent of Russian citizens find environmental pollution a global threat; and this threat is higher than international terrorism¹. Therefore, implementing successful

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¹ The Russians called the pollution of nature a threat worse than terrorism. *RBC.ru*. 23.01.2019. Available from: <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/23/01/2020/5e2893299a79472b28203508>. Accessed: 01.12.2019 (In Russ.).

regulatory and enforcement reform in the area of environmental protection is of significant public importance. It is also supposed to contribute to more general efforts aimed at environmental protection in the framework of *Ecology* national project underway since 2019.

Control and enforcement activities in the area of environmental protection in Russia are conducted by a few federal executive bodies and also by regional authorities; however, the key federal authority responsible for minimizing environmental risk is the Federal Environmental Service (Rosprirodnadzor)².

The annual report on conducting state control (supervision) and its efficiency in 2018 [1] suggests that in 2018 Federal Environmental Service conducted some 11,639 inspections and initiated over 38 thousand administrative cases. In addition, some 5,932 administrative cases were transferred to the Federal Environmental Service in accordance with its competence. Over the past years the number of inspections has decreased significantly (for instance, in 2014 some 19,251 inspections were conducted; in 2015 – 17,241).

As a result of enforcement activities conducted by Federal Environmental Service some 28,9 thousand places of illegal waste placements occupying some 2738.5 hectares were liquidated (73.8 percent of total number of detected cases).

In 2018 Federal Environmental Service conducted 824 unplanned inspections based on reports from the public and legal entities, information from other authorities or mass media. In 416 cases these reports contained information about threat or facts of damage to environment. Overall, the share of unplanned inspections conducted based on these feedback mechanisms accounted for only some 10 percent of total number of unplanned inspections (9693). Thus, the feedback mechanisms are not fully used to guide and target inspection activity.

During control and inspection activities in 2018 Federal Environmental Service detected 901 cases of damage to the environment. Almost half of these detected cases (427 or 47 percent of total) were related to harm to water objects. Some 338 detected cases or 38 percent of total were related to damage to soil (i.e. by misplacing waste, etc.). The cases when subsoil or protected areas were damaged were less common, i.e., 78 and 58 cases, respectively (Fig. 1).

Federal Environmental Service does not report any cases of damage to atmosphere. However, the data published by Rosgydromet [2] suggests that in 2018 in 37 Russian cities annual concentrations of one or more pollutants exceeded the maximum acceptable levels. The list of cities with maximum air pollution level in 2018 (Priority list) contained 22 cities. This priority list has grown by 3 cities for the previous 5 years. In 143 cities (or 58 percent of cities where air quality monitoring is conducted) average annual concentration of one pollutant exceed one maximum acceptable level. Some 56,0 million people live in these cities. Overall, in 2018 Rosgydromet detected 219 cases of high or extremely high air pollution (when maximum acceptable concentration was exceeded 10 times or more).

² Some control and enforcement functions are also performed by the Federal Service of Technological Supervision (Rostekhnadzor).

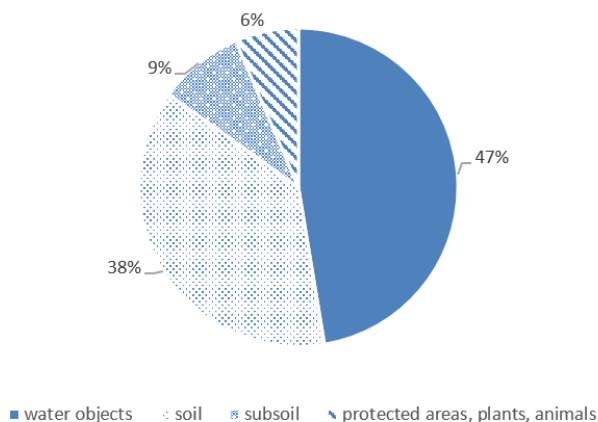


Fig. 1. Distribution of Damage Cases by Environmental Component

Rosgydromet data also suggest higher level of water pollution. This data demonstrates that extremely high pollution levels of surface water were detected in 631 cases at 133 water objects (in 2017 – 6243 cases at 128 water objects), high pollution levels – in 2112 cases at 312 water objects (in 2017 – 2121 cases at 330 water objects). Simultaneously, total number of damage cases detected by the Federal Environment Service accounted for only 427 cases.

This discrepancy of data on damage frequency as reported based on environment pollution monitoring and based on the state environmental control demonstrates that these monitoring results are not used for conducting unplanned inspections. Therefore, the impact of regulatory and enforcement activities in minimizing the risks of environmental pollution is limited.

To-date, Federal Environmental Service has implemented risk-oriented approach to inspections in the framework of environmental control, including control over geological research, rational use and protection of subsoil, state land supervision, supervision in the area of waste processing, supervision in the area of air protection, and in the area of use and protection of water objects. Implementation of risk-oriented approach assumes that each object (i.e. production facility) is assigned a risk category depending on the level of potential damage operation of such object may cause to the environment.

As of end 2018, some 93.3 thousand of objects were included into the state register of objects with negative effect on the environment. This register includes:

- 254 objects with extremely high-risk category (calls for regular annual inspections);
- 3208 objects with high risk category (calls for regular inspections carried out once every two years);
- 10947 objects with significant risk category (planned inspections are conducted once every three years);
- 26128 objects with average risk category; and
- 42429 objects with moderate risk category;
- 7363 objects with low risk category (Figure 2).

Some 3036 objects have not been assigned a risk category yet.

Categorization of objects allows to reduce inspection frequency for most objects with lower environmental risks and hence reduce administrative burden on businesses related to inspections. Notably, Federal Environmental Service has already implemented a mechanism for increasing or decreasing the risk category for the objects depending on inspection results. Such changes of categories annually affect some 5 percent of the objects included into the register of objects with negative effect on the environment.

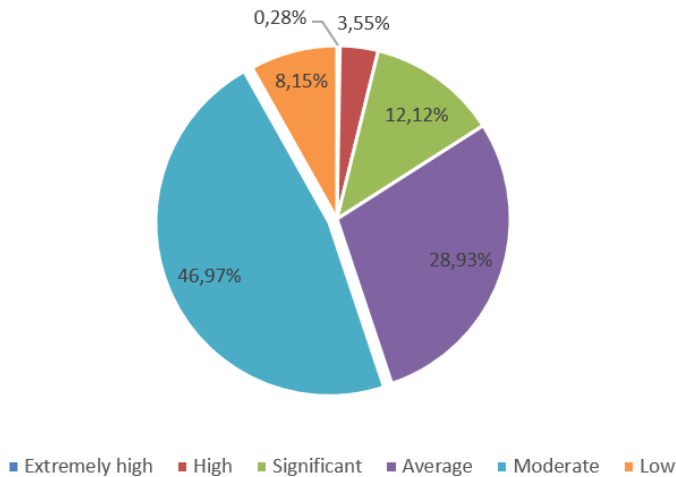


Fig. 2. Distribution of Objects with Negative Effect on Environments by Category (% of total)

However, the available statistical data does not suggest that implementation of risk-oriented approach to inspection activity has led to improvements in inspection targeting so far. For instance, in 2018 violations of legal requirements posing threat to environment were detected as a result of inspection of only 3 percent of businesses; in 0.9 percent of the cases such violations were the cause of environmental damage. To compare, in 2015 these indicators accounted for 5.8 percent and 0.6 percent of total inspected subjects, respectively. In other words, Federal Environmental Service has become less efficient in detecting violations which really pose a threat to the public value it protects; most violations of legal requirements detected as a result of inspection activity (92.9 percent of businesses with violations) do not pose any risk of damage to the environment.

Noteworthy, the analysis of international experience suggests that in other countries environmental services provide different statistics for various types of violations of legal requirements detected (i.e., serious violations; repetitive violations; etc.). Such practice helps to better target inspection and enforcement efforts [3].

Notably, the operations of inspected businesses caused 149 cases of damage to environment, while the total number of such cases detected, as discussed above, accounted for some 901 cases. Thus, the inspections helped to reveal only 16.53 percent of total detected damage cases. Hence, the impact of inspection activity on reducing environmental damage is considered rather low.

Table 1 below summarizes Federal Environmental Service data on the volumes of material damage to the environment structured by the risk categories of objects which were the cause of such damage. Notably, significant damage was revealed as a part of license control activities.

Table 1

**Distribution of material damage to environment brought by the controlled objects
(or businesses operating these objects) in 2018**

| Risk category | Number of objects (as of end 2018) | Damage to environment brought by the controlled objects or by businesses operating these objects in 2018, mln. RUR | Damage brought per 1 object in this category, thousand RUR |
|---|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Federal state environmental supervision | | | |
| Extremely high | 254 | 23.52 | 92.60 |
| High | 3208 | 36.33 | 11.32 |
| Significant | 10947 | 19.88 | 1.82 |
| Average | 26128 | 264.59 | 10.13 |
| Moderate | 42429 | 0.22 | 0.01 |
| Low | 7363 | 230.32 | 31.28 |
| No category assigned (risk-oriented approach not implemented) | 3036 | – | – |
| Total | 93365 | 574.86 | 6.16 |
| License control | | | |
| Total | 15037 | 938 | 62.38 |

Source: Federal Environmental Service, own calculations.

The analysis of the data summarized in the table suggest that most of the damage brought to environment was caused by activity of objects with average and low risks (in absolute terms), while the highest damage per one object in category is noted for the objects with extremely high risks. However, even for such object average risk level accounted for less than 100 thousand RUR per object. To compare, the average cost of inspection accounts for some 159 thousand RUR³. Significant environmental damage caused by the objects categorized as low risk level suggest that the criteria for assigning risks may need additional review.

Utilization of waste or payment of environmental duty is another important mechanism for compensating the damage brought to environment. Overall, in 2018 the amount of environmental duty collected accounted for 2.6 billion RUR.

³ Estimated based on the ratio of total funding of regulatory and enforcement activities and the number of inspections carried out.

Issuing permissions is an important state regulatory mechanism used in the area of biodiversity aimed at minimizing the risks of damage to animals and plants. In 2018, Federal Environmental Service issued 968 permissions, including 636 export permissions, 67 import permissions, 265 re-export permissions. In addition, 129 permissions were issued for extracting protecting species, 235 permissions for keeping such species. Federal Environmental Service does not present any evaluation of impact of such activity on reducing environmental risks.

The results of sociological polls demonstrate that environmental risks are perceived among the highest safety risks in Russia. In accordance with the sociological survey conducted by RANEPa in 2019⁴, only 30.2 percent of citizens find the level of safety of their lives, health and environment from pollution as adequate. Some 13.1 percent of respondents had faced a need to protect themselves and environment from pollution and other environment-related risks for the 2 years preceding the survey. If we extrapolate this data, some 6.5 percent of population faces environmental risks annually. This suggest that actual frequency of damage cases is much higher than detected and reported by the Federal Environmental Service.

Among the respondents who confronted the risk, only 22.1 percent of respondents reported the risk to environmental enforcement authorities and only 17.1 percent of those who reported obtained full response (containing the measures taken to prevent or mitigate risks, identify the liable parties and remove violations of legal requirements) to their reports [4]. Therefore, a small fraction of unplanned inspections conducted by the Federal Environmental Service based on feedback mechanisms (i.e., public reports) does not reflect low risks in the area of environment. On the contrary, sociological data suggest that processing of public reports and other data on environmental risk is insufficiently effective. Better use of feedback mechanisms, such as the portal ‘Our Nature’⁵ could improve targeting of inspection and other enforcement activities undertaken by the Federal Environmental Service.

Noteworthy, Federal Environmental Service considers that damage to environment affects only this public value. However, in a broader sense, pollution causes damage not only to environment per se, but also to the public health. The data published by the Federal Consumer Protection Service suggest that pollution of air, water, and soil in urban and rural areas in 2018 caused some 75.4 thousands of deaths (80 percent of the level noted in 2013) and some 3.0 million illness cases among children and adults (or 70.5 percent of the level achieved in 2013) [5]. While the level of environmental-related damage to public health seems to be decreasing, this factor is still important and should not be neglected.

⁴ The survey was conducted in March 2019 in 35 Russian regions. The sample accounted for 2,000 respondents.

⁵ *Our Nature*. Available from: <https://www.priroda-ok.ru/#/about/howsend>. Based on the data published on this portal, to date 166 reports were recorded and only 64 problems reported solved.

The results of business sociological survey conducted by RANEPА in 2017⁶, some 4.9 percent of respondents noted that environmental regulatory and enforcement activity was one of the most problematic in terms of business administrative costs. This is a comparatively low level of administrative costs. For instance, tax inspections were found the costliest by 23.8 respondents, fire inspections – by some 19.3 percent of businesses surveyed. However, only 2.5 percent of respondents noted that environmental regulatory and enforcement activities helped to improve public safety [6].

The following conclusions can be drawn based on our analysis.

First, the results of the monitoring conducted by Rosgydromet and Federal Consumer Protection Service, as well as sociological data, suggest that environmental risks are much higher than reported by the Federal Environmental Service both in terms of damage cases frequency and in terms of risk scale. Significant discrepancies in data reported by various federal bodies and the data reported by the federal bodies, on the one side, and the sociological surveys – on the other, demonstrate that currently the risks are underestimated.

Second, while implementation of risk-oriented approach is important for managing risks in environmental sphere, so far, the categorization of objects by risk level does not seem to be logical in terms of allocation of actual damage brought to environment. For instance, in 2018 about 40 percent of total damage to environment was caused by the operations of low risk objects which represent some 8 percent of total objects with category assigned. There might be a need for adjustments in the current risk assignment procedure and criteria.

Third, environmental inspections help to detect only some 16.5 percent of total cases of damage detected by the Federal Environmental Service. This suggests that the impact of inspection activity on minimizing risk levels is insufficient.

Fourth, one of the reasons for insufficient impact of inspection activity is poor targeting of inspections (which is partially due to risk categorization issues and partially due to inefficient use of the existing feedback mechanisms). Another problem is that, as reported by businesses, environmental inspections have little influence on maintaining public safety from environmental risks.

Overall, the current status of environmental risks is perceived as inadequate by most of Russian population. Therefore, the task of improving the quality of regulatory and enforcement activity retains its importance.

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⁶ The sample of the survey included 1,000 respondents. Most of respondents represented small and medium enterprises and individual entrepreneurs.

- D1%81%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8B%D0%B9_301019.pdf. Accessed: 01.11.2019 (In Russ.).
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Научная статья

Влияние контрольно-надзорной деятельности на защиту окружающей среды

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Аннотация. Социологические исследования показывают, что граждане России оценивают экологические риски крайне высоко. Реформирование контрольно-надзорной деятельности в природоохранной сфере является важным фактором минимизации таких рисков. Данные усилия предпринимаются в более широком контексте реформы контрольно-надзорной деятельности, направленной на минимизацию рисков причинения вреда охраняемым законом ценностям. В статье приведена оценка текущего состояния контрольно-надзорной деятельности в сфере охраны окружающей среды на основе статистических и социологических данных. Показано, что деятельность по государственному контролю (надзору) имеет ограниченное влияние на защиту окружающей среды и необходима реализация дополнительных мер по обеспечению повышения ее вклада в защиту граждан от экологических рисков.

Ключевые слова: проверки, результативность, охрана окружающей среды, контрольно-надзорная деятельность, социологические исследования

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Research article

Oil, Democracy and Internal Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract. This study examines the effect of oil and democracy on internal conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The study employed panel regression on 14 oil rich SSA spanning from 1983–2012. The major finding reveals a U-turn from the resource curse theory because it clearly shows that, increase in oil leads to a reduction in the likelihood of internal conflict situations in SSA. The study found strong evidence on the significance of political institutions in mitigating internal conflict in SSA. However, the interaction between oil and democracy reduces the risk of internal conflict in SSA countries with the lowest and average polity scores and increase conflict in those SSA with a maximum polity score. This outcome is usually expected in the course of transition from autocracy to democracy in developing countries. Therefore, with further improvement in the political institutions, the mitigating effects of oil on internal conflict will re-emerge. Impliedly, oil in itself is a blessing and leads to the realization of peace when countries improve their political institutions. Also, the study uncovered that, while real GDP reduces the chances of internal conflicts in SSA, an increase in military expenditures tends to dampen the likelihood of peace which is a bit departure from the rentier peace theory. Therefore, the study suggests that, for peace to be maintained, SSA should reduce its expenditure on the military and increase that of social spending while improving its political system.

Keywords: oil, democracy; internal conflict, panel regression, Sub-Saharan Africa

Introduction

Today, most developing economies have been heavily dependent on natural resources for growth and development. In those economies, resources such as oil play a key role in generating substantial revenue for the governments. This is in line with the assertion of the staple theory that, poor but resource-abundant economies have the potential to utilize oil income to overcome the challenges of lower capital base and to provide public goods to uplift the general wellbeing of their

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citizenries [1]. Interestingly, the countries of Norway, Canada and Russia have used oil income in the provision of infrastructures, and social security that improves the general wellbeing of their people. In the same vein, they expended oil income by diversifying in non-oil outlets leading to the growth and development of their economies. However, in most developing countries rich in oil, the resources breed incessant corruption and conflict. This is evident in Nigeria, Angola, and South Sudan.

This study will particularly focus on Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (Table 1).

Table 1

Table 1. List of Sub-Saharan African Countries employed in the Study

| S/N | COUNTRY'S NAME |
|-----|----------------|
| 1 | ANGOLA |
| 2 | CAMEROON |
| 3 | COTE D'IVOIRE |
| 4 | CONGO |
| 5 | DR CONGO |
| 6 | GABON |
| 7 | GHANA |
| 8 | MOZAMBIQUE |
| 9 | NIGER |
| 10 | NIGERIA |
| 11 | SENEGAL |
| 12 | SOUTH AFRICA |
| 13 | SUDAN |
| 14 | TANZANIA |

These countries share some common characteristics. For instance, Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest number of post-colonial conflict as noted by Fearon and Latin [2]. Human Security Report Project [3] opines that one-third of the world conflict-related death are found in Sub-Saharan Africa. Also, Albuja et al. [4] found that SSA has the highest number of internally displaced persons (IDP) by the end of 2012. Nonetheless, the majority of SSA countries gained independence around the 1960s. After independence, most of these countries strive to build their economic and social institutions and policies to achieve economic growth and development. As a result, SSA had experienced rapid growth in the 1960s and 1970s. During that time, SSA economies are characterized by state-owned enterprises in the provision of social services with stringent control on the financial sector. However, oil price shock in the 1970s and the debt crisis of the 1980s explicitly exposed the economic and political weaknesses of these countries. During these periods, SSA economies experienced a deteriorating economic performance, huge debt profile, and term of trade worsening. These scenarios necessitated most SSA countries to embark on structural economic adjustment in the 1980s through a devaluation of the nation currency, abolition or reduction of subsidies and reduction in a budget deficit.

However, these policies did not yield an expected result due to weak political and economic environment coupled with internal and external conflicts. Therefore, there are several empirical studies focused on SSA countries due to the distinctive role played by the region. Interestingly, SSA countries have the largest oil reserves and production on the continent. Sadly, the region is bedeviled by internal conflict, sluggish economic growth, widespread poverty, and weak public and private institutions [5]. It is pertinent to assert that most SSA countries that are suffering from internal conflict and civil unrest have been endowed with abundant natural (oil) resources and some of these countries run a democratic regime. For example, Nigeria has returned to uninterrupted democratic regimes since 1999 and between 1970 and 2000 only, Nigeria earned about 300 billion US dollars from oil export. However, despite huge income realized from oil export, about 70% of the Niger Delta population live below the poverty line¹ [6]. This proposition is reiterated by the World Bank [7] report that 82% of the Niger Delta population lives below 2 U.S dollars per day in 2010. This position is indifferent across most of the regions in Nigeria.

Therefore, Nigeria like other Sub-Saharan Africa countries share some common characteristics concerning the democratic system, the political economy of the resource rent, ethnic division, widespread corruption, and internal conflict. It is against this background that this study explores the effect of oil and democracy on internal conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa with important potential policy implications for sustained economic growth and development. Rest of the paper anchored on theoretical framework and empirical literature, methodology, results and discussion, conclusion and policy recommendations.

Theoretical Framework and Empirical literature

From the theoretical perspectives, there is still no clear cut mechanism through which resource rent, institution (be it political or economic) and conflicts puzzle can be addressed. This is because, the literature focuses on several theoretical propositions such as resource curse effect, institutional effect, and rentier peace effect. The resource curse theorists pioneered by Auty [8] premised on the belief that natural resources dampened the performance of the manufacturing sector and increased importation of manufactured goods in what he described as the Dutch Disease Syndrome. This view is popularized by Sachs and Warner [9]. The resource curse hypothesis may be induced by either greed [10], grievance [11] or volatility [12]. In the context of institutional effect, several factors (weak bureaucracy, state detachment, economic fragility) were reported to have induced conflicts in the literature. For instance, [2; 13] viewed weak bureaucracy as a major factor, a situation when there is loose administrative coordination and control to counter any rebellion intent within a territory. The proponent of the state detachment hypothesis [14; 15] argued that people might induced conflict against the

¹ Niger Delta region produce all the crude oil and natural gas in Nigeria.

state when the government disconnects itself from the people it governs by not providing social and economic opportunities.

The economic fragility theorists believed that resource-rich countries usually have worse economic performance because of the pervasive corruption and rent-seeking behavior in the system which may spark violence conflict [2; 16]. On the same notes, Humphreys [14] reports that the absence of employment opportunities from the regular economy may lure people, especially youth to accept the price of the rebels. However, the proponent of the rentier hypothesis [17; 11] viewed natural resources from a contrary perspective. To them, resource rent can be utilized to mitigate the onset of conflicts. This can be achieved by spending on patronage, using military might to repress any rebellion intent, offering low tax system, inhibiting social changes brought by modernization, bribery, and corruption [18] or seeking foreign support to maintain an autocratic regime in exchange of uninterrupted supply of resources [19].

From the empirical perspective, a lot of literature had studied the links between resource rent Institutions and conflicts. However, it is still unclear and inconclusive in the literature the actual path that generates conflict in developing countries- is it the natural resources endowment or absence of good institutions? On the resources led conflict perspective, the groundbreaking paper by Sachs and Warner [9] provided an empirical content to the resource curse theory pioneered by Auty [8]. Consequently, a significant number of studies examined the links between resources and conflict [20; 14; 21; 22; 23]. However, most of the empirics on the resource curse syndrome focused on developing countries. For instance, Le billion [24] reviewed oil and armed conflict in Africa and found that generally oil can motivate and generate the onset of conflict in Africa. Also, Wizarat [25] employed panel data from a sample of developed and less developed countries using Generalized Method of Moment (GMM) estimators spanning from 1980–2006 and found that oil, gas and coal production does not breed conflict in developed countries. However, in less developed countries, the production of oil, gas, and coal has significantly triggered world conflict. Partly these conflicts are exacerbated by the greed intent of developed countries to acquire these resources and on the other hand due to their increased supply of weapons to conflict striking countries.

Singh, et al. [11] explored oil and civil conflict and analysed the effect of public spending in mitigating violent conflicts in 148 countries spanning from 1960-2009. A non-trivial finding in the study shows that excessive military spending in countries less endowed with oil may instead fuel the conflicts. This evidence is against the repression effect theory. On the impact of mining on the conflict in Africa, Berman, Couttenier, Rohner, and Thoenig [26] used novel data from 1997 to 2010 and found that an upward swing in mineral prices have significantly contributed to violent conflict in Africa. Additionally, mineral resources-rich countries of Africa have the likelihood of both violent conflict and increased secessionism by the insurgency group. By using logit, probit and pooled regression on annual data from 1950 to 2008, Anyanwu [27] found that African countries that are endowed with oil but ethnically and linguistically fractionalized are more likely to experience civil conflict. Elbadawi and Sato [28] investigated resource rents, institutions and violent civil conflicts employing panel data covering

over 100 developing countries and 3600 annual observations during the period 1970 to 2010. Their findings revealed that developing countries with huge dependent on resources are more risky to armed conflict.

Meanwhile, the proponents of the rentier effect theory examined resources and conflict in a rather contrary dimension. For instance, Basedau and Lay [29] after investigated the obvious puzzle between resource curse and rentier effect, found that high oil wealth per capita mitigates the onset of violent conflict—through large scale distribution, sizable spending on securities and intervention from foreign allied forces, thus supporting the rentier effect perspective. In the same vein, Cotet and Tsui, [17] employed data from over 100 countries on a panel regression and found that countries rich in oil but do not practice democracy spend hugely on security and defense thereby help to mitigate the onset of violence. Non-trivial findings by Singh, et al. [11] revealed that the degree of conflicts in oil-rich countries can be mitigated through military spending and that spending on welfare has a significant effect in reducing conflicts irrespective of the magnitude of oil wealth. Similarly, Taydes and Peksen [30] found that higher welfare spending in oil-rich countries lower the risk of civil conflict. By using data on Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) spanning from 1985 to 2007, Arezki and Gylfason [31] found that SSA countries with resource rents are less likely to experience internal conflict. From a similar perspective, using Two-Stage Least Square (2SLS) on a sample of 115 countries, Bruckner and Gradstein, [32] found that, countries with large income growth induced by international oil price experienced lower political risk (conflict inclusive). By testing the rentier state argument on a sample of 148 countries using logit models from 1960–2009 Bodea, found that excessive military spending in countries rich in oil and gas resources mitigate the risk of both minor and major conflict onset. However, huge military spending in countries with lower oil and gas resources will increase the risk of civil conflict onset.

Other strands of literature link conflict in resource abundance countries to the absence of political institutions. To the supporters of this thought, resource rent inhibits democratic governance hence leading to government ineffectiveness and conflicts. For example, Fearon and Latin [2] found that neither ethnic nor religious characteristics breeds insurgency and civil war but weak bureaucracy induced by political instability and that is why Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest number of post-colonial civil war than other regions of the world. Ahmadov, Mammadov, and Aslanli [33] studied the resource-rich Caspian Basin Countries of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan, and found a negative impact of total natural resources rent on government effectiveness. This is because countries with higher average oil income and total natural resources income experienced lower rates of government effectiveness. A piece of non-trivial evidence by Anyanwu and Erhijakpor [34] by using both panel regression and IV-2SLS on 49 African countries found that oil wealth is linked negatively to democratization.

While these pieces of evidence focus mostly on developing countries, the story is dissimilar in Latin America. This is because Dunning [35] found that oil wealth does not hinder democracy in Latin America. His finding revealed that Latin American countries rich in oil democratized more quickly than their non-oil wealth counterparts. Also, Ross [19] using data that covers all countries from

1960 to 2002, found that oil wealth does not inhibit democratization and resource curse syndrome in Latin America. These findings may be attributed to the existence of good institutions in Latin American countries as the findings by Ebeke, Omgba, and Laajaji [36] revealed that countries with good institutions (good governance), oil rents re-orient the redistribution of talent from grabbers (law, management, and social sciences) to producers (engineering, manufacturing, and construction). This implies that good institutions positively affect oil rents and vice versa. On the contrary, other studies do not attribute resource abundance to the emergence of conflict occasioned by weak institutions. For example, Brunnschweiler and Bulte, [37] findings revealed that resource wealth is a blessing rather than a curse for both institutional and economic development. Specifically, the result of the links between resource abundance and institutions shows a positive and significant outcome. This implies that countries with natural resources wealth will have better and strong institutions and economic growth.

Other studies attributed conflicts to the interactive effects of resource rents and the absence of institutions. For instance, Alao and Olanisakin [38] found that societies with abundant resources are prone to armed conflict especially when such resources are not properly utilized (under a political regime) to meet the needs of various groups leading to unfair and unjust resources distribution. Collier and Rohner [39] revealed that democracy with an income level below a threshold increases the incidence of conflict in developing countries. Kevin [40] findings show that countries with weak institutions (weak state capacity), the oil significantly spurs violent conflict. In a similar instance, Ross [41] findings revealed that petroleum resources are linked to a more durable authoritarian regime with a pervasive effect on government corruption and incidence of conflict onset or exacerbation of conflict, especially in low and middle-income countries. Some studies protested these findings on the ground that, the interaction between resources rent and political institution (irrespective of the degree of the democratic regime) do not breed conflict but instead reduce it. For example, in their study, Collier and Rohner, (2008) found that the interaction between democracy and high-income level (resource rent) above a threshold reduces conflict situation. Kevin [40] findings show that strong state capacity deters the tendency to have civil conflict in oil-producing countries. This implied that institutions play a mediating role in the occurrence of conflict. Arezki and Gylfason [31] found that SSA countries with huge resource rents and lower democratic scores are likely to have a lower level of conflict. This is because the possibility of large government spending from huge resource rents occurred in countries with lower democracy. Elbadawi and Sato [28] found that good economic and political institutions have a mitigating effect on the onset of civil conflict. Likewise, huge resource rents are found to have repressive and co-optation effects on the emergence of civil conflicts.

Methodology

This study employed a panel regression technique on the data on petroleum rents (oil and gas rents), democracy (Imputed polity II), internal conflict and other control variables. Specifically, the dependent variable is modeled following Arezki

and Gylfason [31] by employing annual data on 14 Sub-Saharan African countries rich in oil from 1983 to 2012. The model is estimated using three years of data on the panel regression model within the context of Pooled, Random-Effect and Fixed-Effect models. Another test conducted is descriptive statistics. Data for the study is obtained from the World Bank Development Indicator (2016), ICRG (PRS, 2012), and Quality of Government (QOG) Basic Dataset, 2016.

To run the econometric exercise, the model of this study is in the spirit of Arezki and Gylfason [31] specified as follows:

$$ICONFLICT_{it} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 OIL_{it} + \alpha_2 POLITY_{it} + \alpha_3 OIL * POLITY_{it} + \alpha_4 Z_{it} + U_{it} + \phi_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad 3.4.2$$

Where i index-countries and t index-time. α_0 is constant. The dependent variable $ICONFLICT$ stand for internal conflict. OIL , $POLITY$, and $OIL * POLITY$ represent oil and gas rents as a percentage of GDP, imputed polity II, and interaction between oil and gas rents and imputed polity II respectively. The interaction of oil and gas revenues makes up a large sum of petroleum resource rent. The choice of oil and gas as against other natural resources, since they have the highest risk of civil conflict. This is because it is highly volatile and has the largest contribution to rent [1]. Democracy is measured by imputed polity II obtained from QOG datasets [42]. Imputed polity II is chosen as a democratic score because it performs better in terms of validity and reliability than polity II. Z stand for control variables used and ε is the disturbance term. Note also, failure to capture for unobserved country-specific and country-invariant factors such as culture, climate, and geography may render our panel regression estimate biased and inconsistent. Therefore, this study includes U_{it} and ϕ_{it} to capture for the country-specific and time-invariant characteristics that are common to all countries in the sample.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Statistics

The result of the descriptive statistics is provided in table 2. It shows that internal conflict has a mean and a standard deviation of 7.26 and 2.38 respectively and it varies between a minimum of 1.36 and a maximum of 10.93. Oil has an average of 13.45 and a standard deviation of 18.91 and varies between the minimum of 0.000 and a maximum of 66.23. Polity has an average of 3.82 and a standard deviation of 2.43 and varies between the minimum of 0.75 and a maximum of 9.33. Interaction between oil and polity has a mean and a standard deviation of 41.36 and 66.06 respectively and it varies between a minimum of 0.00 and a maximum of 285.4. Real GDP per capita has a mean of 6.56 and a standard deviation of 1.04 and varies between a minimum of 4.90 and a maximum of 9.26. Military expenditure has an average of 1.79 and a standard deviation of 2.54 and varies between the minimum of 0 and a maximum of 21.98. Lastly, ethnic fractionalization has a mean of 0.82 and a standard deviation of 0.09 and varies between a minimum of 0.64 and a maximum of 0.95.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics

| Variable | Mean | Standard deviation | Maximum | Minimum |
|-----------|-------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Iconflict | 7.26 | 2.38 | 10.93 | 1.36 |
| Oil | 13.45 | 18.9 | 66.23 | 0.00 |
| Polity | 3.82 | 2.43 | 9.33 | 0.75 |
| OilPolity | 41.36 | 66.06 | 285.4 | 0.00 |
| Rgdpc | 6.56 | 1.04 | 9.26 | 4.90 |
| Mexp | 1.79 | 2.54 | 21.98 | 0.00 |
| Ethnfr | 0.82 | 0.09 | 0.95 | 0.64 |

Source: Eviews9.5 output using data from WDI, QOGI and ICRG.

Note that all the variables have 140 observations and only the Real GDP Per Capita is in its log form.

The model examines the effects of oil, democracy and their interactions on internal conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. Following the estimation using panel regression, the estimation suggests a random effect model as the Hausman test fails to reject the null hypothesis at even a 10% significance level (Table 3).

Table 3

Random effect model result

Lagrange Multiplier Tests for Random Effects

Null hypotheses: No effects

Alternative hypotheses: Two-sided (Breusch-Pagan) and one-sided (all others) alternatives

| | Test Hypothesis | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Cross-section | Time | Both |
| Breusch-Pagan | 20.12124 (0.0000) | 5.844982 (0.0156) | 25.96623 (0.0000) |
| Honda | 4.485671 (0.0000) | 2.417640 (0.0078) | 4.881378 (0.0000) |
| King-Wu | 4.485671 (0.0000) | 2.417640 (0.0078) | 4.727499 (0.0000) |
| Standardized Honda | 6.390124 (0.0000) | 2.857446 (0.0021) | 2.346903 (0.0095) |
| Standardized King-Wu | 6.390124 (0.0000) | 2.857446 (0.0021) | 2.150780 (0.0157) |
| Gourieroux, et al.* | -- | -- | 25.96623 (0.0000) |

The random effect model result that incorporate countries fixed effects and time effects are presented in table 4 below.

Table 4

Oil, Democracy and Internal conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa (1983-2012)

| Variable | Internal conflicts | (1) REM | (2) REM | (3) REM |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Oil | 0.053*** 0.032 0.059** | (0.019) | (0.021) | (0.019) |
| Polity | 0.455*** 0.208** 0.546*** | (0.096) | (0.098) | (0.097) |
| Oil*Polity | -0.009* -0.009** -0.009** | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.004) |
| Lnrgdpc | 0.549** 0.593** 0.462* | (0.272) | (0.258) | (0.279) |
| Mexp | -0.204*** -0.207*** -0.210*** | (0.077) | (0.054) | (0.085) |
| Ethnfr | 2.476 2.236 2.691 | (3.717) | (4.197) | (3.196) |
| Country Fixed Effects | | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Time Effects | | Yes | Yes | No |
| Breusch-Pagan test: | 25.97 (0.000) | | | |
| Hausman test: | 5 (0.44) | | | |
| R-squared | | 0.28 | 0.52 | 0.36 |
| F statistics/Prob. | | 8.73(0.0000) | 8.94(0.0000) | 12.61(0.0000) |
| Observations | | 140 | 140 | 140 |
| Countries | | 14 | 14 | 14 |

Note: The dependent variable is an internal conflict. An increase in internal conflict means less internal conflict. The robust standard errors are reported in brackets. ***, **, * represent 1%, 5% and 10% significance level. Marginal effects of oil on the conflict in column one at minimum polity, average polity, and maximum polity are 0.04625, 0.01862 and -0.03097 respectively.

The estimation result for model two depicted in table 4 shows no satisfactory evidence that oil increases the risk of internal conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. The results from column one testify that oil reduces the risk of internal conflict in SSA at a 1% significance level. Specifically, it shows that, when time effect is considered, an increase in oil by 1% standard deviation would decrease the risk of internal conflict by 42% standard deviation.

The result is obtained by initially multiplying the coefficient of the absolute value of the independent variable (oil), 0.053 by its standard deviation, 18.9 (Re-

fer to table 4) and divide the product by the standard deviation of the dependent variable (Iconflict), 2.38 (Also in table 4). (i.e., $0.053 * 18.9/2.38 = 0.42$) (table 5).

Table 5

Model Pooled OLS result

Dependent Variable: ICONFLICT
 Method: Panel Least Squares
 Date: 04/08/17 Time: 06:12
 Sample: 2005 2014
 Periods included: 10
 Cross-sections included: 14
 Total panel (balanced) observations: 140

| Variable | Coefficient | Std. Error | t-Statistic | Prob. |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|----------|
| C | 1.525607 | 1.728755 | 0.882489 | 0.3791 |
| OIL | 0.042123 | 0.021782 | 1.933847 | 0.0553 |
| POLITY | 0.476814 | 0.080270 | 5.940150 | 0.0000 |
| OILPOLITY | -0.005110 | 0.005798 | -0.881231 | 0.3798 |
| LNRGDPC | 0.310835 | 0.180695 | 1.720219 | 0.0877 |
| MEXP | -0.303041 | 0.064748 | -4.680341 | 0.0000 |
| ETHNFR | 2.533294 | 1.870380 | 1.354428 | 0.1779 |
| R-squared | 0.418948 | Mean dependent var | | 7.263194 |
| Adjusted R-squared | 0.392735 | S.D. dependent var | | 2.384071 |
| S.E. of regression | 1.857841 | Akaike info criterion | | 4.125413 |
| Sum squared resid | 459.0590 | Schwarz criterion | | 4.272496 |
| Log likelihood | -281.7789 | Hannan-Quinn criter. | | 4.185183 |
| F-statistic | 15.98251 | Durbin-Watson stat | | 0.660147 |
| Prob(F-statistic) | 0.000000 | | | |

The result is structurally indifferent when time effect is ignored in column three because it shows that a 1% standard deviation increase in oil decreases the likelihood of internal conflict in SSA by 47% standard deviation at a 1% level of significance. However, these results have contradicted the resource curse theory and some shreds of evidence [20; 24; 28].

The possible explanation for the recent development may not be unconnected with the fact that oil in itself is a blessing as reiterated by Brunnschweiler and Bulte [37] that resource rents (oil inclusive) are a blessing for countries growth and development. Therefore, oil might be a curse as a result of other factors such as weak institutions and the absence of fair distribution mechanisms that channel oil rent to improve the wellbeing of the people [24]. It is noteworthy that most of the developed countries endowed with oil and gas such as Norway, Canada, and Russia do not face internal conflict because of the strong institution and government commitment as noted by Wizarat [25] that oil and gas do not breed conflict in developed countries. In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, this study coincides with Arezki and Gylfason [31]. Also, these findings are in tandem with the results from Basedau and Lay [29] and Bruckner and Gradstein [32].

To further strengthen our result on oil and internal conflict nexus, results in table 6.

Table 6

Lagrange multiplier test result

Lagrange Multiplier Tests for Random Effects

Null hypotheses: No effects

Alternative hypotheses: Two-sided (Breusch-Pagan) and one-sided
(all others) alternatives

| | Test Hypothesis | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Cross-section | Time | Both |
| Breusch-Pagan | 20.12124 (0.0000) | 5.844982 (0.0156) | 25.96623 (0.0000) |
| Honda | 4.485671 (0.0000) | 2.417640 (0.0078) | 4.881378 (0.0000) |
| King-Wu | 4.485671 (0.0000) | 2.417640 (0.0078) | 4.727499 (0.0000) |
| Standardized Honda | 6.390124 (0.0000) | 2.857446 (0.0021) | 2.346903 (0.0095) |
| Standardized King-Wu | 6.390124 (0.0000) | 2.857446 (0.0021) | 2.150780 (0.0157) |
| Gourieroux, et al.* | -- | -- | 25.96623 (0.0000) |

Lagrange indicated that democracy proxy by polity reduces the risk of internal conflict in SSA. The results from columns one, two and three vindicated that 1% standard deviation increase in polity significantly leads to a reduction in the likelihood of internal conflict by 46%, 21%, and 56% standard deviations respectively. This result implied that democracy (polity) alone tends to increase the likelihood of peace in SSA because democracy would ensure the possibility of having a government that is committed to its people. However, empirical evidence by Collier and Hoeffler [10] contradicts this, still studies by Bodea and Elbadawi, [43] and Elbadawi and Soto [28] have lent support for this finding by noting that political institution reduces the likelihood of civil conflict onset. The finding from this study is in line with the proposition of the international community that, democracy is the best strategy for promoting peace because accountability as a guiding principle of democracy helps in reducing the likelihood of conflict. The marginal effects of the interaction between oil and polity implied that an increase in oil rent reduces the likelihood of internal conflict in SSA at a minimum and an average level of polity only. In column one, the total effect of oil rent on internal conflict is calculated as $dI_{\text{conflict}}/dO_{\text{il}} = 0.053 - 0.009 * \text{Polity}^2$. This interaction

² To obtain the maximum marginal effect, the absolute value of the coefficient of the interaction term is multiplied by the maximum value of polity in the sample. Thus, in our sample, South Africa has the highest polity score of 9.3. (i.e., $0.053 - 0.009 * 9.3 = -0.03097$). Also, the

term is found to be statistically significant such that a 1% overall increase in oil leads to a 4.63% reduction in internal conflict for SSA countries with the minimum polity score. However, the average value of the marginal effect of the interaction term reduces internal conflict by 1.86% in the sample. On the other hand, such interaction leads to an increase of 3.09% in the internal conflict in SSA countries with a maximum polity score (table 7).

Table 7

Robust random effect model result with fixed time effect

Dependent Variable: ICONFLECT
 Method: Panel EGLS (Cross-section random effects)
 Date: 04/08/17 Time: 06:16
 Sample: 2005 2014
 Periods included: 10
 Cross-sections included: 14
 Total panel (balanced) observations: 140
 Swamy and Arora estimator of component variances
 White cross-section standard errors & covariance (d.f. corrected)
 WARNING: estimated coefficient covariance matrix is of reduced rank

| Variable | Coefficient | Std. Error | t-Statistic | Prob. |
|-----------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------|
| C | 1.100105 | 4.230059 | 0.260068 | 0.7952 |
| OIL | 0.031751 | 0.021111 | 1.504017 | 0.1351 |
| POLITY | 0.207565 | 0.098215 | 2.113368 | 0.0366 |
| OILPOLITY | -0.009697 | 0.004722 | -2.053360 | 0.0421 |
| LNRGDPC | 0.592990 | 0.258329 | 2.295486 | 0.0234 |
| MEXP | -0.206650 | 0.053892 | -3.834517 | 0.0002 |
| ETHNFR | 2.236187 | 4.197115 | 0.532791 | 0.5951 |

| Effects Specification | | S.D. | Rho |
|--------------------------------|--|----------|--------|
| Cross-section random | | 1.142646 | 0.3813 |
| Period fixed (dummy variables) | | | |
| Idiosyncratic random | | 1.455491 | 0.6187 |

| Weighted Statistics | | | |
|---------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| R-squared | 0.519445 | Mean dependent var | 7.263194 |
| Adjusted R-squared | 0.461313 | S.D. dependent var | 1.974609 |
| S.E. of regression | 1.449269 | Sum squared resid | 260.4473 |
| F-statistic | 8.935668 | Durbin-Watson stat | 0.712637 |
| Prob(F-statistic) | 0.000000 | | |

| Unweighted Statistics | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| R-squared | 0.502394 | Mean dependent var | 7.263194 |
| Sum squared resid | 393.1326 | Durbin-Watson stat | 0.472117 |

minimum marginal effect is obtained by multiplying the interaction coefficient by the minimum value of polity in the sample. (i.e., $0.053 - 0.009 \cdot 0.75 = 0.04625$). The same process applies to the marginal average effect of polity on conflict.

The marginal effect of the interaction term has the same effects when we controlled for fixed time effect in column two as well as when time effects are ignored in column three. This result coincides with findings from Arezki and Gylfason [31] that, natural resources countries with less democracy experienced less internal conflict. This finding seems to be surprising but the study by Fedderke and Klitgaard [42] found a similar effect in developing countries and described the outcome as transitional uncertainty from autocracy to improved democracy. The result from table 2 shows that an increase in real GDP per capita increases the likelihood of peace in SSA. This is because results from columns one and two show that a 1% standard deviation increase in real GDP per capita reduces the risk of internal conflict by 23.9% and 25.9% standard deviation both at a 5% significance level after taking time effects into cognizant. In the same vein, the result seems to be similar when the time effect is ignored in column three (table 8).

Table 8

Robust random effect model result with random time effect

Dependent Variable: ICONFLICT
Method: Panel EGLS (Cross-section random effects)
Date: 04/08/17 Time: 06:14
Sample: 2005 2014
Periods included: 10
Cross-sections included: 14
Total panel (balanced) observations: 140
Swamy and Arora estimator of component variances
White cross-section standard errors & covariance (d.f. corrected)

| Variable | Coefficient | Std. Error | t-Statistic | Prob. |
|-----------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------|
| C | -0.086927 | 3.633182 | -0.023926 | 0.9809 |
| OIL | 0.059446 | 0.018941 | 3.138415 | 0.0021 |
| POLITY | 0.545524 | 0.096837 | 5.633426 | 0.0000 |
| OILPOLITY | -0.009275 | 0.004363 | -2.125736 | 0.0354 |
| LNRGDPC | 0.462320 | 0.278694 | 1.658879 | 0.0995 |
| MEXP | -0.210147 | 0.085482 | -2.458367 | 0.0152 |
| ETHNFR | 2.691198 | 3.195984 | 0.842056 | 0.4013 |

| Effects Specification | | S.D. | Rho |
|-----------------------|--|----------|--------|
| Cross-section random | | 1.119147 | 0.3209 |
| Idiosyncratic random | | 1.627870 | 0.6791 |

| Weighted Statistics | | | |
|---------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| R-squared | 0.362568 | Mean dependent var | 3.035184 |
| Adjusted R-squared | 0.333812 | S.D. dependent var | 1.992920 |
| S.E. of regression | 1.626629 | Sum squared resid | 351.9074 |
| F-statistic | 12.60830 | Durbin-Watson stat | 0.812333 |
| Prob(F-statistic) | 0.000000 | | |

| Unweighted Statistics | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| R-squared | 0.395307 | Mean dependent var | 7.263194 |
| Sum squared resid | 477.7366 | Durbin-Watson stat | 0.598376 |

It shows that a 1% standard deviation increase in real GDP per capita reduces the likelihood of internal conflict by 20.2% standard deviation at a 10% significant level. These findings are in tandem with the result of Elbadawi and Soto [28]. However, an increase in military expenditure does not reduce the risk of internal conflict in SSA. Specifically, the results show that a 1% standard deviation increase in military expenditure significantly increases the likelihood of internal conflict by 21.8%, 22.1% and 22.4% standard deviations in columns one, two, and three respectively. Interestingly, this result is in line with the reality of situations in some SSA countries. For instance, military operations over the years in the oil-rich Niger Delta region and Boko Haram in Northeastern, Nigeria do not eliminate the spade of conflict in the region rather such operations tend to exacerbate the crisis by germinating more rebel groups. Another case in point, the military intervention in Sudan and South Sudan has always deteriorated and fueled the crisis and that is why even after the secession of South Sudan as a sovereign state peace has being a mirage.

Although, the proponents of the rentier theory viewed that internal conflict in oil-rich countries can be ameliorated through repression (military intervention), co-optation and bribery but this finding does not seem to support the positive effect of military intervention rather it coincides with the findings from Singh, et al. [11] revealing the ineffectiveness of military spending in reducing the risk of internal conflict. You can found that high military spending crowds out social spending, economic growth, and investment, subsequently erupting grievances and increases the likelihood of insurgency. Teydas and Peksen [30] found that military spending has no impact on the onset of civil war. The result in table 2 shows that ethnic fractionalization does not affect internal conflict in SSA. Even though, studies by Collier and Hoeffler [20] identifies ethnic fractionalization as a culprit for internal conflict but Besadau and Lay [29] found similar findings that ethnic fractionalization is immaterial in influencing internal conflict.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

Having explored the nexus between oil, democracy and internal conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) during the period from 1983-2012, this study unraveled that oil rents do not breed internal conflict in SSA. Oil rents instead increase the likelihood of achieving and maintaining peace and stability if judiciously utilize in uplifting the wellbeing of the people. The study also concludes that democracy proxy by polity is a significant factor in increasing the likelihood of achieving peace in SSA countries endowed with oil resources. More importantly, the mitigating effects of oil on conflict is amplified downward only at the lower and average levels of polity. However, at the maximum level of polity in SSA, the marginal effect of polity is unfavorable. This is quite surprising, but the implication of this finding is reported by Fedderke and Klitgaard [44] that, the negative outcome at the maximum level of polity in developing countries is connected to political uncertainty due to transition from autocracy to democracy³. This paper provides the following recommendations:

³ The maximum polity level in SSA is like a moderate level of polity at the global level.

1. Since the empirical findings of this study provide a U-turn from the resource curse theory in the sample of SSA used, SSA should note that oil is a blessing for them and should ensure its optimum utilization to reduce internal conflict. This is because the current mitigating impact of oil on internal conflict is discouraging as shown in the results in table two.

2. We acknowledged the fact that improvement in political institutions (democracy) accrue benefits to SSA in terms of increasing the likelihood of peace hence, it should be pursued vigorously. However, the manifestation of conflict at the maximum level of the polity should not deter SSA in the pursuance of an improved political system. This is because the transitional cost from autocracy to democracy will greatly diminish as they continue in the pursuance of higher and improved political institutions. The achievement of peace and stability in SSA countries would have positive multiplier effects on the African continent in specific and the world at large.

3. It is of utmost importance that governments in SSA countries should re-strategize their security architecture by reducing their expenditure on military and other security apparatus for tackling internal conflict since such spending is considered futile and even tend to fuel the crisis. Therefore, this study identifies the significance of improvement in real GDP per capita which the oil rents have the potential as a viable alternative to achieving sustained peace, growth, and development.

4. The governments in SSA countries should not be distracted by the fractionalized nature of their societies and concentrate on the core issues that improve the livelihood of their people.

5. The government in SSA countries should ensure that oil exploration does not cause huge environmental damages and effort should be put in place to ensure frequent abatement of oil spillage due to exploration activities. This should complement by providing improved social services such as clean drinking water, education, health care delivery, etc. These will mitigate the grievances from the oil communities thereby reducing internal conflict.

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Научная статья

Нефть, демократия и внутренний конфликт в странах Субсахарской Африки

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Аннотация. В данном исследовании рассматривается влияние нефти и демократии на внутренние конфликты в странах Субсахарской Африки (ССА). В исследовании использовалась регрессивная модель панельных данных по 14 богатым нефтью Субсахарским странам, охватывающая период с 1983 по 2012 годы. Основной вывод указывает на тенденции, которые не соответствуют положениям часто применяемой в подобных случаях теории ресурсного проклятия и ясно показывает, что увеличение добычи нефти ведет к снижению вероятности возникновения внутренних конфликтных ситуаций в ССА. В исследование присутствуют убедительные доказательства значимости политических институтов в смягчении внутреннего конфликта в ССА. Тем не менее, взаимосвязь между нефтью и демократией снижает риск возникновения внутренних конфликтов в странах ССА с наименьшим и средним политическим баллом и

увеличивает конфликт в ССА с максимальным политическим баллом. Этот результат обычно ожидается в процессе перехода от самодержавия к демократии в развивающихся странах. Поэтому с дальнейшим улучшением политических институтов смягчающее воздействие нефти на внутренний конфликт вновь проявится. Подразумевается, что нефть сама по себе является благом и ведет к достижению мира, когда страны совершенствуют свои политические институты. Кроме того, исследование показало, что, хотя рост реального ВВП снижает шансы на внутренние конфликты в ССА, увеличение военных расходов имеет тенденцию также понижать вероятность мира, что вступает в некоторое противоречие с положениями концепции мира-рантье. Таким образом, предполагается, что для поддержания мира в ССА следует сократить расходы на вооруженные силы и увеличить расходы на социальные нужды, одновременно улучшая политические системы стран.

Ключевые слова: нефть, демократия, внутренний конфликт, регрессивная модель панельных данных, Субсахарская Африка

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Research article

India-US Relations Through the Lens of Cold War: The Time of Estranged Relations (Brief Overview)

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Abstract. This paper provides a brief description of the estranged relations, ideological differences, divergences in national interests, initial misunderstandings and ups & down in the relations between two democracies – India and the US – during the Cold War period. After the WWII, an ideological clash dubbed “Cold War” started between two competing powers: the US and the USSR. During the Cold War era, both states went at great lengths to expand their ideologies into the Asian region and its periphery. The US formed security blocs and provided substantial financial aid to Asian countries in an attempt to contain the expansion of communist ideology of its main rival (the USSR) in the Asian region. After India gained independence, the US pressured the Indian leadership into joining the US bloc against the communist Soviet Union. On the other side, the USSR built Warsaw Pact and tried to enroll the newly born states, such as India and Pakistan, in its bloc to counter the US course of action. However, India was not disposed to join any blocs, the US bloc above all, and entered the Non-Alignment Movement. The Indian leadership supported the catchphrase “Asia for Asians” and condemned the involvement of extra-regional powers, such as the US, in Asian regional matters.

Keywords: Cold War, India-US estranged relations, India & Non-Alignment Movement, US policy of containment

I. India-US Relations During the Cold War: Time of Estrangement

The independence of India was declared on 15th August, 1947, at a time when the world was on the verge of division into two blocs (the USA & the USSR) and the menace of the Cold War was looming on the horizon of the post-world-war world. Initially, the newly emerged state India could not afford to show any particular inclination to joining either bloc and followed the policy of Non-Alignment: a policy of peaceful co-existence. Strong commitment to democratic values and norms gave India and the US a common ground, however, India's join-

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ing the Non-Alignment Movement alienated the two countries, as the US leaders took it to be an unfriendly gesture by the country. Indian policy of Non-Alignment and affable disposition towards China upset Americans policy makers. Propagating their ideologies and different ways of living, the US and USSR formed security alliance pacts, such as NATO, SEATO, and Warsaw Pact, to counter each other's game plan. India, in its turn, preferred to stay away from all security pacts and chose a neutral stance [1]. Despite the US efforts to coerce India into an alliance, India held on to its position of non-interference. As Nehru put it, "India wants World Peace rather than to join any bloc". By adopting the non-alignment policy, India managed to ward off both power blocs and withheld itself from any major decisions in the global arena. By supporting China during its independence and advocating the slogan "Asia for Asians", India developed very cordial relations with China, and voted for China's permanent seat in the United Nations. The foreign policy of India under Nehru, who was an active Non-Alignment supporter and friends with Tito (Yugoslavia), Nasser (Egypt), Sukarno (Indonesia) and Nkrumah (Ghana), was based on the concept of non-interference and non-aggression. The Non-Alignment leaders disapproved of the bi-polar world structure led by the US and USSR and supported a multipolar world system. Being totally against the system of alliances and blocs, they based their movement on the principles of sovereignty and independence. Nehru's policy ran counter to US interests [2]. With the emergence of new communist state People's Republic of China in 1949 and the beginning of the Korean War, the US policies towards the Asian region had changed. The worth of India in the global arena had grown and, due to its ideological and geopolitical importance in Asia, the US recognized the new state as a prospective partner to countervail communist China and USSR [2]. But America's plans fell through, as India decided to stick to its non-alignment status. To shift the global power balance in its favor, the US formed a containment alliance with other Asian countries. For several weeks at the beginning of 1951, the level of Indo-US distrust remained extremely high. When the US rejected the peace resolution, Nehru took a stand against the US and supported China with the motto "*Asia for Asians*" purporting that western powers have no right to interfere in the internal affairs of Asian countries as they are quite capable of managing their own public order [1].

In the context of Indian nuclear development in the pre-Cold War era, the British government established *Tata Institute of Fundamental Research* in Mumbai. The institute was headed by Homi Bhabha, who was the executive of Indian Atomic Energy Committee at that time. Nehru supported the Committee and explained that "the rationale of Indian atomic energy is only for peaceful means". After the British pressured India into joining the commonwealth and giving up "fake loyalties" (implying its possible alliance with the USA), Washington was seriously confused as to who its allies in South Asia were and was set on monitoring Indian nuclear developments. A month later, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs George C. McGhee came to South Asia to explain the American policy of invasion in Tibet and Korea. The 1952 elections in America ended

with a landslide victory of Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Republicans took over both houses of Congress. The Eisenhower administration sent Secretary of State Dulles to South Asia, and in the same year he visited India after his visit to Karachi [3].

In the mid-fifties, paradoxically, the US was able to build cordial relations with two rivaling South Asian states – India and Pakistan, trying to ally itself with both. After when the US declared Washington Pact with Pakistan, Nehru categorically denounced America’s double game, saying that the ultimate purpose behind the US amiability was to create a counter force to contain its communist enemies and establish hegemony in the Asian region. In 1954, the Indian leaders condemned US “Massive Retaliation” policy, in which America committed itself to retaliate by using its nuclear arsenals in the event of an attack from an aggressor. Meanwhile, in 1954, India concluded a treaty with China in regard to Tibet, recognizing it as autonomous part of China. Furthermore, China and India did not get involved in the Korean War and signed the *Panchsheel treaty*. Nehru emphasized that “peace in the Asia is necessary and could not be promoted without friendly relations with China”. Subsequently, Chinese premier Mr. Zhou Enlai flew to India to consult with Nehru, where he received a very warm welcome from the Indian leader. As a result of the meeting, the leaders agreed on five principles:

- *Respect for territory and sovereignty.*
- *Non-aggression.*
- *Non-interference in domestic affairs.*
- *Equality and mutual benefit.*
- *Peaceful co-existence.*

Upon signing the treaty, Nehru immediately made *Panchsheel* the touchstone of Indian foreign policy and expressed his desire for these principles to be applied at the international level. At the 1955 Bandung Conference of Asia, Nehru announced that “now “*Panchsheel*” is the basis of Indo-China friendly relations and in the context of these principles we will settle any distrust in future”.

Against the backdrop of Nehru’s Non-Alignment stance, critical attitude towards America’s policy and India’s teaming up with China, the Indo-US relations took an unfavorable turn [4]. As a result of which, Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Britain and the US signed the Baghdad pact, and Pakistan, US and Taiwan established the SEATO. As the US kept signing treaties with other countries (Japan, South Korea and New Zealand), its main goals remained to create a counter balance for the communist bloc, establish its hegemony in the world and prevent India from allying with communist countries. Nonetheless, India held on to the *Panchsheel* principles, and the catchphrase “*Hindi-Chini, Bhai-Bhai*” (“Indians and Chinese are brothers”) became the core of China-India relations in the 1950s. Nehru called the Chinese leader as a “younger brother”, to which Zhou responded: “I have met all the preeminent leaders of the world, but I have never met anyone more arrogant than Mr. Nehru”. The Sino-India friendly relations were a heavy blow for the US leadership, as they realized the possibility of India joining the Communist bloc in future. However, when in 1962 the Tibet issue broke out,

Sino-India relations shipwrecked: China attacked India, and for next 14 years the diplomatic relations between the countries were non-existent. That was the turning point for the creation of the Indo-US potent nexus, as India got full military and economic support from the US against China. Nehru expressed his frustration with the situation: “China is a great and powerful country with enormous resources, but India is not weak and won’t be frightened by threats and military might”. Americans equipped Indian troops with B-47 bombers and sent military advisors and technicians to India [5].

Thus, besides holding the trump card of India’s obligation for full military and economic support in its confrontation with China, the US also criticized the USSR on its engagement in Cuba. On December 19, when the USSR withdrew from Cuba, China also decided to put an end to the Indo-Chinese war and solve the border dispute by peaceful means. After the war, the Indo-US friendly relations were formally established, however, India was still officially involved in the Non-Alignment movement and did not join any powerful blocs [3]. When the 1965 Indo-Pak war started, the India-US relations were not yet fully developed. Naturally, the US supported its ally Pakistan, both militarily and politically (including during the UN forum), and tensions between the two democracies (US and India) were once again created. The anxious Indian leadership turned to the US with a demand to stop military assistance to Pakistan, which was used by Pakistan against India. Despite of the US support to India in the Indo-China war, India did not leave the Non-Alignment movement and point-blank refused to support American anti-communism policies [6].

The 1965 Indo-Pak war put the US loyalties to test: on the one hand, Pakistan had been America’s long-standing and trustworthy ally, and on the other hand, Washington was interested in creating a strong partnership with India. From 1954 to early December 1965, the US rendered aid to India under the provision of Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act ‘PL-480’. The program opened new market opportunities for American products, while ‘PL-480’ brought about a fundamental change in the direction of Indian economy. The Indian government announced a new farm program, as 1.5 million tons of American wheat was imported to India [7].

II. The 1970s Relations

By the early 1970s, the rapport between the US and China had been established, facilitated by a number of global changes, such as the policy of détente, Cultural Revolution (1966–1969) in China, as well as normalization of the US and China relations with Pakistan, which played a crucial role in the Indo-American partnership. On the other hand, India fell victim to Nixon and Kissinger’s triangular diplomacy and got tangled in the Washington-Moscow-Beijing relations. Kissinger’s visit to Beijing in an attempt to build bridges of friendship, as well as Pakistan’s strategic relationship with China, struck a warning note for to India [8]. As the American leadership abolished their policy of containment, the goal of the

new diplomacy was to manage relations between two contesting communist powers – China and the USSR. In addition, American president Nixon played a double game: while he used Pakistani president Agha Yahya Khan to fix US relations with China, thus creating a threat to India with the possible US-China-Pakistan nexus, he also pitted China and the USSR against each other. Washington's attempt to mend fences was eagerly welcomed by Beijing. Nixon announced that he would travel to China in order to establish a good rapport between the two countries and eliminate any past mistrust [5].

To sum up, the India-US relationship reached its lowest point on the threshold of the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971. The US supported Pakistan and India slammed the American actions as an underhanded act of aggression. In August 1971, Indira Gandhi signed the Peace, Friendship and Cooperation treaty with the USSR to counteract a possible US-China-Pakistan alliance against India. The reciprocal agreement specified strategic cooperation in the event of a military attack in the course of the following 25 years [9]. The Indian forces were engaged in military operations in East Pakistan in 1971, which led to the defeat of the Pakistani army and emergence of one more sovereign state – Bangladesh. Whereas, Indira Gandhi was nicknamed “Iron Lady” for her deft actions that led to the victory in the India-Pak war and aggressiveness towards the US. Nixon and Kissinger not only misestimated the crisis in East Pakistan, their conscious pro-Pakistani bias turned a regional conflict into a major global conflagration, which resulted in Indian inclination towards the Soviet camp, reinforced by the India-USSR friendship treaty. India became a principal ally of the Soviet Union, and the USSR fully supported India not only from the military and economic perspectives, but also on the Kashmir issue and UNSC. In return, India backed up the Soviets on the 1979 Afghanistan invasion [3].

During 1972, the Nixon administration faced an aggressive and negative attitude from the Indian leaders triggered by American support of Pakistan. In May, the US and USSR signed the agreement on chief documents (“The Basic Principles of Relations”) concerning U.S.-Soviet bilateral relations and held two rounds of conferences (‘Salt 1’ and ‘Salt 2’) to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Following the bilateral talks, the US managed to build durable relations with the Soviets, China and Pakistan. India, however, was left on the sideline. Thus, as perceived by the Indian leadership, the US replaced the bipolar world structure with a triangular one, this time including China. The strengthening US-Sino-USSR relations raised a red flag with India, who was weary of a possible security threat from China [1]. In 1973–1974, by virtue of Kissinger and Nixon's efforts, and as a consequence of bilateral negotiations to reach mutual understanding and support, the India-US relations were stabilized. Again, in 1975, the Indo-US partnership showed signs of strain, when the US imposed a ten-year embargo on the sale of lethal arms to South Asia, after which Indian cancelled all scheduled visits. In 1977, after the formation of Janata Government in India, the India-US relations made some progress. In 1978, Jimmy Carter visited India, which was followed by a return visit from Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai. Meanwhile,

Nixon visited Beijing with the purpose of consolidating a partnership with China. Consequently, China got a permanent seat in the UNSC, which was unacceptable for India [10].

In the meantime, the US was playing a very careful chess game in Asia, building friendly relations with all major regional players. In December 1978, the US and China signed an agreement, in which the US consented to withdraw from Taiwan and formally recognize the Beijing government as the legitimate government of China. The main obstacle in the way of normalization of the Sino-US relations was the Taiwan issue, as China was angered by the USA sponsoring Taiwan with armaments, which was thought to be a great threat to its national security and peace. Other issues, such as the US invasion in Grenada and America's willingness to participate in the arms race, also became a stumbling-block on the way to the Sino-US good rapport. Eventually, the differences were ironed out against the backdrop of the mutually beneficial economic partnership, and the US became China's third largest trading partner. However, the two countries never completely got over the past rivalries [7].

III. The 1980s Relations

In 1981, the US and China reinforced their relations with a number of agreements in the fields of trade, civil aviation, maritime traffic, textiles, and commerce. However, China remained apprehensive about US-Taiwan relations, remembering American support to Taiwan in the China-Thai war. According to China, despite officially supporting the 'one China policy', the US upgraded the aircrafts it was sending to Taiwan. Besides that, Washington maintained semi-cordial relations with India. However, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the global settings completely changed and the world found itself at sixes and sevens. The invasion was a flat-out threat for American hegemony in the Asian region, therefore, the US supported Pakistan in terms of military and economic needs, supplying the "freedom fighters" with ammunition and provision. For all intents and purposes, it was a proxy war fought by Pakistan on behalf of the US against the USSR. The Indian leaders, displeased with the US presence in the Indian Ocean, officially declared that the US used Pakistan and its fighters to pursue its interests in the confrontation with the Soviet Union. The American leadership commented their objective was to contain the spread of communism in South Asia [10].

Between 1982 and 1985, Indian Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi paid visits to the US in an attempt to restore friendly ties between India and the US; as a result, a cooperation initiative in the fields of security, science and technology was launched. In 1985, the high officials of both countries continued to pay each other visits in order to consolidate the cooperation. The USA was not the only country India tried to repair the strained relations with: in 1988, Rajiv Gandhi visited Beijing to solve the border dispute, and eliminate the mistrust be-

tween the two nations. In 1991, thirty-one years after his last visit, Li Pang travelled to India with the aim to establish strong diplomatic relations [11].

As the US took a positive stance on preventing nuclear proliferation, India (and later Pakistan) became the centerpiece of its non-proliferation efforts. According to India, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act, the Pressler Amendment, and Symington Amendment, as well as supply of F-16 aircrafts and weapons to Pakistan in the American proxy war in Afghanistan, created an unlevelled playing field for India and Pakistan and fueled the arms race in the subcontinent. Under these circumstances, the downfall of the USSR led to an unfortunate (if not catastrophic) development in New Delhi. The disintegration of the Soviet Republics forced India (needing a new powerful and reliable ally) to reconsider its foreign policy towards its neighboring rival states – China and Pakistan. As Gorbachev's reforms in 1991 led to the collapse of the USSR and the failure of its version of Communism, the Cold War came to an end, and so did the fifty-year-long turmoil in the history of the Indo-US relations. The USA remained the sole superpower, with its democratic ideology triumphing over Marxist Communism [2].

IV. Relations in the Post-Cold War Decade: the 90s Era

After the end of the Cold War, the US reshaped its policies towards the Asian region and declared the new world order. Washington developed an inclusive economic, military and political partnership with India, and the relations between the two democracies transformed from “estrangement” to “engagement”. In the context of the improving economic relations with India, the US committed to providing developmental and provision assistance to South Asia. By 2000, India received \$170 million in the form of humanitarian aid [12], which was 45 times larger than the relief support to Pakistan. India and the US now have a shared interest in stability in the Indian Ocean region and in maintaining an adequate balance of power in Asia.

India is a relatively large, economically and militarily sufficient country. Provided the Indian government carries through with its economic reforms, genuinely modifying India's economic policies in order to open the country for the rest of the world and inlock new market opportunities, the US is unlikely to get more economically involved with India than it has in the past [13].

The post-Cold War era marked the beginning of a new chapter in the relations between India and the United States, as they transformed from estrangement to engagement. There were many political, economic and strategic factors behind this change. Firstly, “the world's fate will be decided in the Indian Ocean. Whoever controls the Indian Ocean, controls Asia, because this ocean is the key to the seven seas” [10]. The importance of the Indian Ocean is related to the US policies of European-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific, which brought the US closer to India, whose role in the development of the US policies may become vital. Beijing riposted to the US activities in the Indian Ocean in a very sagacious manner and adopted the “periphery” and “strings of pearls” strategies to secure itself in the In-

dian Ocean region. China's counter-strike ran contrary to the US plans to establish hegemony in the South Asian region and its periphery and decrease Chinese influence in the region.

Secondly, the Asia Pacific region has the largest energy reserves in the world. Chinese military modernization in Asia Pacific directly threatens the US dominance and Indian interests in the region.

Thirdly, the US has been trying to strengthen its presence in South Asia through joint military exercises with India and enjoying "the freedom of the maritime lanes from the Hormuz Straits and branching out in the West and East" [10].

Fourthly, due to China's economic escalation and expansion of its armed forces, the US has re-examined its policy towards India. Owing to its rising economic and nuclear power, as well as strategic potential that can be used to counter China, India became momentous for the US policy makers.

In the fifth place, the US realized the importance of India as a counterweight to rising China, capable of contributing to the re-distribution of power in the Asian arena. Using the former tensions between India and China caused by the border disputes and historical resentment (the two nations were historical competitors from economic, political and strategic perspectives), the USA is trying to use the power rebalance in its favor. Three "transition states" – Russia, China and India – are political players that need to be "handled with care" by the US. Rapprochement with India to contain China was the best option for Washington to prevent a possible China-India-Russia alliance.

In the sixth place, India has shown itself as an important commercial partner with a rapid economic growth and notable development in the information technology industry.

In the seventh place, after the disintegration of the Socialist bloc, China is currently the most influential and fastest growing power in Asia. Its rapid expansion in Asia Pacific has turned it into the number one competitor of the United States.

And lastly, the US adopted the "balance of power" strategy, using India as a countervailing force against rising China [10].

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Научная статья

Американо-индийские отношения через призму холодной войны: период отчуждения (краткий обзор)

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Аннотация. В данной статье дается краткое описание непростой истории отношений, идеологических разногласий, расхождений в национальных интересах, непонимания, взлетов и падений в отношениях между двумя крупнейшими демократиями – Индией и США – в период холодной войны. После Второй мировой войны между двумя конкурирующими сверхдержавами – США и СССР – началось идеологическое противостояние, получившее название «холодной войны». В эпоху холодной войны оба государства стремились распространить свои идеологии на азиатский регион и его периферию. США формировали блоки безопасности и оказывали существенную финансовую помощь азиатским странам в попытке сдержать экспансию коммунистической идеологии своего главного соперника (СССР) в регионе. После обретения Индией независимости США оказали давление на индийское руководство, чтобы оно присоединилось к американскому блоку против Советского Союза. С другой стороны, СССР создал Варшавский договор и пытался включить в свой блок вновь рожденные государства, такие как Индия и Пакистан, чтобы противостоять курсу США. Однако Индия не была настроена вступать в какие-либо внешние блоки, прежде всего в блок США, и вступила в Движение неприсоединения. Автор отмечает, что вместо заключения внешнеполитических альянсов индийское руководство поддержало лозунг «Азия для азиатов» и осудило участие внерегиональных держав, таких как США, в азиатских региональных делах.

Ключевые слова: холодная война, Индо-американские отношения, Движение за Индию и неприсоединение, политика сдерживания США

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Research article

US Middle East Policy Shift: Trump’s Administration Divergency

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Abstract. Middle East is one of the most volatile geopolitical hotspots in the world. US administration approach towards the region is crucial for geopolitical relations between great powers, regional stability, moreover projects leverages and friction for political developments far beyond its geographical definition. Main research objective takes a comparative prospective between administrations of Barack Obama and Donald Trump and their approaches towards the region. Key hypothesis is that approach of Donald Trump differs from the one of Barack Obama. Sub-hypothesis is: was US influence in the Middle East more profound and sinewy, during Obama administration and his “universal liberalism” – theoretical approach, or Trump administration Hobbesian realism, zero-sum and “make the job done” is more potent for new geopolitical constellation of power. Further, autocratic dictators or Islamist forces, is democracy in the Middle East increasing or decreasing US influence in the region. This article determines effects of how different theoretical, personal and operational dynamics influence political developments on multiple levels. Identifies vectors and modality of US relations with key countries in the region during both administrations. Analysis in this article lies in the realist school of thought in international politics and uses comparative methods of Comparative politics in political science.

Keywords: Trump, Obama, Geopolitics, Middle East, Asia, Russia, Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey

Introduction

According to observations of Joseph S. Nye Jr., even the founding fathers (of US) worried whether their new republic would decline in virtue like its ancient Roman predecessor. The resulting system of security alliances, multilateral institutions and relatively open economic policies has been called the American International order or the “liberal international order” [1]. This system now is facing new challenges in a new multipolar world. US security apparatus alongside its fi-

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nancial might encountered new volatile issues which need to be dealt with in a different manner than few decades ago. “Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat” is a useful aphorism of Sun Tzu to use as preliminary guide between the Obama and Trump approaches to the Middle East [2]. Referring to Middle East at any time and place, analyzing geopolitical and social movements steps-in the domain of a Sisyphean task. It is yet to be determent possible differences in approach between Trump and Obama administrations towards the Middle East. Obama administration tried to make a strategic shift towards east Asia possibly to contain rising Chinese power in the South China sea and Asia Pacific Region. On October 11, 2011 then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton wrote an article for Foreign Affairs, titled “America’s Pacific Century”. In it she states that over the past decade US attention has been preoccupied with conflicts in the Middle East, specifically ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. She argues that the magnitude of US resources and attention spent on these wars has been a mistake, and that it is important for the US to refocus its energy on areas of the world that can deliver the greatest return on our investment, such as the Asia-Pacific region [3]. Nevertheless, as it turned out, during the shift of focus, the Middle East became a possible Achilles heel for the US global military and political reach during Obama’s Administration. Prolonged Syrian crisis, Russian strategic rapprochement into Levant, taking initiative into peace talks and resolutions, together with prospects of new economic constellations in the Gulf Region, moreover with Chinese economic push, both in the “New Silk Road”, as well in the Horn of Africa, urged Trump administration to bring back the focus to Middle East. US saturation with prolonged engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq weaken the focus towards the region, while at the same time Russia issued “The Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation on February 2013 in which was stated that the main focus is “securing (Russia’s) high standing in the international community”; its paragraph 25 claims that Russia’s foreign policy is transparent, predictable and pragmatic. Paragraph 26 makes plain that “Russia is fully aware of its special responsibility for maintaining security in the world both on global and regional levels”. Together with the Foreign Policy Concept adopted in November 2016, the document reflects the views and policies of Russia after the annexation of Crimea and the beginning of its military intervention in Syria [4]. With Russian strategic rapprochement into the region, as well with China’s “push westwards”, conducted with permissive US foreign policy during Obama administration, strategic pivot to Asia-Pacific was not fruit-bearing as expected. Facing engrained social and economic indifferences, such as decline in the countries middle class and a social gap between middle-income Americans and the super-rich which can be reached back to the robber barons of the 1890’s and Gatsby’s of the 1920’s for a similar comparison [5], which was efused with liberal economic and migration policy US may lack political and economic leverage to deal with global issues with the same fervor as few decades earlier. Past experience shows that an incumbent president focus in his first term was

towards domestic policies and possible second term shifted the focus into international arena. This textbook approach is ever hard to follow in new geopolitical and economic relations. Despite having a major impact on world economy. Being the world leader in controlling the financial flows, due to the decades of liberal policy, most financial power in the US is in private hands. With the US National Debt Hitting Record highs [6; 7], the Trump administration is facing a challenging dilemma balancing between domestic issues or investing more political and financial capital in maintaining a global reach, which takes the US through a slippery path in new geopolitical constellation of the modern world. Obama's strategic approach pivoted to Asia, where US strategic thinkers had an agenda to block China in its attempt to breach the US containment in the Pacific and towards the South China Sea. Nevertheless, the flaw of such approach resulted with weakening the US position in the Middle East, peculiarly after Russia's intervention into Syrian Civil War and taking over diplomatic and political incentives in resolving the crisis. On the contrary, in east Asia, the US was only able to maintain a fragile status quo between China and US allies in the region. With the US focus on Asia, following ineffectiveness of the EU soft power approach, Russia used its military intervention approach in the strategic vacuum created between EU soft approach and US complaint diplomacy towards the region with high rate of success. Moscow positioned itself in the MENA region as a counterbalance to the West. In the Kremlin's view, as follow-up of the Arab Spring, the West – which means mainly the US but also the EU – is pursuing a destabilizing agenda aiming to overthrow some regional authoritarian regimes [4]. President Trump flamboyant style and political unpredictability creates a division between scientists and analysts regarding the differences between approaches of past and present administrations.

US Middle East Policy

Analyzing processes in the Middle East, it's clear, a classical/offensive realism/neorealism to be main force of political development instead of liberalism/neoliberalism and its derivations. In December 2015 President Putin addressed the UN General Assembly and blamed the West for the chaos in the Middle East and Libya particular. A few days later, Russia deployed jet fighters and anti-aircraft missile systems in Syria, altering dramatically the balance of power in the war and the diplomatic context for its solution [4]. Barack Obama formulated a Middle East strategy designed to repair the damage done during George W. Bush presidency. The United States needed to rest an exhausted military, replenish its soft power, and create political space for addressing long-standing challenges [8]. Obama did manage to reduce troops in Iraq, restrained from conducting new large-scale military interventions, and tried to address issues with diplomacy. Nevertheless, permissive diplomatic effort, after military withdrawal and Russian strategic ingress in the region was seen as a possible weakness. Obama's combinations and engagement such as signing Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), solicitating to broker a peace deal between Israelis

and Palestinians, based on a two-state solutions, encouraging democratic reforms, avoiding Sunni-Shia divide, alongside other policies, lacked incentives and were not suitable for contemporary issues and challenges. President Trump took a more direct and steadfast rapprochement to above mentioned issues, with less equivocal goals, moreover he introduced so-called Muslim travel ban, and is promoting bloc led by Saudi Arabia, Israel and the United Arab Emirates, which seeks to contain Iran. New reality of the Middle East, Russian rapprochement, spreading Iranian influence through fight against the ISIS/ISIL hampered Obama's decision in comparison of his ideological and theoretical glance. Based on decisions that the Obama administration had made, the traditional allies of the United States only saw that the United States had done a pivot to Asia, but it also pivoted towards Iran and had upset the regional balance of power. 2018 was also a significant year in terms of energy geopolitics, the United States once again was able to regain its title as the world's largest oil producer [9]. This fact, among other increases the leverage of US strategic standing with the regional countries, especially the GCC countries. It seems that in the post ISIS/ISIL era Middle East Iran containment takes contours of future clashes and possible new alignment. US secretary of State, Pompeo said, "It is impossible to achieve peace in the region without containing Iran". He stated that Houthis, Hamas, Hezbollah were real threats, and referred groups which had support from Iran [10]. President Trump approach was to invest great effort to bring the GCC leaders and Israel at the negotiating table. It seems that Trump's proactive realist approach towards the Arab-Israeli conflict and common urge of Sunni Gulf states and Israel to contain Iran's influence bring more US incentive and makes stronger US strategic leverage which was weakened during the Obama administration. US led Middle East conference in Warsaw, which took place on 13/14 February 2019. It was meant to confront Iran against its ballistic missile program, to mobilize EU allies against the nuclear deal (JCPOA) signed under President Obama, deter Iran from its policies of support to non-state actors in Yemen, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. Through the prospect of Trump's policy, that allies need to accept more incentive and bear a greater burden, the Warsaw conference was also meant to revive the Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA) [11], representing largely Sunni world, which was first discussed during President Trump's first visit to Saudi Arabia in 2017. US is prompting a creation of this alliance, consisting of the six GCC nations, Egypt and Jordan, it is colloquially called an Islamic NATO. These potential members have their own internal differences which will make difficult to realize the initiative. Nevertheless, Trump's effort and pro-Israeli card, already endeared Israel and Saudi Arabia, moreover if initiative is to be successful it would restore some of the US strategic leverage lost to Russia.

Iran

Obama's approach towards Iran was his greatest gamble [12] Obama's desire to get the Iran agreement (JCPOA) at all cost actually cost plenty; the United

States ceded Middle East to Iran and Russia. Iran is a top concern of the administration. The 2017 National Security Strategy mentions it 17 times. Trump had often criticized the deal. He and other conservatives complained it did nothing to address other problematic aspects of Iranian foreign policy, including its aspirations for regional hegemony and support for radical groups such as Hezbollah. The marginalization or departure of advisers inclined to support the JCPOA – such as Secretary of Defense James Mattis, former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and former National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster and the influence of hawkish National Security Adviser John Bolton, made withdrawal more likely. In a May 2018 speech, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that the administration would be willing to restore diplomatic and economic ties in return for: complete denuclearization; cessation of Iran’s ballistic missile program; the release of all prisoners that have citizenship in the US and or an allied nation; and end to efforts to extend Iranian influence in the region, especially in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan; and an end to cyberattacks. As a basis for negotiations, this was a non-starter [8]. In a retrospective hindsight, Iranian foreign policy priorities seem to be consistent. Despite several Iranian administrations have sought different approaches, the main pillars of Iran’s foreign policy such as Pan-Islamist, Pan-Shia, anti-Western, anti-Zionist and pro-Resistance Front have remained stable. Hassan Rouhani is bent on pursuing a centrist-pragmatic vision in Iran’s foreign policy, unlike an ideological-populist stance of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Within two months of inauguration, he had held a historic phone call with US President Barack Obama, becoming first Iranian and US presidents to speak directly since the Iranian revolution in 1979 [13]. Nevertheless, President Trump decision to withdraw from the JCPOA and levy new economic sanctions were probably a political calculation in a matrix containing new approaches towards Israel and Saudi Arabia. Worth mentioning, Trump’s unilaterally withdrawal from JCPOA made also a rift between his European allies. Trump’s Iran policy definitely differs from the previous administration, since he took office and followed up tensions escalating in last weeks. Trump administration has been ramping up criticism of Tehran considerably in recent weeks, with more sanctions expected in the coming days and strategic maneuvers such as, announced on Sunday May 5, 2019, moving a US carrier strike group to the region [14]. A US pragmatic shift towards Israel and Sunni world is evident in attempt to contain Iran and Russia. We are seeing an evidently different US *modus operandi* in the region.

Saudi Arabia

Whilst the election of Donald Trump was divisive within the United States, the reaction in the region given his vocal opposition towards the Iranian nuclear deal (JCPOA) and condemnation of Iranian Proxies, within the context of pro-Israeli stance, made him a welcome entrant to the White House to key regional partners such as Saudi Arabia who had been increasingly viewing themselves as locked in an existential struggle with Iran. Moreover, given his commercial back-

ground, there was every reason to expect that he could be a new partner. Great attention is traditionally given to the first country that a President of the United States chooses to visit after the election and in that case of Trump, it was Saudi Arabia. There were, two unique aspects about this inaugural visit, which should be identified here: the first was that a major arms deal was signed with Saudi Arabia which amounted to over US \$350 billion and was heralded as the largest arms deal in history. This figure was certainly inflated due to it encompassing previously signed agreements, and included intensions to buy rather than actual purchases, it was nonetheless a political accomplishment for Trump given he was elected on the platform of economic nationalism. The more important aspect of this inaugural visit was that an international summit was convened in Saudi Arabia where Trump could address the leaders of over 50 Arab and Muslim countries, with notable exceptions being Iran, Syria and Sudan [9]. Relations between US and Saudi Arabia manifest itself through a decade's long alliance of security cooperation and business ties dominated by US interest in oil. Despite some challenges in the past, such as the 1973 oil embargo and 9/11 attacks, successive US administrations have held Saudi Arabia as a critical strategic partner in the region. Supplementing previous administrations demeanor, the House of Saud was a faithful companion. Saudis created a complex system of governance through a series of alliances based on intermarriage and distributed oil wealth that created a coalition of tribes, clans and families undergirding the House of Saud. Alongside security and business, Saudi Arabia had a key place in US interventions, from the anti-Soviet engagement in Afghanistan till modern day wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Key figure in US diplomatic and intelligence efforts for decades was Saudi prince Turki al Faisal, who guided Saudi intelligence for a quarter of century. He was regarded as a key collaborator and friend of the CIA [15]. Fruitful cooperation faced a decline during Obama administration and historically common objectives of regional stability and containing Iran deferred in that period. Lack of US support for ousted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and his preclusion in initial negotiations on Iran's nuclear program (JCPOA) dismayed the Saudis. Saudi leadership was also ill at ease with President Obama's vision that the kingdom "share the neighborhood and institute some sort of cold peace" with Iran [16]. US-Saudi relations went off the usual tracs during Obama's indecisive and lukewarm approach towards key regional issues. US-Saudi relations got warm under President Donald Trump and Saudi de facto leader Mohammed bin Salman, who was elevated to crown prince in mid-2017. Both leaders expressed their intention to amalgamate efforts to counter Iran and return the relations to its previous tracks. Killing of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi posted some strains and discomfort in the diplomatic discourse as many members of the US Congress have called for reassessing the relationship with Riyadh. Nevertheless, volatile developments in the region, including other actors and pragmatic US approach managed to gloss over this politically unpleasant issue. With Trump's commercial background, Saudis pragmatism and joint interest arose from new geopolitical

developments, it can be expected that economic and political relations between two countries get an upward trajectory.

Israel, the Peace Process and new geopolitical constellation

Narrative of US-Israeli relations during Obama presidency were strained in manifestation through personal policies agendas between the conservative Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and liberal US president. Israel's realist side of viewing possible solutions for resolving Israeli-Palestinian conflict was not in line with the liberal view of Obama administration and his devotion for two state solution peace deal. Relations in that period between two countries remained unmodified and pragmatic on both sides. Even the well-known mutual loathing between Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Obama, has done little to negatively impact the relationship as the respective policies are in close alignment [17]. Nevertheless, relations got its previous scope since Trump took office. Israel is one of the countries in the region which can be most pleased with the Trump administration. In addition to withdrawing from the JCPOA, which Netanyahu castigated as a "historic mistake", Trump moved the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and notified the Palestinians that their diplomatic mission in Washington will be closed. As ambassador, Trump send the lawyer David Friedman, a longtime friend of the president, who was seen as a vocal opponent of the two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The administration also canceled all funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees. The administration has cut more than US\$200 million in bilateral aid to the West Bank and Gaza. In spite of this one-sided approach, Trump has promised that he will resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict [8]. He assembled a "troika", led by his son in law, the 38-year-old real estate developer, Jarred Kushner, the lawyer Jason Greenblatt, longtime Trump Organization employee and US Ambassador to Israel, David Friedman. Kushner is well known and successful in closing business deals, but has no experience in diplomacy, it is yet to be seen if he manages to apply this attainment in Middle East politics. Details of the "Troika" plan has not been publicly revealed, however key regional players such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan have publicly rejected fundamental components. In an attempt to implement the peace plan, moreover to recapitulate US approach towards the region, Warsaw Middle East Conference was made public during the US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo visit at the University of Cairo, Egypt in January 2019. He stated that the agenda of the Conference would include terrorism, extremism, cyber terrorism, crises in Syria and Yemen and also make an overt reference to Iran's intervention in politics of the Middle East. The other major aim of this Conference was to reveal the much-veiled deal, "The Deal of the Century" and convince the Arab leaders to accept a permanent solution to the prolonged Arab-Israeli conflict [10]. In such geopolitical paradigm, Palestinian issue could be used on multiple levels, first as a leverage between regional powers, which main focus

is to contain Iran and its influence in the region, and in fragile constellation of relations between world powers, US and Russia. Palestinian issue could become a bargaining chip between the regional Arab powers and Israel, based on a realist political theory of mutual interests, where Gulf countries want to block Iran's influence in political but also in religious sphere on a Sunni-Shia division. Additional complexity in the regional equation was fueled with a non-national, non-state actor (ISIS/ISIL) which triggered a reshape of possible alliances in the region as well as the geopolitical entrenchment since the Russian rapprochement in Syria. In that hindsight, in November 2017, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff, Lt General Gadi Eisenkot, made headlines when he offered to share intelligence on Iran with Saudi Arabia – nothing that the two countries shared “many common interests” [18]. Such developments could indicate future geopolitical shifts, after recent developments in the region.

Further key fusion point is Golan Heights, a Cold War relic, with status quo residing for the last half century. The war in Syria has provided an opportunity for Israel to undermine any residual Syrian claims to the Golan Heights, which it occupied in 1967 and annexed in 1981. According to some analysts, Iran's expansion within Syria, both westwards and southwards, reflects a deeper ambition to move ever closer to the Golan Heights, a move which would pose a direct threat to Israel. This could be seen as a part of a broader effort to consolidate its regional leverage and deterrence capabilities – something that it might enhance if it moves assets closer to the Israeli border [19]. Such constellations of political and military developments alongside favorable Trump administration lend Israel an opportunity, a de jure verification of de facto realist stand on the ground. President Trump said at a rally in Green Bay, Wisconsin, on Saturday, 27 April that recognizing Israel's control of the disputed Golan Heights territory was a decision that is “important strategically” for the nation [20]. Israeli proactive approach towards Gulf countries, with its timidly agitation towards the Palestinian issue, backed up with US prize policy, could be another significant indicator in geopolitical changes and an attempt to diminish Iran's and Russian influence in the region.

Egypt and Turkey

Relations with two crucial allies in the region, Egypt and Turkey, have been strained in recent years. Ever since the 1979 peace agreement with Israel, the Arab Republic has benefitted from US\$1.3 billion in annual military aid, largely because Washington is eager to keep relations between key allies on a strong footing. However, in the wake of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's 2014 seizure of power, Obama administration briefly froze some military aid after the coup but relented in 2015. Concerned by Cairo's facilitation of North Korean arm sales, Trump administration also temporarily withheld some funding, almost US\$ 300 million, but released much of it in July 2018. Trump's realist “make the job done” approach could be more fruitful towards strong political figures with authoritarian inclinations such as el-Sisi than his liberal predecessor. Com-

plexity in the regional equation added Russian involvement in Syrian war. With Moscow's military and diplomatic push, Egypt and Israel both now have their own lines of communication with the Kremlin and see Vladimir Putin as a reliable statesman who does what he says and follows through on his commitments. Kremlin offers itself as a more reliable mediator than Washington and proffers equipment and capabilities that Washington is reluctant to provide. This in turn makes former Cold War adversaries in the region, especially Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel, more open to developing a new relationship with the Kremlin while maintaining its influence with governments like Iran that are hostile towards the US [21]. From the individual point of view, Trump's firm approach could be accepted with greater interest in contrast to strong personality of Vladimir Putin. In regards of Turkey, US relations towards Ankara in recent years, were far from the ones which were supposed to be with a key NATO ally. During Obama's turn in Office, deteriorating relations culminated after the failed coup in Turkey on July 15, 2016. Initially, both the Europeans and Americans behaved hesitantly to congratulate President Erdoğan and the Turkish people for defeating the coup plotters. Instead, they called for the preservation of Turkish democracy. Then, the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, explicitly warned the Turkish leadership to refrain from mass purges of its military officers that might weaken the fight against the ISIL. In response to the US critique of mass purges, President Erdoğan accused the US of being partially involved in the coup, since Fethullah Gülen, the leading figure of the coup, resides in Pennsylvania with a Green card [22]. It seemed that change of administration in Washington would bring some change in relations between two countries, but this also proved to be of short run. Initially, Trump and Turkish President Erdoğan enjoyed strong chemistry, however Ankara's purchase of Russian arms, attacks in Syria on Kurdish fighters, a key US ally and Washington's refusal to extradite Fethullah Gülen had no apparent impact on the relationship between the two men. In fact, according to reports, Trump first bumped the Turkish leader during NATO meeting in Helsinki in July 2018, praising him for not allowing democratic niceties to prevent decisive action, unlike other European leaders. Nevertheless, Trump drew the line when it came to safeguard his domestic political interests. Among a group of US citizens incarcerated in Turkey, the administration has focused on Andrew Brunson. The fate of the pastor was of special interest to evangelical Christians, a crucial part of the president's conservative base and Vice President Mike Pence often highlighted Brunson's case [8]. In October 2018, Trump administration successfully secured the release of Andrew Brunson, after US economic sanctions and tariffs were placed on Turkey which further erode relations between NATO allies. This was the first time the US was sanctioning a NATO ally and relations stayed restrained. Geopolitical complexity in the region, Russian strategic push and US institutional "restrains" did not find a precise leverage for the Middle Eastern matrix. Obama's initial focus to domestic politics and an incentive to pivot towards Asia did not proliferate US interest in the region and left key partners in limbo or even discouraged from the

path of mutual interest such as with Turkey. Obama allowed America's dysfunctional political culture to undermine his peace vision and defeat it [23]. Moreover, his approach did not yield expected success in dealing with key regional issues, but it did deteriorate relations with Egypt and a key NATO member, Turkey. On the contrary, Trump's approach albeit initial hope of restoring deteriorated relations, was not able to redress accumulated issues, such as the US backing of Kurds in Syria, US sanctions and tariffs within Trump's policy of economic protectionism, peculiarly afflicting Turkey because of incarceration of US citizens after the coup and Turkey's rapprochement with Russia does not give much institutional nor political framework to significantly improve relations on a short basis.

Iraq and Syria

In a speech at Camp Lejeune in early 2009, President Obama outlined how he planned to end the US military commitment to Iraq, stressing his administration would "not let the pursuit of the perfect stand in the way of achievable goals". After December 2011, he predicted, it would be up to Iraqis to secure their own future. Popular sentiment firmly supported Obama's decision. Nevertheless, he inherited US military involvement in Iraq and signed agreement with the Iraqi government by the Bush administration about the US military withdrawal from Iraq, colloquially called US-Iraq Status of Forces Agreement. This agreement complied with Obama's "anti-doctrinal doctrine" [23], moreover assimilating into his domestic policy focus as well as the strategic pivot to Asia. In accordance with this agreement, all United States forces should have withdrawn from Iraq by December 18, 2011. In 2013, anger and discontent among Sunni population sparked nationwide and peaceful protest against Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, which security forces cracked down violently. Obama turned away his attention from Iraq and in June 2013 he proposed 70 to 95 percent cuts in US funding for Iraqi peacebuilding, human rights and civil society. Escalation of war in Syria and 2014 advance of the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) from Syria to Iraq's western provinces prompted another US intervention in Iraq and subsequently, Syria. Learning from previous mistakes in 2011-2014, Obama tried to adopt more balanced approach. Strategic quagmire started in Syria was spreading through Iraq, and US military withdrawal without securing a stable and functional government in Iraq, resulted with chaos and demise of US influence. Incentives in anti-terrorist activities and diplomacy were taken over by Russia which weaken US influence in the region. Following downturns in foreign policy, President Obama sent American troops to Syria in 2015 as a part of a coalition against the ISIS/ISIL. Describing Obama's Middle East policy as a complete failure, ex US Vice President went even further with stating: "... Iraq is at risk of falling to a radical Islamic terror group and Mr. Obama is talking climate change.... Mr. Obama is busy ushering America's adversaries into positions of power in the Middle East. First it was the Russians in Syria, now, in a move that defies creduli-

ty, he toys with the idea of ushering Iran into Iraq... American freedom will not be secured by empty threats, meaningless red lines, leading from behind, appeasing our enemies, abandoning our allies or apologizing for our great nation, all hallmarks to date of Obama doctrine... In 1983, President Ronald Reagan said, “If history teaches anything, it teaches that simple minded appeasement or wishful thinking about our adversaries is folly” [24]. Cheney’s remarks describe, roughly but realistically Obama’s Middle Eastern policy and its achievements and that is a demise of US influence in the region without a supplementary gain in other parts of the world. President Trump also led to incline a possible shift of policy and not much interest for the Middle East at the beginning of his presidential term. Nevertheless, volatile developments and a prospect of losing strategic grip and influence on Russia and Iran, prompted President Trump to get significantly involved. Arranging the Middle Eastern puzzle, its noteworthy that President’s Trump feud with Erdoğan came at an inappropriate moment. Turkey is an influential actor in Syria and the US military uses Incirlik Air Base for airstrikes against the Islamic State. In early 2018, former Secretary of State Tillerson announced a plan that entailed indefinitely committing troops to Syria in order to counter Iran and secure the ouster of President Bashar al-Assad. Then, in April 2018, Trump ordered the military to begin planning for the withdrawal of troops from Syria [8], and on Wednesday December 19, 2018, President Trump ordered a complete withdrawal of all US troops from Syria [25]. The impending military withdrawal of US from Syria will also reduce Washington’s diplomatic influence over Syria-related developments. Even before the US made decision to leave, it was indicative that Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Emmanuel Macron met and discuss Syria with the presidents of Russia and Turkey [26]. Obama administration left-handedness with dealing of issues in Iraq and Syria has demise the US strategic influence in the region and spreading the ones of Russia and Iran. It’s is yet to be seen which the next steps of US strategic thinkers will be to contain Russian and Iranian influence in the region. President Trump took firmer approach, hence in the wake of present developments different instruments need to be used and different ways to be found. Possible scenario is that the Kurds in Syria and Iraq will be another bargaining chip between the regional powers and used as a leverage for the regional balance of power. Kurds are the main US ally in Syria and Iraq, as long as Turkey and Iran align with Russian strategies. Obama’s policy played a significant role in rapprochement between Russia, Turkey and Iran. Despite Kurds being a strategic US ally, they were left behind by previous US administrations in the past, moreover any possible future rapprochement between US and Turkey is likely to use the Kurdish leverage.

Conclusion

In this article, by sublimating data and analyzing differences in approaches towards the Middle Eastern issues between Obama and Trump administrations,

we can conclude existence of disparity in implementation of policies. It is noteworthy that President Trump is still in his first presidential term and this might have influence on his focus and sequence of priorities. As an American government official, academic and author, Stephen Sestanovich has shown American foreign policy has always oscillated between overreaching maximalism and retrenchment. In the cycle of retrenchment that had began well before the election of November 2016, Trump's National Security Strategy (NSS) of December 2017 expressed skepticism about the benefits of multilateral institutions and global commerce, refocusing attention instead on Great Power rivalry with China and Russia. In January 2018 Defense Secretary James Mattis proclaimed that "great power competition, not terrorism, is now the primary American focus". In the view of Economist, "Trump seems to reject both the Bush and Obama doctrines" and strategy's "transactional, zero-sum tone is dismaying". Obama's move towards universal liberalism, exchanged Trump's relevant standards of Hobbesian realism [1]. Irrelevant of ideological and doctrinal view of any individual, function of a US President is contracted with interwoven mosaic of institutional constrains and conciliation of plethora opposed interests. The discontent between nature of Obama's rhetoric and his centrist policies, largely adhering to the status quo, disappointed critics at home on both left and right who looked for ideological clarity and purity. The air is also thick with liberal disappointment because of Obama's unwillingness to close down Bush's 9/11 wars and heal the scars, including the US military prison at Guantánamo Bay. Even the sympathetic Zbigniew Brzezinski, a former National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter, noted the mismatch between rhetoric and the reality of the Obama administration: "I greatly admire his insights and understanding. I don't think he really has a policy that's implementing those insights and understandings". Brzezinski added: "He doesn't strategize. He sermonizes". Obama's priorities were domestic and primarily economic. Foreign affairs, including the Middle East did not rank high on his agenda [23]. Bind with contrasted, entrenched interest groups and ideological background which brought him to office, Obama's unhandy balancing brought to decline of US influence in the region, weaken strategic partnerships with no identical gain on the domestic side of policy. Trump's approach is definitely different, albeit it's yet to be seen what kind of result will be delivered. US political influence in region has eroded in the last decade as a result of inapposite Obama's policy and his disbalance between his ideological views and lacking geopolitical agenda. Obama's presidency was characterized with constant temptation between a radical change envied with his liberal world view and the need to action, expected from a world power which is trying to hold onto a number one world power status. In that prospective, a speech delivered by President Putin at the Valdai forum in Sochi in October 2018, saying that US dominance is ending after mistakes "typical of an empire" [27] bears even more irritation and should give US policy more intention to refocus the Middle East. It seems that Trump's policy is just on that agenda and his pragmatic, business-like approach is more likely to achieve results. Re-

gional political specter has change in recent years and Donald Trump does not have the same leverage as his predecessors. Nevertheless, change of approach and modus operandi seems to have changed, it is yet to be seen how much political and economic leverage his policy will achieve. It is crucial to decide on strategic agenda which needs to elect an ideological, operational and political method of action. US, as a world power cannot allow to be seen weak, nor out of focus, moreover it needs to have a pragmatic, realist approach to preserve its influence and geopolitical reach. President Obama's ambiguous policy derailed US strategic incentive. President Trump's adamant and pragmatic policy is a turn from his predecessor. Its yet to be seen with what benefit in new regional geopolitical constellation.

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Научная статья

Сдвиг политики США на Ближнем Востоке: политика администрации Д. Трампа

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Аннотация. Ближний Восток – один из самых геополитически нестабильных и напряженных регионов мира. Подход администрации США к региону имеет решающее значение для геополитических отношений между великими державами, региональной стабильности и мира. Основная цель настоящей статьи – сравнительный анализ администраций президентов Барака Обамы и Дональда Трампа и их подходов к региону. Ключевая гипотеза статьи заключается в том, что внешнеполитический подход к региону Дональда Трампа радикально отличается от подхода предыдущего президента США – Барака Обамы. Автор задается вопросом: было ли влияние США на Ближнем Востоке более глубоким и значительным, в период администрации Б. Обамы и его концепции «универсального либерализма», или администрации Д. Трампа, придерживающейся политического реализма для новой геополитической констелляции власти. В данной статье определяются эффекты влияния различных концептуальных, личностных и операционных факторов на политические события на различных уровнях. Автор выявляет векторы и модальности отношений США с ключевыми странами региона в период администраций обоих президентов. Автор проводит анализ на основе школы реализма в международной политике и опирается на методологию сравнительного подхода в политологии.

Ключевые слова: Д. Трамп, Б. Обама, геополитика, Ближний Восток, Азия, Россия, Иран, Израиль, Саудовская Аравия, Турция

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INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ ОПЫТ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО УПРАВЛЕНИЯ

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Research article

Study on the Effectiveness of Internal Control Systems in Ghana Public Sector: A Look into the District Assemblies. Part 2

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Abstract. Assessing the effectiveness of the internal control system in the public sector is one of the surest way to identify if public institutions are working effectively to achieve corporate objectives. The objective of the study is to assess the effectiveness of the internal control systems in the MMDA'S. The study made use of convenience and purposive sampling method to sample data. It was observed that there is an existence of internal control system in the Adenta. Municipal Assembly and it is very effective in the achievement of the Assembly's objectives. The Writer recommended that the government should employ more personnel who are members of the professional bodies such as the ICA Ghana, ACCA, and CIMA into the unit, this is because with their knowledge and in-depth study of their profession it will help to reduce the problems of internal control as highlighted in this work.

Keywords: internal control systems, effectiveness, public sector, ADMA, Adenta municipal assembly, Ghana

Form and Structure of Decentralization System in Ghana

Decentralization of the machinery of government has been espoused in the 4th Republican Constitution of 1992. Article 35 (6) (d) [1] of the Constitution provides for making “democracy a reality by decentralizing the administrative and financial machinery of government to the regions and districts”. To give form and meaning to the constitutional provisions relating to decentralization, the government enacted the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 463) [2]. Other subsidiary legislations have also been enacted to deepen the range, scope and process of decentralization, notably Local Government (Urban, Zonal and Town Councils and Unit Committees) Establishment Instrument of 1994 (L.I. 1589), Civil Service Law of 1993 (PNDC Law 327), (Act 455) [3], National Development Planning (System) Act of 1994 (Act 480)[4] and the Local Government Service Act

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of 2003 (Act 656) [5]. From a review of these legal documents and commentaries on Ghana's decentralization policy and programme, the objectives of the decentralized system can be stated as follows:

- To restructure the allocation of resources and reassign functions and responsibilities into three levels of government (national, regional and district).
- To promote efficiency of management; integrate central and local government units and functions at the district level into the District Assembly system; and
- To improve resource allocation, utilisation and management as well as administrative efficiency by providing for flexible adaptation of local conditions and circumstances that may affect development efforts and outcomes [6].

Generally, the local government structure that emerged under the decentralised system of planning and public administration has four levels: national, regional, district and sub district level institutions.

At the national level, the ministries have been restructured into four-line directorates to deal with broad sector policy formulation, planning, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation. At the regional level, the Regional Coordinating Councils coordinate, harmonize, monitor and evaluate the activities of metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies within their respective areas of jurisdiction. At the district level, the metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies are the highest political administrative, legislative, development, planning including implementation and rating authority. At the sub district level, the sub metro district councils, urban councils, zonal councils, town councils, area councils and unit committees have been established to perform community and grassroots planning and management functions in support of the district assemblies within which they are located. Also operating concurrently at the national, regional and district levels are the parastatals (public companies), statutory bodies, non-governmental organizations and private sector firms that do not directly form part of the decentralisation programme. The structure of the local government system is depicted in Figure 1 below.

Ghana's local government structure, roles and procedures, in practice entails elements of the five forms of decentralization. These are depicted as: deconcentration where governmental functions are assigned to regional and district offices of sector MDAs e.g. Department of Feeder Roads, Department of Urban Roads etc.; delegation where responsibilities and authority for specific public sector activities are assigned to parastatals or other semi-autonomous central government organisation e.g. ECG, GWCL and CWSA; devolution where local government units are given the decision making, resource generation and allocation authority to perform specific public sector development functions; principal agency where local government units are allowed to perform specific public sector functions at the local level on behalf of central government under the latter's supervision and direction; and privatisation where certain public sector functions i.e. provision and management of services and facilities such as markets and refuse collection and disposal are transferred to private sector firms, individuals and NGOs [6]. Given the experience of Ghana's decentralisation system over

time, there is an apparent emphasis and direction towards decentralisation by devolution. The essence of devolution is discretionary authority. This implies that MMDAs must have the discretion to raise, allocate and utilize financial resources to promote the overall development of their respective areas of jurisdiction. This makes fiscal decentralization, an essential component of Ghana's decentralization programme.

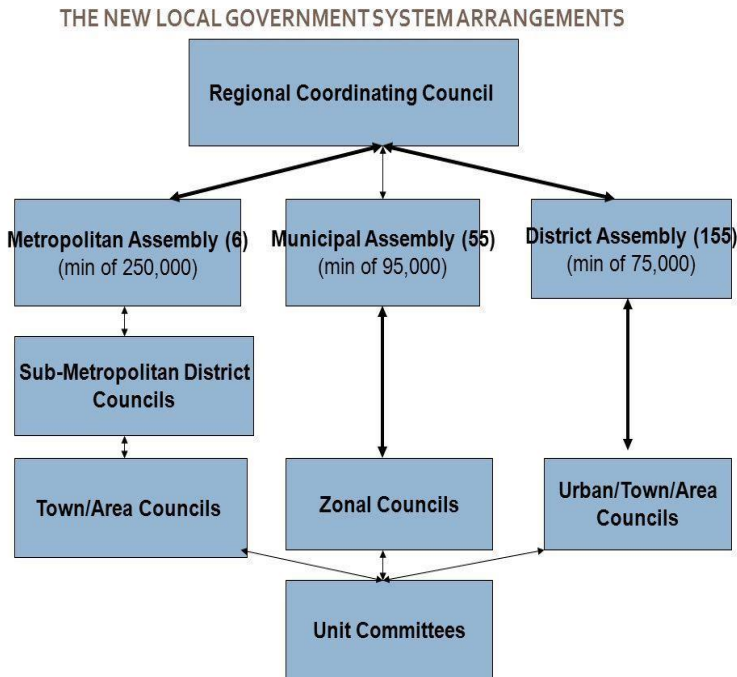


Fig. 1. Structure of the Local Government System.

Source: MLGRD, 1996

Fiscal Decentralization in Ghana

Fiscal decentralisation entails entrusting local government units with the authority and capacity to generate, allocate and utilize financial resources to promote socio economic development. According to Kokor and Kroes, the objectives of Ghana's decentralisation programme are to increase local revenue mobilization, restructure allocation of resources to meet local needs and empower MMDAs to make allocation decisions at the local level over both locally generated funds and those transferred from the central government [6].

In furtherance of these objectives, the District Assemblies Common Fund was established and has been in operation for over a decade. The allocations to each MMDA are based on a formula approved by Parliament. Disbursements are made on a quarterly basis and a quarter in arrears.

The DACF is available to MMDAs only for investment expenditure. In 2008, the proportion of total government revenue allocated to the DACF was reviewed from 5% to 7.5%. All MMDAs can only receive their allocations upon

the submission of their Annual Action Plans (AAP) and Annual Budgets to the Administrator of the DACF. MMDAs have also been mandated under section 245 of the 1992 Constitution and Act 462 to collect fees, fines, rates, tolls and licenses in order to support socio economic development in their areas. Further to this, several legal instruments have been enacted to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of financial resources at the local level. These include:

- Financial Administration Act, 2003 (Act 654, amendment to FAD, 1979, SMCD 221)
- Financial Administration Regulations, 2004 (L.I. 1802, revoking the Financial Administration Regulations, 1979, L.I. 1234)
- Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663)
- Ghana Audit Service Act, 2000, (Act 658)
- Internal Audit Agency Act, 2004 (Act 656),

It has to be acknowledged that some modest gains have been achieved since the process of fiscal

decentralisation was set in motion in Ghana. According to Kunfaa, despite th many negative stories about misappropriation of funds in MMDAs, a significant number of development projects have been carried out on the initiative of almost every MMDA throughout the country, which would not have been the case if development was initiated from only the central government.

A number of bottlenecks towards fully institutionalizing fiscal decentralisation in Ghana however still remain. These include the following:

- Substantial authority had been given to MMDAs without accompanying resources to fulfil the mandates;
- Composite budget system has not been fully operationalised;
- MDAs continue to prepare budget estimates and account for expenditure on sectorial basis at the district and regional levels;
- Limited discretionary authority of MMDAs over funds from DACF;
- Weak local revenue generation and mobilisation capacity of MMDAs
- Untimely disbursement of funds from DACF; and
- Substantial deduction in the quarterly DACF allocation to the MMDAs to finance national level programme e.g. National Youth Employment Programme, Fumigation etc.

• Variances in the amounts allocated, disbursed and actually received by MMDAs from the DACF. The variations were as a result of the fact that certain expenditures were incurred on behalf of MMDAs and the cost deducted at source.

To address these and other related challenges with fiscal decentralisation in Ghana, a number of initiatives are being implemented. An inter-governmental fiscal framework that clearly assigns service responsibilities between the central government and the sub-national level has been developed and is being implemented. A Municipal Finance Bill to assist local governments to source funds from the open capital market is being considered by Parliament. In a bid to further strengthen the fiscal capacity of MMDAs, the Ghana

government and Development Partners (DPs) have introduced the District Development Facility (DDF). This facility exists to provide additional financial resources to MMDAs through an annual performance assessment to enable them implement programmes and projects in their MTDPs. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development also intends to introduce the concept and practice of “municipal contracts” whereby Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies would be assessed at the technical/urban, financial and organizational levels with a view to granting them additional financial assistance to implement projects identified in a Priority Investment Programme prepared after the assessment.

District Assembly’s Compliance to Internal Controls and Prescribed Procedures

According to Kwamena Ahowi one time Local Government Minister, there is an evidence to suggest that the proceeds have been embezzled by the district assembly officials and in award of contracts for development projects, some district chief executives have colluded with contractors to inflate the cost of projects. In April 1997, twenty DCE’s were dismissed for rent – seeking practice. In August 1997, the Ashanti Regional Minister refused to commission a clinic in one of the districts because the cost was inflated. All these problems noted were due to non – compliance of the officials to the internal controls and procedures.’’[7]

Again according to Vice President Atta Mills in 1997 monitoring teams of the regional coordinating council and the report of the auditor general 1995, 1996, and 1997 indicated that most district assemblies had invested in idle funds, which were usually proceeds from the district assembly common funds (DACF) in treasury bills. The Central Government directed the District Assemblies to refrain from the practice because it amounted to the government paying for the interest on its own money and this fueled inflation.

The district assembly over rely on the on the proceeds of the district assembly common fund (DACF). For example, only the Accra Metropolitan Assembly was able to generate about 45% of their projected revenue from their traditional source since the introduction of DACF. It was also established that most of the assemblies use the proceeds from DACF on their recurrent expenditure as against the DACF laws and guidelines which prescribe the use of DACF for only capital projects and it related expenditure.

Former minister of the ministry of local government and rural development states that the key challenges facing the local government system is the putting in place a sound financial management in the district assembly. That, to most critics to the decentralization process, the local government sector is not well equipped to manage the huge resources entrusted to them. This was based on the forensic audit report on the Local Government Ministry (Assemblies) from 1992 – 2000, that showed a gross malfeasance of large sums of money at the assemblies like the payment of non-existing projects, awards of projects not going through the tender-

ing process, expenditure not having a budget line, records in financial statements not reconcilable, expenditures not authorized and among others.

Revenue collection and administration in Kumasi leaves much to be desired. Some of the reasons for such poor performance were, on -participation of rate payers in fixing rate, failure of the assemblies to account to the public the disbursement of revenues, poor public education on taxation, poor human resource management, failure of the assemblies to provide adequate facilities in the markets, the parallel procedures – with different intermediaries – for payment of revenues into the treasury, the usage of the receipts books without carbon copies and the general counterfoil receipts(GCR) booklets for the collections of all public revenues in Ghana, among others.

According to public expenditure tracking survey (PETS) report [8], the expenditure reports from the district assemblies are inconsistent with those of the DACF office. The report showed a total of 3 billion were transferred from the DACF office whereas the district assemblies reported receiving 400 billion cedi. However, these inconsistencies could not be explained by any of the units. The report also stated that the study of projects undertaken by the assemblies showed that about 30% of the projects were completed on schedule and the authorities could not assign reasons for this situation. Perhaps, this was the result of non-adherence to control procedures in the assemblies.

According to the Auditors General Report [9] on the financial statements of the assemblies for the period 1996 – 2000, the following findings were made:

- Payments were made without proper authorization processes followed contrary to the provisions of the financial administration regulations.

- Payments for mobilization to contractors ranging from 25% and above of the contract sums as against part IX section 69 of the financial memoranda of district assemblies, which provide a limit to 15% of the contract sum.

- That, section 1522 of the store's regulations 1984, requires a work order form to be supported by a written estimate of the cost repairs or other work required by clients which must be signed by a manager or supervisor of the workshop. However, contrary to this provision, most assemblies sent their vehicles and equipment to garages or workshops for servicing or repairs without formal works order or authorization.

- Contrary to section 17(1) of the procurement act 2003, acts 663, and the tender board regulations, it was observed that most assemblies executed various projects without going through the tendering process.

- Contrary to parts IX, section 74 of the financial memoranda most assemblies were not keeping contract registers on projects.

- That chapter V section 70 of the stores regulations states that, 'all stores received will be taken on charge in the stores ledger, store cost book at the time of receipts and entries will be supported by the prescribed vouchers''. However, contrary to these provisions, most assemblies did not follow these procedures.

- Part 1, section 22 (1) of the financial administration regulations states that 'all public monies collected shall be paid gross into the public funds accounts and

no disbursement shall be made from the monies collected except as provided by an enactment’’. Contrary to these provisions, the audit revealed that the assembly staff (revenue collectors) could not account for a total of 5.86 billion cedi being part revenues collected from taxpayers. This was attributed to poor supervision of revenue collectors by management.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design used is survey design where data was gathered from respondents. Survey design describes the process of collecting data from members of a population in order to determine their current status in that population with respect to one or more variables [10]. This type of research design is best appropriate since it provided the researcher the opportunity to collect primary data. Furthermore, the researcher engaged the respondents which made it possible to understand the dynamic factors of the research by having a direct experience. The advantage with the survey design is that the researcher had the likelihood to experience how the internal control system of the assembly is practiced rather than getting it through the secondary sources.

Population

The general staff of Adenta Municipal Assembly (ADMA) was considered for population of the research study. An assessment from the assembly indicates that the total number of employees at the assembly was seventy.

Sample Size

The sample size refers to the number of elements to be included in the study. For this research work, the researcher selected a sample size of forty-five from the research population which includes both staff and management of Adenta Municipal Assembly (ADMA).

Sampling Technique

To enable valid references to be made about population characteristics, the convenience and purposive sampling methods was used in choosing the sample for the study.

Convenience Sampling

It was non-random sampling technique in which the researcher decided the selection of sampling units based on their convenience.

Purposive Sampling

This implied deliberate selection of sample unit from whole purpose. This sample technique was used because they were easy, less costly and convenient to use because they seek to target respondents who can provide relevant information that would address the issue under consideration. In this type of sampling, respondents were selected on the basis of their accessibility and convenient to the researcher.

Research Instruments

The researcher used questionnaire to obtained information relevant to the study. The questionnaires were structured with both open-ended and closed-

ended questions which provided possible alternatives to choose from. The questionnaires formed the bases on the research questions and objectives of the study. The study was brief and respondents were assured of confidentiality of any information that they provided. The use of questionnaires provided the researcher the opportunity to accumulate data of the selected themes outlined in by the questionnaires and objectives of the study. In all, fifty questionnaires were administered to the staff at the various departments of the assembly. The use of questionnaires permitted wide coverage for a minimum expense for both in money and efforts. Also, it reached out to individuals who were normally difficult to contact.

Source of Data

The researcher made use of primary and secondary data collection. The primary data is the data collected directly by the researcher from the respondent under the study. The researcher used questionnaires to collect primary data for the study.

The secondary data consisted of literatures materials by well-known writer and authors in the field of organizational internal control systems and other related topics. Information was gathered from published sources, (books, articles and course literature with useful information for the study), the internet and some information from the assembly.

Administration Procedure

At the onset, the researcher sought the help of the management of the assembly, followed by an official letter to conduct the research. Administration of the questionnaires was done by the researcher by hand. The assembly was served with fifty copies for ten working days in which respondents were expected to finish answering the questionnaires. In some cases, the items completed instantly for collection while others were collected later by the researcher.

Validation of research instrument

The extent to which a particular measure is free from both systematic and random error indicates the validity of the measure. The research instrument validated both internally and externally. Internal validity can be viewed from a number of different perspectives, being face validity, content validity; criterion validity and construct validity.

The following internal validities were ensured:

1. For *face validity*, the researcher thought that it was logical to assess the respondents' knowledge on the internal control system of the Assembly using questionnaires.

2. To achieve *content validity*, the questionnaires for this study given to the research supervisor for review.

3. On *criterion validity*, the questionnaire was matched up with similarly validated questionnaire used in related studies.

4. With respect to *construct validity*, the items in the questionnaire were taken from the review.

Data Analysis

In order to draw a meaningful, valid and relevant recommendation a combination of qualitative and quantitative procedures was used. The researcher examined all questionnaires individually to ensure that answers elicited from the respondents address the research objectives stated in the study. The responses to the questions were rated and analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2010 and descriptive statistical tools such as frequency tables and percentages. The analyzed data was discussed within the context of the research objectives.

Table 1

Findings and Discussions of Data Table 1.1: Sex Distribution of Respondents

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Male | 28 | 62 |
| Female | 17 | 38 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

The gender of the respondents was discussed to indicate the age disposition of respondents. From the data collected, it was observed that the assembly has more male employees than female employees, 62% of respondents constituting male and the remaining 38% constituting female. This indicates how the activities of the various MMDA's in the country are dominated by males.

Age Distribution of Employees

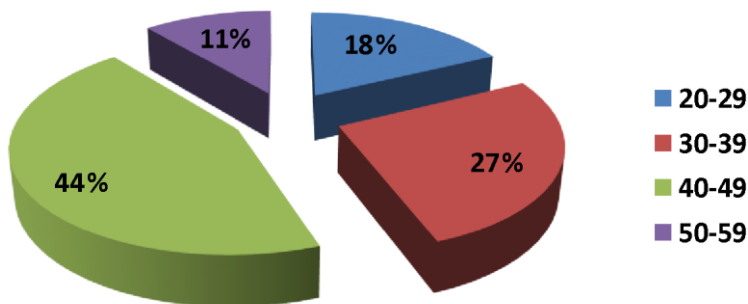


Fig. 2.1. Age Distribution of Employees.

Source: field data 2018

Figure 2.1 above shows that most of the respondents (20) were between the ages of 40–49 years, representing 44%, followed by 30–39 years representing 27%. 18% and 11% range between 20–29 years and 50–59 years respectively. This pre-supposes that, the demographic characteristics of the Assembly in terms of age were young and active and are able to take part in internal control activities.

Table 1.2

Educational Attainment of Respondent

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|----------|-----------|--------------|
| Degree | 28 | 62 |
| Masters | 8 | 18 |
| Others | 9 | 20 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

In table 1.2, is the educational qualification of the respondents. It was found that 62% of the respondents are degree holders, 18% Masters and 20% are professional certificate holders. This shows that the organization has much more qualified employees who are likely to have much information and knowledge about internal controls of the Assembly. The educational background will make them understand and assist to keep effective controls of the assembly’s transactions.

Ranks of Respondents

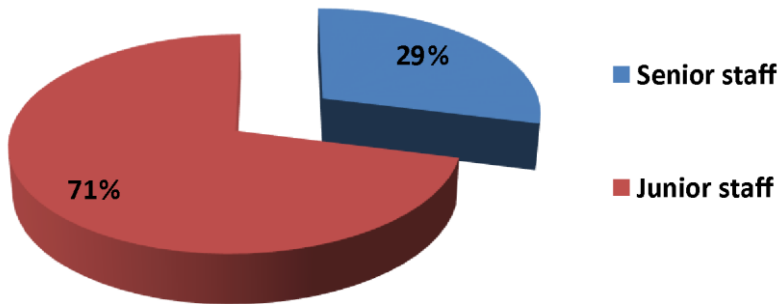


Fig. 2.2. Ranks of Respondents.

Source: field data 2018

Figure 2.2 shows that, a greater percentage of staff members of Adentan Municipal Assembly are junior staff recording a percentage of 71%. Senior staffs recorded a percentage of 29%. It was however discovered that the few senior staff were mostly heads of departments (The Town and Country Planning, Budgeting, Auditing, Feeder Roads, The Coordinating Director etc). This group of people constitutes the management of the Assembly. It was therefore the responsibility of the management to communicate the internal control system to their subordinates for effective and efficient running of the Assembly.

Table 1.3 indicates number of years the respondents have associated themselves with the organization. Most of them 33%, had been with the organization for 16 – 20 years, 31% had been with the organization for 11 – 15 years. Also, 22% had been working with the Assembly for 6 – 10 years and only 13% had spent 1 – 5 years in the organization. It could be seen that most of the respondents

had associated with the organization for a considerable period of time and are familiar with the internal control issues.

Table 1.3

Years of Association with ADMA

| Year | Frequency | Percentage % |
|--------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1–5 | 6 | 13 |
| 6–10 | 10 | 22 |
| 11–15 | 14 | 31 |
| 16–20 | 15 | 33 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

Analysis of the Internal Control System of the Assembly

The level of understanding of workers about the mission and objectives of the assembly was positive since all the respondents were familiar with the organization’s mission and objectives. This indicates that management have done well and trained workers to know about the core mandate of the Assembly. This to a larger extent will help improve internal controls in the organization.

It was also noted that the employees did not only know about the mission and objectives of the assembly, but also about the code of conduct especially aspect regarding effective internal controls, positively all employees interviewed agreed that they have knowledge about the code of conduct of the assembly. The implication is that combining their full knowledge on mission and objectives with that of the code of conduct, the employees being well versed with internal control systems in an organization depends on the effectiveness of information flow in the organization. If information is not well communicated and received, internal controls cannot be effective. The study revealed that information flow in the Adentan District Assembly, (ADMA) is effective and that the employees understand all instruction and information given to them and they abide by them also.

Another important element of internal control is effective supervision and control. Employees are likely to make several errors that could cost the organization. There is therefore a greater need for management to exert control of workers and monitor their activities effectively. Per oral interview, it was evident that 96% of the respondents agreed that they are well supervised by management to become more effective while only 4% thought otherwise. This implies that majority of the respondents are enthused about the supervision and control levels in the assembly and this opinion of theirs has improved controls in the organization.

Record keeping is a major problem affecting internal control. If records are not well kept and transactions not recorded well, errors can negatively affect the effectiveness of internal controls.

Respondents agreed that the organization have an internal audit function responsible for checking and ensuring that transactions are recorded accurately, also, errors are identified and corrections made.

As a result of keeping abreast with current issues of the nitty – gritty of the practice of internal controls, it becomes so expedient for the staff of the accounts and internal audit department to subject themselves to periodic training sessions and refresher courses so as to beef them to squarely match the inherent challenges embedded in the practice of internal audit. The higher authority in the assembly like the management team including the District coordinating director (DCD), District Finance Officer (DFO), the District Budget Officer (DBO) and the District Chief Executive (DCE) expects the final report of the internal audit department to be presented with accuracy and dexterity. However, this could be only possible if the periodic training of staff is materialized. Periodic training of account and audit staff does not only make them effective and efficient in their duties but also provide the staff of being internationally oriented in the practice of internal controls and audit, as such makes their circle of performance in the geographical sense wider. However, from the data analyses from the questionnaires represented and received, 85% agreed to being given the chance to embark on periodic training, and 15% disagreed to that fact. The few minorities who disagreed were found to be junior staff who may perhaps have minor issues with management.

Table 1.4

Knowledge in Internal Control System

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Agreed | 45 | 100 |
| Disagreed | – | – |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

Table 1.4 indicated that 100% of the respondents expressed their view that they have knowledge in internal control system and have taken course in internal control system. Most of them pointed periodic training from the Local Government Authority both at the district and regional level has broadened their knowledge on internal activities of the Assembly.

Table 1.5

Participation in Workshop Organized for Internal Purposes

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Agree | 37 | 82 |
| Disagree | 8 | 18 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

Table 1.5: 37 of the respondents, representing 82% claimed that they had ever participated in the workshop for staff concerning internal control issues. This could be attributed to their interest and level of awareness of the benefits of internal control system in the public sector. They answered that, at regular intervals they are called for training programs at both district and regional level. When asked about their interested in the workshops, most of the respondents expressed their key interest in the workshop. The reason behind this was that every participant was financially rewarded at the end of every workshop. This creates a true picture that, for internal control system to be effective, there is the need to create awareness through workshop or training programs. In creating awareness, employees must also be motivated to develop interest.

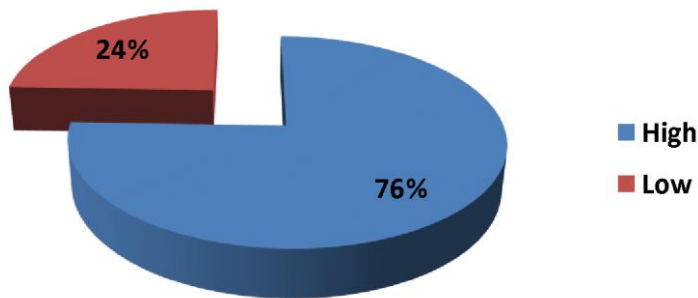


Fig. 2.3. Awareness of the Benefits of Internal Control Systems.

Source: field data 2018.

Figure 2.3 indicates that out of 45 respondents who answered in the affirmative to the question as to whether they were aware of the benefits of internal control activities, 76% claimed that they had high level of awareness of the benefits of internal control systems and only 24% claimed to have a low level of awareness of the benefits of internal control system. This means that, the execution of internal control measures is strictly adhered to.

Table 1.6

Communication of Internal Control Systems

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree | 36 | 80 |
| Disagree | 9 | 20 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

Table 1.6 questioned if internal control issues should be communicated to other personnel, there was an overwhelming view in favour of this claim. 80% of the respondents suggested this view as they believe that it was going to promote transparency and accountability. On the other hand, those who thought otherwise constituted only 20% of the sample collected; they claim that internal control issues must be handled by specialist.

Table 1.7

Ways of communicating Internal Control Issues

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Memos | – | – |
| Staff Meeting | 39 | 87 |
| Verbal | – | – |
| Not communicated | 6 | 13 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

From table 1.7, 87% of the sample indicated that internal control issues are communicated during meetings as they believed that it would enable the staff to understand the internal control system. On the other hand, 13% said internal control issues are not communicated. According to them, this creates friction and suspicion between management and staff.

Table 1.8

Types of Internal Control Systems

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Corrective Control | 13 | 29 |
| Preventive Control | 23 | 51 |
| Detective Control | 9 | 20 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

Table 1.8 depicts that the majority 51% of the respondents agreed that the existence of internal control is preventive, 29% corrective and 20% detective control. Some of the respondents gave examples of some of the internal controls measures used in the organization to ensure the safety of records, and prevention of fraud. The control measures used are peer review, segregation of duties, internal control initiatives, control procedures, audit control, and system security.

From the data presentation and analysis it has been shown that there are internal control systems in existence in the local government sector. The people in charge of this function are well qualified people who have extensive experience in the field. The internal control systems identified include cash and cheque control, inventory control and fixed asset control. However, computer-based system control and a few others were a challenge to the Assembly.

Majority of the respondents said the controls are preventive. The organizational structure of Adentan Municipal assembly is formal and bureaucratic; consistent and properly structured. It is effectively organized starting from the head of the District Chief Executive to the line managers/ heads of departments and then to the junior staff. Relevant information regarding legislation, regulatory devel-

opment, political changes in leadership and other external factors that may affect the organization are explained to staff members during meetings.

Table 1.9

Effectiveness and Efficiency of Internal Audit

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage % |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Strongly Agree | 14 | 31 |
| Agree | 26 | 58 |
| Disagree | 4 | 9 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

Table 1.9 shows that majority of respondents agreed that an audit team exist and effectively function to ensure accuracy of records. This means that internal control in the organization is taken serious. Approximately, almost all the population believes there is efficient and effective internal audit unit to oversee the internal control system of the assembly.

It has also been established that the control systems in Adentan Municipal Assembly is very effective in the achievement of the assembly's objectives. There are systems put in place to check fraudulent deals in the organization such as segregation of duties, reconciliations and others. Receiving of cash for transaction is discouraged as it is a public service organization with the motive of serving its people within its geographical jurisdiction and where even it is done monies are expected to be banked at the earliest time which ranges between one to three days. The research also showed the nature and the extent of control mechanism in the assembly vary from one to another. The control mechanism used by the assembly depends mainly on:

- The nature, size and volume of transaction that is processed daily, weekly, monthly or yearly
- The number of administrative staff available
- The importance placed on internal controls by the head of the various departments. The measures put in place to ensure the safety of records and the preventive of fraud.

Table 1.10 represent the responses received concerning who approves and authenticates cheques and other document received from the assembly. From the table, it can be seen that the District Chief Executive (DCE) is responsible for the authorization of cheques and other documents as compared to the other authorities specified in the table above. Twenty three others added that it depends on the type of document as it can be approved by either the DCD or the DFO. An interview shows how the decisions of the assembly are influenced with political ideologies as the DCE's of the various MMDA's are political appointees.

Table 1.10

Approval and Authorization of Cheque and Other Documents

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| The District Finance Officer (DFO) | 4 | 16 |
| The Chief Internal Auditor | – | – |
| The District Budget Officer | – | – |
| The District Coordinating Director (DCD) | 8 | 18 |
| The District Chief Executive (DCE) | 22 | 49 |
| Depends on the type of document | 11 | 24 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

Proper authorization procedures of inventory requisition

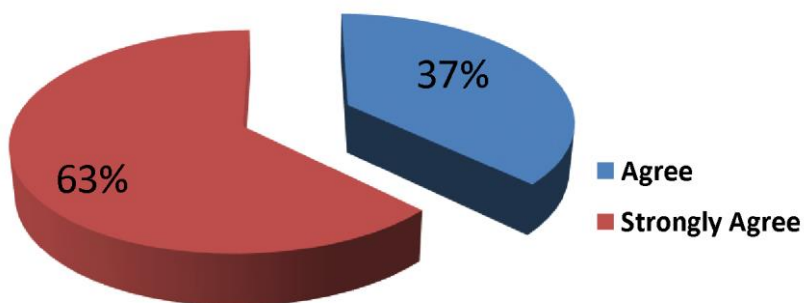


Fig. 2.4. Inventory Control.

Source: field data 2018.

In figure 2.4 respondents were asked to indicate, if inventory requisition are subject to proper authorization procedures, in absolute terms the entire respondent indicated that, inventory requisition are subject to proper authorization procedures. As evident from the table above, 29 agreed and 71 strongly agreed representing 37% and 63% respectively. All also indicated that transfers and movement of inventory are recorded and reconciled regularly with actual physical inventory balances. Finally, on inventory controls, it has been agreed unanimously by the entire respondents that goods and materials removed from stores are done only by a properly authorized stores employee.

Table 1.11 shows that 60% of respondents strongly agree that assets of the organization are being recorded and checked against the assets register. This further explains that when assets are acquired and taken out of the organization, it is being recorded to ensure that they are safe.

Table 1.11

Records on Assets of the Assembly

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage % |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Agree | 18 | 40 |
| Strongly agree | 27 | 60 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: field data 2018.

Summary of findings

The study revealed that staff of Adentan Municipal Assembly (ADMA) have knowledge in internal control activities and have taken courses in internal control activities which is in line with internal control act.

The study shows that internal control activities are communicated to staff. This would enable staff members to understand the activities of the organization and most of them are aware of the benefits of internal control systems. The study also showed that the internal control system adopted by ADMA is efficient and effective as management regular workshop for its staff both the district and regional level.

The respondents were asked to mention two constraints for each controls; that is cash and cheque controls, inventory control; computer based system control and fixed assets controls. Under the cash and cheque controls, most of the respondents indicated lack of accurate accountability from the revenue collectors/mobilizers who go to the field to mobilize revenue for the assembly. Under the inventory control, it was stated that, the determination of re-order level and maximum stock level were cited as constraints faced in the inventory control. Also under computer based system control, all respondents did mention the assembly does not have effective and efficient computer base system. Under the fixed assets controls, they made mention quantity of all the assets are not known. Also the Assembly has problems with determining revaluation process of the assets.

Conclusions and Recommendations**Conclusions**

The management should exercise and discharge their duty of care by: adhering to the strict code of conducts of the MMDAs of the Republic of Ghana, monitoring compliance and taking actions against breaches, strengthening the internal audit unit, and making the audit committee powerful as well.

Strong effective and efficient internal control in the MMDAs is very important and essential element towards their growth, survival and achievement of goals, objectives or targets set.

The management and employees at all level in the assembly have a major responsibility for the organization success in internal control mechanism. If they do not insist on accurate and adequate documentation, compliance of accounting standards and principles, separation of duties, authorization, timely recording of

information ,effective and efficient internal audit unit, competent and reliable personnel and so on as recommended by Larson [11] and Vatter [12], then, the organizations troubles becomes extensive and inevitable.

The study however concluded that, the staff of Adentan Municipal Assembly (ADMA) has knowledge in internal control system. They had taken and participated in workshops organized for staff in relation to internal control system issues. Issues of internal control systems are also communicated to staff members making it efficient and effective.

Recommendations

From the findings of the research the researcher recommends the following;
To Policy Makers;

The government should employ more personnel who are members of the professional bodies such as the ICA Ghana, ACCA, and CIMA into the unit; this is because with their knowledge and in-depth study of their profession it will help to reduce the problems of internal control as highlighted in this work.

It can also be inferred from the above reviews that for every entity to succeed in achieving its goals and objectives it should not only have an evidence of effective internal control systems, and an effective and efficient internal Auditor but all parties should be committed to the process and periodically have a mechanism to test the system to find out whether they are working well. Thus, the objectives of a company are in away embodied in that of internal control and internal audit unit. Therefore, the objective of internal control and internal audit unit and for that matter, a company will be defeated if there exist weak and inadequate internal control systems and ineffective internal Auditor as a result of challenges or limitations. Hence, it will be of great importance to policy make makers to ensure that there are some acceptable degrees of perfection in internal control systems and internal auditing unit which will periodically test the systems to find out whether they exist and are working.

To Local Government Practitioners;

Furthermore, the management of the assemblies should strengthen their training programs, refresher courses and seminars for their employees on regular basis. This will help them to upgrade their skills and knowledge in their field of work. All staff and employees under the Local Government Authority should be encouraged to learn and keep to date with technical matters and new technologies.

Also, management of the district assemblies in the Republic of Ghana should ensure that there is proper division of work and responsibilities as well as rotation of duties.

The control mechanism used in the organization should be reliable and checked often to ensure that assets of the organization are secured.

To Scholars and Researchers:

This research work is limited to the District Assemblies under the Ghana Local Government system. The researcher wishes to recommend to future researchers to broaden the area of study to other public organization on the effectiveness of the

internal control system since it is generally accepted that state funds are being embezzled and misappropriate by most public servant practitioners.

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Научная статья

Исследование эффективности систем внутреннего контроля в государственном секторе Ганы: взгляд на окружные собрания. Часть 2

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Аннотация. Оценка эффективности системы внутреннего контроля в государственном секторе является одним из самых надежных способов определения того, работают ли государственные учреждения эффективно для достижения корпоративных целей. Задачей исследования является оценка эффективности систем внутреннего контроля в столичных и муниципальных собраниях. В исследовании использовался целе-

направленный метод отбора для выборки данных. В Муниципальном собрании г. Адента отмечается наличие системы внутреннего контроля, позволяющей эффективно достигать реализации целей Ассамблеи. В статье присутствуют авторские рекомендации правительству по привлечению большего числа сотрудников, являющихся членами профессиональных органов, таких как Институт дипломированных бухгалтеров Ганы, Ассоциация дипломированных присяжных бухгалтеров и Чартерный институт управленческого учета, в соответствующие подразделения и по использованию их знаний и опыта в сокращении проблемы внутреннего контроля, о которых в том числе пойдет речь в данной работе.

Ключевые слова: системы внутреннего контроля, эффективность, государственный сектор, муниципальное собрание Адента, Гана

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Research article

Multicultural Citizenship and the Status of ‘Others’ in the Post 1991 Ethiopia: A Study on Membership and Self-Governing Status of Amhara People in Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State

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Abstract. Following the regime change in 1991, the Ethiopian government sought to institutionalize inclusive multicultural citizenship in the country. Membership status and self-governing rights are crucial entitlements in the multiculturalists’ notion of citizenship. Though citizenship is considered to be part of domestic affairs of a state, it is also influenced by the policies of sub-state political units. Hence, this paper examines the membership and self-governing status of Amhara and analyzes how the citizenship status is affected at sub-state units, with a focus on Benishangul Gumuz Regional State. Concurrent embedded mixed approach was employed and data were collected through interviews and document analysis. Interview data were obtained from 29 respondents, chosen by means of an intensity sampling method. Quantitative data were also acquired from Ethiopian Central Statistical Agency. The data were analyzed qualitatively with some quantitative backup. Though *Amhara People* of BGRS have the legal status of Ethiopian citizenship, BGRS has failed to fully integrate these people to the mainstream political community. Particularly, the exclusionary politics of recognition (as only selected nationalities receive the so-called *ownership of the region*) and the prohibition of *Amhara* from exercising self-government rights (this right is exclusively given to the ‘owner’ nationalities by the regional constitution) demonstrate the hierarchy of citizenship, where *Amhara people* are treated as second-class citizens in BGRS, which is contradictory to the notion of multicultural citizenship.

Keywords: Amhara, Ethnic Federalism, Ethiopia, Multiculturalism, Multicultural Citizenship, Politics of identity

Introduction

Citizenship, which is bound by reciprocal rights and duties, is seen as a legal relationship between individuals/groups and the state [1]. Today, however, it is almost universally accepted that viewing citizenship as a mere legal status is erroneous [2]. Modern citizenship is understood in terms of four interconnected di-

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mensions: *membership*, *legal status*, *rights* and *participation* [2]. Membership refers to an inclusion in a particular cultural and political community either at the state or sub-state levels [2]. It is one of the crucial components in establishing citizenship since the distribution of rights and duties is determined by the distinctions between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ in a community [2]. As a result, the politics of inclusion/exclusion to/from a particular political community significantly influences the citizenship status.

The second constituent of citizenship is the legal status. This is a contractual relation between an individual and the political community. It is granted by applying the principle of *jus solis* (place of birth), *jus sanguinis* (citizenship of parent/s) or ‘naturalization’ depending on the specific citizenship law of a particular state [2]. Although one would expect the legality of citizenship to be the determinant factor, the mere legal status in itself is not sufficient to enjoy full citizenship status [1]. The third element of citizenship is participation. When individuals are legally recognized as citizens, it is expected for them to be charged with duties. Citizenship in the form of participation is explained in terms discharging responsibilities, such as obligatory taxes or military services [2].

The final component of citizenship is the rights. As has been stated before, individuals who are legally recognized as citizens of a particular state are entitled with privileges named rights [3]. *Citizenship and the Social Class* by T.H. Marshall (1950) is considered to be a seminal work on the typology and lists of citizens’ rights. However, given the ever expanding definitions of civil rights, the catalogue has been supplemented with news lists, for example, self-governing rights [3]. Undeniably, this right is central in the multiculturalists’ notion of citizenship [2]. Both Kymlicka [4] and Young [5], well-known advocates of multicultural citizenship, believe self-government to be an important tool that protects ethnic ‘minorities’ from marginalization and oppression. Of all the four dimensions of citizenship, this paper is focused on *membership* and *self-governing status*, which will be analyzed in order to reveal Amhara’s standing in the region.

In talking about citizenship, it is also important to note that “citizenship is not only a matter of state but also of sub-state, supra-state, or non-state political communities” [6]. As a result, it appears practical to “employ the concept of citizenship to analyze sub-state policies and programs that affect citizens in different ways” [6]. Mainly in federal states, such as Ethiopia, where entitlements and privileges are determined by the ethno-linguistic identities, analyzing the sub-state policies and legal frameworks that regulate the distribution of prerogatives is imperative. In order to establish home territories at sub-state levels and label inhabitants as ‘owners’ and ‘non-owners’ (as required by the regional constitution), the Ethiopian authorities have created two levels of citizenship [7]. Hence, this paper seeks to examine the way the ‘others’¹ are treated at the sub-state levels, with a focus on Amhara in BGRS.

¹ In this paper, the terms ‘others’ or ‘new minorities’ are used to refer to ethnic groups residing outside ‘their ethnically determined’ territorial unit. In terms of population size, the ‘others’ can outnumber the ‘owners’ or titular nationalities, as is the case with Amhara in BGRS and Harari [16].

Although an individual may be a legal citizen, they may feel that they are not enjoying citizenship rights to the full extent. This inequality is created by *de jure* and *de facto* exclusions at the state or sub-state levels, resulting in a *hierarchy of citizenship*. Hierarchy of citizenship (first class, second class, and under-class) emerges when a certain society domain displays a higher level of integration into the socio-political community (as compared to others) and articulates its demands more effectively than others. The rest, who have a different religion, language or ethnicity, are discriminated and denied full privileges [1]. As was well put by Heater [8], there are different hierarchies of citizenship:

At the top of the ladder, there are the full and active citizens. These are individuals/groups who have the most complete set of rights and who most fully discharge their civic duties. On the second rung down, there are the full but passive citizens. These are citizens with full citizenship rights but being apathetic about performing duties. At the third level down, there are second-class citizens. These individuals have the legal status of citizenship, but because of discrimination and segregation, they are deprived from the full practices of citizenship rights. At the fourth level are under classes. Like the second-class citizens, these citizens have the legal citizenship status. However, since they are economically and culturally impoverished, they are in effect excluded from the normal style of social and political activity, which the term, citizenship, connotes [8. P. 87].

It is obvious that hierarchy of citizenship is undesirable and it has to be avoided at all costs [4]. As a result, increasing awareness about the diverse and pluralistic nature of modern societies in different parts of the world, including Ethiopia, has encouraged scholars to question and even reject the idea of ‘universal’ citizenship. In replacing it, multicultural citizenship is expected to be a viable alternative that can help to avoid exclusions and hierarchies [4]. This kind of citizenship calls for the recognition (alongside universal rights) of ‘special rights’: rights that are special in that they apply only to specific categories of people [4].

Attracted by its undeniable advantages, Ethiopian ethno-nationalists had been propagating multicultural citizenship, which eventually became a state policy when EPRDF came to power [9]. It is argued that the current political arrangement is democratic as it recognizes and practically ensures equal access of all nationalities to the basic citizenship entitlements ([2]; [10]). Critics, on the other hand, argue that in spite of the country’s transition to multicultural citizenship, the legal and practical experiences of different regions show that the hierarchy of ethnicities continues, even to a higher degree, mainly at sub-state levels [11]. BGRS is one of such sub-state units, where *Amharas*² and other non-titular nationalities are claimed to be deprived of basic citizenship rights, such as political representation in the parliament and the cabinet [11], with an explicit division of its inhabitants into ‘owners’ and ‘non-owners’ [12]). Therefore, the purpose of the current research is to critically examine the membership and self-governing status

² Amhara is the second largest ethnic group both in Ethiopia and BGRS [16], with its ‘home’ region of Amhara National Regional State.

of *Amhara* in BGRS. Analyzing citizenship practices in BGRS, which designates almost half (43%) of its population as ‘non-owners’, appears practical as it can shed light upon the flaws in the implementation of multicultural citizenship. We have selected *Amharas*’ case because it is the region’s largest ethnic group, which frequently claims exclusions and marginalization [11].

As has been mentioned above, there are different dimensions of citizenship that need to be addressed in order to get a full picture of the status. However, this paper selectively focuses on *membership* and *self-governing status*, as the other elements will be analyzed in subsequent articles. Specifically, the research is aimed at:

- ✓ examining the region’s politics of ‘belonging’ and its implication for the membership status of *Amharas*;
- ✓ exploring *de jure* and *de facto* realities of the region in relation to *Amhara*’s self-governing status; and
- ✓ analyzing how *Amhara*’s self-governing and membership standing is related to the citizenship status of its residents.

In fact, there has been a significant amount of research that has investigated the political representation of *Amhara* [11], inter-ethnic conflicts between the highlanders and lowlanders in BGRS [11]), and the protection of ethnic minorities at the sub-state levels [12]. However, none of these studies analyzed *Amhara* from the perspective of how membership and self-governing are related to and important for the citizenship status of the new minorities. This specific angle of analysis is what makes the current investigation particularly relevant.

1. Research Method

The dominant method used in this paper is qualitative research. The author seeks to interpret and make sense of the experiences, opinions and views of the concerned actors about the implications of membership and self-governing for the citizenship status in *Amhara*. Qualitative research appeared to be logical for the stated purpose. Quantitative data that give an idea about the size and proportion of population support the qualitative method. Qualitative descriptions were used to back up the quantitative data. Therefore, it is possible to say that a concurrent embedded mixed approach³ was employed.

The data were collected by means of face-to-face semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The participants were chosen with the help intensity sampling method⁴ upon consent. The interviewees were selected from two categories: government officials (from federal to district levels), and ‘ordinary’ citizens.

³ Concurrent embedded mixed approach is a study technique in which one method of research is dominant and another one is supportive [15].

⁴ Intensity sampling procedure is a purposive sampling technique variety that selects examples according to their capacity to provide in-depth information and important knowledge about the phenomenon of interest [15].

Among the government participants, we interviewed: one official from the House of Federation, four officials from BGRS offices, two individuals from Amhara National Regional State (ANRS), five officials from *Pawe woreda*⁵, four officials from Assosa *woreda*, and three officials from *Bambasi woreda*⁶.

The participants from the “ordinary” group were chosen from both the titular citizens and *Amhara* ethnic communities. The titular nationalities included two Berthas, two *Gumuz* and one *Shinasha*. Seven ‘ordinary’ *Amharas* were chosen among *Amharas* living in Assosa and *Bambasi* districts. Based on this, we conducted 29 interviews, the size of which was determined by the saturation of the data. The interviews were conducted in the period between January and February 2019 at various locations and took 45 – 120 minutes.

In addition to the interviews, pertinent data were collected through consulting different secondary sources, such as the federal and regional constitutions, reports of Ethiopia’s Central Statistical Agency (CSA) and published research reports. Among the extensively utilized resources were: the 1995 Federal Constitution of Ethiopia, the 2002 revised constitution of BGRS, the 2002 revised constitution of ANRS (for comparative purpose), and the 1994 and 2007 national census reports of Ethiopia’s CSA. Finally, the data were examined with the use of qualitative thematic analysis, which was supported by the quantitative description.

2. Results and Discussion

2.1. The Region’s Politics of Recognition and Amharas’ Membership Status

The main legal document that addresses the politics of “belonging” to the region’s political community is the 2002 revised regional constitution. The regional constitution, by which the local politics of recognition is enacted, identifies two types of inhabitants: ‘owners’ and ‘non-owners’. It states the following: ‘although other peoples will be recognized, *the owners of BGRS are Mao, Komo, Shinasha, Gumuz, and Bertha* [14. Art. 2]’. This constitutional framework creates two types of ethnic groups, one of which is granted the privilege of being legal members of the region, while the other is given a secondary status of inhabitants [12]. Thus, while some members of the local community are entitled to assert and defend their rights, others are denied this opportunity, as they do not enjoy an equal status of “belonging”. In relation to this, interviewee 22 from the *Amhara* community stated: “We and the five nationalities do not have an equal legal status in this region. While they have the full ownership status, we are regarded as aliens living in the area at the mercy of the owners”.

Despite the fact that *Amharas* and other non-titular nationalities are citizens of Ethiopia and account for almost half (43%) of the region’s population (see table 1), the politics of recognition employed by BGRS does not give such a significant number of inhabitants the ownership status. This situation creates hierarchy of ethnicities [11] and, as a result, an in-

⁵ *Woreda* is an Amharic term meaning “district”.

⁶ These three areas were selected because of the relatively high number of Amhara inhabitants living there [16].

equitable citizenship status too. The division of inhabitants into ‘owners’ and ‘non-owners’ is not supported even by informants from the owner nationalities. Interviewee 12 from the *Shinasha* community commented: “... sure we shall not let our people face the historical assimilation. However, the terminology of the constitution referring to the five minorities as the ‘owners’ of the region is radical. That is why we, academicians, prefer to use the term ‘indigenous’ rather than ‘owners’” (28 January 2019, *Assosa*).

Table 1

Ethnic makeup of BGRS

| Titular ethnic groups | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Ethnic group</i> | <i>Population in Number</i> | <i>Proportion in %</i> |
| Bertha | 199,303 | 25.4% |
| Gumuz | 163,781 | 20.6% |
| Shinasha | 60,587 | 7.7% |
| Mao | 15,384 | 1.8% |
| Komo | 7,773 | 0.99% |
| Total | 447,028 | ≈57% |
| Non-titular ethnic groups | | |
| Amhara | 170,132 | 21.7% |
| Oromo | 106,275 | 13.4% |
| Agaw-Awi | 33,061 | 4.2% |
| Tigre | 5,562 | 0.7% |
| Others | 22,287 | 2.8 |
| Total | 333,317 | ≈43% |

Source: Computed by the researcher with reliance on the 2007 national census report.

Apart from the ‘undesirable’ hierarchies, the division issue is criticized for violating the federal constitution. In regard to this, an official from ADP’s Branch office in *Assosa* stated:

The issue of ownership of BGRS was politically decided in contrary to the federal constitution and history. Since the transition was led by TPLF, it was this group who made the five nationalities the owner of the region while *Amhara* with large population size and historical attachment to the area is excluded (January 18, 2019).

As is stated in article 46 (2) of the FDRE constitution [17], regional administrations and self-governing status are expected to be established with due consideration of language, ethnic identity, settlement pattern and peoples’ willingness. If we use these criteria as a guide for self-governance, we cannot exclude the population size of the people living in that area. *If this was the case, then how is it possible for Amharas that constitute 21.7 % of the total population in BGRS, as compared to the Gumuz, Shinasha, Mao and Komo, making up 20.6 %, 7.7 %, 1.8 % and 0.99% of the region’s population respectively (See table 1), to be excluded?* This fact seems to be paradoxical: while *Komo* with 0.9% are among the ‘owning’ members of the region, *Amharas* with 21.7% are deprived of such status. Beyond all doubt, the current situation is contrary to the stated article of the federal constitution.

Here, some may argue that such hierarchical politics of recognition emanates from the very nature of ethnic federalism that the country abides by. Never-

theless, such supposition does not appear logical if one examines the experience of *Amhara* National Regional State (ANRS). The largest ethnic group among the nationalities that constitute ANRS is *Amhara*. It accounts for 94.4% of the region's population, and only 5.6% is represented by other nationalities [18]). However, the constitution of ANRS does not have an article that gives an exclusive ownership of the region to *Amhara* [12]. Instead, the constitution confers equal recognition for all nationalities living in the region. It may serve as an eloquent example that the BGRS constitution preamble [14] begins with “We, the people of *Bertha, Gumuz, Shinasha, Mao and Komo...*”, while the ANRS constitution [19] preface reads: “We, the people of Amhara National Regional State...” Moreover, while the BGRS constitution [14: art.2] has an article that gives an exclusive ownership right to five nationalities, the ‘owners’ of ANRS are all nationalities living in the region [19. Art. 8]. If exclusiveness were embedded in the very nature of ethnic federalism, ANRS would have also a similar discriminative law. Hence, it seems that the issue is a matter of political willingness and commitment.

There exist other opinions stating that such exclusions result from the institutionalization of multicultural citizenship, which focuses on group identities [12]. However, such speculation does not appear to be reasonable as well: *de jure* and *de facto* realities of the region contradict the main tenets of the differentiated/multicultural citizenship concept. The main aim of multicultural citizenship is ensuring that minorities have the same political and socio-economic entitlements as other ethnicities (Kymlicka 1995), and not creating a ‘majority minority’ through hierarchical politics of recognition. In spite of the fact that the purpose of multicultural citizenship is to avoid exclusions and marginalization along cultural, linguistic or ethnic lines [14], the politics of recognition employed in BGRS demonstrates inequality, as certain ethnicities, despite being numerical majorities, such as *Amharas*, are designated to have a secondary status.

The regional constitution does not clearly state the criteria used to distinguish some residents as ‘owners’ and others as ‘non-owners’. However, some regional officials associate it with *temporal chronologies* of living in the area (interviewee 17 from BGRS council office, February 13, 2019, *Assosa*). Nevertheless, the federal constitution does not mention *history* as a criterion for establishing an administrative or ownership status. Moreover, relying on ‘historical presence’ as a reference for granting ownership is highly problematic, as numerous nationalities did not have a permanent place of residence. An area inhabited by one ethnic group at a certain point in history was also inhabited by a different ethnicity at another point in time [11]. This argument challenges the idea that the length of historical presence on a certain territory should be considered a criterion for assigning the ownership status. Thus, *temporal chronology* cannot serve as a legal basis for granting privileges, *as it can become another bone of contention among the multiple regional ethnicities*.

The examples above demonstrate that the exclusionary politics of recognition employed in the region does not have any rational justification. Moreover, it is illegal, since it contradicts article 46(2) of the Federal Constitution. It also challenges the main principle of the multicultural citizenship notion: instead of ensuring inclusiveness and equal

politics of recognition, BGRS implements multiculturalism in a manner where majorities are excluded from basic membership status. Thus, the provisions of the revised regional constitution create a citizenship hierarchy, in which *Amharas* and other non-titular nationalities are implicitly recognized as second-class citizens.

2.2. Self-Governing Rights

Both Kymlicka [4] and Young [5], pioneers of group based recognition, believe self-governance to be a tool protecting ethnic ‘minorities’ from marginalization and oppression. In particular, the self-governing right is a core element of the multiculturalists’ notion of citizenship. For Kymlicka [4], recognition and institutionalization of the right for self-governance is a crucial institutional mechanism that must be used to address inequality. The federal government of Ethiopia attempts to ensure the rights for self-determination and self-government of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia, which is unequivocally stated in article 39 of the Constitution [17]. In institutionalizing these rights, various *regions, nationality zones and special woredas* are created for the dominant ethno-linguistic groups.

BGRS has ‘adapted’ the federal constitution and recognized the self-determination rights of nationalities and people in the region. Nonetheless, the adapted version of the constitution grants the self-governance right exclusively to the “owners”: article 39 is devoted to “*the self-determination rights of owner nationalities*” [14. Art. 39]. All the specific rights, listed in the articles, such as the right to self-governance, the right to maintain and develop one’s culture, the right to equal representation in the regional and federal government structures, etc., are not applicable to Amharas and other non-titular nationalities in the region, no matter the size of their population (Interviewee 17 from ADP office at Assosa, 16 February 2019, Assosa).

...while minority nationalities such as *Komo* and *Mao* are enjoying self-administration rights, we, *Amharas*, are not even named by the constitution, let alone possess the self-administration right. If this is the reality, how can I consider myself a citizen of Ethiopia equal to a *Mao* and *Komo*? (Interviewee 01 from *Amhara*, February 16, 2019, *Bambasi*).

Though *Amharas* claim their right to exercise self-governance authority like the rest, there is stiff opposition from the side of the ‘owners’. According to the ‘owner’ respondents, granting a self-administration right for a non-titular nationality is a violation of the regional constitution and the very idea of federalism. One of the titular informants indicates: “Since BGRS is created to empower minorities through self-determination, this empowerment shall not be challenged by allowing non-owners to determine over a certain administrative level to which they are not the owner” (interviewee 11 from *Shinasha*, 28 January 2019, *Assosa*). As various informants explained, the heavy opposition of the owner nationalities is caused by two reasons. The first reason is the exclusionary politics of recognition enshrined in the constitution. Since the constitution ordains that they are the ‘owners’ of the region and exclusive bearers of self-determination right, they claim this right to be

solely theirs. The second reason has to do with their concern that their rights will be taken away from them and they may face the marginalization of the past, if the ‘non-owners’ are treated equally.

In spite of the fact that self-determination and administrative arrangements (regions, nationality zones, and special districts) are established with regard for the ethnic identity that has the largest number of inhabitants in the administrative area, the implementation is not consistent across different regions, and even within a single region, as is the case with BGRS. In relation to this, Asnake [7] wrote: “like the practice of the Soviet Union, the decision to give a certain level of administrative status to ethnic groups solely rests upon the ‘vanguard’ party, the EPRDF. As a result, there are some paradoxes, which are still difficult to explain”. BGRS’ higher officials, however, explained that to single out the most numerous group is practically infeasible due to the high level of mixing between the ethnicities. This is how an informant from BGRS Council office put it:

Despite the fact that *Amharas* are the second largest group in the region, there is no single district inhabited by *Amharas* alone. Instead, the population is comprised by different nationalities, which makes it difficult to establish a special *woreda* /zone for a single ethnic group. Because of this problem, we are even unable to institutionalize nationality administrations for the owner ethnicities. (Interviewee 16, January 18, 2019, *Assosa*).

Though the officials’ explanation seems to be reasonable, critics reveal that it is not the actual problem. Instead, they explain the situation by the unwillingness of the BGRS authorities to [properly] implement the tenets of multicultural citizenship and the federal constitution⁷. Moreover, a different solution to a similar problem in *Pawe* and *Assosa* districts contradicts the officials’ commentary.

Pawe is one of the 20 *woredas* of BGRS. Before the 1990s, *Pawe* was part of the former *Gojam* province [7]. Nevertheless, when TPLF/EPRDF restructured Ethiopia’s internal administrative divisions, *Pawe* became part of the newly created BGRS [7]. The inclusion of *Pawe* into BGRS was, however, controversial. The residents of this district, including its higher officials, claim that they would reside in ANRS if the demarcation was based on the criteria of the federal constitution.

If the historical linkage and people’s consent were considered, we would not be part of BGRS. If culture, language, mentality, geographical proximity, and ethnic identity were considered, we would belong to ANRS rather than BGRS. (Interviewee 05 from *Pawe woreda* administrative office, January 10, 2019, *Almu*)

On the other hand, the titular interviewees justify the territorial division based on historical possession the same way the officials rationalize the ownership entitlement. ‘Despite the fact that *Pawe* is now inhabited by the settlers, the land had been occupied by the indigenous people before the arrival of the settlers in the 1970s and 1980s. Making it part of BGRS is justified from this perspective’ (interviewee 13 from *Gumuz* ethnic group, January 19, 2019, *Gilgel Beles*). Nev-

⁷ *Walta TV, an interview with Yaregal Aysheshm, former president of BGRS*. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9J6XFWEd_E. Accessed: 10.10.2019.

ertheless, as has been mentioned before, history is not considered a criterion for delimiting the internal borders. The guidelines for internal border demarcation are ethnic identity, willingness of the people, language, and settlement pattern [17: art.46]. None of these criteria, however, allowed the inclusion of *Pawe* into BGRS, as the vast majority (80%) of its inhabitants are *Amharas* (see table 2). The proportion of the titular nationalities in this district is negligible: combined, they constitute only 0.43% of the district’s population. It seems paradoxical that 0.43% of the population ‘own’ the district, while the remaining 99.57% (see Table 2) are denied the legal status of ownership [14].

Table 2

Ethnic makeup of *Pawe Woreda*

| Ethnic group | Population size | Percent |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|
| Amhara | 36,309 | 79.72% |
| Kambata | 2,111 | 4.63% |
| Haddiya | 2,050 | 4.51% |
| Oromo | 1,009 | 2.21% |
| Somali | 875 | 1.92% |
| Tigre | 374 | 0.82% |
| Titular nationalities | 198 | 0.43% |
| others | 2,626 | 5.76% |
| Total | 45,552 | 100% |

Source: Computed by the researcher with reliance on the 2007 national census report.

In terms of the settlement pattern, *Pawe* is territorially adjacent to the *Amhara* region. “The intense opposition of the people against being incorporated into BGRS is also undeniable” (interviewee 27 from *Pawe Woreda* Administrative and Security Office, January 22, 2019, *Almu*). All the contradictions considered, what could the rationale behind the inclusion of *Pawe* into BGRS? In reply to this question, an informant from ANRS President Office commented: “nothing, except political supremacy of the group that led the transition” (January 4, 2019, *Bahirdar*).

Apart from the illegitimate incorporation, the denial of the self-governing status to the *Amharas* in *Pawe* is another reason for them to feel discriminated, marginalized and oppressed. Although the inhabitants of *Pawe* have had a special *woreda* status since 1994 [7], they lost this status by the decision of the regional council in 2012 (interviewee 07 from ADP’s branch office at *Pawe*, January 12, 2019, *Almu*).

Enjoying a self-governing status is regarded as a central entitlement in multicultural citizenship [4]. However, the practice of BGRS prohibits *Amharas* from enjoying this right and is therefore found to be discriminatory. It also violates the constitutional proclamation, which declares that ‘every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to a full measure of self-government, which includes the right to establish institutions of government in the territory that it inhabits and to equitable representation in state and federal governments’ (FDRE

constitution, 1995, art. 39(3)). “If this article was genuinely implemented, there would be a special administrative structure (*woreda*) for the *Amharas* of *Pawe*, as they make up the majority of the district’s population.” (interviewee 08 from ADP’s central office, January 7, 2019, *Bahirdar*). More specifically, compared to the case of *Mao-Komo*, who have a *woreda* of their own while covering 40.88% of the community (CSA, 2007), the prohibition of *Amharas* in *Pawe*, accounting for 80% of the district’s population, is *illegitimate*.

There is also a justifiable claim for *Amharas* to be able to exercise self-governing rights in *Assosa woreda*. *Assosa woreda* is part of *Bertha* dominated *Assosa* zone. *Assosa woreda* is inhabited by *Amharas* (55.4%), *Berthas* (33.2%), *Oromos* (9.5%) and other nationalities (2.9%) [16]. “The majority of the residents of this district are *Amharas*... however, the administration and ownership of this district is the hands of *Berthas*” (interviewee 14 from *Amhara*, February 8, 2019, *Assosa*). Because of this, the *Amharas* of *Assosa woreda* have been demanding a special *woreda* status. “Following the banning of *Amhara* candidates from candidacy of the 2000 election, we raised a question about arranging a special *woreda* of our own, however, our demand was declined by the state council” (interviewee 07 from *Amhara*, January 16, 2019, *Assosa*). This situation, once again, clearly demonstrates the discrimination against the *Amhara* ethnicity.

It is noteworthy, that there exists an alternative way to allow *Amharas* to implement the self-administration right. “From the 74 Kebeles of *Assosa Woreda*, 38 are exclusively inhabited by *Amharas* and 36 are populated by *Berthas* and *Oromos* (interviewee 15 from ADP’s branch office in *Assosa*, January 19, 2019, *Assosa*)”. Moreover, *Assosa woreda* is one of the most populated in the region (104,147), as compared to *Kurmuk* (16,734), *Yaso* (12,747), *Sirba Abay* (17,966), *Kamashi* (17,883), and *Guba* (14,907) [16]. Provided there is enough political will and commitment, *Assosa woreda* could be divided into two administrative units (one for *Amharas* and one for *Berthas*), thus ensuring *Amharas*’ self-governing rights. The redistricting can be implemented easily, since the settlement pattern is conducive and the population size of *Amhara* (57, 281) is more than sufficient to administer a separate *woreda*.

To sum up, while there are sufficient legal (the FDRE constitution, at the very least) and practical grounds for *Amharas* to be able to exercise self-governing rights and be granted their own *woreda*, *Amharas* are deprived of this right. This is contradictory to the federal constitution, idea of federalism and tenets of multicultural citizenship. Regional constitutions are the source of marginalization and discrimination, as they grant self-determination and self-governing rights only to the titular nationalities. As a result, despite the fact that the *Amharas* of BGRS are ‘citizens of Ethiopia’ by law, they are not treated equally to the titular nationalities and are relegated to the secondary citizenship status in the region.

3. Conclusion

The aim of the paper was to examine the membership and self-governing authority of *Amharas* in BGRS and analyze its effect on the citizenship status at

the sub-state levels. The main document that determines the inclusion/exclusion of nationalities in the region is the 2002 revised constitution of BGRS. This constitution is found to be exclusionary towards certain ethnicities, as it gives ownership entitlements to five nationalities of the region and excludes a major portion of the population. Though *Amharas* are the second largest community in the area, the regional constitution rules them out from the basic socio-political entitlements.

In addition to being ‘blackballed’ from being part of member community, *Amharas* of BGRS are denied their self-governance right. Self-governing prerogative is a fundamental right in the multiculturalists’ notion of citizenship. Nonetheless, as was in the case with establishing the territorial ‘ownership’, the regional constitution ordained an exclusionary distribution of the self-governing right. Article 39 of the regional constitution declares that the owner nationalities are exclusively entitled to enjoy self-determination rights. Although there are legal (the FDRE constitution) and practical grounds (mainly the *Pawe* and *Assosa* cases) for *Amharas* to exercise self-governing rights and obtain a *woreda* of their own, they are banned from doing so. This situation arose mainly due to lack of political will and commitment. Besides the *de jure* exclusions, practical violation of Amhara’s citizenship rights in the region also takes place. In general, although *Amharas* of BGRS are ‘citizens of Ethiopia’ by law, they are excluded from the underlying citizenship entitlements. The exclusionary politics of recognition and preventing *Amharas* from exercising self-government rights, both by law and practice, attest to a hierarchical citizenship practice in the region, in which *Amharas* are treated as second-class citizens.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Научная статья

**Мультикультурное гражданство и статус «других»
в Эфиопии после 1991 г.:
анализ идентичности и самоуправления народа Амхара
в региональном штате Бенишангул-Гумуз**

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Аннотация. После смены политического режима в 1991 году правительство Эфиопии стремилось институционализировать инклюзивное мультикультурное гражданство в стране. Статус национальной принадлежности и права на самоуправление являются важнейшими правами в концепции гражданства сторонников мультикультурализма. Несмотря на то, что гражданство относится к сфере внутренних дел государства, оно также зависит от политики субгосударственных политических единиц. Таким образом, в данной статье рассматриваются проблемы принадлежности и статус самоуправления амхарского народа и анализируется влияние статуса гражданства на субгосударственные единицы с акцентом на региональный штат Бенишангул-Гумуз. Параллельно автор опирался на анализ данных, собранных при помощи интервью и анализа документов. Данные интервью были получены от 29 респондентов, отобранных методом интенсивной выборки. Количественные данные были также получены от Центрального

статистического управления Эфиопии. Собранные данные были проанализированы посредством качественного и количественного анализа. Несмотря на то, что амхарцы из Бенишангул-Гумуз имеют правовой статус граждан Эфиопии, региональному штату не удалось полностью интегрировать этих людей. В частности, исключительная политика национального признания (поскольку только избранные национальности получают так называемую «собственность региона») и запрет народу Амхара на осуществление прав самоуправления (это право предоставляется исключительно национальностям «собственникам» региональной конституцией) демонстрируют иерархию гражданства, где народу Амхара в штате Бенишангул-Гумуз рассматриваются как «граждане второго сорта», что противоречит самому понятию мультикультурного гражданства.

Ключевые слова: Амхара, этнический федерализм, Эфиопия, мультикультурализм, мультикультурное гражданство, политика идентичности

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PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD ПУБЛИЧНАЯ ДИПЛОМАТИЯ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ МИРЕ

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Research article

People's Diplomacy in Contemporary Central Asia: Towards Integration and Prosperity

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Abstract. Central Asian countries have been recognized by the international community as independent states since 1991. The region's location makes it a geostrategic "bridge" linking the East and the West, therefore it plays a crucial role in establishing connections between the world's leading countries. In the last three years, Central Asia has witnessed a change in perspective integration, with a view to new cooperation in the field of People's diplomacy. The aim of the article is to analyze the significance and perspectives of Public diplomacy for developing integration processes in the region.

Keywords: People's diplomacy, Public Diplomacy, Eurasia, Central Asia, inter-ethnic relations, friendship societies

1. Introduction

At present, with the appearance of new states and, consequently, new global challenges, the international arena is rapidly changing. Currently in the world, there exist about 6000 nationalities/ethnic groups. The Central Asian region, situated in the heart of Eurasia and inhabited by more than 75 million people (over 150 various nationalities), is becoming one of the vital strategic regions of the world. The majority of the region's population are Turkish-Persian speakers.

Indeed, the Central Asian region occupies the territory, crucial not only from the geopolitical point of view, but also from geo-economic, geo-cultural and geo-historical perspectives. The region is a strategic "bridge" between the East and the West, rich in natural resources, and home to ancient cities, such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Kesh, Termez, Fergana valley (Uzbekistan), Ashgabat, Dashovuz, Marv (Turkmenistan), Khujand, Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Shimkent, Aktobe, (Kazakhstan), Osh (Kyrgyzstan) Kashgar, Khotan (Xinjiang

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region, China), which are located in the heart of Eurasia and historically were part of the ancient Great Silk Road.

Central Asian Turkic and Persian-speaking Muslim peoples are similar to each other in their cultural, linguistic and religious uniqueness. The region shares borders with Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Russia, India, and Iran. The neighbor countries, although stimulating the region's cooperation with the world market, negatively impact Central Asia with unnecessary clashes of interests and competition for hegemony in the region. All Central Asian countries are multinational states: besides the Russian diaspora, they are populated by Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Germans, British, Polish, Koreans, Chinese, Arabs, Jews, Persian and Indian ethnicities, Uyghur and Dungan peoples, Azerbaijani, Armenians, Georgians, Moldavians, Greeks, and other nations. Nowadays, in the light of the rapid globalization process, one of the most important objectives for all countries of the world is to promote peace, stability and increase sustainable development through integration.

According to American scientist Fredric Starr, the situation in Central Asia and the regional inter-ethnic processes are guaranteed to grab the attention of the world's leading countries [1. P. 71–82].

The paper is based on the existing Ph.D. research work regarding the prospects and problems of People's diplomacy in Central Asia, as well as surveys and interviews of national and international scholars and experts. The paper attempts to examine the relations between Central Asia and neighboring countries from the regional perspective, while focusing on the dynamics of the bilateral relations, multilateral cooperation and the potential of a more comprehensive partnership between Central Asian countries.

2. Public Diplomacy and Its Importance

In 1965, Edmund Gullion, Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, was “the first to use the idiom in its contemporary meaning”, namely, Gullion's concept of public diplomacy in international relations.

Public diplomacy deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policy. It includes traditional diplomacy, the cultivation of public opinions in other countries, the dialogue of interests between groups and nations, and the process of intercultural communication [2]. The mechanism of public diplomacy rests on the ability of a state (through official and non-official channels) to influence the society of other countries. According to Joseph Nye, soft power is “attractiveness”, while public diplomacy is a tool to increase the attractiveness [3. P. 70].

In early 1991, the Central Asian region experienced international competition over its resources and suffered small-scale tensions between the interested countries [1]. Currently, inter-ethnic tensions are expanding to the global level, as the major countries of the world are seeking ways to get access to resources and gain geo-strategic control, especially in developing countries. In light of the cur-

rent state of the world, promoting regional integration in Central Asia offers many opportunities from geopolitical, geo-economic and logistical standpoints.

One of the public diplomacy tools is governmental scholarships. The demand for the Russian language in Central Asia has decreased, while English, German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese are rapidly gaining popularity. This is especially true in regards to English, the fluency in which opens possibilities for international career and business. The knowledge of English also offers the best educational opportunities inside Central Asia, such as the American University of Central Asia (Bishkek) and the three campuses of the Aga Khan University of Central Asia (Khorog in Tajikistan, and Tekeli in Kazakhstan) [4. P. 74–75].

3. Analysis of Public Diplomacy in Central Asia

Central Asian states are members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Commonwealth Independent States (CIS), China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, the Eurasian Economic Community and others. The significance of these organizations is undeniable in regard to investments and regional integration.

According to Nye, Russia made the following proposals concerning public diplomacy in Central Asia:

- Increasing daily communication with the foreign public through media and IT mobilization;
- Promoting systematic long-term networking and engagement of scholarship programs as part of Russia's soft power strategy in the region;
- Establishing close trans-boundary relations with the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, especially in Central Asia, which now represent the biggest market for both Eastern and Western countries [3. P. 72].

Russia is the main affiliate of Central Asian countries and China is the main potential economic partner of the region. The Russian language is still widespread in the region, and the Chinese language is becoming increasingly popular. Branches of numerous Russian universities are open in all Central Asian countries except Turkmenistan, and Confucius Institute is promoting Chinese language and culture in the region. The number of students from Central Asia enrolled in Russian, Chinese, South Korean and Japanese universities keeps steadily growing. Citizens of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan have the right to enter Russian universities on equal terms with Russian citizens. International organizations in the region, such as JICA (Japan), ITEC (India), TIKA (Turkey), KOICA (Republic of Korea), and others are expanding their activities targeted at mutual collaboration [5. P. 2]. The above mentioned states and organizations are encouraging cooperation and integration through cultural and public diplomacy tools. As the scholar Anholt put it, the image of the country and region is formed by a wide range of factors represented in the hexagon. These are six natural 'channels'

through which countries typically convey their images to the world: tourism, exports, people, governance, culture and heritage, and investment [6. P. 18].

4. Uzbekistan' integration initiatives

Uzbekistan is the most populated and one of the most influential states in Central Asia. At present, by means of People's diplomacy, the government of Uzbekistan is providing a sustainable development strategy for the country and promoting regional integration – the two most significant directions of the region's current policy.

It is noteworthy that 35 million citizens of Uzbekistan (which is about 50% of all Central Asian population) have secondary and higher education¹.

It should also be emphasized that the region's population is multi-ethnic: the Uzbeks make up about 3.1% of population of Kazakhstan, 14.0% of Tajikistan, 14.6% of Kyrgyzstan, 5.0% of Turkmenistan, and 9% of Afghanistan [7. P. 365–387].

The ongoing rapid globalization process is bringing with it different kinds of unexpected issues worldwide. Contemporary Uzbekistan's external policy (both in relation to the immediate neighbors and other foreign countries) is based on the principles of public diplomacy. In the context of the adopted strategy, in February 2017, Leader of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoev endorsed a new national strategic plan called "Development Strategy in 2017–2021". The Fifth guideline of the Strategy outlines new state agencies and public organizations necessary for implementation of public diplomacy in the country and abroad. Among such agencies are the Committee on Inter-ethnic Relations and Friendly Cooperation with Foreign Countries under the Ministry of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Public Diplomacy Center of Uzbekistan of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The primary objective of the Committee is to implement the state policy on inter-ethnic relations: maintain various nations and ethnic groups' cultural activities domestically and support friendly cooperation with foreign countries, including the Uzbek Diasporas and organizations abroad. The main goal of the Center is to enhance collaboration by encouraging people's diplomacy mechanisms among the SCO member countries [8].

In 2016, Uzbekistan initiated a new integration process in Central Asian region. The process is based on neighborly relations, friendly cooperation, new reforms, and novel approaches built upon the principles of public diplomacy. The President of Uzbekistan started his new political course conforming to the concepts of openness and mutually beneficial partnership both with the historical neighbors and remote countries. For example, in November 2017, upon the initiative of the Uzbek President, an international conference "Central Asia: Single His-

¹ Central Asian nations. *Wikipedia*. Available from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Asia. Accessed 30.01.2019.

tory and Common Future, Sustainable Development and Cooperation on Prospects” was held in Samarkand.

In 2018, within the framework of the abovementioned initiative, a new Center of Public Diplomacy of Uzbekistan under the umbrella of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was established. Aimed at the region’s prospective development, the Center fulfills the following functions:

- Assistance in strengthening mutual trust and good-neighborliness, inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony, as well as development of inter-civilizational dialogue between the SCO countries;
- Reinforcement of cultural and humanitarian ties with the SCO countries, including arrangement of reciprocal visits of delegations;
- Maintaining a friendly atmosphere of interaction between the SCO countries’ civil institutions, in particular, youth and women’s organizations;
- Promoting cooperation between the SCO countries in the information communication field: development of information resources and expanding media interaction with a view to pursue the SCO’s primary objectives, while abiding by the fundamental principles. The collaboration in the information field includes preparation and regular publication of educational and analytical materials on the achievements of the SCO countries in the cultural and humanitarian spheres;
- Using people's diplomacy tools in order to bring the SCO countries and their peoples closer together and consolidate the feeling of mutual trust and neighborly relations [9].

5. Processes and Dynamics of Cooperation

At present, Central Asian countries are actively engaged in the process of comprehensive partnership on order to invigorate and strengthen relations. The new government of Uzbekistan is taking every effort to increase the dynamics of the bilateral relations built on the principles of public diplomacy. The regional governments created new opportunities for extended cooperation by opening borders, launching new airline connections, holding cultural and educational events, encouraging the regional tourism, etc. Uzbekistan gave the go-ahead for students from Turkmenistan, Uyghur, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan to enroll in Uzbek higher educational programs, which is an important step for developing the integration process in Central Asia.

Uzbekistan is involved in numerous diplomatic practical activities in the region to promote integration, including grand-scale international conferences, such as “Central Asia: Single History and Common Future, Sustainable Development and Cooperation Prospects” in Samarkand and “Peace Process, Security Cooperation and Regional Connectivity” (devoted to Afghanistan) in Tashkent. These projects played a key role in introducing Uzbekistan’s new development strategy to the rest of the world and implementing integration processes of the region. Moreover, in the course of the conferences, numerous practical solutions to the existing regional challenges were offered.

In the recent years, at the behest of Uzbekistan and with the cooperation of Central Asian countries, major international conferences on regional integration have been held and significant progress on applying public diplomacy has been achieved.

5.1. International Conference on Central Asia

In November 2017, upon the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan, the international conference “Central Asia: Single History and Common Future, Sustainable Development and Cooperation Prospects” was organized in the ancient Uzbek city Samarkand. As a result of the conference, significant practical success in boosting cooperation and integration process between the regional countries was achieved [12, 2017]. Among the major achievements directed at long term problem solving was the Treaty on the Junction Point of State Borders signed by Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan also achieved an agreement on 85% of their border. Moreover, flights to Tajikistan were restarted and the process of delimitation and demarcation of state borders between the countries was completed. Another achievement of the conference was the creation of the Regional Economic Forum, the Association of Regional Authorities (hokims) and Central Asian business groups. The development of transportation corridors (the construction of the new Turkmenabad – Farab automobile and railway bridges, Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Iran-Oman routes, and Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan-China railroad) was a significant advancement in the process of regional integration [10].

As a result of the implementation of public diplomacy by Uzbekistan, mutual trade volume between the regional economies sprung from 20 percent to almost 70 percent. As the ties between the regional partners are strengthening, cultural and humanitarian exchange, as well as practical cooperation for ensuring security and stability in Central Asia are increasing. Currently, the biggest problems in the regional security area are instability in Afghanistan, the Aral Sea ecological disaster, deficiency of water resources, terrorism, religious extremism, transnational crime and drug trafficking. To deal with the regional security issue, Uzbekistan uses the instruments of preventive diplomacy introduced by the United Nations. The country is trying to strengthen the interaction with the CIS, SCO, OSCE, and other international and regional agencies. However, stable and sustainable development in Central Asia is impossible without achieving peace in neighboring Afghanistan, which is currently one of Uzbekistan’s top priority tasks. Tashkent actively participates in the economic reconstruction of the neighboring country, including the development of transportation and energy infrastructures and human resource training.

According to the UN experts, effective cooperation of Central Asian countries can increase the regional GDP by at least fifty per cent in the next 10 years. Central Asia has colossal natural and human resources opportunities: it is officially one of the «youngest» regions as to the age of the population (60% young adults). In the light of this, Uzbekistan put forward “Convention on the Rights of the Youth” and accepted a special UN resolution “Education and Tolerance” at

the General Assembly session in New York. In order to protect the young population from extremist influences and educate them on the true humanistic values of Islam, Uzbekistan established Imam Bukhari International Research Center in Samarkand and the Center of Islamic Civilization in Tashkent.

As a result of the conference, the UN General Assembly adopted a special resolution on strengthening regional and international cooperation for peace, security, and sustainable socio-economic development in the Central Asian region. The resolution encourages a constructive dialogue, mutually beneficial cooperation and a consistent approach to the resolution of the current regional problems. Undoubtedly, this step can serve as a vivid example of successful public diplomacy implementation by Uzbekistan. As part of the people's diplomacy, the government of Uzbekistan seeks to reinforce the active cultural and humanitarian partnership by holding cultural events (Days of Culture) and supporting educational and tourist exchange. A simple and open dialogue is a sure way to support the environment of mutual understanding, friendship, and integration in Central Asia. The "Central Asian Home" is aimed at ensuring sustainable development, stability, and prosperity in the region.

5.2. International Conference on Afghanistan

On March 26, 2018, Uzbek government initiated international conference on Afghanistan "Peace Process, Security Cooperation and Regional Connectivity" took place in Tashkent. As a result of the conference, Tashkent Declaration on Afghanistan was signed. The convention is an important part of Uzbekistan's peace strategy aimed at providing stability and increasing cooperation in the region. The security of neighboring Afghanistan remains a pressing issue and is one of the key directions of the regional integration policy. We carefully examined numerous global forums on Afghanistan (for example, ones in Kabul, Moscow and Istanbul), the SCO and Afghanistan international contact group, regional economic cooperation conference on Afghanistan and, particularly, Uzbekistan's speech during the UNGA's 48th session in 1993. We also studied the 1998 "6+2" diplomatic negotiation (six regional neighbors, USA and Russia), which, with the addition of NATO in 2008, became "6+3". Uzbekistan always actively participates in supporting the peace process and regional integration. In 2018, the first meeting in the format (C5+1) (Central Asia + Afghanistan) was held in Uzbekistan. It is our hope that the new format will not only lead to integration success in Central Asia but also positively affect regional cooperation with Afghanistan through economic and infrastructural projects [11].

In September 2017, at the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York the Leader of Uzbekistan confirmed his strategy on security and stability in the region, and in November of the same year, another international conference on Central Asia was held in Samarkand. The objective of the conference was to strengthen integration of Central Asian countries, this time including Afghanistan. Uzbekistan is closely monitoring the current situation in Central

Asia and Afghanistan, and the prospects of development in the region have generated a keen interest of the international community. The location of Central Asia is strategically important, as it connects Europe and the Middle East, South and East Asia. Moreover, the region is rich in natural resources, has a stable market and a unique cultural legacy. Consequently, the region has caught the attention of the world's leading countries, which, at times even causes a clash of interests. However, it is important for the regional countries to stay united and keep cordial relations to sustain stability. As for settling the situation in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan's standing is based on three interrelated levels: domestic, regional and global.

Central Asian countries have a long history of sharing borders, therefore, regional stability, sustainable development, and good-neighborliness are crucial for successful integration, as well as achieving political goals and economic prosperity. Peaceful resolution in Afghanistan will give access to a huge market, enable entry to the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf and establish connections between the Middle Eastern and European markets. Afghanistan's regional neighbors will also benefit from these opportunities. Therefore, security issues in Afghanistan are not merely of domestic or regional significance, they have a global reach. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is playing a crucial role in the regional integration: all Central Asian countries are members of this geopolitical cooperation and are involved in regional consolidation activities.

6. Discussions and Conclusions

Central Asia is one of the world's most strategically important regions. Public diplomacy is a necessary tool for promoting regional integration and securing Central Asia's standing in the international arena. The regional countries' shared history, religion, language, traditions, and challenges are the basis for successful integration. In the past two years, the Central Asian states started rapidly moving towards integration thanks to the initiatives of the new Uzbek Government, whose goals are to strengthen cordial relations and cooperation in the region.

The Leader of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoev visited every country in Central Asia with the purpose of strengthening ties and encouraging cooperation between the nations by means of public (People's) diplomacy. Uzbekistan is creating many new opportunities for the peoples of neighboring countries by opening its borders and engaging in joint projects.

Furthermore, international and regional organizations play a vital role in promoting robust relations in Central Asia by building a strong partnership between the nations and ensuring regional stability.

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Научная статья

Народная дипломатия в современной Центральной Азии: в направлении интеграции и процветания

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Аннотация. Страны Центральной Азии признаны международным сообществом как независимые государства после 1991 года. Геостратегическое расположение региона позволяет рассматривать его в качестве геостратегических «моста» между Востоком и Западом, он играет крайне важную роль в соединении ведущих стран Евразии. В течение последних лет в Центральной Азии произошли изменения и процессы, обеспечивающие новые перспективы для интеграции и развития сотрудничества в области народной дипломатии. Целью статьи является изучение значимости и анализ перспектив народной дипломатии для развития интеграции в регионе. В международных отношениях особое внимание уделяется развитию сотрудничества между странами, что исследуется в рамках анализа внешней политики.

Ключевые слова: народная дипломатия, публичная дипломатия, Евразия, Центральная Азия, межнациональные отношения, общества дружбы

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Research article

Russian Cultural Marking of the International Scene: The Soft Power to the Test (2000–2018)

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Abstract. Since the mid-1990s, and even more Vladimir Putin's accession to the presidency, reaffirmation and recognition of Russia's status as a great power has been erected as an existential political imperative. The restoration of Russia's global influence is one of the parts of this high-powered policy implemented by the authorities. It manifests itself repeatedly through hard power initiatives outside national borders in Georgia, Ukraine or Syria. But the "color revolutions" in the post-Soviet space, primarily the Orange Revolution of 2004, prompt the Russian government to rethink its foreign policy in order to project a better image of Russia abroad. This late awareness is reflected in the adoption of a clean soft power strategy and its main key instruments are created during the second term of Vladimir Putin (2004–2008). The notion of soft power will be institutionalized in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation on February 12, 2013. This article is therefore intended as a contribution to the analysis of the issues surrounding the cultural variable in foreign policy of the Russian Federation. It is therefore more precisely his ambition to decipher the motives underlying the mobilization of resources for the purpose of cultural outreach by Russia. A country with many contrasts and, moreover, in a world cultural field traditionally controlled by strong Western powers, Russia has opted for soft power, with the triple vision of making its way, to feed its current rise and to pose as a "responsible" and "conciliatory" power. For the twelfth largest economic power in the world, it is also a question of reducing the mistrust and criticism that its presence already arouses on the international scene. The choice made on the cultural variable is therefore not insignificant; because, it is a strategy, through which Russia would like to build, if not regain its greatness of yesteryear.

Keywords: Russia, foreign policy, soft power, Power, culture, cooperation, sport

The motives that underlie Russia's international cultural influence

Russia is an exceptional mosaic of regions with their own cultural roots, a past and a cultural present of their own. It is around the 16th century that the state built by the Muscovite power changes scale and becomes a territory henceforth

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associated with the notion of immensity. From the eighteenth century to the present day, Russia is the largest state in the world [1]. The Eurasian “state-continent” status is not without consequences in terms of perception of the world. It has often reinforced, both among Russian thinkers and governments, the temptation to make “a world in itself” [1], when we know that ideology [2] serves to conceal intentions, justify actions, mobilize people and recruit supporters across borders; a screen, an argument, a cement and a weapon. In the light of realistic theories, the elements of the power of a state are diverse. Among those listed by Hans Morgenthau, figure indeed geography. This is what we will try to develop here keeping in mind this fundamental axis linking space and power, the power expressed in the space policies implemented by Russia. Space is like a palette where the degrees of state power can be expressed. Thus, to consider the stakes that represent the Russian territory leads us to question its attraction, its credibility that can explain its projection on the international scene.

In Russian academic literature, the concept of soft power seems recent and hardly convincing [3; 4]. In fact, it is not new. Through its ideology, the USSR exerted a real attraction, even during its last years of existence thanks to the outstanding communicator that was Mikhail Gorbachev. Boris Yeltsin was also very concerned about the image of his country in the world and he managed to impose the idea that Russia continued to be one of the big ones of this world. The domestic and international positions of the latter are deteriorating, but success has been limited. The double enlargement of the Atlantic Alliance and the European Union as well as the color revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine have rekindled reflection on the issue. They clearly mean that Russia has to change the image it has of itself in the world, modernize the means at its disposal and acquire new instruments. Because, every self-respecting country builds its identity.

Russia, unlike the countries of Western Europe, is experiencing a period of radical transformation of its social fabric. Cultural policy has changed significantly in the last decade as a result of political and economic reforms. The two pivotal dates are 1985 and 1991¹. It was in 1985 that perestroika, that is the transformation of state policy in the economic, social and cultural sphere. Attempts to change and reform the Soviet political and economic system led to an exacerbation of internal contradictions and ultimately to the collapse of 1991, which saw the USSR disappear. At the same time, the cultural policy implemented in present-day Russia could only bear the imprint of the past. Thus from the year 2000, the popular support to the political and state project of Vladimir Putin, which combines restoration of national values, political intransigence in the face of any threat of state monopoly and the desire to restore the status of great power of Russia, is manifested ([5]). From then on, the development of the cultural factor by Russia responds to a logic that consists in wanting to unify the world to its cultural values, in order to achieve the results that it can not have through the political struggles and the military force. Even though the policy seems to use culture for

¹ *Cultural Policy of the Russian Federation*. Council of Cultural Cooperation; Strasbourg; 1998.

strategic purposes, for Russia, it also aims to improve its image by helping mutual understanding and denouncing the stereotypes, prejudices and prejudices she is a victim. And above all, as Alain Peyrefitte points out, “the Western public is afflicted with myopia made up of prejudices, ideological passions and above all ignorance ...” [6]. Russia wants, through culture, to defuse ideological criticism and recover the greatness of the past. This further confirms Marie Dousset's statement that: “nostalgic of Russia's past greatness, Putin dreams of giving it back a place of choice on the international stage” [7].

Russian Soft Power Instruments

The culture since the end of the Cold War, occupies a pre-eminent place in the organization of the international society. Each actor tends to value the cultural variable and Luc Sindjoun thinks in this respect that the cultural power has acquired a major importance in international relations after the Cold War and especially after September 11, 2001. He also underlines that this expression refers to “*a set of capabilities based on mastery either by a group in any form whatsoever (state, network, company, international organization, etc.) or by individuals, ways of doing, thinking and to feel able to enable him to orient a social relation to their symbolic or material profit. It is the chance of the triumph of the will, based on the control of meanings, norms and values, objects of identity*” [8]. For J. Nye “power in the twenty-first century will be based on a mixture of hard and soft resources” [9]. Today, power rests less on military domination alone, concentrating instead on several chess-boards, certainly military, but also economic, political, media, cultural and symbolic. According to Nye, “*the power of co-optation - the ability to steer what others want – often depends on the attraction of culture and ideology to other peoples, or the ability to manipulate political choices so that actors can express some of their desires only because they appear unrealistic*” [10]. To this end, it is undeniably accepted that the cultural aspect is among the official declarations proclaimed by the Russian Government: the use of “soft power” instruments to solve foreign policy problems becomes an integral part current international politics, that is, the use of civil society capabilities, information and communication technologies and technologies, social and other, in addition to traditional diplomatic methods².

To this end, Russia has been developing since 2000 a set of tools to make its emergence not threatening, but attractive. Some examples of this soft approach are public diplomacy, exchange programs, development aid, humanitarian aid, military contacts, media. Public diplomacy is now an integral part of Russian foreign policy. In 2003–2004, she is looking for new ways of doing things. In areas very different from each other, it relaunches the policies implemented and sets up new channels and relays. His numerous and eclectic initiatives aim to develop a di-

² The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by Russian President Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)

plomacy of influence, to gain support for his ideas and, to create an environment that is favorable to him, to weigh, through representations and attractiveness, on the definition of policies towards it. Thus Russia invests the means of which it has a simple concept, that of shared reflection. To carry out its project, the country will put in place various essential resources such as:

Russkyi Mir Foundation (Russian World) and Rossotrudnichestvo:

Created in 2007 and 2008 respectively, the Russkyi Mir Foundation (Russian World) and the Federal Agency for International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo) have given a new impetus to the promotion of the Russian language, especially in the post-Soviet the reception of foreign students, that is to say the training of the elites and the organization of commemorations of great events which aims to maintain symbols of the greatness of Russia [11]. They aim to promote research in education and aim to create or develop concrete objects, symbolic devices, practices, situations, educational and pedagogical. Luc Sindjoun believes that education “refers to the formation and transmission of knowledge: it is the framework par excellence of labeling culture” [8]. The training and development of foreign students is one of the strategic aspects of Rossotrudnichestvo. This training aims to create resources that promote the development of southern countries. The Russkyi Mir Foundation strives to develop a sense of Russian culture, a certain intelligibility or a certain understanding, through an effort of global reflection, intuition and sensitive listening, which goes beyond the natural, human and social sciences, without excluding them.

Russia Today (RT): This 24-hour streaming television channel in English from December 2005, then in Arabic from 2007 and in Spanish from 2009 has modernized the Russian outdoor audiovisual system]. It must be said that Russia has made the choice, here again, to set up a satellite channel that can largely compete with the prestigious foreign channels (CNN, France 24, BBC, etc.). Thus, the chain allows the borders to be opened in a symbolic way to let information pass and to understand what is going on elsewhere. It seems that it allows Russia to join the globalization and to take a place in this world that has often turned its back. It should be noted that this channel allows its viewers to flourish and sharpen a reflection of their own. Moreover, it is certain that it must certainly frighten the majority of the countries of the world, especially those of the Western world, because it enjoys an influence that gives it a role in the Russian street.

In view of the foregoing, since the USSR was a predominantly military power, the Russian ruling elites became more familiar with hard power and “the ability to influence what others do” through coercion or of the reward, that with the soft power and “*the ability to influence what others want [...] to seduce and attract [...], attraction often leading to consent and imitation*” [12; 13].

Investment in international events: The communication and the cultural have become determinant in the outcome of the battles that are won today. Thus, Russia sets up and hosts projects whose mission is to strengthen its presence in the world, to participate in all the major debates of the world, to spread a “Russian thought” and to rectify what it considers to be the misconceptions that circulate on

his account. Since 2000, Elle has relied more on sports, scientific and cultural records such as: Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games, 2017 Football Confederation Cup, 19th World Youth Festival and 2017 Students Festival Sochi and the 2018 FIFA World Cup. This is to enhance its attractiveness through innovation, and a branding policy. Indeed, the image of a country is the perception that one has of it. From then on, it can vary from one individual to another. The image does not escape the States. In fact, nothing prevents them from caring for this image, to develop it, to use it to achieve certain objectives. Other factors may affect the image of a country or a state. This is true of the people of this country, its culture, history, cuisine, flagship products, or even its level of development [14]. The image and reputation of a country become indispensable to the politics of a state that wants to be prosperous and influential [15]. Russia is doing it, without renouncing the hard power instruments.

The image is part of Russia's nation-branding policy, implemented as a result of Sochi's candidacy for the organization of the 2014 Olympic Games. The concept of nation branding refers to the policy of promoting the image of a state, using "reputation management" tools usually mobilized by private companies. It is therefore a convincing example of Russia's strategy of cultural influence in the world, which combines with its diplomatic influences (the frequent exchange of visits at the highest level) to defeat Western hegemony. As Alain Plantey notes, "*competition between nations does not spare the field of thought insofar as the spread of speech, image, and idea can make it possible to influence politics and strategies of states*" [16]. To this end, no country has as much impact on the organization of international events as Russia since the beginning of the millennium.

Russia has been able to adopt and successfully implement a new strategy, that of branding. The sporting niche is one of the most prized by state brands and Russia is no exception to the rule. The sport is considered by the Russian authorities as one of the sure ways to achieve a high international visibility. Russia is giving itself the means to multiply competitions and accommodate a maximum of major sporting events. With significant financial surpluses, the country's leaders use significant resources both to meet the huge consumption and investment needs, and at the same time to serve them for greater international visibility. It is for this purpose that Russia is betting on sport. For Jean-Jacques Bozonnet, "globalized professional sport has become for many states one of the best vectors of soft power" [17]. What Pascal Boniface confirms: "Sport has become an instrument of soft power, this soft power that has become the new and subtle form of power. Each state tries to attract the attention, the respect and the sympathy of the other nations thanks to its champions who have become true international stars, known and admired on the five continents. Living icons of the global village that is today the planet with the rise of communication and information technologies" [18].

In addition to the Olympic games and football competitions, other cultural activities are in the spotlight in Russia. The 2014 Sochi Olympic Winter Games (OJ) provided good international visibility for Russia. This event presents a geopolitical dimension. "*With the Olympics, Putin is playing Russia's place in the*

world cherishing the hope of recreating a kind of common market around Russia that would be an alternative to the European Union"³. Although apolitical character of this event, but it should be noted that this is simply a myth. What makes Pascal Boniface say that: "from the moment when we bring together, for a competition, citizens from different countries, the event is inevitably political" [18]. Moreover, he says, "*the official ban on the intrusion of politics in the Games concerns athletes, not States. The first, who will quickly become ambassadors in shorts, are obliged to reserve. States remain free to determine their political line and the IOC, whether in accepting or excluding national delegations or choosing the host city, will make decisions based on geostrategic criteria*" [18]. So to speak, the power of the image has Exponentially believed after the Second World War and the Olympics marked the spirits, proving the extraordinary interweaving of politics and sport in the Olympic universe.

The stakes of football, be they political, economic and even geopolitical, have long gone beyond purely sports. Football competitions have, moreover, been widely used by States as signals of rapprochement. Subject of passion and sometimes overflowing, football contributes to developing relations between peoples [19]. This "sport king" proved that it could constitute, for some states, like Russia, not only a formidable relay for its image in the world but also an instrument that promotes its discovery. Football is the image of the nation, its reflection [19] and thus contributes to the international influence of a state. This is what makes Didier Lucas say that "in the age of soft power, football is probably one of the best instruments of the radiation of a state" [20]. It is the international football competitions in the framework of the June-July 2017 Confederations Cup and the 2018 World Cup, which will allow Russia to discover more.

Always in perfect coherence, Russia has chosen to allow politicians, diplomats, young people, intellectuals and students from around the world to come together to think together about global issues, or simply through essential concepts. This sensitivity that Russian leaders bring makes it possible to create means to produce a common reflection that can increase the efficiency of human work. These times of work and reflection must allow people to enrich themselves and become actors in this world. The XIX World Festival of Youth and Students of 2017 Sochi, already organized in 1957 and 1985 in Russia, brought together the different nations, with one goal, that of thinking together. The program of this international event included youth meetings in more than 70 venues to discuss multiple themes, including "Culture and Globalization", "The Global Economy", "The Knowledge Economy", "The World". development of public institutions and "politics and international security". An International Forum of Youth Cinema, Artistic and Cultural Exhibitions and various sports and youth activities were organized in Yekaterinburg, Simferopol, Sevastopol and other cities representing 15 Russian regions. Vladimir Putin has therefore made a choice for his country, that

³ *Les Echos*. 27.01.2014.

of allowing different people to come together to reflect on global issues. From now on, it will be necessary to count with Russia “unavoidable country”. This event is part of the charm offensive, aimed at making Russia more attractive and less intimidating. This event is part of the “soft power” resources and therefore corresponds to the attraction and seduction capacity exercised by the Russian cultural model. And the objectives assigned to this great world meeting are proving to be a vector for the development of friendship ties between Russia and the rest of the world. As such, during the opening ceremony of the festival, Vladimir Putin said that this meeting is a link between countries committed to freedom and solidarity. The organization of the festival cost a total of 4.5 billion rubles to the Russian budget. The country has financed the holding of all events in Sochi as well as the accommodation and meals of the participants in hotels located in Adler, not far from the Olympic Park. The total number of participants is approximately 30,000, including 20,000 delegates (10,000 Russians and 10,000 foreigners), 7,000 volunteers, and a large number of speakers and guests. Vladimir Putin declared that the countries of the world must stop spending resources in a “useless” rivalry: “we see each other as adversaries, and instead of cooperating and solving problems that concern us all, we devote a large part of our resources to secondary things, we must strive to consider each other as partners”⁴. This festival has therefore participated, through its activities, in the implementation of the soft dimension of Russian power. This festival contributed to the cultural influence of Russia in the world, at the same time as it was one of the strong instruments of its power.

In short, to evoke the “return” of Russia on the international scene is today a commonplace. In Russia, this phenomenon is largely put to the credit of Vladimir Putin, a majority of his fellow citizens believing that his policy allowed the recovery of the country after the “disorders” of US years [11]. In Europe and the United States, this “return” raises questions and sometimes concerns. Russia is returning to its ambitions of power at a time when rising oil prices are changing its relationship with the world. It is positioning itself, along with the major industrialized countries and emerging powers, as one of the centers of power in a multipolar world whose work it is trying to demonstrate. Russian policy seems very proactive, pragmatic and focused. It relies, as we mentioned above, on certain resources. Nevertheless, the Russian cultural power is articulated as exclusively around the state in the governmental sense of the term. And, as Samuel Huntington points out, “*the power of a State is normally evaluated by measuring the resources available to it over those possessed by other States that it tries to influence*” [21]. Developing a soft power by Russia is a long-term task. Without prejudging the future, we note that the initiatives taken are facing serious difficulties. To move from propaganda, omnipresent during the time of the Soviet Union, to the information and the debate of ideas turns out in particular very complex and that their effects are limited. The very deteriorated image of Russia in the world

⁴ Mitina Daria, Member of the National Organizing Committee and President of the Russian Communist Youth Union (RKSM) in RBC Daily. 16.10.2017.

bears witness to this. In December 2004, a survey conducted in 23 countries revealed that Russia was only marginally perceived as having a positive influence. Subsequently, his image has deteriorated further. In Europe, the decline is general. One of the reasons for Western discontent is that Russia seems to represent a form of alternative development that is popular with the majority of humanity [22]. For political scientist Sergei Karaganov, “*Russia is one of the few countries to attract a huge number of people through its efforts to maintain its independence and sovereignty. It is a powerful pole of attraction. It intends to become again master of its destiny, to weigh on the decision and to be recognized like a driving element of a more ‘just’ international order. A dream of power, but also of magnitude. But greatness is not a matter of discourse, but of objectives and results. What we must recognize is that contemporary Russia stands out as much from the traditions of the time of the autocracy, where orthodoxy was the state religion, that the Soviet era, marked by the monopoly of the Marxist-Leninist ideology*” [23]. However, are the soft power resources mobilized by Vladimir Putin commensurate with Russia’s quest for power? The cultural rise and then the political supremacy at the international level of Vladimir Putin could be consolidated after reelection at the head of the Russian Federation for a new mandate of 06 years of 18 March 2018.

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Научная статья

Культурная маркировка России на международной арене: испытание мягкой силы (2000–2018)

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Аннотация. Автор утверждает, что со второй половины 1990-х годов, и особенно с момента вступления В.В. Путина на пост президента, международное подтверждение и признание статуса России как великой державы было возведено в ранг экзистенциального внешнеполитического императива. Восстановление глобального влияния России – одна из составляющих этой политики, проводимой российскими властями. Однако «цветные революции» на постсоветском пространстве, в первую очередь «Оранжевая революция» 2004 года на Украине, заставили российское руководство переосмыслить отдельные императивы внешней политики для того, чтобы спроецировать за рубежом лучший образ России. Данные приоритеты нашли отражение в программных документах во время второго президентского срока В.В. Путина (2004–2008 гг.). Понятие «мягкой силы» будет институционализировано в Концепции внешней политики Российской Федерации от 12 февраля 2013 года. Данная статья призвана внести вклад в анализ проблем, связанных с культурной переменной во внешней политике Российской Федерации. Автор полагает, что в мировом культурном поле, традиционно контролируемом сильными западными державами, Россия выбрала мягкую силу на основе видения своего особенного пути, своей истории культуры и многочисленных достижений, представляя себя «ответственной» и «примиряющей» державой.

Ключевые слова: Россия, внешняя политика, мягкая сила, власть, культура, сотрудничество, спорт

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Review article

**Book review: *Leenco Lata*
Peacekeeping as State-Building:
Current Challenges for the Horn of Africa.
Ewing Township, USA: The Red Sea Press. 2012. 160 p.**

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Abstract. The review of Leenco Lata's¹ book “Peacekeeping as State-Building: Current Challenges for the Horn of Africa” examines the theory and practice of state-building on the example of African countries. The central premise of this monograph is the assumption that state-building requires rethinking of the factors and attributes traditionally associated with the state. The book consists of nine chapters, each of which is analyzed by the reviewer. The monograph focuses on the problems of state-building, state legitimacy, and the role and specifics of peacekeeping operations in the horn of Africa.

Keywords: peacekeeping, state-building, Horn of Africa, democracy, political stability

The overall goal of this work is to make a modest contribution to the emerging field of state-building theory. Hence, the central message of this work is a supposition that state-building requires rethinking the attributes conventionally associated with the state. The book is organized into nine chapters. The first chapter is an introductory section, which narrates mainly about state formation, state legitimacy and peacekeeping operations in the Horn of Africa.

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¹ The author studied engineering in the US in the 1960s and, upon returning to Ethiopia, joined other Oromos to establish the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). As a member of the OLF leadership, Lata collaborated with the present leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea to chart the course that led to Eritrea's separation and the reconfiguration of the remainder of Ethiopia as a federation. The author currently lives in Oslo and is associated with the Norwegian Research Institution. Lata works as a freelance analyst of political developments in the Horn of Africa. He is the author of the “Ethiopian State at the Crossroads” (1999) and the “Horn of Africa as Common Homeland” (2004), as well as numerous other articles.

In this chapter, the book argues that state formation was the result of the late 19th century settlements: European imperialists (Britain, France and Italy) that came mainly from outside the region, and internal imperialists (Christian Abyssinia and Mahdist Sudan), which appeared from within the region. ‘State legitimacy’ is conceptualized as a degree to which the idea of state formation is shared by all the people residing on the territory of the state. However, as is demonstrated in the book, in the Horn of Africa, the shared idea of a state has not been particularly unanimous. Hence, the ‘state’ is legitimate for some residents and unenforceable for others. Another aspect in the purview of the chapter is expansion of peacekeeping doctrine in the Horn of Africa. Currently a number of peacekeeping operations are being conducted in the region. It is argued, however, that the peace-making forces lack a consensual approach in the matters of state formation. The book underscores that the goal of peacekeeping is building a preeminently democratic state and not just any kind of state.

The second chapter of the book is devoted to state building and the challenges associated with it, such as asymmetrical flow of resources, nation-building, external recognition and legitimacy. With regard to asymmetrical flow of resources, it is argued that debt servicing and the ever rising gap between the prices of raw materials exported by poor countries and the prices of industrial products they import from wealthy favors the latter. The book claims that African countries would never be able to sustain institutions and practices underpinning a modern democratic state unless the ongoing asymmetrical flow of resources is corrected. At the same time, the current attempt at nation-building in the region may result in the prevalence on some nations over others in the number of residents populating the state. The author believes that such practice will lead to reactive nationalism, which consequently may result in the state’s failure. Therefore, nation-building may become the reason for the fiasco of the state. Furthermore, the author strongly believes that external recognition determines the acknowledgment of internal legitimacy. The author insists that any regime that lacks internal legitimacy cannot guarantee the legality of its external regulations.

The third chapter of the book deals with determining the size of the state in the Horn of Africa, where the concurrent existence of expansionist and contractionist tendencies within a state should be taken into consideration. It is argued that some of the region’s states aspire to achieve expansion by claiming the whole or parts of a neighboring entity. If nothing else, there exists projection of power and influence into neighboring states. At the same time, there is at least one group entertaining separation or, at the minimum, decentralization. According to the author, any state-building initiative that overlooks the co-occurrence of expansionist and contractionist tendencies is very unlikely to succeed. Lata suggests that regional integration combined with decentralization should be a response to the local nature of many African problems.

Chapter four discusses the role of traditions in the state formation. The author notes that African political traditions and attitudes were heavily influenced by the Enlightenment movement that spread from Europe. Educated Africans, who

were under the influence of European theories about Africa and African societies, relinquished African traditions, dismissing the positive elements of their conventional practices and structures. The author underlines that in the process of state-building, a society's traditions should be reckoned with and looked upon as fundamental principles, "the bedrock" for the future nation. According to Lata, building a sustainable and robust state in Africa would be unthinkable unless traditional structures, practices and formations are taken into account.

Chapter five of the book is devoted to state ownership. In this chapter, the author indicates that state ownership and state legitimacy are contested to various degrees practically in every state in the Horn of Africa. He mentions that policies, practices, symbols and myths of each state grant privileges to a particular part of population and ignore the interests of others. The author stresses that many of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa stem from the asymmetrical nature of state ownership.

In chapter six, the author states that in order to successfully build a democratic state in the Horn of Africa, it is imperative to use a version of democracy that takes into account cultural and linguistic diversity. Lata argues that liberal democracy is not preferable for Africa, as it lacks sensitivity to cultural pluralism and leans upon a strong economy. The author opts for the deliberative version of democracy as opposed to the liberal one. He emphasizes that deliberative democracy reconciles the interests of the common national and a particular ethnic identity.

In chapter seven, the issues of diversity and citizenship are discussed. The world in general and the Horn of Africa in particular are culturally and ethnically diverse; therefore, recognizing these identities is the only way to build a civilized society. The author suggests that in the process of state and citizenship formation the existence of such diversity needs to be acknowledged.

Chapter eight of the book focuses on legitimacy of military and security institutions. The author points out that state-building cannot be successful unless these sectors are legitimized. He recommends that military and security forces should serve as protectors of all spheres of the state with authorization to do so being derived from all members of society. The book further argues that, in the Horn of Africa, where the military has transformed itself into a political party, the fundamental challenge is to end militarization of political parties and politicization of military forces.

Finally, in the last chapter, the author summarizes four imperatives that need to be addressed for sustainable peace and stability to prevail in the strife-torn region of the Horn of Africa. The imperatives include: addressing the concurrent expansionist and contractionist tendencies; ensuring the symmetry of state ownership; providing accountability and accessibility of state institutions to grassland communities; recognizing ethnic diversity and various identities.

The main strength of this book is that it gives a comprehensive description of the state-building process and the challenges associated with it in regards to each state in the Horn of Africa. The way the author comes up with alternatives to the problems raised in the discussion presents a particular interest. The reviewer believes that the ideas suggested by the author are applicable in various ways.

Lata offers a different perspective regarding the relations between state and society, which he sets in opposition to the existing common practice of state autonomy prevailing over societal autonomy. The existing tradition views state as a sovereign entity standing above and controlling society on its territory. However, the author does not concur with this conventional vision of the role of the state and believes that seeing the state as a superior entity undermines the autonomy of society members. Hence, the author proposes his own concept of state authority, which he views as a reflection and testimony of the autonomous status of the individuals who compose its population. This particular standpoint, perhaps, opens room for academic debate.

Lata also puts forth an opinion that applying the Western pattern of state formation as a panacea to the existing problems of the region has to be reconsidered. Such suggestion encourages further study and reminds other academics to critically evaluate the Western models in regards to their applicability in the African region.

Above all, given the subject of state building is a burning issue in the region, policy makers, academics and other parties concerned are pressed to work on its realization in their respective areas. The reviewer believes that Lata's work will serve as an alarm for all parties involved in the state-building process in the Horn of Africa, who should give priority to interests of the people residing on the territory of the future state and strive, in the first place, for best of the region.

Methodologically, the work lacks variety of primary data sources, entirely depending on secondary sources. With regards to modernization, the author portrays and describes Christian Abyssinia, some northern Sudanese and Somali family clans who hold themselves out as different from the rest of the uncivilized local population and deem themselves as worthy counterparts to Europeans. The reviewer believes that, though such description has substance, in some respects it seems quite exaggerated, as, for example, the described family clans do not position themselves as competitors to the Western lifestyle.

The reviewer also feels that, in certain respects, the author follows a reductionist approach. Paying sufficient attention to dominant groups, such as Christian Abyssinia and northern Sudan, the book overlooks the role of other ethnic groups that participated in the process of state formation in the region. The reviewer further assumes that the author is overly preoccupied with the idiosyncrasy of the region, sometimes disregarding the real state of affairs. The Horn of Africa is described as peculiar in many respects, which, as is believed by the reviewer, is not consistent with the facts.

Furthermore, the author mis-conceptualizes the peace-keeping doctrine, seeing peace-making operations as a long-term strategy and the only way of realizing state-building in the Horn of Africa. However, the very genesis of peacekeeping operations contradicts the author's understanding of the purpose of peace-making, as PCOs emerged as an ad hoc response to the international crises after the formation of the United Nations. The reviewer argues that the mission of any peace-keeping operation in the world in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular solely consists in preventing further violence.

**Рецензия на монографию: Линко Лата
Миротворчество как государственное строительство:
современные вызовы для Африканского Рога.
США, Эвинг Тауншип: The Red Sea Press. 2012. 160 с.**

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Аннотация. В рецензии на книгу Линко Лата «Миротворчество как государственное строительство: современные вызовы для Африканского Рога» рассматривается теория и практика государственного строительства на примере ряда африканских стран. Центральным посылом этой работы является предположение о том, что государственное строительство требует переосмысления ряда факторов и атрибутов, традиционно ассоциируемых с государством. Книга состоит из девяти глав, каждая из которых анализируется рецензентом. Основное внимание в рассматриваемой монографии уделяется проблемам государственного строительства, государственной легитимности, а также роли и специфике миротворческих операций на Африканском Роге.

Ключевые слова: миротворчество, государственное строительство, Африканский Рог, демократия, политическая стабильность

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