



VOLUME 14 ISSUE 6 December 2017

BIMONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

ISSN (online): 2421-8111

Giorgos KENTAS

Unlocking and Assessing UN Secretary-Generals' Optimism for "A Tactical Stalemate" in Cyprus Talks

Jean-Loup SAMAN

The Future of Gulf-Asia Relations

Klaus LARRES

The Governmental Crisis in Germany and the Future of Angela Merkel

Michalis KONTOS

Will Iran Become a Regional Hegemon in the Middle East?

Stamatoula PANAGAKOU

J. S. Mill on Women's Empowerment and the Improvement of Humankind

Savvakis C. SAVVIDES

Policy Should Focus on the Need to Overcome Private Indebtedness

Maria HADJIATHANASIOU

A Country Within a Country: Empire, Cyprus, Historical Research and Twitter

Vasileios BALAFAS

The Clash of the Titans on the Energy Field



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1993-2017 TWENTY FOUR YEARS OF POLICY FORMULATION AND ANALYSIS

**UNLOCKING AND ASSESSING UN SECRETARY-GENERALS' OPTIMISM
FOR "A TACTICAL STALEMATE" IN CYPRUS TALKS**

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Cyprus talks may have entered yet another stalemate period, but, according to the latest UN Secretary-General Report, this could be considered as a *tactical stalemate*. Mr. Guterres expressed a "firm belief that a historic opportunity was lost in Crans-Montana" (par. 45), but, at the same time, his Report reveals some express guidelines on how the parties could reach a strategic agreement that will pave the way for a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus problem. UN Secretary-General reports substantial progress on all the elements of a framework he presented to the parties of the Cyprus Conference. His Report allows for a very little doubt about the overall context of an agreement, probably in the "near future", as he advises.

Tactical stalemated unlocked

During the Conference, the Secretary-General presented the parties with a framework for a strategic understanding that comprises of issues that relate to territory, political equality, property, equivalent treatment of Turkish nationals, and security and guarantees. Apart from the security dossier, the Report suggests that there is not much left to discuss in substance, but some details. The Report observes that, by the end of the Conference, "the sides had reached practically full agreement on the federal executive and effective participation" (par. 21). The Secretary-General seems to assume that some of the core outstanding issues related to the chapter of governance and power-sharing (including effective participation, the composition of federal bodies and institutions, decision making, and the federal executive) were bridged, if not sorted out for good. The Secretary-General also reported that the thorny issue of the equivalent treatment of Turkish nationals in Cyprus "to that enjoyed by Greek nationals in their capacity as citizens of the European Union" (par. 20) was also effectively addressed. He noted that "[w]hile some differences remained on the equivalent treatment of Turkish nationals with regard to the issue of free movement of persons, they were a question of certain details rather than principles" (par. 27). According to his Report, "officials of the European

Commission present in the negotiations qualified [these differences] as limited and possible to accommodate through practical solutions” (par. 21).

Regarding the chapter of property, the Report expresses optimism that the understanding being reached between the two leaders, “left little outstanding with respect to an overarching property settlement framework” (par. 22). It is clearly assumed that, if details with regard to the exact criteria that would apply in each of the two property regimes are agreed, the property chapter shall be effectively closed (par. 22). Equally, the Report reveals Secretary-General’s optimism on the chapter of territory. It is stated that, even though the parties are expected to conclude the issue of territory “only as part of a final package “an agreement on territorial adjustment was within reach” (par. 23).

The Secretary-General is also hopeful for a joint understanding on the chapter of security and guarantees. Although he acknowledges “the complexity and importance of the chapter on security and guarantees” (par. 24), he concludes that the parties “had significantly advanced in developing a security concept” (par. 27). Mr. Guterres “proposed that the parties identify solutions while taking into account the fact that the current system of guarantees, in particular article IV of the Treaty of Guarantee, containing the unilateral right of intervention, was “unsustainable”” (par. 24). The Secretary-General, while remaining neutral as to the future of the Treaty of Guarantee, he is clear about his views on the continuation of a relatively reimagined system of guarantees. He believes that Cyprus needs a new system of security, which will entail “a credible framework for monitoring the implementation of the agreement in which the current guarantors would play a role” (par. 24).

The only element of Guterres’ framework which is left open to discussion is the future presence of Greek and Turkish troops in Cyprus. While not making explicit reference to the Treaty of Alliance, the Secretary-General expresses an intention to differentiate it from the Treaty of Guarantees. His express suggestion is that “any outstanding issues regarding troops would best be addressed at the highest political level involving the Prime Ministers of the three guarantor Powers” (par. 24). In that regard, Mr. Guterres clearly deprives the Foreign Ministers of Greece, Turkey and the UK (who, during the Cyprus Conference, led the discussion on behalf of their governments) from any substantive role in the finalization of an agreement on the future presence of troops in Cyprus.

Tactical stalemate assessed

On the overall prospects of a settlement, the Secretary-General expressively suggests that all elements of package deal –the elements of a “strategic understanding across the negotiating chapters”– were, and could probably still be, reading available for paving the “way for the final

settlement deal” (par. 26). Mr. Guterrrs came to an ultimate conclusion that literally all key issues of the Cyprus Problem were bridged or bridgeable (par. 27), but what really prevented the parties from reaching a historic strategic understanding and heralding a final deal was the lack of “the strongest of political will, courage and determination, mutual trust and a readiness on the part of all parties to take calculated risks in the last and most difficult mile of the negotiations” (par. 46, also observed in par. 26).

That “deficit” of determination, political will, mutual trust, and readiness is thought to be the source of a new stalemate in the Cyprus problem. The Secretary-General is convinced that there are some very good chances for overcoming that “deficit”. He suggests that, “in the framework of a renewed process, if a comprehensive settlement is to be successful in simultaneous referendums, the parties should lose no time in engaging the public and jointly building support for a unified future” (par. 46). His Report sets the following benchmarks as necessary provisos for a successful result (par. 47-48):

- All parties must reflect and determine the conditions for a new, maybe final, Conference “in the near future”.
- The aim of a new Conference shall be the conclusion of a strategic agreement “that was emanating in Crans-Montana”.
- In the meantime, the parties are encouraged “to seek ways to preserve the body of work that had been built throughout the process in the form of convergences and understandings accumulated in the course of the past two years”.
- The basis of the comprehensive settlement shall emanate from an agreement, at the strategic level, “on key outstanding issues”. Details “will need to be worked out at the technical level.”
- A strategic agreement on key issues is critical for assuring each community on the vital elements of the overall settlement, as well as it will “provide impetus for completion of the remaining technical details”.

On substance, the Secretary-General concludes his Report with a promise that he will continue to work on the economic and financial issues that relate to a comprehensive settlement. He reports that “close cooperation among the international financial institutions under the auspices of [his] good offices mission yielded significant results” (par. 49). According to the Report, the IMF, the World Bank, the European Central Bank and the EU “provided timely and helpful technical assistance and support to the leaders and negotiating teams in jointly designing an economically sustainable agreement that maximizes an expected peace dividend, reduces risks in the post-settlement period and promotes human security across the island” (par. 49). Mr. Guterres seems to be certain about the eagerness and the ultimate effectiveness of the international institutions to offer assistance and help the communities to build the needed capacities “in order to prepare

Cyprus for reunification” (par. 49). All substantial needs will be determined in due time through “diagnostic assessments and technical advice.”

Considering all these remarks, one may discern a new methodology that Mr. Guterres has coined and follows for addressing the outstanding procedural and substantial issues of the Cyprus Problem. The Secretary-General seems to have clearly departed from the concept of the so-called leader-led negotiations between the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot sides. Even though –at least for the moment– he does not attempt any form arbitration in relation to the parties’ positions (akin to the method that Mr. Annan followed between 1999 and 2004), Mr. Guterres has adopted a firm position on how Cyprus talks may be resumed and concluded. His Report clearly sets a framework of crucial elements and overtly acknowledges that three out of four of these elements are concluded in substance. In other words, the Secretary-General has opined that issues related to (1) governance and power-sharing, (2) the federal executive and (3) the equivalent treatment of Turkish nationals, have been concluded, save some differences (limited in scope) with regard to latter (i.e. equivalent treatment) (par. 21). The fourth element of his framework (i.e. the issue of security and guarantees) is also considered to be soluble. Mr. Guterres expressed a view for assigning Guarantor powers with a “new role” in Cyprus, in the framework of the monitoring and the implementation of an agreement. The only element which is left open is the issue of troops. He expects that this could only be addressed by the Prime Ministers of Greece, Turkey and the UK (par. 24).

Guterres framework is defined in such a way that allows for no substantial leeway to the parties in all elements of a strategic agreement, save issues of troops, i.e. issues relating to “the presence of Greek and Turkish troops in Cyprus” (par. 24). In that regard, Mr. Guterres appears willing to assist the parties only in the context of the procedural and substantive elements of his framework. This is expressively stated in paragraph 47 of his Report where he reaffirms “the readiness of the United Nations to assist the sides, should they jointly decide to engage in such a process with the necessary political will, in order to conclude the strategic agreement that was emerging in Crans-Montana.” The UN Secretary-General does not allow for any other reading of his future intentions.

What remains to be seen is whether Secretary-General’s optimism for a tactical stalemate will be vindicated. In the history of Cyprus talks, there is only one precedent on which one may judge the prospects of Guterres’ method. In April 2003, UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1475, which called “on all concerned to negotiate within the framework of the Secretary-General’s Good Offices, using the plan to reach a comprehensive settlement as set forth in paragraphs 144-151 of the Secretary-General’s report” (par. 4). When that Resolution provision was implemented in February 2004, the result was the ultimate rejection of a comprehensive UN plan in April 2004.

This time, however, the Secretary-General Report urges the parties to voluntarily embrace an arbitrated framework, accept that all its elements, but one, are substantially completed, embark on a final bargaining of an arrangement on the monitoring and implementation of an agreement (that will actively involve the Guarantor powers), and authorize the Prime Ministers of Greece, Turkey and the UK to finalize the status of troops in Cyprus so that a strategic agreement will be reached, that will ultimately pave the way to a comprehensive settlement.

It is not likely that the Security Council will make paragraphs 45-49 of Guterres' Report mandatory for the parties, but it is not unlikely that both the Secretariat and Permanent Members of the Security Council will adopt these paragraphs as if they were mandatory for the parties. Whether the parties themselves however will be eager to embark on such an approach is subject to political circumstances which are only partly predictable.

On balance, the Secretary-General may have set the conditions under which the current stalemate in Cyprus talks could be a tactical one, but the conditions he has set for untying it are certainly beyond his control and subject to both domestic and external factors, which are generally in flux. Presidential elections in Cyprus, political, economic, demographic, cultural and religious developments in the Turkish Cypriot community, the impulsive way in which Mr. Erdogan makes decisions on foreign policy, as well as regional developments in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East are the major factors that will ultimately determine the chances for success or failure of Guterres' method.

THE FUTURE OF GULF-ASIA RELATIONS*



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In the first semester of 2017, Gulf politics were marked by numerous international events. Among them, three had a distinct significance. First, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, crown prince of Abu Dhabi, travelled to Delhi at the end of January where he was invited as guest of honor to the celebration of India's Republic Day, a privilege given in the recent past to the former US and French Heads of State, Barack Obama and Francois Hollande. Four weeks later, the ruler of Saudi Arabia, King Salman, embarked on a historical month-long Asia tour that brought him to Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, Japan, and China. Lastly, in June, in the midst of the biggest diplomatic crisis within the Gulf Cooperation Council opposing Qatar to Saudi Arabia and others, Turkish President Erdogan announced the speeding up of Turkey's military base in Doha, its first overseas military permanent deployment since the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

These three episodes highlight one common development: Gulf strategic partnerships are no longer exclusively looking at the US and Western traditional powers and eye increasingly towards Asia. These new ties do not serve as a substitute but have a pragmatic purpose: to send a signal to Washington. In other words, this Gulf-Asia rapprochement can be understood as a way for Arab rulers to hedge against the declining influence of the US.

This new geopolitical landscape is the result of two separate trends from the last decade. First, from the chaotic reconstruction of Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein to the inconsistencies of the Obama policy in the Middle East, the unpredictability of US policy in the region grew and caused local actors to diversify their strategic options.

Second, the growth of Asian economies – in particular India, China, Japan, and South Korea – is now driving oil markets. This means by extension that Asia's economic ties to the Gulf are becoming more consequential than

* The views expressed in this paper are strictly those of the author. They do not reflect the views of the UAE National Defense College, or the government of the United Arab Emirates.

those of Western powers with Arab oil producers. If we exclude the US, the four biggest importers of oil in the world are today in Asia: China, India, Japan and South Korea which total 40.6% altogether of oil purchases in 2016. Over the next fifteen years, China, India and the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will define the global energy consumption, leaving the countries of the OECD far behind.

The conjunction of these two trends has several ramifications. To start with, economic interdependence begets common security interests. The flow of commodities from the Arab peninsula to the Asia Pacific region relies on regional and maritime stability. Any trouble onshore (e.g. failed State, civil war) or offshore (piracy attacks) can disrupt this movement. This is why the last years have been marked by an increased role of Gulf and Asian navies in counterpiracy operations in the Indian Ocean. Likewise, Gulf stability is becoming a security priority for Asian countries, as evidenced by documents such as China's Arab Policy Paper.

This interdependence may rely on Gulf oil supplies but it is widening its scope to include other sectors. A South Korean consortium has been building the UAE's first nuclear plants since 2009. Saudi Arabia aims to follow the same path as it signed partnerships for its own nuclear program with South Korea and China. Investments in infrastructures also play a central role in Gulf relations with India and China, especially as countries like Saudi Arabia aim to position them as regional hubs for China's Belt and Road Initiative. In addition to these economic indicators, Gulf-Asia ties are also visible in the military domain. High level visits between military commanders increased, multiple defense agreements were signed and followed by numerous cooperation programs in the field of military education or joint training.

If this rapprochement is significant, does it mean a geopolitical revolution in the Gulf? One has to remain cautious: as of today, it does not mean a realignment of Gulf countries between the US and Asian powers. At the military level, it is unlikely that any country – be it China or India – could and would replace both the resources and the security guarantees provided by the US to the Peninsula. Moreover, the strategic rapprochement between Gulf and Asian countries may also be impeded by the way it impacts – as well as is impacted by – the local competitions. For instance, it is not clear how Gulf countries, which historically have had a strong military relationship with Pakistan, could strengthen their strategic dialogue with India without challenging their ties to the former. This is why this new geopolitical landscape should neither be ignored nor overestimated. In any event, given the current foreign policy style of the Trump presidency, the logic of hedging – meaning for Gulf countries to diversify their international relations and to cover against the US unpredictability – is likely to become

the new pattern of Gulf strategies but it remains to be seen how much it will affect the regional security system on the long term.

THE GOVERNMENTAL CRISIS IN GERMANY AND THE FUTURE OF ANGELA MERKEL



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Until late on November 19, 2017, Germany was one of the few large countries in Europe not afflicted by a major crisis. This perception of Germany as a pillar of stability in an uncertain and unpredictable world changed suddenly when the negotiations for forming a new government collapsed. Since 2005 Chancellor Angela Merkel has been in charge of relatively well-functioning stable governments and a healthy economy. After Donald Trump's election as US president some analysts even went so far as to declare her the 'leader of the western world.'

But is this the beginning of the end of the Merkel era? Will there be new elections soon or will the Berlin Republic be governed by an unprecedented minority government? Have the major parties been discredited with the extreme right-wing party AfD (*Alliance for Germany*) being the 'laughing third'?

The situation

The German general elections on September 24, 2017, produced a number of unexpected results. The two major parties – Merkel's CDU/CSU and the slightly left-of center SPD – suffered significant losses. Despite a combined loss of more than 8 per cent, Merkel's CDU and its Bavarian conservative sister party, CSU, still remained the largest party in parliament, with 33 per cent in total. The small neo-liberal FDP managed an impressive return to the national parliament after an absence of four years. Other smaller parties, such as the Greens and the Left party, also gained some seats.

However, much to the consternation of many in Germany and the wider world, a party on the extreme right of the political spectrum won seats in the Bundestag for the first time since 1949. AfD (*Alternative for Germany*), which was only founded in 2013, took a massive 12.6 per cent of the vote and 94 seats in parliament, making it the country's third largest party.

The SPD soon declared that in view of its massive defeat, it was not ready to participate in the new government and would go into opposition. After all, the party took only 20.5 per cent of the vote, down from 25.7 per cent in the last election. The SPD and its leader, Martin Schulz, the former president of the European parliament, were no longer interested in continuing the 'Grand Coalition' with Merkel's party. Numerically it would have been possible. But it was clear that being a junior partner to Merkel for the previous four years and before had undermined the SPD's electoral credibility. The same had happened to the FDP; the party was in government with Merkel from 2009-2013 and lost the following elections.

With no party prepared to enter into government with the *AfD* or *Die Linke* (the former East German communists), this left four parties that could form a coalition government. The colors these parties have adopted as symbols resemble the national flag of Jamaica, leading to talk of a 'Jamaica coalition.' This was meant to consist of Angela Merkel's CDU, its sister party CSU, the neoliberal FDP and the Greens. Negotiations to overcome their substantive divisions and talks about forming a governing coalition in Berlin were conducted for four long weeks. As set out by law, the new parliament elected in September convened on 24 October. Until a new government has been formed, the old government remains in office in an acting capacity, with Merkel as Chancellor and Sigmar Gabriel as Foreign Minister.

The four parties that commenced negotiations to form a 'Jamaica coalition government' were divided by many issues. Among them were taxes and the abolition of the 'solidarity tax' to finance support for eastern Germany, the imposition of an upper ceiling for accepting refugees, and the question of whether family members of re-settled refugees are entitled to join them in Germany. There were also a number of controversial questions regarding 'big data,' the environment, climate and energy that needed to be agreed upon.

By the evening of November 19 a compromise deal seemed to have been achieved. But then all of a sudden, the FDP with its inexperienced and somewhat self-important leader Christian Lindner pulled out. He declared that there were disagreements on substantive issues, in particular with the Green Party, that could not be bridged. It is better "not to govern at all, then to govern badly," Lindner announced shortly before midnight.

His prospective partners were stunned, as was the German nation and most of the rest of the world, which had become used to stability and common sense prevailing in Berlin. Overnight, Germany had been plunged into a deep constitutional crisis.

Many commentators blamed the young FDP leader, saying that his responsibility to help create a workable government appeared to have taken a backset to his party political ambitions. He apparently expects that new elections will provide his party with more seats in parliament and thus the ability to form a coalition with the CDU/CSU and without the Greens.

What are the options?

1. The SPD could enter another 'Grand Coalition' with Angela Merkel's CDU/CSU after all. The SPD could argue that they have changed their mind out of responsibility to the nation. In negotiations with Merkel, the SPD could even limit the new 'Grand Coalition' to two years, for instance, and insist on early general elections after this time. The SPD might find it easier to enter into a new 'Grand Coalition' with the CDU/CSU if Angela Merkel were to retire as Chancellor and be replaced as party leader. At present, however, this is an unlikely prospect.
2. Merkel could form a minority government with or without the Greens. This however makes for a weak and unstable government with changing majorities. It also has no precedent in German history since 1949. At present there is great reluctance from most involved to go down this path. For every bill and major initiative, Merkel would be dependent on the opposition parties to provide her with a parliamentary majority. She has expressed skepticism about this course of action.
3. New elections could be called. This, though, is not easy. The German parliament has no right to dissolve itself. Only the German President can do so, and only after a prolonged process. This was made deliberately difficult in the Basic Law, the country's constitution, as a lesson from the failed Weimar Republic of the 1920s and early 1930s. At that time parliament could be dissolved much too easily, leading to much instability and, ultimately, the appointment of Hitler as chancellor.

The Role of the German President

The initiative to call new elections rests with the German federal president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, a former SPD Foreign Minister. He must propose the leader of the strongest party in parliament (currently Merkel) for election as Chancellor by the federal parliament. And parliament has to elect the Chancellor with an absolute majority. If this fails the first time, as it would at present, parliament must try to elect the chancellor again within two weeks. Any candidate who obtains an absolute parliamentary majority becomes German Chancellor.

If this fails, however, it is only in the third round of voting that the chancellor can be elected with a simple rather than an absolute majority. At this point the role of the president becomes decisive. After discussion with all parliamentary parties, Steinmeier can decide whether to appoint as chancellor the party leader who has obtained a relative parliamentary majority or to dissolve parliament. If he decides to dissolve parliament, new parliamentary elections must be held within 60 days. Were this scenario to become reality now, new elections might be held toward the end of February at the earliest and possibly only in March/April 2018, depending on when parliament could be dissolved.

Until then the current government and Chancellor Merkel will stay in office in an acting capacity. Germany will continue to have a functioning government, though an acting government is unlikely to embark on any major reform initiatives. At first, following the collapse of the 'Jamaica talks', the majority of parties seemed to prefer holding new elections. Acting Chancellor Merkel, the SPD and the FDP were in favor of this course of action. The right-wing AfD also preferred new elections, expecting to obtain an even greater share of the votes than in September.

It was doubtful, however, that the major traditional parties who have led the nation to this impasse would benefit from new elections. In fact, the FDP and the SPD might be penalized by the voters: the FDP for having brought the collapse of the negotiations about and the SPD for having refused to resolve it by forming another grand coalition. But Merkel and her party might also suffer from new elections. Grassroots resentment against her government is on the rise.

Latest opinion polls indicate, however, that if new elections were held all parties would roughly obtain the same share of the vote as in September. The FDP might actually increase their share a little while the AfD would see no significant gains. Yet, by early December Germany's major parties had lost interest in new elections; instead they decided to explore the possibility of forming another grand coalition, the third one since 2005.

The Future of Angela Merkel

Merkel's own future is quite unclear. As the undisputed national leader of the CDU, there is no competition to her leadership in her own party. The crisis may have undermined her authority somewhat; some blame her for the collapse of the negotiations. On the other hand, she is perceived by many as having done her best to bring about a 'Jamaica coalition'. In the meantime she has also expressed her readiness to enter into coalition negotiations with the SPD to form a new grand coalition.

If there were a minority government, Angela Merkel would be the Chancellor of such a government. If there were new elections to be held early in 2018, Merkel would be the CDU/CSU's candidate for chancellor. If there were a new grand coalition with the SPD, Merkel may or may not be able to continue as chancellor. The outcome of any new general election, however, is entirely unpredictable. If her party suffered a further massive loss of votes, she may have to retire (despite the lack of an obvious successor waiting in the wings).

President Steinmeier is reluctant to hold new elections, however, wishing instead to convene talks with all the 'Jamaica parties' and the SPD. He declared that with the elections of September 2017, "the parties have been given a responsibility to the nation which cannot simply be returned to the voters." He may have a point. And indeed, Steinmeier succeeded in persuading the SPD to entertain the notion of entering government after all. Talks between the SPD and the CDU about considering a new grand coalition began in late November.

Given Germany's international importance, this crisis has global repercussions. In view of the difficult situation within the EU and a world largely rudderless and in uproar, Germany has responsibility for providing an element of stability to European and global politics. Forming a new grand coalition, even one limited to two years, might be the right way forward. The talks between the CDU/CSU and the SPD, and perhaps also talks with the Greens, ought to be speeded up. Germany, Europe and the world need to have an elected and stable government in office in Berlin. A new grand coalition would be a sensible way forward. It is more than likely that once again the new government will be headed by Angela Merkel.

WILL IRAN BECOME A REGIONAL HEGEMON IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

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The recent crisis in Lebanon, with the mysterious resignation of the Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri, is one more episode of the undeclared war between the two main players that take part in the contemporary power game in the Middle East: Iran and Saudi Arabia.¹ This is a Cold War-style conflict in the form of a struggle for influence between the two main players through their proxies. This struggle is predominantly taking place in ethnically and religiously polarized states, like Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon.² In that context, Saudi Arabia and its allies in the Arab Gulf, as well as Israel and Trump administration, are concerned due to the ongoing Iranian surge for increased regional influence, which has been pretty successful in Iraq and Syria.³ Inasmuch this process is part of an Iranian agenda in pursuit of regional hegemony, namely undisputed dominance in the Middle East,⁴ (and it seems that Iran's adversaries have no doubt that this is the case) this kind of behavior could be called as hegemonism.⁵ This article examines the perspectives of Iranian hegemonism and, specifically, the possibility of the development of an Iranian hegemony in the Middle East in the years to come.

¹ Bilal Y. Saab, "What Hariri's Resignation Means for Lebanon," *Foreign Affairs*, November 6, 2017.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/lebanon/2017-11-06/what-hariris-resignation-means-lebanon>. Access on November 12, 2017.

² Michael Knights, "What Would a Saudi-Iran War Look Like? Don't look now, but it is already here," *Foreign Policy*, January 11, 2016.

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/11/what-would-a-saudi-iran-war-look-like-dont-look-now-but-it-is-already-here/>. Access on July 13, 2017.

³ Jonathan Spyer, "Tehran Is Winning the War for Control of the Middle East," *Foreign Policy*, November 21, 2017.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/11/21/tehran-is-winning-the-war-for-control-of-the-middle-east-saudi-arabia/>. Access on November 22, 2017.

⁴ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001), 40.

⁵ David Wilkinson, "Unipolarity without Hegemony," *International Studies Review* 1 (1999): 141-171, 143-144.

Hegemonism and balancing in contemporary Middle East

As we have already noted, what is perceived as Iranian hegemonism has been expressed through the fostering of Shia proxy groups in the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Syria (with the mobilization of Lebanese Hezbollah), as well as in Yemen and in the Gulf states during the initial stages of the “Arab Spring” convulsion.⁶ This surge coincided with the intensification of the US-led multilateral talks on the Iranian nuclear program, which ended to the agreement on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in July 2015. This deal signified a long-awaited détente in Tehran’s relations with the West. However, both the activity of Iran’s proxy groups and the (temporary?) end of US confrontation of Iran’s nuclear program alarmed traditional US allies such as Israel and Saudi Arabia who raised concerns about Iran’s hegemonic aspirations, as well as its unexpressed ambition to act as a “nuclear free rider”, thus triggering a nuclear domino in the region.⁷ Iran’s regional adversaries have been attempting to balance Iran’s influence as a form of counter-hegemonic reaction. Theoretically speaking, balancing is a strategy that seeks to prevent an aspirant hegemon from securing his hegemonic position.⁸ The Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen, as well as the efforts to curtail Hezbollah’s political leverage in Lebanon, seem to consist part of such a strategy. In that sense, Iran seems to hold the advantage of initiative, while the anti-Iranian coalition is trying to undermine Iran’s position in the context of a zero-sum game.

Speaking about hegemonic attempts in the Middle East, history has shown that they have been stillborn. For example, Nasser’s efforts to embrace the Arab world and create a pan-Arab movement and Erdogan’s neo-ottoman revisionism have not been fruitful. The main reason is a systemic one: these attempts emerged in the absence of the right structural prerequisites in the region. Neither Nasser or Erdogan’s revisionism, nor contemporary Iran’s “hegemonism by proxies” were/are based on a distribution of capabilities characterized by clear-cut power superiority of the potential hegemon over the rest of the system’s units. In none of these cases did/do the aspirant

⁶ Reva Bhalla, “The U.S.-Saudi Dilemma: Iran’s Reshaping of Persian Gulf Politics,” *Stratfor*, July 19, 2011.

<https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20110718-us-saudi-dilemma-irans-reshaping-persian-gulf-politics>. Access on 23 July 2011. Jonathan Spyer, “Is it Iran’s Middle East Now?” *Fathom*, Autumn 2015.

<http://fathomjournal.org/is-it-irans-middle-east-now/>. Access on 13 November 2015.

⁷ Efraim Inbar, “Implications of US Disengagement from the Middle East,” BESA, Mideast Security and Policy Studies No. 122., 14. For alternative approaches on a potential nuclear domino and nuclear balance see Rizwan Ladha, “A Regional Arms Race? Testing the Nuclear Domino Theory in the Middle East,” *al Nakhlah*, Spring 2012.

<http://fletcher.tufts.edu/~media/43f8f8ef81014262ab2a119709e495e3.pdf>. Access on 12 November 2016. Kenneth N. Waltz, “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb. Nuclear Balancing Would Mean Stability,” *Foreign Affairs* 91 (2012): 1-5.

⁸ Stephen G. Brooks, William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance. International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 22-25.

hegemon enjoy significant military superiority, which would provide him with a critical comparative advantage over his regional competitors.⁹ Since the right distribution of power is absent hegemonic aspirations cannot enjoy legitimacy at the regional level, which is a *sine qua non* element for a viable hegemonic order.¹⁰ In other words, you cannot be a regional hegemon unless your neighbors acknowledge you as such.

The “Concert of the Middle East”

The Middle East is not that kind of a regional system where the development of a hegemonic regional order is a likelihood. The existence of at least three regional peers with potential hegemonic aspirations and balancing potential (Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia), as well as the existence of several other pivotal players of considerable size and/or capabilities (i.e. Israel and Egypt) assure that none will be able to achieve undisputed regional supremacy, as counter-balancing alliances will always be a choice for the rest. Moreover, the balancing role of extra-regional great powers such as the United States and Russia suggests another factor that decisively limits the possibility of a future hegemonic order. Therefore, as stability through hegemony cannot be the case in the foreseeable future (except for the unlikely scenario of an unexpectedly rapid course of uneven growth that would favor one regional power over the rest), stability through balance is the most possible future form of regional order.¹¹ The ongoing regional instability which is characterized by multiple conflicts and power competitions could drive regional and interested extra-regional powers towards a *modus vivendi* similar to 19th-century’s “Concert of Europe” and an analogous form of a “complex balance of power”.¹² In that context, the main pillars of the balance of power will agree to the terms of stability and express their readiness for balancing action (either diplomatic or military) whenever these terms are disputed. Such balancing mechanisms are already in place (as the P5+1 model of negotiations for the nuclear program of Iran, or the Geneva and Astana processes for the Syrian crisis indicate). What we still lack is a new “Concert of the Middle East” that will seal this new regional order and legitimize the new balance of power. Regional systems like the Middle Eastern one naturally tend towards balance of power. Therefore, a future Iranian hegemony is a rather unlikely scenario.

⁹ Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 40.

¹⁰ Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 17.

¹¹ Ross Harrison, “Defying Gravity: Working Toward a Regional Strategy for a Stable Middle East,” *Middle East Institute, Policy Papers Series*, May 2015. George Friedman, “The Middle Eastern balance of power matures”, *Stratfor*, March 31, 2015.

<https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/middle-eastern-balance-power-matures>.

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¹² Hedley Bull, *Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Macmillan Education, 1977), 97-98.

J. S. MILL ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF HUMANKIND



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The Subjection of Women is not only “one of the landmarks of British feminism” (Pyle, 1995a: ix) and a classic text in the canon of feminist theory, but also a fine specimen of J. S. Mill’s political philosophy and social critique. Written in 1861, it was first published in 1869. The book is a robust manifestation of Mill’s feminist views and a passionate application of his theory of individuality, liberty and justice to the case of women. Since its publication, *The Subjection of Women* has received constant scholarly attention. During the nineteenth century, the reception of the book focused mainly on the reaction (positive and negative) to women’s equality, emancipation and rights (Pyle, 1995b). Mill’s views shocked the conservative world, while, at the same time, his theory excited the supporters of social reform and change. Though published more than a century ago, *The Subjection of Women* has still the power to inspire with its vision, to stimulate reflection and to be the object of debate, teaching and research. Contemporary commentators continue to assess the nature and significance of Mill’s feminism, discuss methodological issues, and evaluate the influence of Harriet Taylor on Mill’s feminist thought.¹

My reading of *The Subjection of Women* shows that Mill relates the issue of women’s empowerment to the improvement of humankind and thus to a general conception of the common good. This aspect of Mill’s theory has been rather neglected as scholars tend to focus on issues of freedom, individuality, equality, and rights. Mill, however, employs a holistic approach which harbours both an assertion and celebration of individuality and a deep concern for a social common good. His discourse on women’s empowerment and emancipation is underlined by, and refers to, an ideal of real progress and improvement of humankind.² The time has come to

¹ See Annas (1977), Burgess-Jackson (2005), Donner (1993), Hekman (1992), Mendus (2000), Morales (2007), Okin (1992), Ring (1985), Rossi (1970), and Tulloch (1989). This list is indicative, not exhaustive.

² According to T. Ball, *The Subjection of Women* is one of Mill’s three studies in “applied ethology” (Ball, 2000: 27). Ethology, or the science of character, “is the science which

reassess Mill's feminism and develop new interpretations of his philosophy which would reveal previously unexplored, yet important, dimensions. For instance, Claeys (2013) and Rosen (2013) in their recent monographs on Mill engage with *The Subjection of Women* as a key text in Mill's canon.

As a philosopher, social reformer and visionary, Mill provided a powerful account not only of the evils of sexual inequality, but also of unexamined public opinion and the general feeling supporting the injustice of women's subordinate position in Victorian Britain. Mill's analysis starts with a bold statement declaring:

That the principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes – the legal subordination of one sex to the other – is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other (Mill, 1991: 471).

It is established from the outset that there is a vital relation between women's emancipation and rights and true social progress. Mill holds that the subjection of women (the legal, social, political and economic subjugation of females to male dominance) has a pernicious effect on men, women and society as a whole. Patriarchal power relations pervade marriage and the family corrupting the character of those involved and affecting political culture. In describing the legal subordination of married women, Mill draws upon the slavery analogy (Mill, 1991: 475-476, 486, 504, 520, 557-558). Slavery has been abolished, yet marriage "is the only actual bondage known to our law. There remain no legal slaves, except the mistress of every house" (Mill, 1991: 558). Being ahead of his time, Mill talks about rape within marriage. The position of a wife is worse than the position of a female slave, who, in Christian countries, has "an admitted right, and is considered under a moral obligation, to refuse to her master the last familiarity" (Mill, 1991: 504). Mill acknowledges that not all men use their power to subjugate women. Yet instances of abuse remind us of what can actually happen if the husband decides to exert "the full power of tyranny" with which he is "legally invested" (Mill, 1991: 506).³ Mill draws attention to the common-law doctrine of coverture⁴ (Garner, 2004; Shanley,

corresponds to the art of education; in the widest sense of the term, including the formation of national or collective character as well as individual" (Mill, 1879: 457).

³ "Who doubts that there may be great goodness, and great happiness, and great affection, under the absolute government of a good man? Meanwhile, laws and institutions require to be adapted, not to good men, but to bad. Marriage is not an institution designed for a select few" (Mill, 1991: 507).

⁴ The common-law doctrine of coverture described the state and condition of a married woman. Under the law of coverture, the married woman is "*sub potestati viri*" (under the power of her husband). The husband is the person "under whose wing, protection, and cover, she performs every thing" (Garner, 2004: 394, 652).

1988) and asks for changes in the legal system of his country. Equality before the law is the foundation of a just political order.

The command and obedience ethic that permeates the relations of men and women in the family is magnified in the public sphere where women are deprived of political rights and representation. Limited access to education and exclusion from the civic and professional life hinder women's development and society's flourishing. Real progress thus is thwarted; talent, capacity and creativity are wasted; self-realisation and the promotion of the common good suffer. Women need freedom to "find" their voice, think for themselves, discover their aptitudes, and cultivate their abilities. A major obstacle to change is public opinion and sentiment as well as men's self-assured belief that they know the nature of women (Mill, 1991: 471-474, 495-498). Society might think that women are unfit for public office, yet when the fulfilment of this role has nothing to do with the views of the people – as is the case with queens and empresses – women have shown great leadership abilities and political acumen (Mill, 1991: 529-532). Royal women are educated and prepared to accomplish successfully what they are entrusted to do and their power is accepted as natural. Likewise, all women must be given the opportunity to develop as rational, competent, free and independent beings who can play a part in civic affairs. Mill and his wife, Harriet, made an important contribution to the struggle for women's rights in Victorian Britain.⁵

Mill's diagnosis of the problem of women's social and political inequality is accompanied by prescriptions for treatment which relate to his understanding of progress as "the improvement of the moral sentiments of mankind" (Mill, 1991: 476). The path to liberation is not easy for we have to fight against prejudice, custom, and unexamined opinions which sustain a culture of inequality, injustice and ignorance. Yet, "the whole stream of modern tendencies" suggests that "this relic of the past" – the subjection of women – "is discordant with the future, and must necessarily disappear" (Mill, 1991: 487). The liberating potential of history must be fulfilled: "We have had the morality of submission, and the morality of chivalry and generosity; the time is now come for the morality of justice" (Mill, 1991: 517).

Commonly accepted views about the supposed natural inequality of women should be subjected to the test of reason and rational argument. This is a rather difficult task, because opinions rooted in the feelings are hard to shake (Mill, 1991: 473). The muscular strength of men as a physical attribute important for survival in the earliest stages of civilisation created a state of inferiority for women and established the right of the strongest. In modern times, invocation of the law of the strongest is not morally acceptable. In the case of the relation of the sexes, however, the law of the

⁵ See Collini (1996), Mill (1969), Rossi (1970), Taylor Mill (1996), Taylor and Mill (1996).

strongest became part of the legal system legitimising a pernicious domination – subordination ethic. Reform is needed to modernise the legal framework of marriage and the family as well as the position of women in social, economic and political life.

Inequality of the sexes in marriage affects both the nature of the marital relationship and the spouses' behaviour. The almost unlimited power of the husband to enforce his will gives him licence to cultivate despotic and oppressive tendencies which, in turn, could provoke the wife's retaliation and bad temper (Mill, 1991: 510-511). This toxic environment precludes the family from becoming a unit of real love. For Mill, marriage should be an amiable relation of equals and a partnership based on friendship and shared decision-making. From "a school of despotism," family should become "a school of sympathy in equality, of living together in love, without power on one side or obedience on the other" (Mill, 1991: 518-519). Mill believes that for many married women, the family and the household management would be a priority (Mill, 1991: 522-523).⁶ However, this does not mean that women should not be given the opportunity to develop their abilities and engage in activities that they think suitable. Mill's liberal agenda accommodates protection of rights, equality of opportunity, and respect for women's choices.

Concerning the issue of women's participation in the public sphere, Mill's analysis exposes the logic of patriarchy. Women are excluded "from the greater number of lucrative occupations, and from almost all high social functions," because "the generality of the male sex cannot yet tolerate the idea of living with an equal" (Mill, 1991: 524). Full access to education and the professions as well as competition with men would subvert domestic subordination and put an end to injustice and discrimination which are detrimental to society as a whole. Women's empowerment and entrance to the public realm is a matter of social utility and freedom (Mill, 1991: 526). According to Mill, women tend to focus on the practical, have intuitive apprehension and are good judges of character. They also have stamina, multi-tasking ability, a strong sense of duty, and "spirit" (Mill, 1991: 530-542). These characteristics amply equip them for a successful presence in the world of politics and power. For those who worry that unfit women may hold public offices, Mill notes: "if the political system of the country is such as to exclude unfit men, it will equally exclude unfit women: while if it is not, there is no additional evil in the fact that the unfit persons whom it admits may be either women or men" (Mill, 1991: 527-528).

⁶ The relevant passage from *The Subjection of Women* has been the subject of extensive commentary concerning the sexual division of labour in Mill's theory. See, for instance, Annas (1977), Hekman (1992), Hughes (1979), Okin (1992), Shanley (1981), and Urbinati (1991).

The fight against the social construction of sexual inequality is a matter of social justice and a requisite for real progress. Equality empowers women and emancipates men from a false idea of superiority which has a pernicious effect on their character and on the function of society as a whole. Equality allows capacity building and enables women to use their own critical thinking and not to be auxiliaries “of the common public opinion” (Mill, 1991: 568). A woman of cultivated faculties exerts the right type of moral influence on her husband, while both can establish a stimulating companionship of mental communion and mutual respect. Women’s participation and competition in the public sphere would double “the mass of mental faculties available for the higher service of humanity” (Mill, 1991: 561). Mill envisages a life of higher happiness based on healthy interpersonal relations, rational freedom and self-government. Women’s empowerment is indispensable to the improvement of humankind and to social progress:

The moral regeneration of mankind will only really commence, when the most fundamental of the social relations is placed under the rule of equal justice, and when human beings learn to cultivate their strongest sympathy with an equal in rights and in cultivation (Mill, 1991: 575).

In *The Subjection of Women*, J. S. Mill discusses the issue of women’s empowerment and rights in relation to the promotion of social utility and the common good. His analysis shows the vital moral link between the domestic sphere and the public realm, as well as the ethico-formative character of reforms concerning the position of women and the cultivation of their abilities. The morality of justice refers to a new ethos of interpersonal, social and political relations based on freedom, equality, friendship, respect and recognition. Women’s emancipation and equality empowers society and strengthens the moral foundation of civic life.⁷

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⁷ I would like to thank Professor James Connelly for his comments.

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POLICY SHOULD FOCUS ON THE NEED TO OVERCOME PRIVATE INDEBTEDNESS



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I am often asked to give my opinion on what I consider to be the right policy for solving the problem of non-performing loans (NPLs). My response is that NPLs are the symptom not the cause of the predicament the Cyprus economy finds itself in. The real problem is **private sector indebtedness**.

The focus should not be on how to compensate depositors or bond holders or even shareholders of the affected banks. It should be on how the over-indebted businesses and households can lighten their debt burden and be in a position to engage in normal economic activity in a stable and sustainable manner. Cyprus is prone to suffer, like several other countries have (Ireland, Iceland, but most notably Japan), from what Richard Koo has coined a '**balance sheet recession**'. This happens when a country's economic agents (businesses and households) have taken up so much debt that they are not able or even willing to undertake new debt. In such cases, of which Japan is the most stark example in terms of magnitude and length, austerity measures usually prescribed by the IMF and traditional economic thinking, not only do not help but they have the opposite effect of further depressing the economy and causing a downward spiral where savings do not go back into the economy as new loans thereby aggravating and elongating the recession. Koo's general advice is that a more expansionary fiscal policy is required to offset the fall in domestic demand arising from efforts of private sector entities to reduce their indebtedness via increased savings in order to prevent the economy from shrinking.

I believe correct strategies do exist for reducing the high level of indebtedness in Cyprus. One is to find ways for the borrowers to benefit from the substantial provisions made by the banks (which will continue in 2018). The only reason banks prefer to sell their loans (even at huge discounts) is because they consider it to be the only way for them to **write back accounting profits and thus help them with their re-capitalisation needs**.

Following five years of inaction during which NPLs have remained stubbornly high the Government is now considering the creation of a “bad bank”. But once again, politicians do not seem to understand the real issues and the consequences of what they propose. One perhaps should remind many of the politicians who are now pushing for this that they were the same people who killed a similar idea in 2013 when it was put forward by the then Governor of the Central Bank. Be that as it may the proposal raises more questions than answers. At what price would the fund/bad bank buy the loans? What would they do with them? Where would the funding come from? What would the consequences be for the real estate market? Even more importantly, how is this going to help private debt and the real economy? These are the real questions no one is asking!

A good policy would be one that provides the benefits the banks would derive from selling the loans (even at huge discounts) but which utilises the provisions to make possible viable restructurings and, more importantly, extend new loans to new entities. For this to happen one needs to settle an existing loan and to refinance viable businesses using the assets that are thus released by creating new SPVs (special purpose vehicles – or, more simply, new companies) funded by new loans and by new equity. This is why I have been arguing since 2013 that we need a Reconstruction and Development Bank or a Development Finance Agency. Not a bad bank, whose main objective at best, is to manage break-down assets (rather than to create new competitive enterprises).

For households and small businesses there are other such policies which can be pursued. The starting point is to identify what is impeding a settlement within the margins afforded by the provisions and causing the economy to be held to ransom, with unpaid debts on the one hand and “counterpart” depleted equity on the other keeping idle potentially productive assets. For example, there should be a limit on the exposure of people to guarantees. There must be a way for borrowers (as there is in some other countries - notably the United States) **to hand over the mortgaged asset and walk away debt free**. The aim of policy should be to enable economic agents to start again. Unfortunately in Cyprus, bank lawyers and poorly informed borrowers have created this mess. The loan contracts asked for the kitchen sink while ignorant borrowers and even innocent bystanders (friends and relatives) were willing to sign anything that was put in front of them. There is also the moral responsibility of banks which should perhaps be made legally binding, in a similar fashion as the Law of Fraudulent Conveyance of New York. Under this law, it is considered illegal if a lender has given a loan **without first assessing the ability of the borrower to repay**. In such cases, the borrower can walk away debt free (even without losing the asset that was put up as collateral). This may be a rather extreme measure for Cyprus and one which in any case is unlikely to have retrospective effect, but a law or, better still, **a central bank regulation** in this respect, would

surely apply pressure on banks to co-operate and even compromise in reaching settlements with borrowers. That should indeed be the ultimate aim. To help the economic agents of the country **overcome their indebtedness** and **re-enable them to undertake new viable capital investments** (and take up new loans) in conditions of **strong domestic** (and foreign) **demand**. Without such policies we will be trapped in a stalemate for too long and this helps no one. Not even the banks themselves.

A COUNTRY WITHIN A COUNTRY: EMPIRE, CYPRUS, HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND TWITTER



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Global comparisons of imperial and colonial experiences are currently being drawn by research networks of international academics that stay connected, thanks to modern communication means, such as e-mail, Skype and social media. Modern national histories, such as British imperial history, are gradually being expanded, amended and diversified through the comparative study of *other* histories, namely the histories of *affected* countries, such as ex-colonies of Britain's empire. Acknowledging the fact that the modern history of Cyprus is irrevocably interconnected with the modern history of Britain, leads to the acceptance of the following position: the British Empire was a global network of shared (but not common) past experiences. Research on these experiences leads to the unlocking of endless possibilities of new knowledge. This new knowledge in turn, becomes focused and specified through credible, in other words, evidence-based, historical analysis.

Within this rich shared history of a country within a(nother) country, in this case of Britain in Cyprus, exists a shorter temporal fraction: the end of Empire. For the purposes of this short article, focus is given on the end of Empire in Cyprus and, specifically the 'Cyprus Emergency' or the 'Greek Liberation Struggle' of 1955-1959 as it is also being referred to. This difference in terminology relates to the point made above on the 'shared but not common experiences'. 'Cyprus Emergency' was the official name given to the Cyprus Revolt by British officials and was in accordance with other 'Emergencies' taking place across the Empire during the 1950s, for example the 'Malaya Emergency' and the 'Kenya Emergency', whereas 'Greek Liberation Struggle' was the name preferred by the Greeks of Cyprus and elsewhere.

The Cyprus Revolt currently remains an understudied case study within the field of comparative research on insurgencies and counter-insurgencies, colonial and other, and on their different aspects such as violence and coercion, human rights violation, propaganda, intelligence, education etc. To

use a paradox, Cyprus's *absence is found* in recent collective volumes, for example Greg Kennedy and Christopher Tuck's (eds.) *British Propaganda and Wars of Empire: Influencing Friend and Foe 1900–2010* (2014) and Andrew Mumford's *The Counter-insurgency Myth: The British Experience of Irregular Warfare* (2012).¹ Both volumes lack a study on Cyprus during decolonisation.

And while academic research on the history of Cyprus at the end of the British Empire certainly needs to strengthen its presence in the Anglophone bibliography by being published, at the same time it needs to enter the field of comparative historical studies of Empire, for example the British and the French Empires. Current collective volumes largely dismiss Cyprus due to the belief, and to an extent, the reality, that Cyprus remains understudied.² What constitutes the need for Cyprus to be included in the global history of previously colonised peoples? By including the case of Cyprus we contribute, not only to the re-shaping of the academic discussion – which, admittedly, leaves uninterested the majority of (any) population, but more importantly, we contribute to the amending of history (and of the larger story), to the education of new generations, and eventually to the shaping of people's attitudes towards each other.

Re-writing history may sound like a utopian concept or theory, but it is not. Apt and recent examples exist that make this claim and intention, a reality. A resonant example is the 2012 'Mau Mau torture case' and historians' contribution to this. The lawsuit against the UK Foreign Office by Mau Mau torture survivors of the 'Kenya Emergency' (1952-1960) was significantly strengthened by academic research conducted by historians who accessed, examined, analysed and eventually disseminated previously unknown archival material. Two of these examples are David Anderson's *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (2005) and Caroline Elkins's *Britain's Gulag: the Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (2005).³ The historians' research findings informed and strengthened the Mau Mau legal case, which resulted in the UK paying out £19.9 million in costs and compensation to more than 5,228 elderly Kenyans who suffered torture and abuse during the Uprising.⁴ Historical research in this case has a great(er) societal impact.

¹ Greg Kennedy and Christopher Tuck eds., *British Propaganda and Wars of Empire: Influencing Friend and Foe 1900–2010* (Ashgate, 2014); Andrew Mumford, *The Counter-insurgency Myth: The British Experience of Irregular Warfare* (Routledge, 2012).

² An example is Martin Thomas and Richard Toye's *Arguing about Empire: Imperial Rhetoric in Britain and France, 1882-1956* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

³ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005); Caroline Elkins, *Britain's Gulag: the Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (Jonathan Cape, 2005).

⁴ Owen Bowcott, '[Mau Mau lawsuit due to begin at high court](#)', *The Guardian*, online version, 22 May 2016.

The Mau Mau torture case set a paradigm on reassessing coloniser-colonised perceptions and relationships, bringing to the international scene issues such as accountability during colonial emergencies, what constitutes a 'terrorist', and what we do today to rectify or at least to relieve past grievances which resonate in present tense. Historians' contribution in this was vital for its outcome. The Mau Mau case set the precedent for other torture cases to emerge. Recent developments find EOKA fighters, who claim they were tortured by British colonial forces during the Cyprus Revolt, seeking damages from the British government.⁵ Previously classified documents disclosed by the UK National Archives in 2012 ('Migrated Archives') provide evidence of brutal treatment of EOKA insurgents, as well as evidence on EOKA's own coercive methods. The case is being unfolded as we speak.

In 2017, social media has an even bigger share in public opinion formation than it had in 2012 during the Mau Mau case. Already, during the last few days, with the announcement of the EOKA case in mainstream media, in the UK, Cyprus and elsewhere, a lively discussion is taking place on Twitter, between academics and the interested public, be that British, Cypriot, or other. The public's engagement may potentially contribute to the development of the case. What is more, the historian's role in this case may be of crucial importance, as solid academic research has the capacity to intervene in the course of developments, not only to inform the actual legal case but also to guide public opinion through social media engagement.

Empire studies are in vogue. Current affairs, which stretch far outside the academic sector, push for a cross-sectoral collaboration between the academia, the professional sector, the government and the public. It will be a missed opportunity for us not to take this into account, and to fail to claim collectively, in the role that each one of us performs, Cyprus's space on the global stage.

⁵ Helena Smith, ['Cypriot fighters seek damages over torture under British rule'](#) , *The Guardian*, online version, 28 November 2017.

THE CLASH OF THE TITANS ON THE ENERGY FIELD



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The Energy Sector reemerged as a theater of intense political antagonisms in the early 2000s. Since then, Putin's Russia has revived its economy and regained national self-confidence by using energy resources as a cornerstone of its national power.¹ For many scholars, after the demise of the USSR, Russia's energy sector has become the catalyst for the country to inaugurate a new era of kingpin global actorness.²

In strict economic terms, *"hydrocarbons play a large role in the Russian economy, as revenue from oil and natural gas production and exports accounts for more than half of Russia's federal budget revenue"*.³ This dependence seems to be analogous to Putin's domestic strength as well.⁴ Being in power for almost two decades, Putin's leadership and his personal views about Russia's place in world politics, has determined nation's course.⁵

Scarcely surprising, the energy sector turns out to have become Russia's "muscles" in the 21st century. It is because of these muscles that today's Russia feels more confident to take action in the international field. Oil and gas pipelines, potential new resource fields, uninterrupted and seamless access to markets, profitability, production control are no longer just part of

¹ H Balzer, 'The Putin Thesis and Russian Energy Policy', in *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 21, 2005, 210–225.

² D Trenin, 'Russia Redefines Itself and Its Relations with the West', in *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 30, 2007, 95–105.

³ EIA, 'Russia is world's largest producer of crude oil and lease condensate - Today in Energy - U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA)', 2015, < <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=22392> > [accessed 28 November 2017].

⁴ JED Kissi Dawn, 'Russia's economic reform remains elusive as oil stays weak', 2017, <<https://www.cnbc.com/2017/06/23/russias-economic-reform-remains-elusive-as-oil-stays-weak.html>> [accessed 28 November 2017].

⁵ P Engel, 'How Vladimir Putin became one of the most feared leaders in the world', in *businessinsider.com*, 2017, <<http://www.businessinsider.com/how-vladimir-putin-rose-to-power-2017-2>> [accessed 28 November 2017].

national infrastructure or mere factors of economic policy and management. They have been evolved into indispensable elements of Russia's national interest and power.

Putin has built the Russian national power on three basic pillars: a strong and compelling leadership, availability of natural resources and energy exports. This pattern is, the same time, the main lens through which Russia gauges developments in international system. By this assumption should anyone, or any element of the international system, attempt to meditate on Putin's Russia.

The aforementioned composition of Russia's national power, was logically projected to the International System, affecting relations, actions and decisions. And this was a conscious choice by the country's side, trying not only to reestablish itself as a strong actor in the system, but also to claim and regain a high place in it, in terms of power, influence and respect from the others.

A series of conflicts like the Russo-Georgian War in 2008,⁶ the 2006 and 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas dispute,⁷ the annexation of Crimea in 2014,⁸ are undoubtedly connected to the larger view of Putin's Russia aspiration to emerge as an "energy superpower",⁹ resuscitating by this way its status as a great (or super) power in the international system in political terms.

After many decades of efforts to keep this reality under diplomatic and political realm, the strongest pole of the system, USA, seem to change course.¹⁰ The late Obama's Administration with the ending of the 40-year ban on U.S. crude oil exports,¹¹ and the new President Trump's declaration about "energy dominance",¹² signify this change. The technology of

⁶ SE Cornell, 'Pipeline Power: The War in Georgia and the Future of the Caucasian Energy Corridor', in *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 10, 2009, 131-139.

⁷ M Bilgin, 'Geopolitics of European natural gas demand: Supplies from Russia, Caspian and the Middle East', in *Energy Policy*, vol. 37, 2009, 4482-4492.

⁸ J Biersack & S O'Lear, 'The geopolitics of Russia's annexation of Crimea: narratives, identity, silences, and energy', in *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, vol. 55, 2014, 247-269.

⁹ P Rutland, 'Russia as an Energy Superpower', in *New Political Economy*, vol. 13, 2008, 203-210.

¹⁰ CJ Cleveland & RK Kaufmann, 'Oil supply and oil politics: Déjà Vu all over again', in *Energy Policy*, vol. 31, 2003, 485-489.

¹¹ E Humiston, 'Obama's Surprise Economic Legacy: Energy Exports > IPI Issues > Institute for Policy Innovation', in *ipi.org*, 2016, <http://www.ipi.org/ipi_issues/detail/obamas-surprise-economic-legacy-energy-exports> [accessed 29 November 2017].

¹² T DiChristopher, 'Trump wants America to be "energy dominant." Here's what that means', in *cnbc.com*, 2017, <<https://www.cnbc.com/2017/06/28/trump-america-energy-dominant-policy.html>> [accessed 29 November 2017].

hydraulic fracturing led USA to the shale oil and gas revolution,¹³ topping the country as an oil producer in April 2014.¹⁴ The technological achievement denotes many more implications than a simple economic, scientific or market fact. It becomes a decisive component of US national power.

If we consider that Energy is a factor that can operate in its absence too and provoke events, in terms of large importing countries like China, then we can see China's recent efforts to support solar energy and its plans to invest \$367 billion in renewable energy, as an also clear actorness move in the Energy Field.¹⁵

It is more than obvious that the "big guys", the Titans are taking positions on the international chessboard, balancing and/or competing on the Energy Field. This issue is not dryly economic, industrial or technological. It is deeply political and happening under terms of power in the International System. Political theory should address this subject as a transformation of the global power politics agenda in its entirety.

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¹³ J Mauldin, 'Shale Oil: Another Layer of US Power', in *MauldinEconomics.com*, <<http://www.mauldineconomics.com/outsidethebox/shale-oil-another-layer-of-us-power>> [accessed 29 November 2017].

¹⁴ EIA, 'U.S. oil production growth in 2014 was largest in more than 100 years - Today in Energy - U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA)', in *eia.gov*, 2015, <<https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=20572>> [accessed 29 November 2017].

¹⁵ SP and M Rivers, 'China is crushing the U.S. in renewable energy', in *CNNMoney*, 2017, <<http://money.cnn.com/2017/07/18/technology/china-us-clean-energy-solar-farm/index.html>> [accessed 29 November 2017].

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IN DEPTH
Bimonthly Electronic Newsletter

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ISSN (online) 2421-8111



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