"Emerging Trends Reshaping the International Security"

Symposium Proceedings

BEYOND THE HORIZON

Wilfried **Martens Centre** for European Studies

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Symposium Proceedings

Proceedings of the 1st New Horizons Symposium on "Emerging Trends Reshaping the International Security"

22 October 2018, Brussels, Belgium

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Foreword

New Horizons Symposium, as an annual landmark event, aspires to be a unique platform for political, academic and business leaders across the globe to discuss and provide solutions for the most pressing issues of our time. It aims to serve as an important stage for diplomacy and a platform for international engagement for both public and private sectors.

We held the initial issue of New Horizons Symposium series which focused on the emerging trends reshaping the international security. Panel discussions conducted by some of the best minds on their respective subjects, provided their strategic forethought and insight on the collapse of the liberal world order and the expansion of future conflict domains. The venue was also an opportunity for academia and field experts to meet and extend their respective networks.

As New Horizons Community, we shared knowledge, discovered latest trends, capabilities, and potential collective responses to future risks and threats across the globe. Together with our strategic partners and sponsors, we hosted leading figures, institutions and delegations in the symposium.

Co-organizers

Beyond the Horizon International Strategic Studies Group is a non-partisan, independent, and non-profit think tank. The mission of Beyond the Horizon is to promote global peace and security by empowering decision and policy-makers with knowledge and advocating paths to prevent, mitigate or end crises and conflicts.

Beyond the Horizon is unique in its focus on realistic policies and in-depth analyses to offer comprehensive solutions on topics related to international politics and security, peace and conflict studies.

As an independent voice, Beyond the Horizon aims to translate applied and basic research in its focus areas into a language that is understandable, reliable and accessible for a wide audience.

The Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies is the Political foundation at European level of the European People's Party and an EU think tank. The Martens Centre embodies a pan-European mindset, promoting Christian Democrat, conservative and like-minded political values.

It serves as a framework for national political foundations linked to member parties of the EPP. The Martens Centre takes part in the preparation of EPP programmes and policy documents. It organises seminars and training on EU policies and on the process of European integration. The Martens Centre also contributes to formulating EU and national public policies.

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University of Delaware

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Université Catholique de Louvain

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Panellist: Prof. Raffaele Marchetti
The School of Government of LUISS

Return of the Political Warfare
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The American University of Paris

Disinformation as a Political Weapon
Panellist: Prof. Žiga Turk
Martens Centre Academic Council Member, University of Ljubljana

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Keynote Address

Jamie P. Shea,
Keynote Speaker

Professor of Strategy and Security of the Strategy and Security Institute,
University of Exeter, United Kingdom
Senior Fellow, Friends of Europe
Former Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, NATO

Biography

Prior to joining the University of Exeter, Jamie Shea was an international public servant and a member of the International Staff of NATO for 38 years. His last NATO post was Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges. Other positions included Director of Policy Planning in the Private Office of the Secretary General, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for External Relations, Public Diplomacy Division, Director of Information and Press, Spokesman of NATO and Deputy Director of Information and Press, Deputy Head and Senior Planning Officer in the Policy Planning and Multilateral Affairs Section of the Political Directorate as well as Assistant to the Secretary General of NATO for Special Projects.

Outside NATO, Jamie Shea has been involved with several prominent academic institutions. For 20 years, he was Professor at the Collège d'Europe, Bruges. He was also Visiting Lecturer in the Practice of Diplomacy, University of Sussex, Associate Professor of International Relations at the American University, Washington DC, where he also held the position of Director of the Brussels Overseas Study Programme. He has also lectured at the Brussels School of International Studies at the University of Kent and at the Security and Strategy institute of the University of Exeter, where he was an Honorary Fellow for six years. Jamie Shea is a Senior Transatlantic Fellow of the German Marshall Fund of the United States and a Senior Fellow at the London School of Economics, where he teaches a course on crisis management and political communication.

Jamie Shea is a regular writer, lecturer and conference speaker on NATO and European security affairs and on public diplomacy, political communication and many other areas of contemporary international relations. He holds a D.Phil. in Modern History from Oxford University (Lincoln College), 1981. Amongst his many associations and memberships, Jamie Shea is a member of the Advisory Board, Security and Defence Programmes at Chatham House, a member of the Policy Council at the World Economic Forum in Geneva and founder and member of the Board, Security and Defence Agenda Brussels and Friends of Europe. He serves on the Board of the Danish Defence College, Copenhagen, and the Académie Diplomatique Internationale in Paris. He is currently a Senior Advisor at the European Policy Centre and a Senior Fellow at Friends of Europe. These are two of the most active and influential policy think tanks in Brussels.

Jamie Shea is a recipient of the Golden Eagle medal of the Republic of Albania and the Linden medal of the Czech Republic. He was European Communicator of the Year in 1999 and in 2016 was awarded the International Prize for Human Rights of the AAB University in Kosovo. He has also been awarded two honorary doctorates: one from the University of Surrey and the other from the National School of Public Administration in Bucharest, Romania. He is a recipient of the NATO medal for Meritorious Service.

Keynote Address

A couple of decades ago, one of the favourite phrases of former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was "it's a funny world". It is true that we live in a very funny world today.

Couple of years ago, British academic, Tim Gartner Ashton said "If we could whip in a time capsule and go back to just 10 years ago, we would see how the world was massively different than today." EU was opening up a wide range of optimism and economic prosperity in the world with ERASMUS training program. On the other hand, more countries were lining up to join the EU, NATO and Russia was trying to form a security partnership, even cooperating in places like Afghanistan. Indeed, when I worked with Madelene Albright, with a group of experts in 2010, on NATO's new strategic concept, the biggest issue was what NATO is going to do in the future. There is peace in Europe, Balkans is quite peaceful, we are greatly going to the end of the ISAF, NATO mission in Afghanistan, things are looking better with Russia. One of the reasons we came up with the idea putting cyber, counter-terrorism, energy security in the new strategic concept was to give NATO a higher role in an increasingly peaceful world.

How quickly that has changed? Reminding that you can have sudden unpredictable, irretrievable change for the better just like in 1989, in equal, things can go opposite directions. When I look at the situation today, I often remember Edmund Burke, 18th century political scientist, philosophical commentator, who said; "Rage and frenzy will pull down more in half an hour than prudence, deliberation, and foresight can build up in a hundred years." How true that is. Many political scientists describe the situation over the last four-five years, particularly since 2014, Russia's annexation of Crimea, its incursion in Eastern Ukraine, as a great deterioration. But we still don't quite know how far we go before we hit the bottom, hopefully start climbing back up.

One of the problems is Shia-Sunni complexity, and the variety of the issues we confront with. For much of my NATO career, things would rather be simple. In 1980 one map of a war on the wall, with sort of a 60 km zone in the West Germany, was where the future of international conflict, future of this politicizations, the decision between peace and war will be played out. So, if you could plug the Fulda Gap, the rest of the world, at least the Transatlantic Community would remain relatively quiet. You could really boil macro cosmic bounce to the micro cosmic.

And that didn't change very much. Because after the war calmed dawn, we had the micro Bosnia, and it was not just a question in Bosnia or stopping the conflict. Bosnia was the laboratory of great 21st century World War. Responsibility to protect, putting camps to back together again, relations between majorities and minorities in Europe, the definition of self-determination, the issues of European integration, international justice, NATO-EU Cooperation, all of these were going to be constructive.

If we had got it right in Bosnia, we would have a blueprint that we would apply to Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq. But it was one problem, in one place, at one time. As I said, it was all interesting sui-generis, but also micro-cosmic, where some big new principle of new international order, new world order, as George W. Bush put it, would be defined. Of course, that might not be very easy, all of us had to deal with those kinds of issues, we had lots of time to get intelligence, we had lots of time to decrease the troops or to increase the troops. We had plenty of time, so that the UN, EU could reach after. You knew a year before that you are expected to send battalions to Afghanistan, you had long time to canalize the rest of your forces to get where you wanted. There were no immediate blowback and consequences within security at home.

Now it is different, problems are at our doorsteps, and NATO for the first time in its history has the **internal** front in addition to **East** and **South**. In terms of being able to provide order, the priorities of the allies differ. There have been some allies obviously looking the eastern front as a priority. The UK looks to the Russian hybrid campaign against UK, which is crucial to its security. If you go across to Greece, Turkey and Portugal, what is going over Mediterranean is very important. The Russian flexible challenge comes across as much more hypothetical. If you try to get a common view on the priority of the threats, and try to get generosity, each ally would agree that "If you help me on my particular challenge, I will reciprocate and I will send to the conflict states to show you that I am investing in your challenge."

How do we deal with first time ever with these **three strategic fronts**? If you succeed on two, but not three, for example if you deal with conventional challenges outside but not able to do with hybrid warfare type scenarios, if you pacified the East but the South remains bleeding, wounded, hardest groups, organized crime of human trafficking, refugees, we are not going to have a secure Europe during the 21st century.

So, what are the key issues that we have to place?

First thing is that there is no central axis defining world politics, no sort of a framework which basically structures international system. I remember the days when the US Presidents and Russian leaders complete immediately trade decisions, like Reagan and Gorbachev. On TV last night, I have seen the pictures of signing the INF Treaty, 1987, literally bringing the end of the Cold War, saying "now we are going to do de-escalation". That doesn't work anymore. We have too many inter-connected but at the same time disconnected problems.

For example, a couple of months ago, we were celebrating the triumph over ISIS in Rakka and Mousul, and Washinghton Post's brilliant editor was saying, this is the great news, now let's concentrate on 26 other conflicts going on in Syria and Iraq. Al-Qaida benefiting from having the pressure of it, in order to reconstitute and re-emerge significant force, and probably is this took myself in one, in order to get much attraction, on at the other. A couple of years ago, David Patreous, was to say, "We only Americans will solve this Middle East peace, between Israel, Palestinians and Arabs, that would attract so the Arab world, that would improve the America's influence in the Middle East. There is unfortunately not a single conflict as during Cold War, although dangerous, also provides the key to a more stable world order.

The problem today is that the problems tend to ally each other extremely well and effectively. Bad guys honey each other out, such as cyber criminals in the internet and terrorists. Bad things get quickly inter-connected, into piracy, terrorism,

organized crimes. But unfortunately, solutions don't ally very effectively. Therefore, dealing with one issue doesn't make it unfortunately go away. So, there is no central axis.

The second thing, there is a return to great power conflicts. Despite the hopes Donald Trump and EU to solve things with Russia through a few meetings or solve things out with President Xi-Chang of China, more personal factors than the objective factors seem to be driving the situation today. There are constraints coming off. A few years ago, great power rivalry was likely to start, new start can lapse to 2020-21. So far US has shown no willingness to recommit to extend that effort.

So not only the major powers now seem once again to compete with each other, in arms races or technological superiority of the investments, rather than a mutual understanding, but of course the danger we see in South China Sea or in the Black Sea or elsewhere is unconstrained by some kind of a crisis management system, could easily be linked to escalations.

Every zone is contested, every space is contested. So, we have no option but to compete in order to preserve access to our space. It is not by any surprise that greatest military issue in NATO is incapsulated by the formula 'Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2AD)'. I am going to keep you out of this space, which is going to be mine. How we will do that, of course militarily as well as politically.

And finally, we are competing with ourselves. We are not only in competition with external actors, but increasingly in competition with internal actors. Maybe the internal debate even more crucial, even more vicious, even more destructive than the external one. Our internal divisions increasingly promote external challenges, external challenges promote internal divisions, populism, polarization, hybrid scenarios, they increasingly become difficult to manage. Therefore, we have to deal, for the first time, both for the internal and the external. It means that the centre of gravity of warfare is going from land borders to the mindset of our populations. What our people think? What they believe as truth? What stimulates their reactions? What authority they are prepared to follow? becomes as important for our security as the troops deployed on our borders. The functionality of our society becomes increasingly important.

The third issue is the security changes. When I was a young man, basically the security was paying taxes to the government, we spend them wisely and effectively, and security is providing. But it is not anymore. We now have the privatization of the security, as increasingly we see private companies. Not just private security companies like Blackwater, in Iraq. Eric Prince, who attended to Trump administration, is happy to privatize the conflict in Afghanistan. He believes that way US could win it faster. But it is not just private sector taking over the functions of the state. But it is also the fact that state can't basically do it anymore by itself, therefore, it is you, city of Manchester, you have to prepare to deal with terrorist incidents, because, you are the main actor. The responsibility is on you, on citizens, acting in a responsible way you have a better assumption of risk. In the cyber area, we have this fascinating debate about who is liable, who is responsible. Is it the government ever regulated Microsoft, this is Microsoft not producing software, not thinking security, is it the individual not having insurance to cover security risk? We are talking about resilient citizens in the world today as much as we talk about resilient companies or resilient structures. So, the concept of the security and who is responsible for having it together is changing.

Finally, the smaller Western role in multilateralism. Multilateralism episode, as a value system and an ideology, was experienced by the EU across in the soft power era. A well-known EU diplomat Robert Cooper used to say "speak softly, carry a big carrot", that was his definition of world widely EU foreign policy. That is very interesting, if you look for example UN Peacekeeping, back in 2013, China paid 3% of UN Peacekeeping, today 10,5 %, and China now provides over 7000 UN peacekeepers from the Peace and Liberation Army (PLA) in a broader region including in Africa and Middle East. On the human rights issues, China has become a dominant voice, while US left more than 35 UN resolutions of the Human Rights capital. Who is driving the multilateral process? It means much more complicated environment, where Chinese understanding of multilateralism is completely different than ours.

4 key tasks of Europe in dealing more dangerous and complex world.

I think that **Europe has four key tasks in dealing with - maybe not necessarily - a more dangerous world, but increasingly a more complex world.**

I think first thing is that Europe has to learn defending its sole militarily. Europe is no longer an unchallenged, unthreatened space. We certainly see the possibility that part of the EU militarily might be occupied. It is not beyond the imagination. So, the first challenge is how Europe should deal with this situation. Once again, it has to project hard power and defend its territory, defend its place, and be able to not only deter but also respond if that challenge takes place. The

US, notwithstanding some the rhetoric that we heard at the time of the recent NATO Summit, is committed to this. US is increasing its troops in Europe, increasing its budget and spending in European deterrence initiative, is building bases and infrastructure. But, on the other hand, there are some main issues. The first issue is if American commitment would be sufficient if we had a major challenge from Russia in terms of reinforcements and very small US permanent presence in Europe. Even if you keep NATO framework, it is quite clear, Europeans have to spend more on defence for a larger and much more efficient army.

But the other question is, if we see President Donald Trump not as an accident of history, but the harbinger of a longer-term policy of US with a smaller or even no commitment to Europe. Then how far should Europe today spend its time today to design some kind of alternative to the US, not in a kind of "all barrels and missiles, we don't need you Americans any longer". I wouldn't advocate that for a minute, but in a sense, we need an improvement plan. We need to look those issues of having major operations such as Libya and Bosnia. What is the best time mode to do that? President Macron seems to be going two directions at the moment. One is the EU group with Germany, one is the whole more pragmatic European interventions with UK, Norway, non-EU countries, around a coalition of the willing of those countries who has an interventionist culture, willing to be a portion of planning of operations.

Second thing how do we promote a more effective response to the challenges of the South? We are not simply running the latest process of ISIS, Syria or Libya. The US is making big voices to EU stepping up in terms of pain for more reconstruction in Iraq. How do we have an effective burden share? What is the effective transatlantic EU policy built in more systematic way? Would you go it more in Middle East or would you jump over the Middle East or more in Africa? How should the governance be in Africa, given the demographics, the climate change and the bulk of the migrants where they are coming from.

Third issue is hybrid warfare. How do we deal with the vulnerabilities coming from being highly tech, highly connected, integrated, globalized and democratic societies and economies? The advantage also makes us highly manipulable and highly vulnerable. What is resilience in terms of infrastructure? So how do we have a better sense of classifing these sorts of acts? EU had an interesting cyber exercise last year in Estonia, where they looked to response to the cyber-attacks. While some ministers classify these acts as Article 5, some don't want to get into a war when nobody got killed. So how do we come to a greater understanding on this centre of gravity? The attribution makes the problem more complex. What is required in terms of attributions? Thirdly, the question of EU-NATO. What do we have in our arsenal in terms of major topics in take, which will turn this activity from being "low-risk high gain" to something which is something "high-risk".

Finally, one clear task of the EU is fixing soft power culture. Its morals-based ideology. How do we build some kind of sense of rules and norms in such a world becoming increasingly anarchic? We have so many unwilling partners, but we need to try once again some kind of rules-based agenda. Is this something we could do to rescue the nuclear proliferation treaty? Can we build some crisis management, risk reduction measures, confidence building measures? Thinking now that all of these have to be embraced with China, not only be East-West, US-Russia. Concerning Artificial Intelligence, should we support the campaign of Amnesty International, "Stop the killer robots!" These are not only automated but increasingly autonomous weapons systems. How do we build a world very soon that soldiers are going to be half man and woman, half machine, with chipping farms, with gene editing genetic engineering, with chemical enhancements, where the front line of military former battle will increasingly be robotized in the future? Is the gene out of the bottle? Can we still do something about it? What should we push in international system? So that at least we head off some the nightmarish consequences of this world.

Bearing in mind by the way, new domains wrote me up. It was tough enough 20 years ago to do this just on land, air and the sea. We have now new version of domains, space, slobby space, fifth domain of warfare. We have now a sub-maritime, the activity now under the oceans. We have the half domain of virtual reality, augmenting reality, which rapidly move back becoming space of the domain.

Discussion on the Collapse of the Liberal World Order

Prof. Tanguy Struye de Swielande
Moderator Panellist

Professor, Catholic University of Louvain la Neuve and the Catholic University
Faculties of Mons and the Royal Military School
Senior researcher, Center for Crisis and International Conflicts (CECRI)

Biography

Tanguy Struye de Swielande is professor at the Catholic University of Louvain la Neuve (Belgium), and the Catholic University Faculties of Mons and the Royal Military School. He is also senior researcher at the Center for Crisis and International Conflicts (CECRI) and coordinator of the InBev Baillet-Latour Chair, "European Union-China Program" and founder of the GENSYS network. He specializes in the geopolitics and foreign policy of the great powers and in the analysis of decision-making.

Abstract

The Western liberal order is in relative decline because of the economic crisis of 2008, the war against terrorism, the appearance of new threats (cyber, food security, climate, demography, proxy wars…) and new emerging states. There is clearly a leadership fatigue, certainly from the American point of view, something already presents under the Obama administration. Consequently, the Western World is more reluctant than in the past to interfere in conflicts around the world. There is not only a power vacuum but more important a leadership vacuum.

Hence, the institutions, norms, values and standards are in crisis. Furthermore, populism and authoritarianism is on the rise. There are less democratic systems/regimes now than 15 years ago.

 It is likewise worrying to see that Russia and China are playing an important role in weakening the international liberal order and democratic systems through for example hybrid warfare, but also promoting the model of autocratic regime. Russia and China are not the only ones. Indeed, there are other countries challenging Western democracies. Indeed, many emerging middle powers do not necessarily share Western values and norms because of different values, cultures, histories…. So, states as Brazil, India, South Korea, Indonesia, although not revisionist, question the Western standards of civilizations. Consequently, today it is not only about a classic return of power politics but also about a clash of identities.

This situation of systemic chaos should be a wakeup call and therefore an opportunity for great powers to reorganise the international society. For the EU and the US, it means abandoning the idea of defending an outdated version of a Western liberal order and change our mind-sets. The West is less and less at the centre of the world. There is a necessity, without abandoning our values to integrate all the other rising powers into a new international order and pay more attention to realpolitik. If competitive great powers do not try to cooperate more, we will not, unfortunately, overcome the today's challenges and threats we are facing. This will only be possible if decision-makers abandon their short view approaches and start to think strategically. Indeed, only strategic thinking and consequently strategic planning and strategic leadership will make it possible to establish priorities and have a pluralistic lockian international society in the future still characterized by competition but also cooperation in different dossiers, and some rules of the games to manage great powers relations.

Power Vacuums and the Return of Great Power Competition

Prof. Christopher Coker
Panellist

Professor, The London School of Economics and Political Science

Biography

Christopher Coker is professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His publications include Men at War: what fiction has to tell us about conflict from the Iliad to Catch 22 (Hurst 2014); The Improbable War: China, the US and the logic of Great Power War (Hurst 2015); Future War (Polity 2016); His most recent book is Rebooting Clausewitz, 'On War' in the Twenty-First Century (2017). He is a former twice serving member of the Council of the Royal United Services Institute, a former NATO Fellow and a regular lecturer at Defence Colleges in the UK, US. Rome, Singapore, and Tokyo.

Abstract

We can probably take as a point of departure that the world is disordered. And, the question is that is the disorder in the 1930s capable of addressing the disorders of the present day? The answer is probably no.

If we go back to the 1930s, it is very easy to say that the historical analogy is there;

- First, we have **an economic vacuum**. The Bretton Woods organisations that used to run the international economy are no longer than monopoly organisations. We have countries that even more indebted now than they were in 2008. And then, we have the trade tariffs. The United States backed to what they were in 1950. But there are differences. We are much more interdependent than we were in the 1930s in terms of greater direct investment. The trade flows are greater than they were in the 1930s. Central Banks now hold each other's debts. We have now shaken up a trade war between the United States and China. We have 267 trillion dollars of debt. We have never been as indebted as we are now. And, if we would have repeated the 2008 process, we wouldn't have the same success, because we spent the money to a very large extent.

- Second, we have **an ideological vacuum**. The old order that we lived for was a liberal order. China and Russia totally reject the liberal package. They no longer call themselves 'nation states'. This was an order that meant to be based on the nation states. They call themselves 'civilisation states'. Civilisation states have certain authorities that extend beyond those of nation states. Civilisation states do not allow the western ideas to penetrate. Patriarch of Moscow says that human-rights are an invention of the West, an invention of Jews and the Protestants, to be absolutely precise. These countries accept that there has to be a degree of civil society interest, but the interest is very very narrowly circumscribed. Their own NGOs are different from our NGOs. Donald Tusk quite nicely called the West as 'political civilisation'. Our civilisation is under challenge in Eastern Europe.

- Third, we have **a strategic vacuum**. The U.S. administration doesn't seem to like the world order that it puts together. Nuclear Treaty with Russia blown to arms control. We have another strategic vacuum in the exercises in the Russian Far East. NATO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation are possibly going to redefine the strategic map. We have a strategic vacuum in the Middle East. We have new strategic alignments and realignments that are creating strategic vacuum there. And, finally, we have failure of the U.N. which is very similar in many respects with the failure of the League of Nations in the 1930s. This is an organisation that has been absent from most of the important conflicts. It is absent in Syria because of the Security Council deadlock. 700,000 people are dying in Syria, and the U.N. is absent from that conflict. 400,000 people died in South Sudan despite the U.N. efforts. 7 million people died in Congo in the last 10 years; again the U.N. has been very largely absent from that conflict. This is an organisation that have difficulties finding a new Secretary General sometimes. So, wherever you look, you can see disarray, disorder.

Are Russia and China **revisionist powers**? Or are they powers that are seeking to **renegotiate the international order** to bring it in line with the realities of this century on the understanding that probably its historical time may be over. We have **three scenarios** if they are revisionist powers;

- **Russia** will continue to **break the international law** and get away with it to a large extent, and sanctions will not stop it.

- **China** will ban the rules rather than **break the rules**, as it has quite successfully in the South China Sea.

- **ISIS** was an organization that wanted to **throw away the rule book**. ISIS is no longer an immediate interest to us, but **there will be a successor**.

There are some other alternatives which we must at least consider very briefly.

- One was **G2 world** (US-China) that Zbigniew Brzezinski was very keen on. This is probably gone.

- The other possibility is **two parallel systems**; an American-led system and a Chinese-led system. I think the great Belt and Road Initiative which now involves 70 countries is in itself very indicative.

- The third is **G0 world** as Ian Bremmer calls. That's the world in which there is no hegemonic power. There is a global governance gap.

The world order is only as strong as the willingness of the Great Powers to actually keep it going on the road. **Great Powers are the great responsibles.** Their responsibility is to keep the order going.

The Rise of Illiberalism

Dr. Heather Grabbe
Panellist

Director, Open Society European Policy Institute

Biography

Heather Grabbe, as both the director of the Open Society European Policy Institute and director of EU affairs, works to ensure that open society values are at the heart of EU policies and actions, both inside and outside its borders.

From 2004 to 2009 she was senior advisor to then European Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn, responsible in his cabinet for the Balkans and Turkey. Before joining the commission, she was deputy director of the Centre for European Reform, the London-based think tank, where she published widely on EU enlargement and other European issues.

Her academic career includes teaching at the London School of Economics, and research at Oxford and Birmingham universities, the Royal Institute for International Affairs (Chatham House, London), and the European University Institute (Florence). Grabbe has a PhD from Birmingham University and a BA and MA from Oxford University.

Abstract

The question is, if is there in fact a collapse or is there something more of a lapse, because that seems to be the assumption often in Brussels in terms of EU policy making but what we are living through our extraordinary times at some point that we will return to normal there is a new US president and maybe things will just simply get better and will return normal. I think this is not actually a collapse, what we are seeing is that there is a significant erosion, but I suspect that, this erosion is not a lapse, it may well be permanent.

Over the past century both the Europeans and the Americans have been quite successful at shaping their images in the world but now those images are being shaped for them to a much greater extent. There are plenty of other actors that are promoting very different values or counter narratives. There is the civilization narrative which you hear both from Moscow and Beijing.

There are also counter narratives that come through new means, it`s not just governments territories it`s also new TV channels but relatively new like Al Jazeera, Russia Today, it is also social media. There is no longer any monopoly over international relations, the public as well domestic politics has a much greater role than it used to these national relations. Populist politics is becoming rather widespread and we see rising illiberalism in many parts of Europe and other countries, for example Brazil.

Populism is the dark side of democracy. Populist politicians usually portray themselves as I am the one who can speak the voice of the people who can connect it directly into the pure people and their general will. In that populist view of the world, foreign policy is something you enter into only because you really have to, because if you are the strong man leader who is tapping directly into the will of the people, who would you negotiate with anybody especially foreigners especially people who are not like you so suspicion of foreigners and suspicion of elites who negotiate with other elites is built into the populist view of the world.

The ratio of populist vote was 12 % in the past but now it is getting higher in many countries including EU Member States, 25 % of the votes even 30 % of the votes are now in favor of populism, that is new that is really new. The big problem with the populist view of the world is that is not realistic, that is actually an illusion because it dense the facts of interdependence.

Over the next a few years the danger is that the populist illiberal lapses would last for long enough that we will not have

prepared for that major transnational and intergenerational challenges which are coming, and this is really a big danger.

We need to prepare for two major challenges that require a rules-based order which required transnational solutions and really require robust comprehensive policies. The first one is of course climate change which is going to be a massive disrupter, and which will increase many of the pressures that populists are now using very effectively in their narratives to raise fear in the population.

The second one is nonmilitary means of warfare. It is not just about the war of the robots, it is also about asymmetric warfare of a very different type of undermining the trust and faith of voters in the whole democratic process. if you look at the various studies that have been done on what happened in the German and Italian elections last year, what may well happen in the European elections next year, you can see that this information is not necessarily pushing the line or the interest of one party or another, it is simply undermining faith in the system altogether, telling voters that you can`t plug the system, the election is being hacked, there is no point in voting, none of these parties is representing your interests. That is a very different kind of undermining and it is a very strong one, it is a very important one, because it means that if you have voters withdraw in our system, you disorder functions.

How to keep the narrative together, I think one of the key things is actually to talk about, instead of the typical argument which appears very often in security-based - it is about values versus interests- to think a bit rather as they about a hard choice between short term stability and long-term stability, so in terms of the short term and long term, the key question is what keeps societies stable and what keeps the regimes in check so that they don't go to war so they don't pick fights with their neighbors nor they think about these particular issues.

I just point out the way that the undermining of the stability of the liberal international rules-based order happens because of this idea that you frequently hear from populists, first of all they say the rule of law really doesn't matter, rule of law is optional, I have a direct line to my people, but they are not looking at the fact that for example the single market most economic prosperity is underpinned by the rule of law, because that is what provide stability for investment for trade for business.

Secondly protectionism and special deals with foreign powers tend to hurt more countries the most so if you have got any members that are cutting their own special deals with Putin and I say well actually we don't really need to have EU common external actions because we want to have a special action because we want to have a special deal.

Once you have very social tension, there tends to be illiberalism of populism depends on a kind of constant mobilization of by the leader of the public against external threats of various kinds, so if you run out of external threats if you actually have reasonably good relations with your neighbors, you need to create threat, you can start by blaming Brussels, you can start by blaming UN, whatever external enemy he wants to choose, but it tends to then we into some kind of conflict and of course the loss of trust and cohesion within the society and the creative dynamic of the institutions as well.

If you think about illiberal view of Europe of what it should look like, if you put together the statements of some leaders you can find populism in every country, but if you can put together their words for you what you find is in Europe that looks something like that, Citizens are very even hostile towards foreign minorities and need harsh policies to ensure that migrants are kept out minorities, minorities is a betrayal of the nation.

I think the danger we have now is that you resolved the really major long-term transnational intergenerational problems and also questions of how to deal with problems with neighboring countries actually reduced by in the corner of the world and by various populist leaders in Europe. What we deal with long term and undermining long term stability is of course dangerous and it has an immediate effect particularly and EU policies towards neighboring countries. If we could actually focus on what needs to be faced then it is much easier to make the case for international cooperation for continuing integration and for having some kind of rules.

The Spurring of a New Arms Race

Prof. Tom Sauer
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Biography

Tom Sauer is professor of political science at University of Antwerp. His major research interests are international security, more in particular (nuclear) arms control, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, disarmament, missile defence. He currently focusses on humanitarian initiative with respect to nuclear disarmament; Iranian nuclear programme; nuclear terrorism and nuclear security.

Abstract

As any observer can notice, all great and regional powers are building up their weapons arsenals. Some are proud of it and like to show it both to the outside world and to their own people like Putin's Russia or Kim Jong Un's North Korea, and also Trump; others do it more disguised like China.

At first sight, this theme can easily be linked with the overall topic of this section, the collapse of the liberal world order. Under liberal world order, I understand a world order based on the idea of cooperation, that means international law, international organizations, international regimes, including free trade, as well as the idea of democracy and human rights with respect to the domestic characteristics of the polis. The current weakening of the liberal world order yields more uncertainty, that is used as an argument to build up weapons arsenals. Sounds logic.

My point today is that reality is a bit more complex. I will try to argue:

1) That there has never been a truly global liberal world order; if not, one would not have seen arms racing e.g. in the Cold War;

2) That there are also other drivers of arms races than great power rivalry, here I mean domestic drivers, read bureaucratic politics.

3) That there is more and more contestation against arms racing in the group of countries that is mostly forgotten, those that are not directly seen as being regional powers, and that applies in particular to nuclear weapons.

Before elaborating, let me briefly give you an overview of the impasse we have reached in the domain of arms control: with respect to nuclear weapons, the INF treaty on medium-range missiles is gone since yesterday; for the first time ever (including large parts of the Cold War), the US and Russia are not negotiating a new arms treaty nor are they planning to do; the only treaty for strategic nuclear weapons is New START; that will expire in 2021 and it is unclear whether it will be extended for five years; If it is not extended, as it currently looks like, it would be the first time since very long that there will be no strategic arms treaty that is in the stage of being implemented. The latter means that both former superpowers will have no direct access anymore to verify each other's nuclear arms installations, and that both of them can build up their nuclear weapons arsenals again without any constraint. Less information means more uncertainty, which is not beneficial for the overall relationship between the US and Russia. The CTBT dating back to 1996 (and promised at the 95 NPT Review and Extension Conference) has still not entered into force; fissile material cut-off negotiations (also promised in the framework of the NPT) have not started yet; the same applies to negotiations for a Middle East WMD free zone; the last NPT Review Conference failed and most experts believe the next one in 2020 will fail again; that would be unprecedented, exactly 50 years after its entry into force; the CD in Geneva is in complete disarray since the late 1990s. President Bush, Jr. unilaterally withdrew from the ABM treaty; Trump from the Iran deal and the INF treaty. North Korea acquired nuclear weapons. Despite the CWC, chemical weapons have been used again recently in Syria. The CFE Treaty is dead. This is not a rosy picture.

Of course, there is also good news: the numbers of nuclear weapons are still decreasing (but the speed is much and much lower than before, and all nuclear armed states are planning to modernize their nuclear weapons arsenals); a landmine and cluster munitions treaty have been concluded as well as an ATT. But overall, the picture looks rather bleak indeed.

But let's come to the main question: What is the effect of the collapsing liberal world order for arms racing and arms control?

First point: The picture is not that in the past we had a truly successful liberal world order including in the field of peace and security, and that today because of the collapse of that order we see the spurring of new arms races. The origin of the liberal world order is mostly associated with the end of WW II. As we all know, this world order was largely overruled by the Cold War schism right from the beginning. The Soviet Union and its allies never belonged to that liberal world order, also because they did not want to. Because there was no true global liberal order, we immediately tumbled into the Cold War, including an immense nuclear arms race. In short, I would argue that there has never been a true global liberal world order, except maybe in the beginning of the 1990s, maybe.

After the Cold War, there was a window of opportunity to expand the liberal world order from the West to the rest. Remember, this was the time that Francis Fukuyama wrote his famous book 'The end of History', a very optimistic description of the world of that time. According to Fukuyama, the combination of democracy and capitalism, key aspects of a liberal world order, is the ideal world to live in, and humankind had reached that stage. Nothing better could be expected in the future. Theoretically, he may have been right. In practice, it became immediately clear that his theory did not apply to all states and regions in the world. Although Russia embraced both capitalism and democracy under Yeltsin, its economy and as a result its political system never escaped from being very dependent on the export of energy. The Russian economy never made it to a thriving economy. China in contrast did much better in the economic sphere, but there the political system lagged and is still lagging behind. Since Putin is in power, Russia fell back to being a Chinese-like autocracy. In the meantime, even the West encountered serious difficulties on both accounts: we have experienced the financial crisis in the period 2008-2009 that brought us on the brink of an economic crisis like the one of 1929, and we are experiencing the rise of nationalist and populist tendencies, including in the US, which was the initiator and major defender of the so-called liberal world order in the past.

The collapsing liberal world order is partly the result of a shift in the global balance of power that is going on with the rise of China and the demise of the US, at least relatively speaking, esp. in economic terms.

Given all that, it is not surprising to see that the level of cooperation amongst great powers is diminishing, and that balancing mechanisms are on the rise, including arms racing.

That said, I do not believe that we should exaggerate. Overall, most of the liberal world institutions that were created are still alive and kicking: the UN and the whole panoply of other international organizations, the Bretton Woods monetary system, etc. And even in the realm of defence, reality is sometimes different than what the mainstream media makes of it. In the Western media, Putin is the new Hitler. Russia is on the verge of attacking the Baltic states. Russia is building new weapons systems that can easily circumvent Western missile defence systems. Etc. Don't be fooled. Russia is a declining power (also demographically) that is extremely dependent on the expert of energy. Its defence budget is 5 times less than what we in Europe spend on defence, and if we add our big NATO partner 20 times less. Many of the weapon systems Putin announced do not work. In addition, one could make the argument, as I have done in an article in Global Policy last year, that also the West can be blamed of not having integrated Russia into the Euro-Atlantic security architecture after the Cold War. NATO should have been abolished after the Cold War, just like the Warsaw Pact. Even Realists maintain that alliances are temporary organizations. Not so. NATO did not only remain into existence, it also expanded – contrary to what Western leaders had promised to Gorbachev in 1990 – not only once, but twice or thrice. And it installed missile defence in the Central European states 'against Iran'. Notice that the missile defence systems remained after the Iran deal. You do not need a lot of empathy to understand that Russian strategists felt afraid, and Russian politicians and people felt not respected, and excluded. One could even make the argument as Stephen Walt (from Harvard), John Mearsheimer (from Chicago) and myself do: that the West is also responsible for the current crisis with Russia.

What about China? China's arms build-up cannot be denied, but here again it should not be exaggerated. Of course, it is investing some of the huge amount of dollars it has capitalized in defence. But it is limited. China's assertiveness in foreign policy has also been limited, although we see more and more indications recently that that may be changing, which is not abnormal from a Realist perspective. Is it normal that US submarines are still active on the shores of China? How would the US react if the Chinese would start doing that? As all Realists know, there exists something like spheres

of influence. As long as we do not create a true liberal world order, things like spheres of influences and arms racing will remain. The US, the declining power, will have to adapt its behaviour in the Chinese neighbourhood. If not, there will be war.

Second point: the shifting balance of power is not the only explanation for the current arms race. There are also domestic drivers, regardless of the evolution of the external environment. It is crystal clear that defence firms depend for a substantial part for their survival on government orders. Both in the US and Russia a gigantic military-industrial-complex (MIC) was built up during the Cold War with millions of employees both in government and in the private sector. The concept MIC is a term coined by President Eisenhower during his farewell speech. He knew what he was talking about. It means money. It means jobs. As a result, there is permanent pressure from this complex on politicians to order new weapons systems, whether the country needs them or not, whether they work or not (like missile defence, which is basically a job program).

There is another mechanism that is at play in this regard. Weapons systems, especially large weapon systems like missiles, aircraft, ships, nuclear weapons, have a life-time of a couple of decades. It happens that these complex and expensive systems come in cycles. Nowadays, a new cycle of new weapons systems is being planned as the existing systems will come to the end of their lifetime in 10-20 years. That means for instance that the US is now planning to spend 1.2 trillion dollars (and if you add inflation 1.7 trillion dollars) the coming three decades only on nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles. That includes new ballistic missile submarines for 128 bn $, new strategic bombers (B-21s) for 100 bn $, new ICBMs for 85-140 bn $, new air-launched cruise missiles (LRSO) for 11 bn $. The Trump Nuclear Posture Review added new sea-launched cruise missiles and proposes for the first time low-yield SLBMs. But again, most of this (apart from the examples of the Trump NPR) was already planned 10-20 years ago. How do we political scientists call that? Path dependency, right. And it is very hard for politicians to stop that, also because there are so many jobs involved. My point: this arms-racing is happening regardless of the changes in the external environment.

Third and last point: here I limit myself to nuclear weapons. An event that may have escaped your attention (blame it on the mainstream media) is the signing of a major new treaty, namely the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty. It basically forbids the existence, that means development, production, possession, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. The treaty has been negotiated in the framework of the UN and was concluded by 122 states – a clear majority of states in the world - on the 7th of July, last year. Once 50 states ratify, the treaty will enter into force. That may already be the case at the end of next year, or in 2020. From that point onwards, those states that have signed it will regard nuclear weapons not only as inhumane, immoral, but also illegal weapon systems. The nine nuclear armed states and their allies do not like the treaty. But they are a minority. The tables are turned. This is an example of the rise of the Rest, basically African, Latin American and Asian countries who argue that if nuclear weapons will be used, they – their security - will suffer as well, and they are right. The Prohibition treaty is fully in line with the NPT, which up to now was the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, but which is in deep troubles, not because of the Prohibition treaty (as the nuclear armed states claim), but because of the lack of nuclear disarmament. The ongoing modernizations, the ongoing nuclear arms races are perceived by the rest of the world as being a mockery of the nuclear disarmament obligations that are part of the NPT. This frustration was one of the main drivers behind the Humanitarian Initiative that led to the Prohibition Treaty. One could make the point that this is the outcome of the liberal world order that included the NPT that on its turn promised nuclear disarmament. If legal obligations are only to be fulfilled by one party, they become complete meaningless after a while. The Prohibition Treaty should be regarded as a warning signal to the nuclear armed states and their allies.

One can speculate about the effects of the Prohibition Treaty. I have an article coming out in The Non-proliferation Review in a couple of weeks on the possible stigmatization effects of the treaty. While most observers in the nuclear armed states and their allies are sceptical, I am rather optimistic. You see already changes happening now. More in particular in the private sector and more in particular in the financial sector. The Norwegian pension fund, a 1,000 bn dollars fund, one of the biggest in the world, decided to divest from nuclear weapons related businesses, last year. The largest Dutch pension fund followed. Deutsche Bank turned the screws on. And in June of this year, the biggest Belgian bank KBC decided to divest from nuclear weapons related business, explicitly referring to the Prohibition Treaty. Not because the CEO was aware of it, but because clients, employees and in the end his Board of Governance made him aware. I have no illusions that all this will halt the pressure from the MIC, but this debate may have spill-over effects in our societies at large. It is my prediction that countries like the NL, Belgium, Germany, and Norway cannot and will not continue their nuclear weapons policies, once a Prohibition Treaty exists.

With respect to nuclear weapons, a clash is coming. That can be easily predicted. The non-nuclear weapons states are fed up with waiting for real disarmament. The NPT may be the first victim. But in the end the survival of the planet, which is still another ball game than the survival of the liberal order, may be at stake.

To conclude, most of us will probably agree that arms racing is not ideal, that we are risking war and, in our age, even nuclear war. This situation is not tenable. It would not be illogic to start diminishing and then hopefully completely eliminating the risk of nuclear war. The only realistic way of doing that is by eliminating nuclear weapons. There is a new incentive, the Prohibition treaty. If the nuclear weapons states miss this chance, the risk exists that we first have to undergo a worsening of the situation in the sense of the end of the NPT and possibly the arrival of new nuclear armed states.

The Role of Non-state Actors in the Future of Global Governance and International Security

Prof. Raffaele Marchetti
Panellist

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Biography

Raffaele Marchetti is Rector's Delegate for Internationalization and Senior Assistant Professor (national qualification as full professor) in International Relations at the Department of Political Science and the School of Government of LUISS. His research interest concerns global politics and governance, hybrid and city diplomacy, transnational civil society, (cyber-) security and political risk, and democracy.

Abstract

Two main dynamics are at work in the international level. The first is the state-centred "great power dynamics". And the second is pluralist "global governance" in which a plethora of different actors exist alongside states.

A main feature of the latter, non-state actors increasingly engage and create synergy and partnership with governments and inter-governmental institutions. They have rendered the politics and the international system much more complex than the previous times. They are everywhere ranging from philanthropic foundations to think-tanks, banks, big financial actors etc. To attain a political control of this situation, there is need to develop an understanding of complex mechanisms that develop in multiple dimensions, levels and locations.

The new irreversible norm is hybrid politics of coalescing and integration between governmental and non-governmental actors, which further bring in itself opportunities, benefits, risks and costs. In this system, state and non-state actors need each other to further their objectives. Even the greatest power needs to engage possibly with non-state actors.

From quantitative perspective, the sheer number of these actors has increased significantly in the last few decades together with the total development of globalization. They have acquired and continue to perform many functions that were carried out until recently by governments, by public authorities. To give some examples, they bring constituent issues to the public agenda, lobby policy makers, provide funds for both private and public spheres, formulate regulatory decisions, monitor their respective international agreements, resolve disputes and so on and so forth. They are in different formats, from NGOs to tech companies.

Non-state actors do not always operate alone. They increasingly develop forms of cooperation international institutions and national governments with different goals. They find in practice overlapping grounds to develop political or tactical convergence or to pursue similar short-term goals.

At the international level, one example of such cooperation is the so-called multi-stakeholder initiatives based on spontaneous collaboration, participation to ownership, power sharing, better potential to learning, and finally common action. However, it is not only in the international institutions level that these kinds corporations take place. Even the most traditional state-centric organizations like NATO are engaged and strive to develop a much better cooperation with NGOs.

An interesting example of this cooperation can be cited as the conduct of foreign policy through NGOs in third countries, a come-back of a Cold War tradition. It is possible to say that this exercise has garnered recognition by all states with different reactions. As a backlash, many governments pass laws against foreign funded NGOs. However, major powers are now actively engaged in developing their foreign policy through the collaboration and the synergy with non-state actors. It is not any more a matter of American and European democracy promotion or foreign policy by engaging NGOs.

Development of such "public partnerships" has further repercussions we need to consider. The most important one

is entrance of a kind of intervening, transnational variable into the domestic balance of power, favouring either the government or the opposition. Sovereignty loses its meaning in classical terms, becoming one interdependent by degrees. This is common experience in all countries, more or less.

In nearly all states, there is a government, a majority or minority, and an opposition. Both try to take advantage of the opportunities provided from foreign actors to win the game at the national level. Power brokerage is not made solely internally. But further negotiations take place at international level.

There are different mechanisms that can be identified in this kind of dynamic. One classical mechanism is Keck and Sikkink's "boomerang effect." It's a kind of liberal rosy understanding in which there is a minority in an undemocratic country, like the women under Taliban. They can go and ask for support from the EU or from friendly governments and finally put pressure on government to dismantle the barriers that would not be possible otherwise.

An inverse, outside-in example is that foreign NGOs, foreign governments, foreign international organizations who rely on local actors, local opposition, local minorities can push their political agendas. EU democracy promotion can be cited as an example.

This form of foreign intervention can get a little bit darker and a bit unclear. Foreign governments can rely also on local military actors, local rebel group, militias to bring on their interests. According to cyber operation records, there are almost 20 countries that have used these kinds of proxies for their foreign policy objectives almost 200 times in the last decade.

Another practice is that the governments' reliance on like-minded governments, foreign NGOs, foreign groups to smash and criminalize and sometimes even kill the opposition to further put pressure on local minorities or oppositions. Syria and Yemen are good examples to that.

However, this is not only bilateral and bi-directional. In some cases, foreign actors supporting local opposition, foreign actors supporting local governments enter into political competition themselves in a way upsetting entire dynamics. They will not act alone but they will act in networks. So, by bringing one NGO, the local actor actually brings an entire network or group of NGOs to its side. Most of these activities or some of these activities are carried out in a covert fashion.

All in all, the system is very complex. It is imperative for political leaders and political scientists to have a better understanding of these dynamics both in empirical and normative terms. The issue enters into collision with our traditional understanding of national self-determination and sovereignty. However, without understanding this, it will not be possible to understand the international system completely.

Return of Political Warfare

Prof. Hall Gardner
Panellist

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Biography

Hall Gardner is professor in the Department of International and Comparative Politics at the American University of Paris. examines inter-state and inter-societal conflict with a comparative historical orientation. His focus is on the diplomatic origins of war, yet more specifically on deliberating the phenomenon of war's eruption and its regional and global ramifications, with an eye toward conflict resolution. His research blends a historical and theoretical approach with contemporary international affairs, concentrating on questions involving NATO and European Union enlargement, the collapse of the Soviet Union and its impact upon China and Eurasia in general, as well as the global ramifications of the "war on terrorism." His publications include Crimea, Global Rivalry, and the Vengeance of History (2018); World War Trump: The Risks of America's New Nationalism (2018); The Failure to Prevent World War I: The Unexpected Armageddon (2016).

Abstract

Concept of Political Warfare stems from Clausewitz: Condensed Version: « War is a continuation of politics by other means… war is therefore an act of violence to force the opponent to fulfil our will. A deeper reading of Clausewitz implies that war represents the use of force intended as an alternative means of political intercourse or political communication— or even an alternative form of diplomacy— intended to press the opponent to accept one's will.

At the beginning of the Cold War, in April 1948 in a top-secret memo, George Kennan developed his own definition of political warfare stemming from Clausewitz. **Strategic leveraging** incorporates the tools that state leaderships and socio-political movements, among other organizations and groups, can use to expand, sustain or even retract, their relative position of power and influence within the local, provincial, national, regional, and global system. **If we jump ahead to the end of the Cold War**, we can see elements of "political warfare" — or what I prefer to call "strategic leveraging" — being used to support anti-Communist movements throughout the world as a means to undermine Moscow. T**he initial post-Cold War** political goal was to "bring a democratic Russia and the other new democracies into the defense community of democratic nations, so that they can become a force for peace not only in Europe but also in other critical regions of the world," as stated by the Pentagon Defense Planning Guidance.

Rise of Anti-state terrorism and political warfare. As we see, Kennan's concept of political warfare was influenced by both the British and Soviets, but also by Communist Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil war and by Zionist movements. Somewhat similarly, post-Cold war concepts of political warfare would increasingly be influenced by the September 11, 2001 in addition to other actions and tactics of anti-state factions, and countries such as Iran. **Post-cold war hybrid warfare.** Global War on Terrorism begins to merge with Major Power political warfare.

Hybrid or non-linear war. By 2008-14, Moscow began to adopt more sophisticated technique of political warfare and strategic leveraging now called hybrid or non-linear warfare. Here Moscow has appeared to have drawn on anti-state and Iranian tactics for its seizure of Crimea with "little green men" without insignias

Dilemmas of Democracy Engineering. One of the major tools of political warfare was support for democracy movements and religious freedom. Both are double edged swords. Danger is not merely that states are adopting tactics of anti-state "terrorist" movements, but that as both Russia and China begin to assert their regional and global interests, versus the US, NATO, the EU and Japan, clashing major power interests are beginning to interface in the ongoing Global War on Terrorism…,

Way to Peace. To test Russian diplomatic flexibility will require concerted US-European diplomatic engagement backed by tools of what I call "strategic leveraging". These combine political, economic, and military tools which press for sanctions and other constraints.

Disinformation as a Political Weapon

Prof. Žiga Turk
Panellist

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Biography

Dr. Žiga Turk (1962) is a professor of construction information technology and researcher in the field of design communication and internet science at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He is former Slovenian minister for development as well as for education, science, culture and sports. Between 2008 and 2010 he was Secretary General of the Reflection Group on the Future of Europe. He is active in a few High Level Expert Groups of the European Commission including on Fake News and European Science Cloud. He is member of the Academic Council of the Martens Centre.

Abstract

Disinformation is used as a political weapon. It's not a new phenomenon, it used to exist and it will be in the future. It is just one of the tools from the toolbox of a wider effort that is called influence operations which is probably part of the hybrid warfare. What is new is that internet has changed a few things. This counter-narrative paper argues that disinformation or fake news, which are very popular since 2016, are not such major issues as some would like people to believe. In fact, they have good reasons to make people to believe that. It is only one of the tools of the influence operations, not the most part of it. Influence operations are about trust not truth, trust versus not trusting. And in the conclusion, it will be suggested that disinformation could be stopped through technology and legal at hand. Yet, it is questionable whether it could be achieved within the democratic principles, what are the available measures, which state actors or political parties want to engage in and be successful with influence operations.

We have a new communication and media environment. Why? What has actually changed? In the news or information process, a new story is created, then editors do the quality control and proofreading, it is published and amplified, i.e., placed at the top of the newsstand and advertised. As a result, people consumers start talking about it.

In a traditional news process; the professionals create the news (creation stage). In the second stage the news is edited, published and amplified. And in the last stage it is consumed. The editors, the journalists, the political parties and the politicians like the second stage very much as they could control the whole process through this stage. If you control the second stage, you would control the entire media environment.

With internet, not only the professionals but also the ordinary people start tweeting and blogging (creation stage). Anyone can publish and boost the news and the information. They amplify by liking the content. Furthermore, anyone can edit and quality control, so no need to editors. In that landscape there is no trash, internet is one huge trash can. So, no more gatekeepers and there is a huge kind of chaos in the middle. The key issue of the fight against fake news or disinformation is, can it be possible to return from this chaotic picture back to the traditional news process. Certain people like it as they have a control on that. To the contrary, in the new news process they are powerless. Is it possible?

There are ways to do it. But it is argued that the problem is actually not as bad as some think. It is suggested that the research figures show that the social media is the main driver of disinformation. Some statistics argue that 10 percent of the readers of top news come there through social media. But 40 percent of the traffic into the fake news sites comes from social media. So, 10 to 40 percent, social media seems really bad. Yet, if you put that into the perspective of the size of the audience, it could be realized that there's actually still a lot of people who read top news and rather few people go and follow the so-called disinformation.

Indeed, fake and real news are discussed a lot. Disinformation is discussed as much as real news on social media sites. Yet, people are consuming and reading disinformation versus information is still very much favorable to real

information and in Europe it's even better. It's an interesting take out that Europeans seem to be much more resilient to disinformation than Americans. In Europe the discussion on social media was 6 to 1 in favour of real news, while in the US it was 1 to 1. Also, in the French elections it was 10 to 1.

If one wants to have somebody to blame about disinformation discussion and about the spread of the disinformation, this would be Facebook. Most of the traffic into these disinformation sites and fake news is coming from Facebook. However, this is not the major problem with the social media sites. A lot of people are using Facebook or such social media sites. They offer a stream of events that one should be interested in. People can see 10 percent of the published posts that they follow as they have time for only 10 percent. The dangerous and the scary part is that Facebook is deciding which 10 percent of all the news they would see. It's not Russia, not the Macedonian hackers or whatsoever, it's Facebook.

Then the question is how Facebook decides 10 percent? It's not entirely clear. It's actually good that it's not clear. Because hacking Facebook, then writing such a way that they would come to the top of your stream on Facebook would be even easier. So, we don't exactly know how this is happening, the algorithm is changing. There are people who will be complaining that these social media sites are hostile to them. Right wing politicians and publishers in the US, they are very much effected whereas the liberals are not very much. This concludes to a constant kind of mistrust and distrust into what people see on the internet.

Who decides what you look at? Is he or she or is that company deciding it in a neutral and impartial way? Or are they trying to force somebody's agenda? It is not argued in this paper that Facebook is following up anybody's agenda. They are being blamed that they were helping Trump. But they were just played, their algorithms were played by everybody including the Trump campaign.

Some information about disinformation; it is a weapon, to be precise, it is a political weapon. But according to several studies, it is much more popular nowadays to say that it's a big problem. But there are some studies in peer-reviewed scientific journals that would tell that disinformation affected US elections by an order of a hundredth of a percentage form. Is disinformation a political weapon? Of course, disinformation is a political weapon. Political language is designed to make lies sound truthful.

One can argue that if only people knew the truth about Donald Trump, if they knew the truth about the ignorant democratic policies, if they only knew the truth of the unintelligent Christian democratic policies they would not vote for any of them. I think that's a fallacy, this is not true. I think they would vote the same.

The actual consequence of disinformation and fake news is what in the end remains, and in the end people remember very small. In a recent survey, people are asked how much they trust disinformation and how much they remember disinformation. So, the researchers invented that face news were never existed, they were never part of the news string. When Americans asked whether they believe that, do they remember those news; they remembered placebo news about as much as fake news and about as much as disinformation. So, this gives a perspective how comes strong and impact disinformation really has.

However, why there is such a huge fuss about disinformation or fake news. Why is internet blamed to destroy the media, the policies and the democracy? Because in the old media system, the media and the political parties were working together. The chief editor of a right-wing newspaper was working closely with right-wing political parties. Left-wing newspapers were working closely with left-wing political parties. And all were very happy, maybe not a monopoly but they were carving the media space and they were carving the political space for themselves. There was no competition, they were controlling the competition, they were controlling the media.

The problem is not the internet, the new media or the new political parties. But the old players are very much interested in trying to suppress the competition, both political competition as well as the media competition. Thus, they have created and amplified this narrative of fake news, disinformation or hate speech in order to bring back the environment where they could control what was happening. So, most of the discussion, maybe not all, about disinformation is to find a scapegoat on for instance "Why did we lose Brexit? Why did Hillary Clinton loose? Why are we losing to populist?" It's very convenient to find a scapegoat and blame it, to say, "the internet or they did it, the Russians did it". It is so much easier than saying "Well, maybe we did not have the best candidate, maybe we got some messages wrong, maybe the other guys were better".

Following the discussion on disinformation, it might be better to conclude with the topic of influence operation which is very interesting and important. What are the influence operations? These are operations that trick the audience into believing stuff they would not believe otherwise. In order that they change the decision to vote, that they would vote differently, in order that they would regret how they voted, to undermine the trust in whoever was elected. This is what

they want to achieve in the influence operations.

And truth is actually is not a very big part of the story. The influence operation with respect to the election of Donald Trump was a success. We just don't know whether it was Republican influence operation that actually swing the boats towards Donald Trump, or was it the Democratic influence operation which claims that Donald Trump has been elected after cheating. The result is that the administration has been taking away some of its legitimacy. It's not the position of Donald Trump, it's not as if he would be elected fairly, it's not claiming that he is elected fairly, but this is the end, the result. Russians can be very happy about it because in the end it is them who benefit.

The Russians, for instance, did not denied really strong, really emphatically that they were involved in the U.S. elections. Because by doing so, they would empower the political position of Trump. Never, it was kind of a pro forma, "No, no, no, we didn't do it" to leave some doubt because they want Trump to win.

There is more than one way to take people if you can, just because of internet it became more complicated to have parties and editors in the mainstream media. Messaging which is only based on facts does not resonate with real people. They want emotion, they want something different. Satire and humour are means which are just effective as misinformation that could be seen in the U.S. election campaign. How much is invested in humour? How much is invested in kind of political show business?

Not many lies circling around, not many fake news, not many disinformation. Just fun stuff designed to trick voters. The control of the narrative is the key in today's political warfare. Set the agenda, control the news cycle, how the problem is framed. Trust matters, you need authentic candidates, you need authentic communication. Real people can go in internet and like the stuff by the politicians they like, they can engage in discussions on the Internet. And the good stuff that is social media networks are trying to create a difference between what the real users and what are some algorithms pretending to be users.

To conclude; disinformation is a weak political tool whereas truth is available. About all the fake news, truth was over there, for people wanting to search for truth they could find truth, there's no better tool to find the truth as is the Internet. There's also no better tool to find lies as is the internet. But if people do not seek for truth that points to some other issues and some other problems which serious politicians should look into. Stopping disinformation will not stop populist, will not stop populism, but listening to the problems, the grievances that the populists are exploiting with will.

Another important point is censorship, it undermines trust as well. Imagine if you have elections and widespread complaints after that election, what kind of sites, what kind of people, what kind of voices were suppressed before that elections. Legitimacy of those elections will be undermined and of course the power, the intimacy of the political leadership in those elections would be undermined. So, one has to be very, very careful with what one does in trying to suppress disinformation and trying to suppress fake news. Technologically you can do many things to get the good stuff on the internet, the most democratic one is to install a filter on a browser and it will tell you what is fake news. It will not the government for you, it will not the Facebook for you, you will choose it and put it on your browser and you will have the abbreviation of everything. There are not so democratic tools; governments can interfere. But they can't because there are laws about freedom of expression and that's why hands are tied.

To me, the solution which is found is very dangerous. All this gatekeeping is being outsourced to the big social firms such as Facebook, Google, Twitter, Apple or Amazon. Politicians are giving huge power to these companies who are extremely powerful. They hope that these companies will work and help them win elections or at least prevent others from taking the victory. It is not wise to give the democracy in the hands of Mark Zuckerberg.

Technology on the frontier of race for Global Domination: Cyberspace, Artificial Intelligence, and Robotics

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C.M. Jonker is professor of Interactive Intelligence in the Department of Intelligent Systems at Delft University and professor of Explainable Artificial Intelligence in the Department of Media Technology at Leiden University. Her research interests are the modelling and simulation of cognitive processes and concepts such as trust, negotiation, teamwork and the dynamics of individual agents and organisations. She enjoys working in interdisciplinary teams and creating synergy between humans and technology by understanding, shaping and using fundamentals of intelligence and interaction. She is inspired by social intelligence theories, and, e.g., use concepts such as social practice to improve the interactive intelligence of agents.

Abstract

I have studied computer science and developed in the area of artificial intelligence and since then pursuing my research with an emphasis on creating support technology and specifically the support of decision making. To a large extend, my aim is to form a debate in the liberation, that is, helping people argue for or against something and in developing negotiating support systems. It helps to think about people's values. If one talks to people and understands why they have a certain opinion, one might still disagree but also discover that these are descent people, and understand why they choose different from one's choice. Thus, the Delft University of Technology and several other universities are supporting the idea of responsible AI.

The AI is widely covered in the media. For instance, one of the headlines shows that by 2025, 52% of all jobs would be carried out by robots or another news that says by 2022, 75 million jobs will be gone. Whereas another news suggests that by 2022, 130 million new ICT jobs would have been created. It seems that, it's a matter of how one analyses things? The people who would lost their jobs would be unhappy. Yet, there would be more jobs created also in 2022, but then they would be re-educated. These kinds of transitions are hard and it has to be studied on how to tackle with that.

The ideal AI autonomous system should be able to set and pursue its own goals, then also be held accountable and could be given some responsibilities. Maybe it is better to illustrate it here with Sophia, the citizen of Saudi Arabia. It is surprising that people believe that the robot Sophia actually can have a conversation. People are very disappointed when they're explained that the questions are given like a week before so that Sophia can give sufficient answers. So, from my point of view, this a real problem. Because people are believing in AI in the last 50, 60, 70 years. And after such promises there is always a disappointment. So, what I hope to do is to describe what can be expected from AI, and on the other hand to re-consider, to think about AI as a supporting technology that has great power if it is deployed it in the right way.

What is deep learning then? It is a sub-branch of machine learning, the type of artificial intelligence that is capable of learning from more data. There are various types of that kind of learning, but one thing is important that it typically run from big data. So big data is basically the gold of the day, the material that we can get rich with. It's fantastically true but it has some risks. Deep learning consists of huge network of small intelligence with enormous numbers of connections between those networks. It's not a new idea, it was already around like 60s last century. By that time, it didn't fly. The reason that it does fly now is also due to fantastic records of electrical engineering and constructing ever better, faster computers.

And it has really enormous power. It's like a super brain which brings you all kinds of possibilities of extracting patterns from they can. Good for intelligism and therefore in the end set up its own goals. Is that what you want or is it what you don't want? To what extend can it be controlled? And to what extend can be done differently?

So, if this is the engine, the next question is who is in control? Because in the one hand you have all the promises and in the other hand you're being scared stiff by all kind of movies about artificial intelligence taking over the control of the world and do all those nasty things? Yes, then who is in charge? It seems like a logical question, but I think we should pose a different question. It's not so much about who is in charge, but how control, on being in charge, flows from one of us to the next.

Google Deep Mind was based on deep learning efforts which is basically a principal truth program to ever be a proficient player at the game of a goal. That's the game of chess and has been cracked by AI and it was in 1998. This is a major effort which took 20 years for them to do that. But it sells the game. It's a confined game, it's a game in which all information is feasible on board. The context is really scoped to that game. And that's the first thing that we should realize. When it comes to the unbelievable amount of background knowledge, of contextual knowledge that one has to know to make decisions in the political world, it is not easy to solve for machines like deep learning and deep mind tools. Why is that so? Why would it be difficult to grasp what that thing actually will be doing?

An ordinary person can balance a pencil with two fingers or only one finger. How do we do that? Can we explain how that works? Well, that's difficult. When I started my career as a scientist in the 90s, I was at a conference where initial race between symbolic representation approaches to AI first bound into machine learning and we started with flying. How can we teach a computer how to fly? So, there was two camps, both camps have the same number of engineers. Well after 3 weeks with 2 teams fully working on the knowledge representation, the computer didn't fly yet. Asking so many pilots "How do you do that?". All that pilots have so many things that say the same. The computer didn't fly. But basically, after, working with a pilot in hooking a central system to the controls, the thing flew within a decade.

And that's also power, it's fantastic. It's out there and you can really do that. So, what's the problem? Let's do machine learning all the time. There's the point that we still don't know why it flies? We have no clue. It's not maybe that important to fly, but yes, for deploying all the stuff for political warfare and stuff like those spoken before me. This is so fundamental what you are doing, it's so essential, we do really seriously contemplate and leaving that decision to a machine. It's our lives, it's our society. Don't shift responsibility to something else that we can't explain why did it something.

Big data resembles a very big sea in which AI seems to be adrift. Because there are streams in the data that we are not aware of. Basically, when you are thinking that you are going the right direction, that brings you to a wrong point. Amazon has recently applied deep learning to run through all the batches of all the applicants for the jobs to pick up the best 5 candidates. It was a biased decision so they stopped it. What did they give to the machine learning algorithm? The data of their past experiences of how they hired people and there was a bias in there.

So, what's the problem? Why do we deploy machine learning in such cases? Because you don't want to go through all the data. But, you have to realize that if you do unsupervised learning then there might be all kinds of biases that you are not aware of. Ok, then let's supervise learning, let's give it data that we already labelled like, these are good examples and these are bad examples and based on that you can categorize. Sounds good, but then the labelling would be done by humans with their own biases. So, doesn't give any help. If we do it, we would bring our own problems again. So, can we do different? That's basically the question we need. So, how do we stay on course? As a metaphor; we need a moral compass and a moral positioning system. And not only the compass because you can't realize that you are drifting away in the big data sea with only a compass, so we need a moral positioning system instead of a GPS. That will tell you where you are in your sea of morality.

Here's another metaphor to understand better. Probably you see a picture of a rider and a running horse. The horse is an enormously powerful machine, it can run much faster than we can or can carry heavy loads. And it's a very intelligent agent. If there is a hole in the ground or an obstacle in front of it, the avoidance will be done by the horse automatically. It will not crush into that, it will jump, go around or do something intelligent. The type of intelligence that we love and we'd like to harvest also from AI. But you see a rider also over there. So, there is some screening mechanism. That's what we are looking for, how to bring that into AI?

So essentially, the research should take all the power of the machine learning, give it a moral positioning system, make sure that the system is self-reflective. A few words to explain self-reflective systems. I would like to have AI that can say;

• Where am I from a moral point of view?

• What biases am I forming?

• What is the quality of the data I am being fed?

• Who can I turn to for discussion, for further help to talk about these possible biases?

That requires epistemic logic, stuff from basically knowledge representation area. Things that help ask questions; What do I know? What do I know that I don't know? So those are the known knowns. At first it doesn't help us yet on unknown unknows. But we can do that together, we can work with those systems to help discover that.

Thus, my goal here is to enhance you on Responsible AI. First of all, we have to design for values. So, it has to be designed transparent. It has to be designed so that we can explain what it is doing and why. It has to be designed with a moral compass, a moral positioning system for moral control and positioning. And then we can talk about shared leadership and shared control for everyone's good.

Partners

Université catholique de Louvain is Belgium's largest French-speaking university. It is located in Louvain-la-Neuve, and Brussels, Charleroi, Mons and Tournai. UCL was founded at the centre of the historic town of Leuven in 1425, making it the first university in Belgium and the Low Countries. After being closed in 1797 during the Napoleonic period, the Catholic University of Leuven was "re-founded" in 1834.

The Institute of Political Science Louvain-Europe (known by the French acronym ISPOLE) brings together researchers working on political and policy-related issues at national, European and international level from a multidisciplinary perspective and covering a wide range of topics, such as power; political identities; collective memory; political institutions, players and behaviour (voting behaviour, political participation, etc.); domestic and international conflicts; European integration; foreign policy and diplomacy; globalisation; regionalism; humanitarian aid; public policies.

The CECRI (Centre d'Etude des Crises et Conflits Internationaux) is a research centre at Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium. Its central aim is to provide analyses and to conduct academic research on contemporary international crises and conflicts.

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