

CESRAN2026

07-10 July 2026

Budapest | Hungary



13

th Annual Conference on International Studies

Conference Programme

&

Abstract Book

The Annual Conference on International Studies

is organised with funding raised by registration fees and support of the following partners:

- ◆ CESRAN International
 - ◆ The University Excellence Fund and the Faculty Research Grant, Faculty of Humanities, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary (ELTE)
 - ◆ Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa
 - ◆ OBSERVARE
 - ◆ CICIP-University of Minho
 - ◆ Tbilisi State University
 - ◆ Bursa Uludağ University
 - ◆ Jacob of Paradies University
-
- ◆ *The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development*
 - ◆ *JANUS.NET, e-journal of International Relations*
 - ◆ *Novus Orbis: Journal of Politics and International Relations*
 - ◆ *Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security*



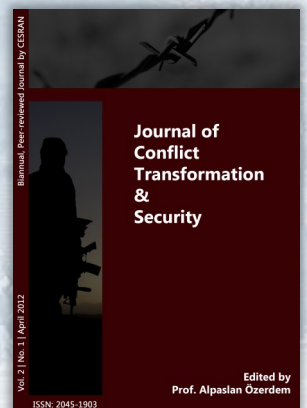
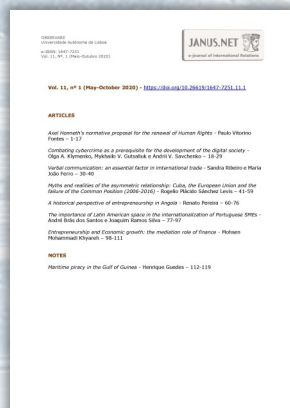
ELTE
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UNIVERSITY



IVANE JAVAKHISHVILI
TBILISI STATE UNIVERSITY



Research Center
in Political Science



Organising Committee

- Professor Ken Booth – CESRAN International
- Professor Ozgur Tufekci – CESRAN International & Karadeniz Technical University, Türkiye
- Professor Rahman Dag – CESRAN International & Marmara University, Türkiye
- Professor Rashed Daher – Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary
- Dr Tamas Dudlak – Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary
- Professor Luís Tomé – OBSERVARE – Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa, Portugal
- Professor Sandra Dias Fernandes – University of Minho, Portugal
- Professor Ferudun Yılmaz (Rector) – Bursa Uludağ University, Türkiye
- Professor Marco Marsili – CEI-Iscte – Centre for International Studies, Portugal
- Assoc. Professor Salome Dundua – Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia
- Professor Tomasz Marcinkowski – The Jacob of Paradies University, Poland

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- Professor Stefan Wolff – University of Birmingham, UK

* The surnames are listed in alphabetical order.

Day 1 - Tuesday, 7 July 2026

10h00 - 10h30	Registration		
10h30 - 10h50	Welcome Speeches Associate Professor Dávid Bartus (Eötvös Loránd University) Professor Rashed Daher (Eötvös Loránd University) Professor Luis Tome (Universidade Autonoma De Lisboa) Professor Salome Dundua (Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University) Professor Rahman Dağ (CESRAN International & Marmara University) Professor Özgür Tüfekçi (CESRAN International & Karadeniz Tech. Uni.)	Venue:	Faculty Meeting Hall—Kari Tanacsterem
10h50 - 11h00	Family Photo		
11h00 - 12h00	Keynote: Professor Michael Cox (LSE) (Online) Title: Whatever happened to the Liberal World Order Moderation: Professor Özgür Tüfekçi (CESRAN International & Karadeniz Technical University)	Venue:	Faculty Meeting Hall—Kari Tanacsterem
12h00 - 13h30	Lunch Break*		
13h30 - 15h00	Panel 01 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 02 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	
15h00 - 15h30	Coffee Break		
15h30 - 17h00	Panel 03 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 04 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	

Day 2 - Wednesday, 8 July 2026

09h30 - 10h30	Keynote: Professor Nicholas J. Wheeler (University of Birmingham) Title: On the Brink: Communication and Dynamics of Nuclear Crisis Escalation and How It Can Be Stopped Moderation: Professor Rashed Daher (Eötvös Loránd University)	Venue:	Faculty Meeting Hall—Kari Tanacsterem
10h30 - 11h00	Coffee Break		
11h00 - 12h30	Panel 05 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 06 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	
12h30 - 14h00	Break		
14h00 - 15h30	Panel 07 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 08 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	
15h30 - 16h00	Coffee Break		
16h00 - 17h30	Panel 09 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 10 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	

Day 3 - Thursday, 9 July 2026

09h30 - 10h30	Book Discussion Panel Book Title: Synthetic Reality: AI, the Metaverse, and the Ethics of a New Digital Humanism Author: Dr. Marco Marsili (CEI-Iscte, Portugal) Moderator: Assoc. Professor Ferenc Petruska (Eötvös Loránd University)	Venue:	Faculty Meeting Hall—Kari Tanacsterem
10h30 - 11h00	Coffee Break		
11h00 - 12h30	Panel 11 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 12 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	
12h30 - 14h00	Break		
14h00 - 15h30	Panel 13 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 14 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	
15h30 - 16h00	Coffee Break		
16h00 - 17h30	Panel 15 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 16 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	

Day 4 - Friday, 10 July 2026

09h30 - 10h30	Keynote Speech: Professor Istvan Tarrosy (University of Pécs) Title: The Evolving International Order from a Global South Perspective Moderation: Dr. Tamas Dudlak (Eötvös Loránd University)	Venue:	Faculty Meeting Hall -Kari Tanacsterem
10h30 - 11h00	Coffee Break		
11h00 - 12h30	Panel 17 Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall	Panel 18 Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem	
12h30 - 14h00	Break		
14h00 - 15h30	Panel 19 Venue: Online		
16h00 - 17h30	Panel 20 Venue: Online		

* A complimentary sandwich lunch will be provided for all participants only on 7 July 2026.

13th Annual Conference on International Studies

CESRAN2026

Participant Information Pack

A. Session times are in **GMT+2 (Budapest)** time zone.

B. Sessions will be hybrid from the first day (July 7, 2026) to the fourth day afternoon (July 10, 2026), via the provided links.

C. Links for Sessions will be sent to the participants before the conference.

D. Session Guidelines:

- Each presenter will be given 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the number of presenters on a panel.
- Session chairs will strictly limit presentations to the maximum allotted speaking time.
- After the presentations are completed within an hour, the remaining 30 minutes will be dedicated to a group Q&A discussion.
- To ask a question to the presenters during the Q&A, please use the "Raise Hand" button for online attendance, and the chair will call on you to speak.
- Presenters can screen share their PowerPoint presentation in meetings
- Please do not forget to MUTE your microphone when not speaking.
- Presenters should join the Meeting Room 5 minutes before the session time, and Chairs should join the Meeting Room 10 minutes before the Session time for the necessary technical arrangements.
- When you need assistance, contact us through the conference email

E. Social Media Tags:

Please use the hashtag #cesran2026 for all social media platforms.

F. Certificate of Paper Presentations:

The certificates will be sent to online participants via email after the conference and will be handed to physical attendees by the moderators right after the panel completes.



SOCIAL MEDIA

www.cesranconference.org

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X / Twitter: @CESRANevent

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Youtube: CESRAN International

Opened in 1849, the Széchenyi Chain Bridge was the first permanent bridge connecting Buda and Pest. It symbolizes Hungary's modernization process and remains one of the city's most photographed sites.

Keynote Speech

Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacssterem

TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 11:00–12:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

Keynote Speech

Professor Michael Cox*

London School of Economics (LSE)

Title:

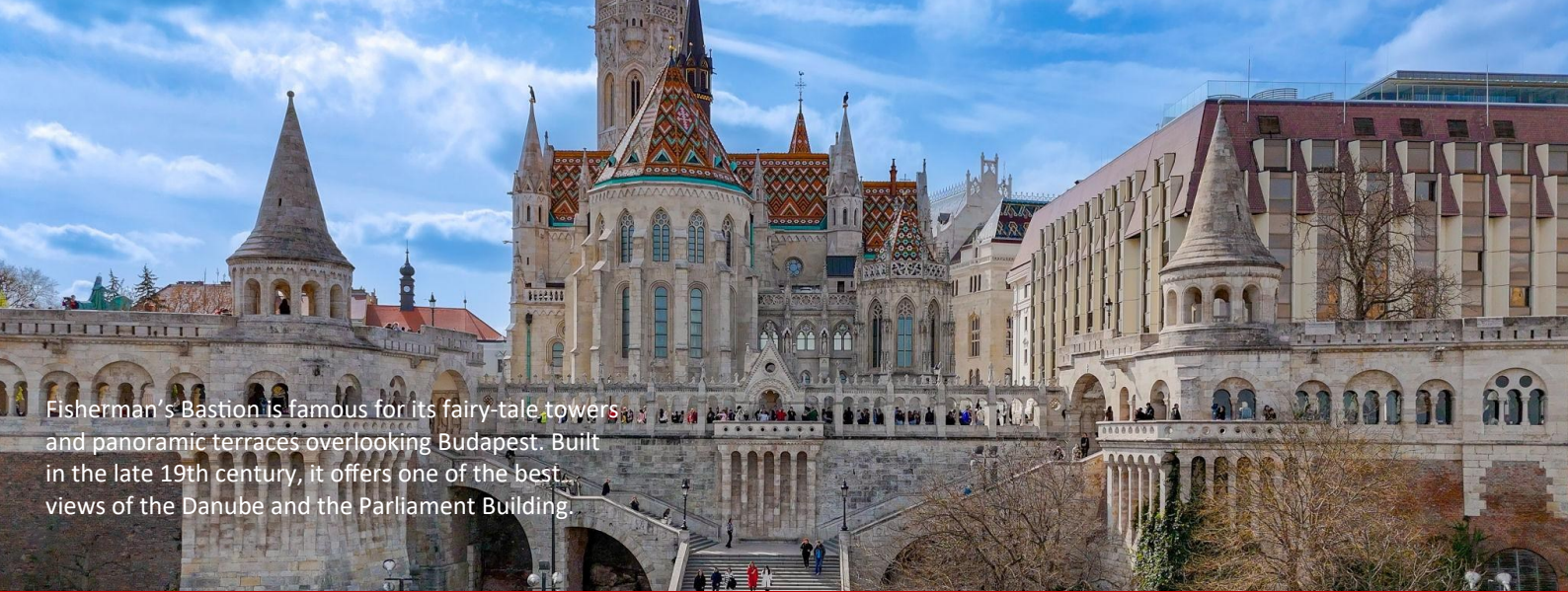
Whatever happened to the Liberal World Order

Moderation:

Professor Özgür Tüfekçi

CESRAN International & Karadeniz Technical University **(In Person)**

** His speech will be online*



Fisherman's Bastion is famous for its fairy-tale towers and panoramic terraces overlooking Budapest. Built in the late 19th century, it offers one of the best views of the Danube and the Parliament Building.

Panel 01 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Geopolitical History, Imperial Practice and Regional Orders

TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 13:30–15:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Rahman Dag, *CESRAN International & Marmara University, Türkiye (In Person)*

- **The CMEA and Iraq in the 1970s and 1980s**
Attila Joos
Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)
- **British Geopolitical Schools and the 'Persian Question' (1872–1922):
Cosmologies, Strategic Logics, and Imperial Practice**
István Dávid Váczi
Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)
- **Key Concepts of Discourse on "Nation" in Georgia in the 19th and the Beginning of the
20th Century**
Zviad Abashidze
Ivane Javakhihshvili Tbilisi State University (In Person)
- **Towards a New Yalta?
Prospects for Russian Cooperation with Trump's United States in Creating a New
Security Architecture in Europe: An Analysis of Russian Political and Media Discourse**
Marcin Składanowski
The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (In Person)
- **Status Partners:
Reimagining Indian-Russian Relations in terms of Status Attribution and Recognition**
Aaryaman Nijhawan
Shiv Nadar University (Online)
- **The Geopolitics of IMEC:
U.S.-Led Efforts to Reshape the Middle Eastern Order**
Yeghia Tashjian
American University of Beirut (In Person)

Discussant: Erzsébet N. Rózsa, *University of Public Service (In Person)*

Founded in 1837, the Hungarian National Museum is one of the country's most important institutions preserving national history and identity. Its neoclassical architecture and historical collections played a symbolic role in Hungary's revolutionary movements.

Panel 02 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Indo-Pacific and Asian Strategic Orders

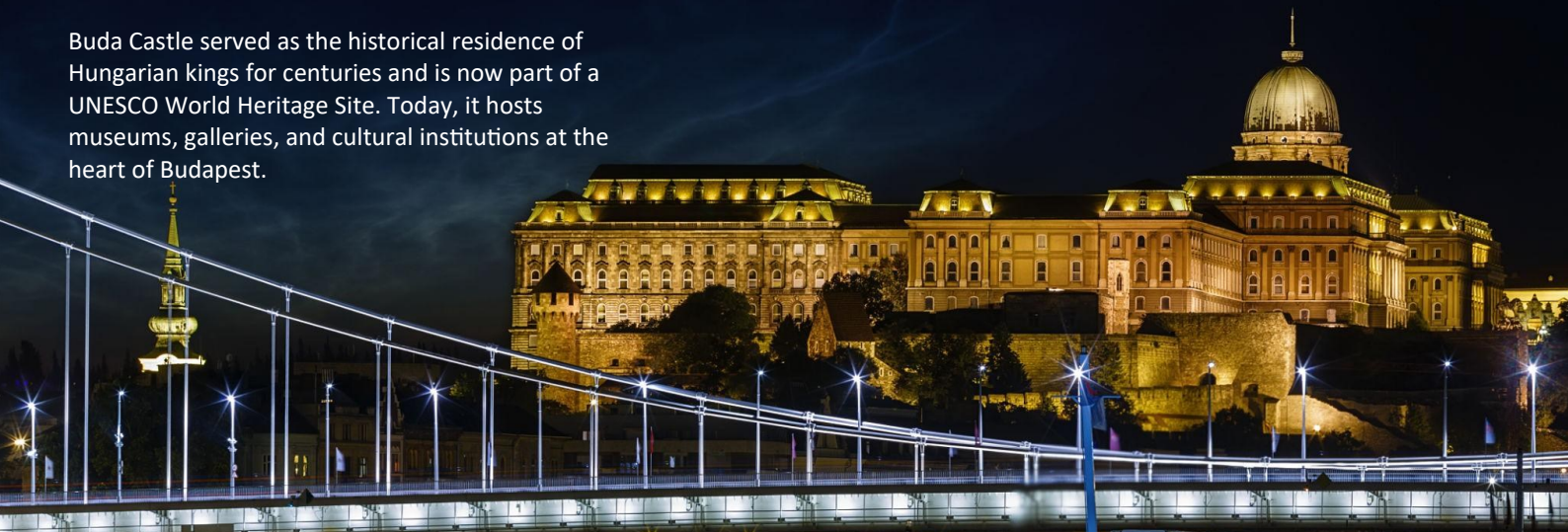
TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 13:30–15:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Salome Dundua, *Tbilisi State University (In Person)*

- **Space in International Relations, generating geopolitical narratives versus regional space: Indo-Pacific concept compared to BIMSTEC and ASEAN**
Christian Ploberger
Rajamangala University of Technology, Tawan OK, Bangkok (Online)
- **Security Realignment in the Indo-Pacific: Middle-Power Choices Between Trump's America First and China's Neo-Tributary Vision**
Dean Karalekas
University of Lancashire (In Person)
- **Wind in China's Sails? Assessing Beijing's Expanding Strategic Presence in the Indian Ocean Region**
Amrita Jash
Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India (In Person)
- **A Three-Level Game: Regional Leaders and Middle Power Strategy in the US-China Competition**
Xiaowen Zhang
National University of Singapore (Online)
- **Trump's Tariffs and Their Geopolitical and Economic Repercussions: A Study of China's Counter-Strategy**
Amr Mansour
Zhengzhou University (Online)

Discussant: Pelin Sönmez, *Kocaeli University (In Person)*

Buda Castle served as the historical residence of Hungarian kings for centuries and is now part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Today, it hosts museums, galleries, and cultural institutions at the heart of Budapest.



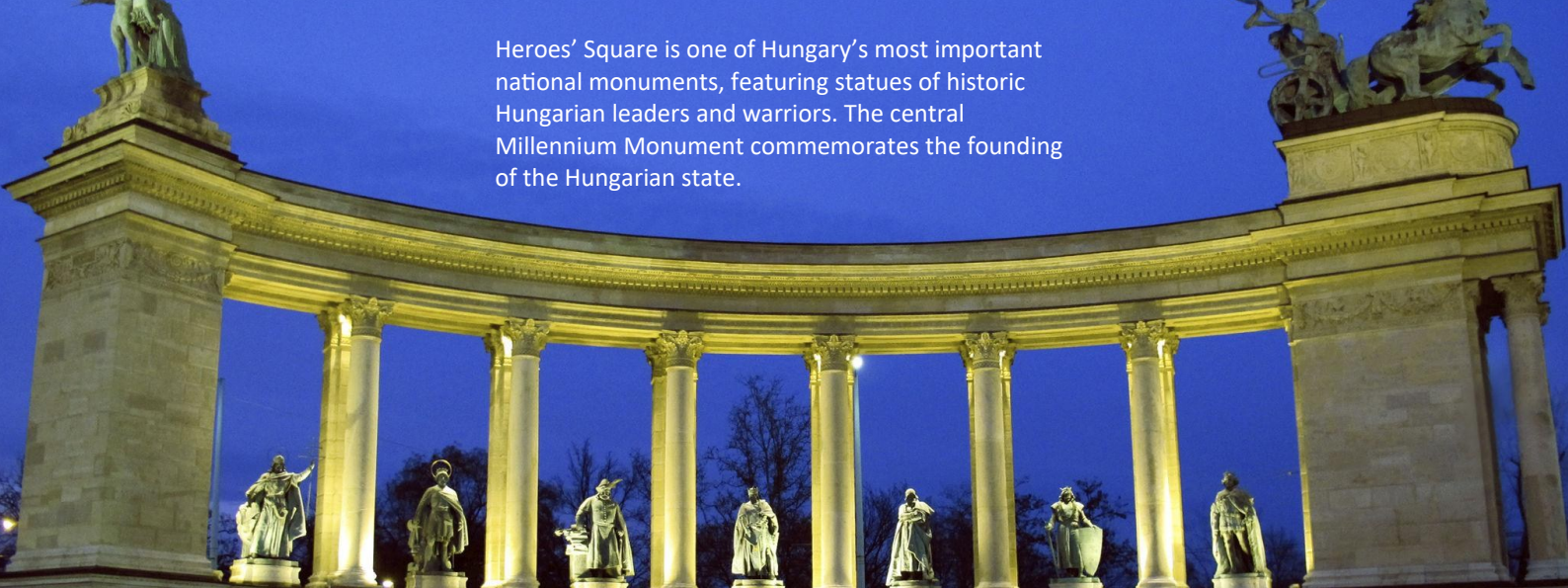
Panel 03 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Postcolonial Critique, Knowledge Production and Identity

TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 15:30–17:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Dean Karalekas, *University of Lancashire (In Person)*

- **Same Brand, Different Standard:
A Cross-National Analysis of Multinational Food Product Quality Through a Postcolonial Lens**
Alperen Türkmen and Sude Bayram
Karadeniz Technical University (In Person)
- **Decentering Knowledge or Reproducing Hierarchy?
Questioning Epistemic Hierarchies in the Turkish International Relations Discipline**
Pelin Sönmez and Zehra Yılmaz
Kocaeli University and Van Yüzüncü Yıl University (In Person)
- **The Social Function of Indigenous Surveillance:
Security, Territory, and Collective Life in the Javari Valley**
Nicole Grell Macias Dalmiglio
São Paulo State University (UNESP) (In Person)
- **Reawakening Silenced Trauma:
Comparative Mnemonic Framing of War Crimes Memories among Abkhazian IDPs in the Context of the War in Ukraine**
Tamar Karaia
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (In Person)
- **The Angry Modern: The Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India**
Anwar Alam
Alatoo International University (In Person)

Discussant: Yeghia Tashjian, *American University of Beirut (In Person)*



Heroes' Square is one of Hungary's most important national monuments, featuring statues of historic Hungarian leaders and warriors. The central Millennium Monument commemorates the founding of the Hungarian state.

Panel 04 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Small States, Foreign Policy and Strategic Adaptation

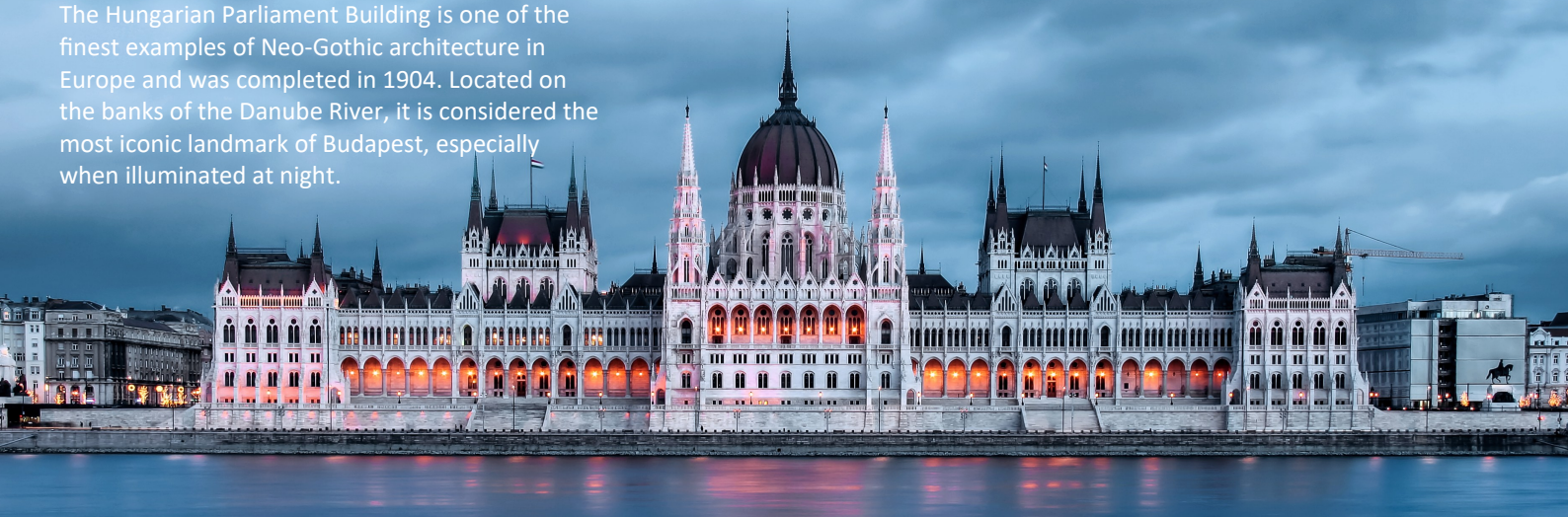
TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 15:30–17:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: **András Varga**, *University of Public Service (In Person)*

- **Small State Foreign Policy Strategy in a Fragmenting World Order
The Case of Hungary-US Conservative Relations**
Bálint Timár
University of Public Service (In Person)
- **The Examination of 'Keystone State' and 'Economic Connector' Concepts
in the Case of Italy**
Adam Sashalmi
University of Pécs (In Person)
- **Diplomatic Relations Between Brazil and the United States in the Context of Lula 3 and
Trump 2 – An Analysis Based on Peter Burke's Book Ignorance**
Carlos Augusto Martins
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (In Person)
- **European Integration Process in the Western Balkans and the Dynamics of
Europeanization**
Müge Palancı Keskin
İstanbul University (In Person)
- **Centralised and Still Autonomous?
City Diplomacy Beyond Western-centric Approach**
Fedor Zolotarev
University of Pécs (In Person)
- **Observer Status as an Institutional Visibility Strategy for Small States: Hungary's
Experience with the Organization of Turkic States**
Ali Kılıçarslan Topuz
University of Public Service (Online)

Discussant: **Ekrem Ok**, *Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University & Cesran International (In Person)*

The Hungarian Parliament Building is one of the finest examples of Neo-Gothic architecture in Europe and was completed in 1904. Located on the banks of the Danube River, it is considered the most iconic landmark of Budapest, especially when illuminated at night.



Keynote Speech
Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacssterem

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 09:30–10:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

Keynote Speech

Professor Nicholas J. Wheeler
University of Birmingham (In Person)

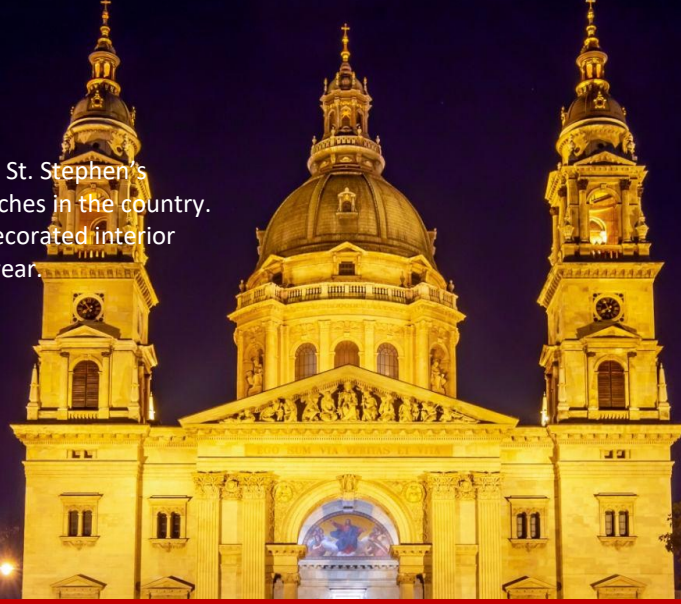
Title:

**On the Brink:
Communication and Dynamics of Nuclear Crisis Escalation and How It Can Be Stopped**

Moderation:

Professor Rashed Daher
Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)

Named after Hungary's first king, St. Stephen's Basilica is one of the largest churches in the country. Its impressive dome and richly decorated interior attract millions of visitors every year.



Panel 05 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Populism, Identity and Belonging in Comparative Perspective

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Tamar Karaia, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University *(In Person)*

- **Populist Expression in Sub-Saharan Africa:
An Archetype Analysis of New Generation Populists
Neo Sithole**
University of Szeged (In Person)
- **Reimagining Belonging:
Hungary, Populism, and the Turkic World
Mustafa Burak Şener and Büşra Özyüksel**
Eötvös Loránd University and Independent Researcher (In Person)
- **Right Populism from A Bibliometric Perspective: 1994-2025
Meltem Hasançebi and Tuncay Odabaş**
Haliç University and Giresun University (In Person)
- **Patriots for Europe:
Rebranding the Far-Right and Reshaping Power in the European Parliament after the
2024 Elections
Vladimer Grdzlishvili**
*Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Institute of Political Sciences of Ilia State
University (Online)*
- **Common Goods and the Global Governance of Essential Resources:
A Goods Legal Theory Perspective on Fundamental Rights
Alessandra Camaiani**
Università della Campania (In Person)

Discussant: Tamás Dudlák, Eötvös Loránd University *(In Person)*

Matthias Church is renowned for its colorful tiled roof and Gothic architectural style. It played a major role in Hungarian royal coronation ceremonies throughout history.



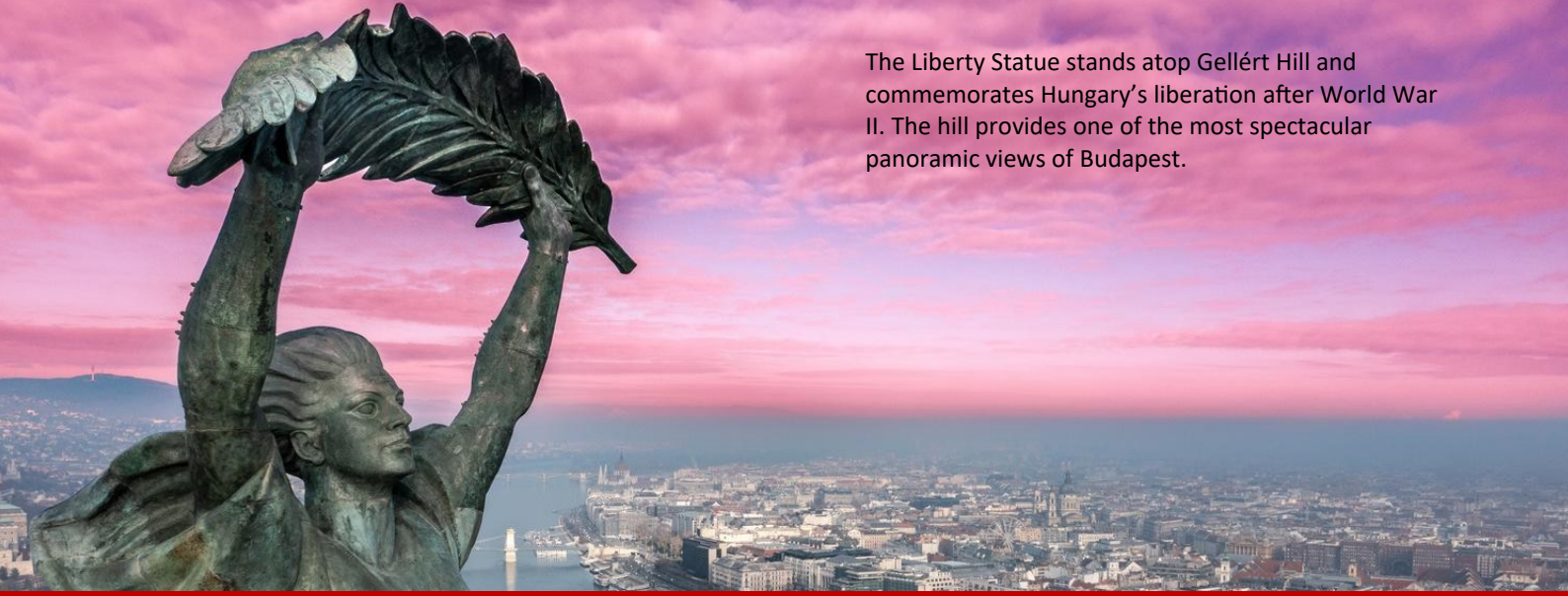
Panel 06 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Global Governance, International Law and Environmental Security

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: *Ágnes Ijjas, Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)*

- **The Cascading Collapse of International Law, Economy and the Environment**
Ivan Kanchev
Independent Researcher (In Person)
- **"No Fund, No Agreement":
Why States Accepted the Loss and Damage Fund at COP27**
Sri Milawati Asshagab
Corvinus University of Budapest (Online)
- **The Complex Interplay between Food Security and Climate Change in the Arab
Region: A Non-Traditional Security Approach**
Navodita-Kumari
University of Allahabad (Online)
- **Between Security and Sovereignty:
The Legal Architecture of SAFE and Its Democratic Implications**
Aleksandra Domalewska
Warsaw School of Economics (In Person)
- **Regional Cooperation and the Challenges of the 21st Century:
A Comparative Analysis of the African Union and ASEAN**
Ramzi Bendebka and Lee Pei May
International Islamic University Malaysia (Online)
- **From Controversy to Regulation: The Dissostichus Case and the Transformation of
Environmental Governance in Antarctica**
Miguel A. Salazar Urrutia
University of Rennes (Online)

Discussant: *Rashed Daher, Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)*



The Liberty Statue stands atop Gellért Hill and commemorates Hungary's liberation after World War II. The hill provides one of the most spectacular panoramic views of Budapest.


Panel 07 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Migration, Asylum and Governance

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Rashed Daher, Eötvös Loránd University *(In Person)*

- **Continuity or Transformation?
The Evolution of Italian Migration Governance**
Mariann Dömös
University of Pécs *(In Person)*
- **Experiencing Prolonged Asylum Procedures:
Syrian Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands**
Ibrahim Akkan
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University *(In Person)*
- **Risk or Resource?
Family Migration as a Policy Dilemma in Contemporary Russia**
Vera Peshkova
Institute of Sociology of the FCTAS of the Russian Academy of Sciences *(In Person)*
- **The Role of Financial Institutions in Driving Global Economic Growth and Stability**
Sheila Osei Owusu
ABSA Bank, Ghana *(Online)*
- **Teacher Burnout and the Challenges of Inclusive Education: A Socio-Economic
Analysis of Educational Sustainability within the European Union**
Emina Kovačić Ahmetović
University of Zagreb *(Online)*

Discussant: András Varga, National University of Public Service *(In Person)*

A photograph of Vajdahunyad Castle in Budapest, Hungary. The castle is a large, ornate building with multiple towers, spires, and a mix of architectural styles, including Gothic and Renaissance. It is surrounded by lush green trees and a clear blue sky. The castle is situated on a hillside, and its reflection is visible in the water of the lake in the foreground.

Vajdahunyad Castle was designed to showcase different architectural styles found throughout Hungarian history. Surrounded by a lake and parkland, it is among Budapest's most picturesque attractions.

Panel 08 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacssterem Security, Conflict and Environmental Harm

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Emre Demir, *TED University (In Person)*

- **When Geography Stops Being Static:
A Theory of Infrastructure Dependence and Disaster Vulnerability in Armed Conflict**
Vlad Surdea-Hernea and Letitia Roman
The University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna and Central European University (Online)
- **Silent Scars of War:
Reconceptualising Environmental Harm in the Discipline of International Relations**
Anchita Borthakur and Angana Kotokey
Chintan Research Foundation, New Delhi (In Person)
- **Playing God in the Gulf:
U.S. Hubris and Iran's Asymmetric Resistance**
Belay Asmare Aragaw
University of Pécs, Hungary (In Person)
- **Strategic Resilience and Information Warfare:
Hezbollah's Adaptation to Kinetic and Structural Shocks (2023–2026)**
Ágnes Ijjas
Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)
- **Network Competition and Regional Proxy Dynamics:
How External Actors Shape Security Governance Through Afghan Political Networks**
Aftab Hussain
Deakin University (In Person)

Discussant: István Dávid Váczy, *Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)*



Opened in 1897, the Great Market Hall is Budapest's largest and most famous indoor market. It is an ideal place to experience traditional Hungarian cuisine and local products.

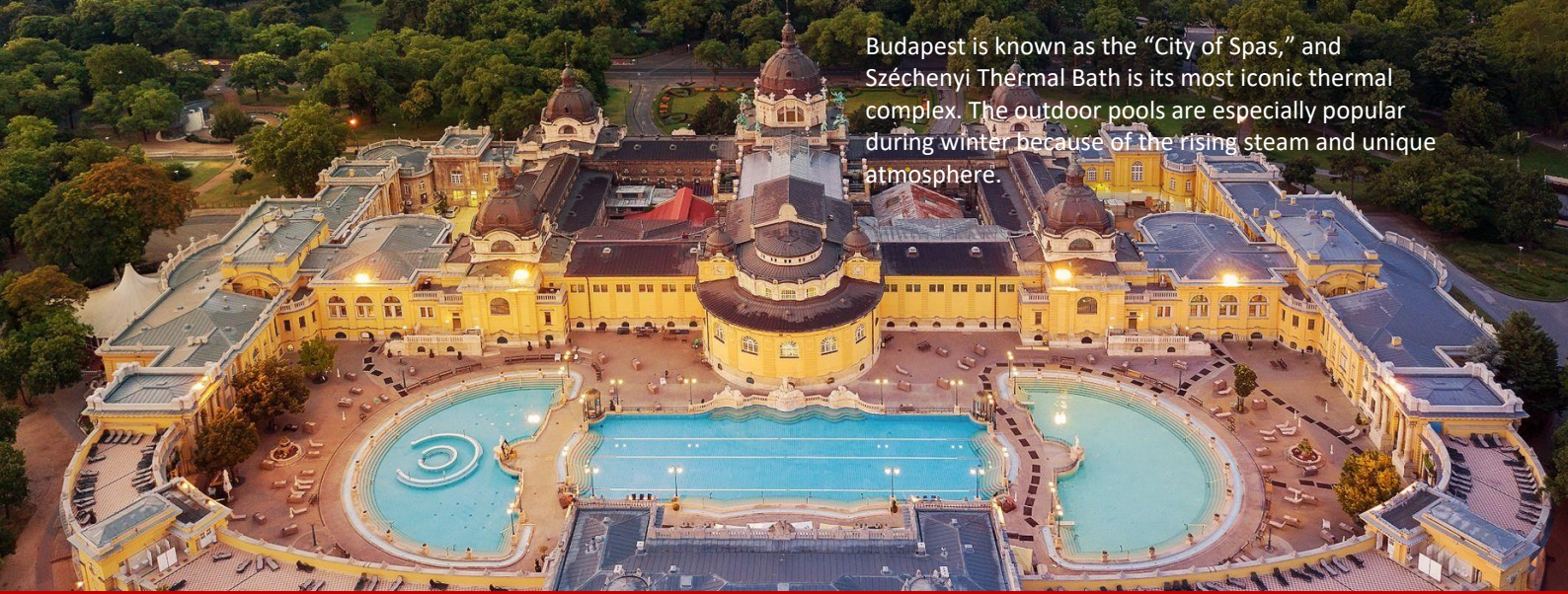
Panel 09 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Geopolitics of Energy and Critical Minerals

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Zoltán Egeresi, *University of Public Service (In Person)*

- **Corridor Geopolitics of Critical Minerals:
India and Türkiye in the Emerging Asian Energy Order**
Kerim Sert
Middle East Technical University (In Person)
- **Energy Security and Transit Dependency:
A Comparative Analysis of China and the European Union**
Ferdi Güçyetmez and Sina Kısacık
University of Bern and Cyprus Aydın University (Online)
- **Moving Beyond Territorial Defence:
Reconceptualising Security Through Energy in Contemporary Conflicts**
Pelin Nur Çağlayan Sert
Middle East Technical University (In Person)
- **Discursive Construction of the Canal Istanbul Projects**
Rabia Büyükpınar
Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University (In Person)
- **Saudi Arabia's Multi-Alignment Strategy in the New Cold War:
Strategic Autonomy across Green Energy and Digital Infrastructure**
Emre Demir
TED University (In Person)

Discussant: László Csicsmann, *Corvinus University of Budapest (In Person)*



Budapest is known as the “City of Spas,” and Széchenyi Thermal Bath is its most iconic thermal complex. The outdoor pools are especially popular during winter because of the rising steam and unique atmosphere.

Panel 10 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacssterem Political Theory, Biopolitics and Digital Age Challenges

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Rashed Daher, Eötvös Loránd University (*In Person*)

- **Governing Reproduction in the Stagnant Era:
Biopolitics and Governmentality in China's Three-Child Policy**
Pengfei Xu
University of Manchester (*Online*)
- **Artificial Intelligence in Care Work**
Anna Ujlaki
Eötvös Loránd University (*In Person*)
- **Faith as Data?
The Ontology of Religious Data and Its Implications for (In)Equality in the Digital Age**
Judit Lenke Tóth
University of Pécs (*In Person*)
- **When Origins Eclipse Ideals:
Rethinking Equality in the Context of Universal Values**
Saliha Mazlum
Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University (*In person*)
- **Suspended Legal Subjects:
Structural Liminality of Migrant Workers and the Normative Response of Common Good
Constitutionalism**
Tzu-Yu Chiou
Hsuan Chuang University (*Online*)

Discussant: István Dávid Váczy, Eötvös Loránd University (*In Person*)

Opened in 1849, the Széchenyi Chain Bridge was the first permanent bridge connecting Buda and Pest. It symbolizes Hungary's modernization process and remains one of the city's most photographed sites.



Book Discussion Panel
Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacssterem

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 09:30–10:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

Book Discussion

Book Title:

**Synthetic Reality:
AI, the Metaverse, and the Ethics of a New Digital Humanism**

Author:

Marco Marsili
CEI-Iscte, Portugal (In Person)

Moderation:

Ferenc Petruska
Ludovika University of Public Service (In Person)

Eger Castle is historically significant for resisting the Ottoman siege of 1552. Today, it serves as a museum complex and one of Hungary's most important historical attractions.



Panel 11 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Middle East Conflicts and Regional Hegemony

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: László Csicsmann, Corvinus University of Budapest *(In Person)*

- **Religion or Ethnicity, Which Comes First:
The Case of Iran Since 1979**
Taner Zorbay
Middle East Technical University *(In Person)*
- **Why States React:
Motivational Patterns in the Gaza Conflict**
Ajtay Gabriella Janka
Ludovika University of Public Administration *(Online)*
- **Regional Hegemony in the Middle East and the Yemen Conflict:
Strategic Competitions of Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates**
Ibrahim Akkan
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University *(In Person)*
- **The US-Israel Wars on Iran:
Causes, War Strategies and Implications**
Syed Adnan Athar Bukhari
Quaid-i-Azam University *(In Person)*
- **Deterrence Failure in the Gray Zone:
A Neoclassical Realist Account of the 2025-2026 Iran Escalation**
Adrián López Fleming and Hani Anouti
University of Barcelona / Geneva Business School and Pompeu Fabra University *(In Person)*

Discussant: Attila Joós, Eötvös Loránd University *(In Person)*



Esztergom Basilica is the largest church in Hungary and a major center of the Hungarian Catholic Church. Its monumental dome dominates the skyline along the Danube River.

Panel 12 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Education, Labour and Political Economy

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Tamas Dudlak, *Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)*

- **Reimagining Political Science Education:
A Proposal for a Student-Centred Simulation Model**
Ekrem Ok
Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University & Cesran International (In Person)
- **Globalisation and Higher Education Policy: Convergence, Diversity, and Strategic
Management Challenges in the Cases of Germany, France, and Georgia**
Maka Benashvili and Tamar Tsertsvadze
Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University and Caucasus University (In Person)
- **Graduate Unemployment in the Modern Labour Market:
Causes, Challenges, and Possible Solutions**
Susan Aslanova
Baku State University (In Person)
- **Rural Tourism in Uttar Pradesh:
Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy Framework**
Shweta-Mishra and Aradhana Misra
Ambalika Institute of Management and Technology (In Person)
- **Criminal State Capture in Transitional Russia:
A Subnational Analysis of State-Gang Integration (1990–2010)**
Anna Kirsanova
Pioneer Academics (Online)

Discussant: Stephen Roddy, *University of San Francisco (In Person)*



Pécs Cathedral reflects the city's long history dating back to Roman times. The cathedral's four distinctive towers make it one of Hungary's most recognizable religious landmarks.

Panel 13 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Regional Leadership, Hegemony and Non-Western Agency

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: **Taner Zorbay**, *Middle East Technical University (In Person)*

- **Rising Titans?
The Dawn of the Non-Western Agency and the Unfinished Project of a World Order**
Emel Akcali
King's College London (In person)
- **From Demographic Surge to Geopolitical Agency:
Human Capital as the Foundation of Epistemic Sovereignty and Economic Statecraft in Africa**
Pedro Baptista
Minho University (In Person)
- **Trump and Milei and the Theory of Peripheral Realism:
The Politics of Carnal Relations and the Search for Equality Among the Unequal**
Carlos Augusto Martins
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (In Person)
- **Secessionism in Balochistan: Impacts on Neighbouring Countries**
Akanksha Roy and Anwar Shahab
Karim City College (Online)
- **Navigating US-China Technology Competition among Middle Powers:
A Study of Chilean Response**
Andres Bórquez and Dorotea López
University of Chile (In Person)

Discussant: **Adrián López Fleming**, *University of Barcelona / Geneva Business School (In Person)*



Hollókő is a preserved traditional Hungarian village listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its wooden houses and folk traditions offer visitors a glimpse into rural Hungarian life.

Panel 14 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanácssterem Democracy, Emergency Powers and Civil Society

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Marco Marsili, CEI-Iscte, Portugal *(In Person)*

- **Between Conventional Emergency Management and Exceptionalism:
The European Union's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic**
Yulieth Martinez Villalba
Foreign Policy Observatory - Ministry of Foreign Policy of Colombia (In Person)
- **Democracy under a State of Emergency:
A Comparative Analysis of Symbolic and Discursive Legitimation by Heads of State in
Italy and Germany during Covid-19**
Valeria Carmen Caputo
University of Trieste / University of Udine (Online)
- **Perceptions of Civil Society Activists in Kosovo on the Role of International Military
Presence in Security Governance**
Burim Ramadani
South East European University (Online)
- **The Security Implications of Ideological Stigmatization:
Political Opposition and Asymmetrical Vulnerabilities in Romania**
George-Daniel Nistor
University of Bucharest (In Person)
- **Religious Challenges in the Georgian Socio-Political Environment**
Salome Dundua
Tbilisi State University (In Person)

Discussant: Syed Adnan Athar Bukhari, Quaid-i-Azam University *(In Person)*



The Tihany Peninsula is famous for its lavender fields, historic abbey, and scenic views over Lake Balaton. It is one of Hungary's most popular summer tourism destinations.

Panel 15 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Maritime Security, Geopolitics and Strategic Projection

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Emel Akcali, *King's College London* **(In person)**

- **Hormuz and the Illusion of Control:
From the Portuguese Occupation to the Risks of Contemporary U.S. Escalation**
Laércio Eduardo de Araújo
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa **(In Person)**
- **Brazil: Contributions to Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea**
Paula Luz
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa **(In Person)**
- **Projecting Power from the Littorals:
A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Asymmetric Maritime Strategies**
Adrián López Fleming and Jovan Iljev Ciric
University of Barcelona / Geneva Business School and King's College London **(In Person)**
- **Waterways Security in the Security Complex: A Study of the Red Sea Crisis in Relation to the Gulf States, Egypt, and Yemen (2024-2026)**
Rasha El Baz
New Giza University **(In Person)**
- **The "New" China's Military Strategy in Africa**
Luís Bernardino
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa **(Online)**

Discussant: Yulieth Martinez Villalba, *Foreign Policy Observatory - Ministry of Foreign Policy of Colombia* **(In Person)**

The Great Reformed Church is the symbolic heart of Hungarian Protestantism. It has also hosted several important political events in Hungarian national history.



Panel 16 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Geopolitics of the Middle East and Global Order

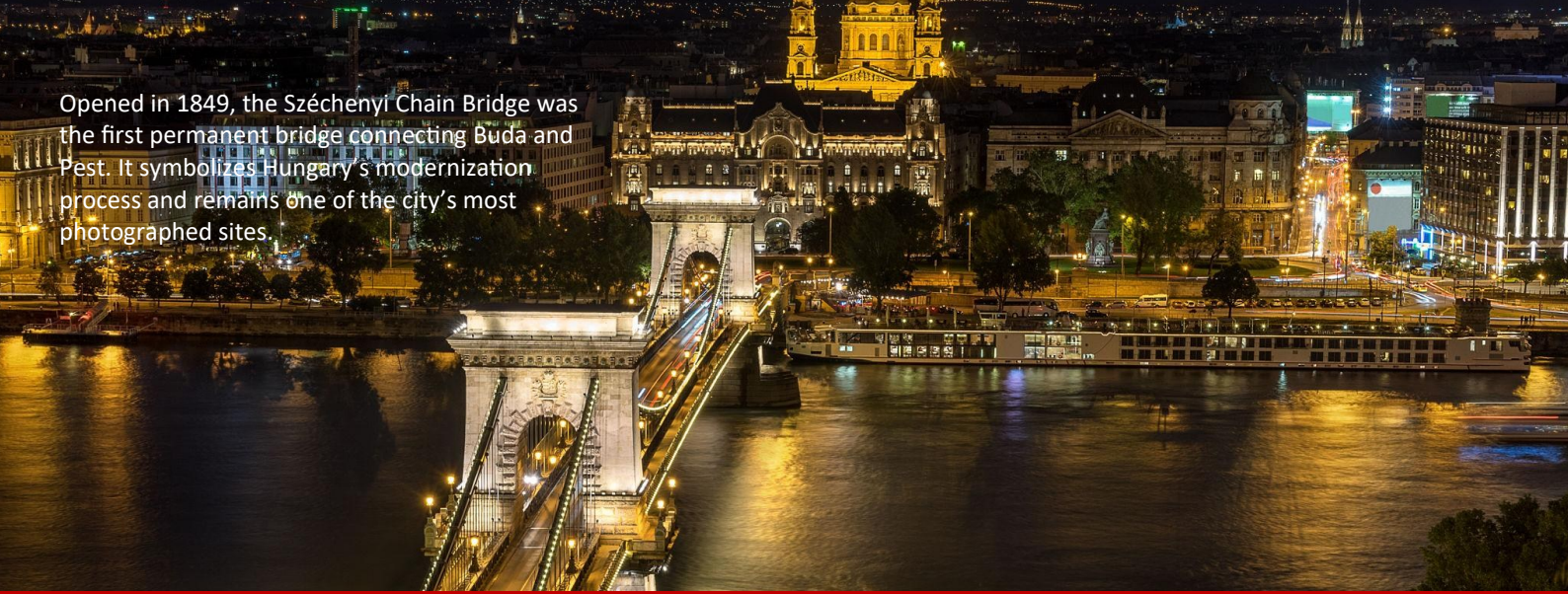
THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Stephen Roddy, *University of San Francisco (In Person)*

- **Ontological Security and Israel's Search for 'Thick' Recognition**
Karel Franco Valansi
Istanbul Kültür University (Online)
- **What does Israel's Recognition of Somaliland Mean for International System/Order?**
Mehmet Alkış
Dicle University (In Person)
- **The Relationship Between Christian Congregation Membership and the Latent Political Participation Among Overseas Working Filipinos in Doha, Qatar**
Fritz Nathan A. Diaz, Danica Jane A. Araoarao and Danilo D. Tan
University of Santo Tomas and University of Santo Tomas (Online)
- **How China Navigates the Choppy Waters of an Upended World**
Andrew K P Leung
Andrew Leung International Consultants (Online)

Discussant: Marco Marsili, *CEI-Iscte, Portugal (In Person)*

Opened in 1849, the Széchenyi Chain Bridge was the first permanent bridge connecting Buda and Pest. It symbolizes Hungary's modernization process and remains one of the city's most photographed sites.



Keynote Speech
Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacssterem

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 09:30–10:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

Keynote Speech


Professor Istvan Tarrosy
University of Pécs (In Person)

Title:

The Evolving International Order from a Global South Perspective

Moderation:

Dr. Tamas Dudlak
Eötvös Loránd University *(In Person)*



The Turul Monument represents the mythical bird of Hungarian folklore and national identity. Located near Tatabánya, it is considered one of the largest bird statues in Europe.

Panel 17 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Security Governance, Strategic Adaptation and Emerging Orders

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Péter Rada, Metropolitan University of Budapest *(In Person)*

- **Securitising the Climate:
China's Discursive Repositioning in Global Climate Governance**
Swati Kanwar
Jawaharlal Nehru University *(In Person)*
- **Emerging Security Technologies and Securitized Governance:
Social Implications for Immigrant Integration in Europe**
Sina Samiee
ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon *(In Person)*
- **The Role of India in US National Security Strategy during the Era of Trump 2.0**
Farzan Safari Sabet
University of Tehran *(In Person)*
- **The Far Eastern Paradox:
Infrastructure Projects and the Divergent Interests of Russia and China**
Olga Zaleskaia
Blagoveschensk State Pedagogical University *(Online)*
- **European Union-Uzbekistan Relations in light of the 2025 Enhanced Partnership and
Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)**
Daniel Haitas
University of Debrecen *(In Person)*
- **Global Governance According to China in the Face of Contemporary International
Security Crises**
Orazio Maria Gnerre
Institute for the History of the Italian Rirosgimento *(Online)*

Discussant: Stephen Roddy, University of San Francisco *(In Person)*

Located near Budapest, Szentendre is famous for its narrow cobblestone streets and colorful Baroque houses. The town's art galleries, museums, and Mediterranean-like atmosphere make it a major cultural tourism destination.



Panel 18 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Conflict, Security and Hybrid Warfare

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Dean Karalekas *University of Lancashire (In Person)*

- **The Gulf Dilemma:
Unintended Consequences of the US/Israel War with Iran**
Ioana Constantin-Bercean
"Ion I.C. Brătianu" Institute of Political Science and International Relations (In Person)
- **Fragile Security:
State vs. People in the Apocalyptic War on Iran**
Sima Baidya
Jawaharlal Nehru University (In Person)
- **Dominance Vacuums and Regional Instability:
Extending Power Transition Theory in the South Caucasus**
Kamala Valiyeva
Istanbul Ticaret University (Online)
- **The EU's "Global Getaway" as Geopolitical Special Purpose Vehicle:
Opportunities and Challenges in the Era of Global Uncertainty**
Andrey Kinyakin
Centro Universitário Integrado, Brazil (Online)
- **European Strategy in the Era of Hybrid Warfare:
EU and NATO Security at the Intersection of Energy, Resources and Technology**
Maurizio Geri
Ca' Foscari/GMU (Online)

Discussant: Emel Akcali, *King's College London (In person)*

Müpa Budapest is one of the city's leading contemporary cultural and performance venues located along the Danube River. Its modern architecture and international artistic events symbolize Budapest's evolving cultural identity.



Panel 19 // ONLINE Eurasian Geopolitics and International Relations

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE EURASIAN CONTINENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION, YEREVAN

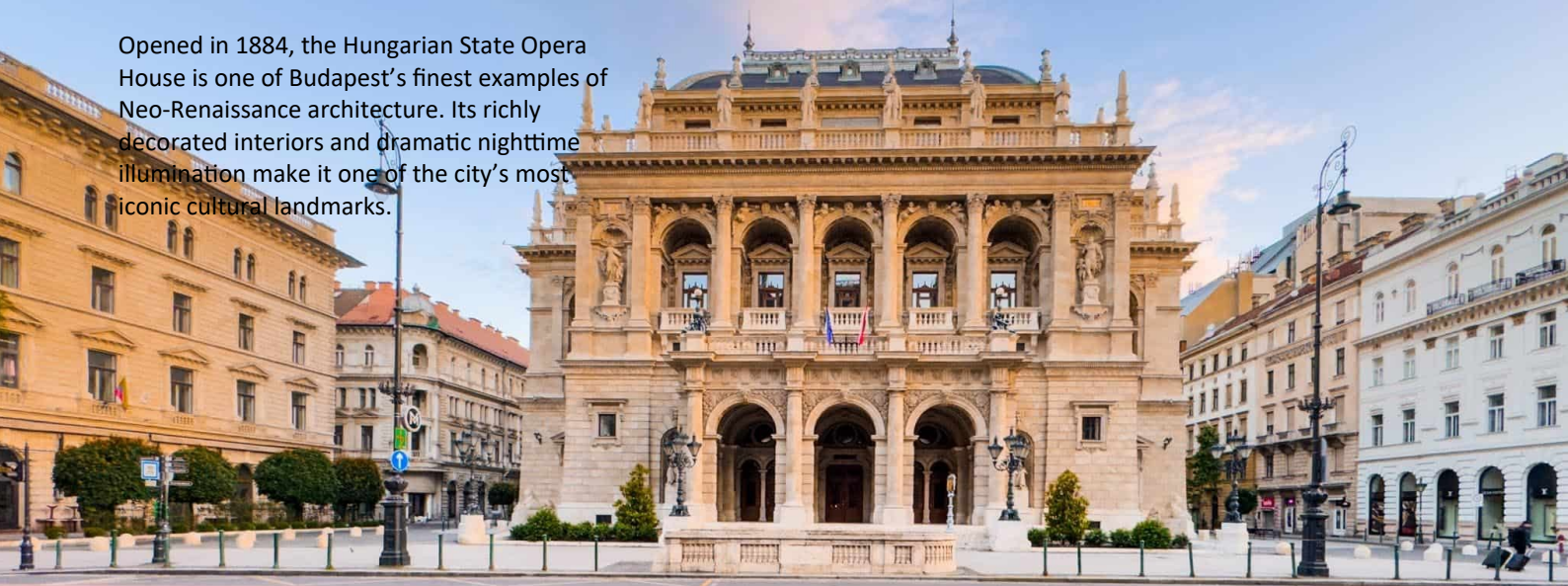
CHAIR: Tamas Dudlak, *Eötvös Loránd University (Online)*

- **Discussing IR Concepts and Thinking About the Global Order**
Süha Atatüre
Istanbul Gedik University (Online)
- **Rethinking Eurasian Stability Beyond Western Alliance Theory**
Mathieu Grandpierron
ICES, France (Online)
- **The China-Gulf Green Shift:
Fuelling the Renewable Energy Partnership**
Chuchu Zhang
Fudan University (Online)
- **Kazakhstan as a Middle Power:
Domestic Foundations of a Regional Leader**
Houman Sadri
University of Central Florida (Online)
- **The United States Geostrategy in Central Asia
in the Context of a Multipolar World Order 2.0**
Mher D. Sahakyan
Eurasian Continent Research Association (Online)

Discussant: Maximilian Ohle, *Catholic Institute of Vendee (Online)*



Opened in 1884, the Hungarian State Opera House is one of Budapest's finest examples of Neo-Renaissance architecture. Its richly decorated interiors and dramatic nighttime illumination make it one of the city's most iconic cultural landmarks.



Panel 20 // ONLINE

War in Ukraine and the Transformation of European Security and Resilience

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Aleksandra Szczerba, *Jacob of Paradies University (Online)*

- **Sexual Violence Against Women from an Anti-discriminatory Perspective**
Aleksandra Szczerba
Jacob of Paradies University (Online)
- **Mechanisms of Amplifying Anti-Ukrainian Messages Through Proxy Sources: A Cognitive War Perspective and Social Consequences**
Juliusz Sikorski
Jacob of Paradies University (Online)
- **The EU Health Security Architecture in the Context of the War in Ukraine**
Tomasz Marcinkowski
Jacob of Paradies University (Online)
- **The Environmental Footprint of Modern Warfare: An Analysis of the Conflict in Ukraine**
Oliwia Radkiewicz
Jacob of Paradies University (Online)
- **Lifelong Learning as a Functional Dimension of European Union Citizenship**
Marcin Szott
Jacob of Paradies University (Online)

Discussant: Tomasz Marcinkowski, *Jacob of Paradies University (Online)*

Participant List				
1.	Aaryaman Nijhawan	PhD Student	Shiv Nadar University	India
2.	Adam Sashalmi	PhD Student	University of Pécs	Hungary
3.	Adrián López Fleming	Lecturer	University of Barcelona / Geneva Business School	Spain
4.	Aftab Hussain	PhD Student	Deakin University	Australia
5.	Ágnes Ijjas	PhD Student	ELTE BTK	Hungary
6.	Ajtay Gabriella Janka	PhD Student	Ludovika University of Public Administration	Hungary
7.	Akanksha Roy	Assistant Professor	Karim City College	India
8.	Aleksandra Domalewska	MA Student	Warsaw School of Economics	Poland
9.	Aleksandra Szczerba	Professor	Jacob of Paradies University	Poland
10.	Alessandra Camaiani	PhD Student	Università della Campania	Italy
11.	Ali Kılıçarslan Topuz	PhD Student	University of Public Service	Hungary
12.	Alperen Türkmen	PhD Student	Karadeniz Technical University	Türkiye
13.	Amr Mansour		Zhengzhou University	China
14.	Amrita Jash	Assistant Professor	Manipal Academy of Higher Education	India
15.	Anchita Borthakur	Independent Researcher	Chintan Research Foundation	India
16.	András Varga	Professor	University of Public Service	Hungary
17.	Andres Bórquez	Assistant Professor	University of Chile	Chile
18.	Andrew K P Leung	Professor	Andrew Leung International Consultants	China
19.	Andrey Kinyakin	Professor	Centro Universitário Integrado	Brazilia
20.	Angana Kotokey		Chintan Research Foundation, New Delhi	India
21.	Anna Kirsanova	Independent Researcher	Pioneer Academics	Russia
22.	Anna Ujlaki	Assistant Professor	Eötvös Loránd University	Hungary
23.	Anwar Alam	Professor	Alatoo International University	India
24.	Anwar Shahab	Associate Professor	Karim City College	India
25.	Aradhana Misra	Professor	Ambalika Institute of Management and Technology	India
26.	Attila Joos	Assistant Professor	Eötvös Loránd University	Hungary
27.	Bálint Timár	PhD Student	University of Public Service	Hungary
28.	Belay Asmare Aragaw	PhD Student	University of Pecs	Hungary
29.	Burim Ramadani	PhD Student	South East European University	Macedonia
30.	Büşra Özyüksel		Independent Researcher	
31.	Carlos Augusto Martins	Lecturer	Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa	Portugal
32.	Christian Ploberger	Lecturer	Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan OK, Bangkok	Thailand

33.	Chuchu Zhang	Associate Professor	Fudan University	China
34.	Danica Jane A. Araoarao		University of Santo Tomas	Philippines
35.	Daniel Haitas	Lecturer	University of Debrecen	Hungary
36.	Danilo D. Tan		University of Santo Tomas	Philippines
37.	Dávid Bartus	Associate Professor	Eötvös Loránd University	Hungary
38.	Dean Karalekas	Associate Professor	University of Lancashire	United Kingdom
39.	Dorotea López	Professor	University of Chile	Chile
40.	Ekrem OK	Assistant Professor	Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University & Cesran International	Türkiye
41.	Emel Akcali	Associate Professor	King's College London	United Kingdom
42.	Emina Kovačić Ahmetović	Lecturer	University of Zagreb	Croatia
43.	Emre Demir	Associate Professor	TED University	Türkiye
44.	Erzsébet N. Rózsa	Professor	University of Public Service	Hungary
45.	Farzan Safari Sabet	PhD Student	University of Tehran	Iran
46.	Fedor Zolotarev	PhD Student	University of Pecs	Hungary
47.	Ferdi Güçyetmez	Independent Researcher	University of Bern	Switzerland
48.	Ferenc Petruska	Associate Professor	Ludovika University of Public Service	Hungary
49.	Ferudun Yılmaz	Professor	Bursa Uludağ University	Türkiye
50.	Fritz Nathan A. Diaz	Independent Researcher	University of Santo Tomas	Philippines
51.	George-Daniel Nistor	PhD Student	University of Bucharest	Romania
52.	Hani Anouti	Lecturer	Geneva Business School	Switzerland
53.	Houman Sadri	Professor	University of Central Florida	USA
54.	Ibrahim Akkan	PhD Student	Maria Curie-Skłodowska University	Poland
55.	Ioana Constantin-Bercean	Associate Professor	"Ion I.C. Brătianu" Institute of Political Science and International Relations	Romania
56.	István Dávid Vác	PhD Student	Eötvös Loránd University	Hungary
57.	Istvan Tarrosy	Professor	University of Pecs	Hungary
58.	Ivan Kanchev	Independent Researcher	University of Ljubljana	Slovenia
59.	Jovan Ilijev Ciric	MA Student	King's College London	United Kingdom
60.	Judit Lenke Tóth	PhD Student	University of Pécs	Hungary
61.	Juliusz Sikorski	Assistant Professor	Jacob of Paradies University	Poland
62.	Kamala Valiyeva	Assistant Professor	Istanbul Ticaret University	Türkiye
63.	Karel Franco Valansi	Lecturer	Istanbul Kültür University	Türkiye
64.	Ken Booth	Professor	CESRAN International	Türkiye

65.	Kerim Sert	Lecturer	Middle East Technical University	Türkiye
66.	Laercio Eduardo de Araujo	Professor	Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa	Portugal
67.	László Csicsmann	Professor	Corvinus University of Budapest	Hungary
68.	Lee Pei May		International Islamic University Malaysia	Malaysia
69.	Letitia Roman	PhD Student	Central European University	Austria
70.	Luis Bernardino	Professor	Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa	Portugal
71.	Luís Tomé	Professor	Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa	Portugal
72.	Maka Benashvili	Assistant Professor	Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University	Georgia
73.	Marcin Składanowski	Professor	The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin	Poland
74.	Marcin Szott		Jacob of Paradies University	Poland
75.	Marco Marsili	Professor	CEI-Iscte – Centre for International Studies	Portugal
76.	Mariann Dömös	Assistant Professor	University of Pécs	Hungary
77.	Matthieu Grandpierron	Associate Professor	Catholic University of Vendée (ICES)	France
78.	Maurizio Geri	Lecturer	Ca' Foscari/GMU	Italy
79.	Maximilian Ohle	Professor	Catholic Institute of Vendee	France
80.	Mehmet Alkış	Associate Professor	Dicle University	Türkiye
81.	Meltem Hasançebi	Lecturer	Haliç University	Türkiye
82.	Mher D. Sahakyan	Professor	Eurasian Continent Research Association	Armenia
83.	Michael Cox	Professor	London School of Economics (LSE)	United Kingdom
84.	Miguel A. Salazar Urrutia	Lecturer	University of Rennes	France
85.	Mustafa Burak Şener	PhD Student	Eötvös Loránd University	Hungary
86.	Müge Palancı Keskin	Assistant Professor	İstanbul University	Türkiye
87.	Navodita-Kumari	PhD Student	University of Allahabad	India
88.	Neo Sithole	PhD Student	University of Szeged	Hungary
89.	Nicole Grell Macias Dalmiglio	PhD Student	São Paulo State University (UNESP)	Brazilia
90.	Nicholas J. Wheeler	Professor	University of Birmingham	United Kingdom
91.	Olga Zalesskaia	Professor	Blagoveschensk State Pedagogical University	Russia
92.	Oliwia Radkiewicz		Jacob of Paradies University	Poland
93.	Orazio Maria Gnerre	Independent Researcher	Institute for the History of the Italian Rirsgimento	Italy
94.	Özgür Tüfekçi	Professor	CESRAN International & Karadeniz Technical University	Türkiye

95.	Paula Luz	MA Student	Autonomous University of Lisbon	Portugal
96.	Pedro Baptista	PhD Student	Minho University	Portugal
97.	Pelin Nur Çağlayan	PhD Student	Middle East Technical University	Türkiye
98.	Pelin Sönmez	Associate Professor	Kocaeli University	Türkiye
99.	Pengfei Xu	Lecturer	Univeristy of Manchester	United Kingdom
100.	Péter Rada	Professor	Metropolitan University of Budapest	Hungary
101.	Rabia Büyükpınar	Lecturer	Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University	Türkiye
102.	Rahman Dag	Professor	CESRAN International & Marmara University	Türkiye
103.	Ramzi Bendebka	Assistant Professor	International Islamic University Malaysia	Malaysia
104.	Rasha El Baz	Assistant Professor	NGU	Egypt
105.	Rashed Daher	Professor	Eötvös Loránd University	Hungary
106.	Saliha Mazlum	PhD Student	Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University	Türkiye
107.	Salome Dundua	Professor	Tbilisi State University	Georgia
108.	Sandro Dias Fernandes	Professor	University of Minho	Portugal
109.	Sheila Osei Owusu	Reader	ABSA Bank	Ghana
110.	Shweta Mishra	Professor	Ambalika Institute of Management and Technology	India
111.	Sima Baidya	Assistant Professor	Jawaharlal Nehru University	India
112.	Sina Kısacık	Assistant Professor	Cyprus Aydın University	Cyprus
113.	Sina Samiee	PhD Student	ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon	Portugal
114.	Sri Milawati Asshagab	PhD Student	Corvinus University of Budapest	Hungary
115.	Stephen Roddy	Professor	University of San Francisco	USA
116.	Sude Bayram	MA Student	Karadeniz Technical University	Türkiye
117.	Susan Aslanova	Lecturer	Baku State University	Azerbaijan
118.	Süha Atatüre	Professor	İstanbul Gedik University	Türkiye
119.	Swati Kanwar	PhD Student	Jawaharlal Nehru University	India
120.	Syed Adnan Athar Bukhari	Assistant Professor	Quaid-i-Azam University	Pakistan
121.	Tamar Karaia	Associate Professor	Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University	Georgia
122.	Tamar Tsertsvadze	Assistant Professor	Caucasus University	Georgia
123.	Tamas Dudlak	Lecturer	Eötvös Loránd University	Hungary

124.	Taner Zorbay	Lecturer	Middle East Technical University	Türkiye
125.	Tomasz Marcinkowski		Jacob of Paradies University	Poland
126.	Tuncay Odabaş	PhD Student	Giresun University	Türkiye
127.	Tzu-Yu Chiou	Assistant Professor	Hsuan Chuang University	Taiwan
128.	Xiaowen Zhang		National University of Singapore	Singapore
129.	Valeria Carmen Caputo	PhD Student	University of Trieste / University of Udine	Italy
130.	Vera Peshkova	Associate Professor	Institute of Sociology of the FCTAS of the Russian Academy of Sciences	Russia
131.	Vlad Surdea-Hernea		The University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences	Austria
132.	Vladimer Grdzlishvili	PhD Student	Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University	Georgia
133.	Yeghia Tashjian	Professor	American University of Beirut	Lebanon
134.	Yulieth Martinez Villalba	Independent Researcher	Ministry of Foreign Policy of Colombia	Colombia
135.	Zehra Yılmaz		Van Yüzüncü Yıl University	Türkiye
136.	Zoltán Egeresi	Research Fellow	University of Public Service	Hungary
137.	Zviad Abashidze	Associate Professor	Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University	Georgia

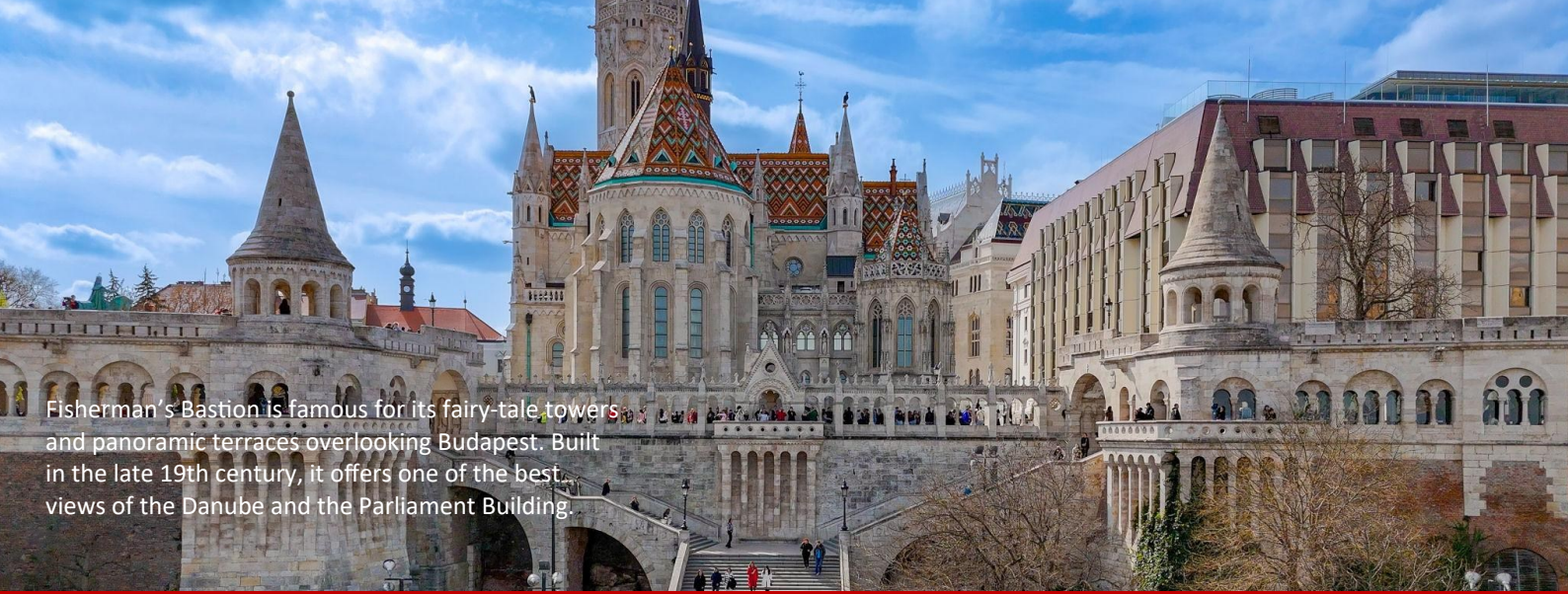
CESRAN2026

07-10 July 2026

Budapest | Hungary

13th Annual Conference on International Studies

Abstracts



Fisherman's Bastion is famous for its fairy-tale towers and panoramic terraces overlooking Budapest. Built in the late 19th century, it offers one of the best views of the Danube and the Parliament Building.

Panel 01 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Geopolitical History, Imperial Practice and Regional Orders

TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 13:30–15:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Rahman Dag, CESRAN International & Marmara University, Türkiye **(In Person)**

- **The CMEA and Iraq in the 1970s and 1980s**
Attila Joos
Eötvös Loránd University **(In Person)**
- **British Geopolitical Schools and the 'Persian Question' (1872–1922):
Cosmologies, Strategic Logics, and Imperial Practice**
István Dávid Váczi
Eötvös Loránd University **(In Person)**
- **Key Concepts of Discourse on "Nation" in Georgia in the 19th and the Beginning of the
20th Century**
Zviad Abashidze
Ivane Javakhiashvili Tbilisi State University **(In Person)**
- **Towards a New Yalta?
Prospects for Russian Cooperation with Trump's United States in Creating a New
Security Architecture in Europe: An Analysis of Russian Political and Media Discourse**
Marcin Składanowski
The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin **(In Person)**
- **Status Partners:
Reimagining Indian-Russian Relations in terms of Status Attribution and Recognition**
Aaryaman Nijhawan
Shiv Nadar University **(Online)**
- **The Geopolitics of IMEC:
U.S.-Led Efforts to Reshape the Middle Eastern Order**
Yeghia Tashjian
American University of Beirut **(In Person)**

Discussant: Erzsébet N. Rózsa, University of Public Service **(In Person)**

The CMEA and Iraq in the 1970s and 1980s

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Abstract

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) was established as a framework for economic cooperation among socialist countries, aiming to promote coordinated development based on socialist principles. During the 1970s, efforts within the CMEA intensified not only to deepen integration but also to expand its influence, particularly in countries of the Global South. In this context, the CMEA functioned both as an economic instrument and as a channel for the Eastern Bloc's geopolitical outreach. Iraq became a key partner in this strategy, ultimately leading to its admission as an observer member of the CMEA in 1975. Drawing on archival materials and diplomatic records, this paper examines the background of that decision, analysing the political, economic, and strategic factors that motivated CMEA member states to bring Iraq into their orbit. The relationship between the Eastern Bloc and the Global South remains a relatively underexplored area of Cold War historiography. While recent scholarship has begun to shed light on certain aspects of these interactions, much of the existing literature tends to focus on bilateral relations, typically examining the ties between a single socialist state and a Global South country.

What is largely missing is a multilateral perspective that analyses the collective strategies and objectives pursued by the Eastern Bloc through institutions such as the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. This paper seeks to address that gap by examining how the CMEA functioned as a platform for engaging with the Global South, using Iraq's observer status as a key example of broader socialist internationalist ambitions during the 1970s. As mentioned earlier, this paper is based primarily on archival research. The main sources are the National Archives of Hungary, which hold a substantial collection of official CMEA reports and documents. As a founding member of the CMEA, Hungary preserved detailed records of the organisation's activities, including internal communications, meeting

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protocols, and strategic plans. Although the archival material is Hungarian in origin, this paper does not focus on Hungary itself but rather uses these sources to shed light on the broader institutional dynamics and multilateral strategies of the CMEA as a whole.

Keywords: CMEA, Global South, Iraq, Cold War, Hungary

British Geopolitical Schools and the 'Persian Question' (1872–1922): Cosmologies, Strategic Logics, and Imperial Practice

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Abstract

This article develops a new typology of British geopolitical thought through an analysis of competing geopolitical schools — the 'Curzonian', the 'Eurocentric', and the 'Liberal', alongside the 'traditional British foreign policy' approach — engaged with the 'Persian Question' between 1872 and 1922. Moving beyond the traditional bureaucratic approach, this paper conceptualises these schools as distinct cosmologies that shaped how British decision-makers interpreted global transformations, defined imperial priorities, and selected policy instruments. Drawing on structuralist and constructivist geopolitics combined with Historical Foreign Policy Analysis, the study categorises these schools along seven interrelated dimensions: cosmology and grand strategic vision; the conceptualisation of Iran's role on the geopolitical 'chessboard'; British priorities in Iran; attitudes towards Iranian modernisation and nationalism; preferred instruments of power and influence; key characters; and institutional bases and bureaucratic affiliations.

The 'Curzonian School', shaped by classical geopoliticians such as Lord Curzon and Sir Henry Rawlinson, regarded Iran as one of the most crucial 'squares' on the geopolitical 'chessboard', conceptualised Russia as the primary adversary, and sought to modernise Iran under a British umbrella. The 'Eurocentric School', dominant within the Foreign Office under Edward Grey, subordinated Iran to its overriding preoccupation with the European balance of power and the perceived German threat, treating Russia — in contrast to the other schools — as a necessary partner. The 'Liberal School', which held a value-driven cosmology in which Britain should behave as a 'liberal' hegemon, emerged as the most committed supporter of Iranian nationalism and constitutionalism, fundamentally challenging the great-power imperialism of the long nineteenth century. The paper demonstrates that the coexistence of these distinct geopolitical schools was the primary source of the

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inconsistencies and internal debates that characterised British policy towards Iran, leaving an enduring imprint on the country's modernisation trajectory and collective historical memory.

Keywords: British Empire, Qajar Iran, Geopolitics, the Persian Question

Key Concepts of Discourse on "Nation" in Georgia in 19th and beginning of 20th Century

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Abstract

The presentation has been prepared within the project with number of № FR-24-17422 financed by Shota Rustaveli Georgian National Scientific Foundation. The emergence of a modern discourse on Nation in Georgia takes place in the mid-19th century, largely associated with the activities of the Tergdaleulebi/"Tergi drinkers" (Young Georgians from 60th of 19th century who got the education at Russian Universities crossing the river Terg on the Georgia-Russian border), and coincides with the limited introduction of a project of modernity (the intensive start of journal and newspaper printing, the introduction of a capitalist economy, expansion of urbanization, later the construction of railways, the gradual spread of literacy, etc.). This process did not arise suddenly, it developed on the basis of certain objective conditions. The intellectual tradition of Georgian Romanticism, itself inspired by the loss of the political independence of state entities and constituting an intellectual reaction to that loss. This is a cultural tradition that, on the one hand, can in some cases be represented as an idealization of a heroic past (as in the cases of Grigol Orbeliani and, partly, Aleksandre Chavchavadze), and on the other hand offers a certain critical rethinking of that heroic past (as in the case of Nikoloz Baratashvili).

The practical experience gained from anti-Russian uprisings in the first half and the opening decades of the 19th century, among which the 1832 movement plays a special role. It was there, specifically in the plan of Phiiiladelpos Kiknadze, that the concepts of "Patria" and "Nation" first appear in a modern sense. Both strands of national conceptualization in Georgia were formed and evolved under the authoritarian, semi-feudal conditions of the Russian Empire, which directly shaped their particularities. Because of this specificity, a direct, mass nationalist political movement could not take shape, and thus there was no strong public demand for

outright political independence; nevertheless, everything internally tended in that direction (Ilya Chavchavadze's principle "let us be ourselves" expresses this best). The Marxist demand for social emancipation, and one reason for its mass popularity, is best understood in this context. By the early 20th century, the fullest expression of independence for both trends was the demand for autonomy, albeit understood in different contextual ways.

Keywords: Nation, Identity, Modernization, Georgia

Towards a New Yalta?
Prospects for Russian Cooperation with Trump's United States in Creating a New
Security Architecture in Europe:
An Analysis of Russian Political and Media Discourse

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Abstract

The commencement of Donald Trump's second presidential term in 2025 has reinvigorated debate in Russia over the possibility of forging a new US-Russian agreement on the security architecture in Europe. The aim of this presentation is to examine the evolution of Russian discourse towards the new US administration, which oscillates between initial enthusiasm and growing pragmatism, and to assess the prospects for realising the concept of a so-called "Yalta 2.0". The methodological foundation of this research is qualitative discourse analysis, including Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The research material comprises official statements by representatives of the Russian political elite and broadcasts by Russian state propaganda media. This analysis facilitates the identification of the main narratives, shifts in sentiment, and strategic expectations communicated by the Russian Federation in the context of its relations with Washington and its European allies. The research demonstrates high volatility in the Russian narrative, driven by the new US administration's ambiguous stance.

The discourse is divided into two main streams evaluating American policy: 1) Aspects favouring Russian interests: In this area, the narrative highlights hopes associated with Trump's anti-Ukrainian rhetoric, the end of unconditional support for Kyiv, and the de facto non-recognition of Ukraine's territorial integrity. Furthermore, conflicts between the US and its traditional allies are strongly emphasised (e.g., the trade war with the EU, disputes with Canada, and the undermining of NATO's role), alongside Washington's strategic pivot towards Asia. This creates the prospect of a reduction in the American military presence and a lack of security guarantees for Europe. 2) Disappointments and limitations: Conversely, the discourse notes that the

"America First" doctrine precludes treating Russia as an equal partner, and Trump only acts in accordance with Moscow's wishes where it aligns with US interests. Assertive actions by the United States are perceived negatively (e.g., the forceful seizure of oil tankers belonging to Russia's so-called shadow fleet), as is the readiness to apply military pressure in regions vital to Moscow (such as Venezuela and Iran). Moreover, the absolute priority given to the rivalry with China ultimately marginalises Russia to the role of a strictly regional power. The analysis shows that in Russian political and media discourse, the initial portrayal of Trump as a "pro-Russian" politician has given way to a much more sober, nuanced assessment. A full-scale division of spheres of influence, modelled on the historical Yalta, is considered highly unlikely given American unilateralism. Nevertheless, Russian elites are still seeking room for an agreement towards a so-called "limited Yalta 2.0". Its implementation would rely on American pressure on Ukraine to force concessions, alongside a radical reduction of US military involvement in Europe. From Russia's perspective, the optimal outcome of this process would be the United States' complete withdrawal from NATO.

Keywords: Russian Political Discourse, US-Russia Relations, European Security Architecture, Yalta 2.0, Donald Trump

Status Partners: Reimagining Indian-Russian Relations in terms of Status Attribution and Recognition

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Abstract

The existing scholarship regarding India-Russia relations focus on the security, economic aspects of explaining the current Indian-Russian strategic partnership. From India's perspective, a large part of the scholarship focuses on the relation as countering regional threats emanating from Pakistan and China and from the Russian perspective, of countering overdependence on China following Western sanctions after the outbreak of the Ukraine conflict and reliance on Europe as a partner in international trade and security architecture. However, an understudied aspect of the relationship has been the role of status and status attribution in construction of the Indian-Russian partnership. Seminal works in the realm of status politics such as *Fighting for Status* by Johnathan Renshon (2017) and *Recognition: A Short History* by Jens Bartelson (2016) as well as recent scholarship (Røren, 2023; Akaev & Kefeli, 2024) have been instrumental in underscoring the role status and recognition play in motivating statist actions in the international realm. As a consequence, the current paper focuses on status as an understudied concept within the development of Indian-Soviet and later Indian-Russian relations and regimes of cooperation. The paper seeks to highlight that both Indian and Russian governments are highly status-sensitive with respect to power projection and country representation in the international realm. The paper aims to root this acute status sensitivity within the identities of both nations as being civilizational states with a rich historical tradition of statecraft. The paper seeks to elaborate that a primary driver within the Indian-Russian relationship has been a deep understanding of each other's status concerns and the ability as well as willingness to bestow the appropriate recognition on each other. The paper ends with takeaways for policymakers on how to engage with status-conscious powers in an emerging era of multipolarity.

Keywords: Indian-Russian Relations, Status Politics, Recognition, Status Attribution, Civilizational States, Multipolarity

The Geopolitics of IMEC: U.S.-Led Efforts to Reshape the Middle Eastern Order

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Abstract

The India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is more than just an infrastructure project; it serves as a developing geopolitical structure by which the United States aims to adjust regional dynamics in the Middle East. This study explores how IMEC operates as a strategic tool to transform connectivity patterns, synchronise regional stakeholders, and challenge rival initiatives—particularly China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). IMEC represents a transition from conflict-focused geopolitics to geo-economics as the primary source of influence, connecting India, the Gulf, Israel, and Europe through unified transport, energy, and digital infrastructures. The research examines the role of the United States in promoting diplomatic normalisation, enhancing economic interdependence, and establishing new multilateral partnerships. It contends that IMEC aims to not only fortify supply chains and improve trade efficiency but also to establish a new regional framework based on selective collaboration, strategic pathways, and technological integration. Simultaneously, the study evaluates the limitations hindering this vision, such as regional unrest, ongoing disputes, and regional uncertainties amid recent attacks by the US and Israel on Iran, as well as questions regarding the status of the Strait of Hormuz. The paper argues that IMEC represents a broader shift in U.S. strategy—from active military involvement to influence through networks—while highlighting significant issues regarding the initiative's future and the position of regional actors.

Keywords: IMEC, US, Geopolitics, Geo-economic, Corridors

Founded in 1837, the Hungarian National Museum is one of the country's most important institutions preserving national history and identity. Its neoclassical architecture and historical collections played a symbolic role in Hungary's revolutionary movements.

Panel 02 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Indo-Pacific and Asian Strategic Orders

TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 13:30–15:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Salome Dundua, *Tbilisi State University (In Person)*

- **Space in International Relations, generating geopolitical narratives versus regional space: Indo-Pacific concept compared to BIMSTEC and ASEAN**
Christian Ploberger
Rajamangala University of Technology, Tawan OK, Bangkok (Online)
- **Security Realignment in the Indo-Pacific: Middle-Power Choices Between Trump's America First and China's Neo-Tributary Vision**
Dean Karalekas
University of Lancashire (In Person)
- **Wind in China's Sails? Assessing Beijing's Expanding Strategic Presence in the Indian Ocean Region**
Amrita Jash
Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India (In Person)
- **A Three-Level Game: Regional Leaders and Middle Power Strategy in the US-China Competition**
Xiaowen Zhang
National University of Singapore (Online)
- **Trump's Tariffs and Their Geopolitical and Economic Repercussions: A Study of China's Counter-Strategy**
Amr Mansour
Zhengzhou University (Online)

Discussant: Pelin Sönmez, *Kocaeli University (In Person)*

Space in International Relations, Generating Geopolitical Narratives Versus Regional Space: Indo-Pacific Concept Compared to BIMSTEC and ASEAN

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Abstract

Despite the increasing popularity of the Indo-Pacific concept, it must be remembered that it represents an imagined geopolitical narrative created to support the strategic interests of a globally acting great power within a specific geographic setting, in response to a shifting strategic balance. In essence, the formulation and dissemination of a strategic narrative requires agency, as a regional narrative or a change in an existing regional narrative does not occur on its own; indeed, such a change is interest-driven. The argument presented here is that, whereas the Indo-Pacific narrative represents an imagined political strategy to suit the geopolitical interests of a globally acting great power, the United States, we can, at the same time, identify locally based regional cooperation dynamics anchored within parts of the same geopolitical space, such as BIMSTEC or ASEAN. Therefore, whereas the Indo-Pacific narrative represents a hierarchical, top-down concept, based on the geopolitical interests of an external, globally acting great power, BIMSTEC and ASEAN refer to horizontal regional cooperation dynamics acting from within. Consequently, highlighting the differences between a globally acting, great-power-inspired regional narrative and a local-actor-inspired regional cooperation dynamic. At the same time, we are reminded that the imagination of regional space is constructed and flexible.

Keywords: Indo-Pacific, Geopolitics, Strategic Narratives, Regional Space, BIMSTEC

Security Realignment in the Indo-Pacific: Middle-Power Choices Between Trump's America First and China's Neo-Tributary Vision

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Abstract

In an era of intensifying great power rivalry, the liberal international order (LIO) is undergoing profound fragmentation, with significant implications for security realignment in the Indo-Pacific. This presentation examines Taiwan's strategic choices in this shifting landscape by distinguishing the post-World War II U.S.-led LIO from its post-Cold War evolution, framing the Trump phenomenon as a counterrevolutionary response, analysing China's contestation through a neo-Tianxia lens, and exploring pathways forward for frontline states like Taiwan and Japan. The post-WWII LIO was characterised by U.S. primacy, sovereign equality, reciprocal trade, and alliance systems designed to promote stability and contain authoritarian expansion. In contrast, the post-Cold War variant increasingly reflected elite transnationalism and institutional overreach. Multilateral bodies expanded into global governance, liberal norms were aggressively exported through democracy promotion and humanitarian intervention, and globalisation—facilitated by China's WTO accession—led to offshoring and domestic economic dislocation. These developments, partly shaped by efforts to prioritise supranational authority over national sovereignty, bred widespread disillusionment. Donald Trump represents a counterrevolutionary effort to reclaim the original LIO's U.S.-centric foundations. Rejecting post-1990s globalism, his "America First" agenda employs tariffs, withdrawal from constraining agreements (TPP, Paris Accord, JCPOA), demands for NATO burden-sharing, and a transactional bilateralism. Rather than dismantling the order, Trump seeks to reshape it around narrow American material interests and sovereignty, signalling a broader populist backlash against elite-driven internationalism. Simultaneously, China is actively reshaping the LIO from within and without. Through its influence in UN specialised agencies, parallel institutions such as the AIIB and the Belt and Road Initiative, and alternative platforms such as the SCO

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and RCEP, Beijing promotes sovereignty, non-interference, state capitalism, and cyber sovereignty. This vision echoes historical Tianxia concepts—a hierarchical “all-under-heaven” system centred on Chinese moral and civilizational authority, sustained through tribute-like deference rather than rules-based equality. While Western Europe largely embraced the deepened normative LIO, many Asian states—and to varying degrees Eastern European ones—prefer a pragmatic, less intrusive order focused on economic development and regime stability, creating openings for Chinese influence. Taiwan, as a vibrant democracy and technological linchpin on the fault line of this systemic rivalry, faces existential pressures. Neither pure liberal universalism nor Sino-centric hierarchy fully accommodates its de facto sovereignty. Strategic options include: bolstering U.S. and like-minded partnerships for deterrence; “porcupine” asymmetric defence and domestic resilience; strategic hedging to preserve manoeuvrability; and selective integration with middle powers (Japan, Australia, India, ASEAN) through economic and security networks. In this uncertain environment, Taiwan and Japan must pursue multi-layered resilience—making aggression prohibitively costly, maintaining indispensable economic roles, and cultivating diversified partnerships. The talk concludes by assessing how such adaptations can stabilise the Indo-Pacific amid a potentially bifurcated or hybridised global order.

Keywords: Liberal International Order (LIO), Counterrevolution, Trumpism, New Tianxia-ism, Strategic Choices, Indo-Pacific Security Realignment

Wind in China's Sails?

Assessing Beijing's Expanding Strategic Presence in the Indian Ocean Region

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Abstract

The Indian Ocean represents the new frontier of China's great power aspirations, where Beijing appears determined to establish a strategic maritime backyard. This objective has added a significant maritime dimension to China's broader geopolitical ambitions. In this context, China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean gained momentum following the release of the 2015 Defense White Paper, which outlined a new military strategy. For the first time, the document emphasized the need to enhance the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) capability for "open seas protection", enabling operations far beyond China's immediate shores. This vision is further reinforced by China's expanding footprint in the Indian Ocean, evident in a surge of naval activities that employ both hard and soft power instruments to strengthen its influence. Notably, the docking of Chinese submarines at Colombo port and, more significantly, at Gwadar has raised serious strategic concerns. Beyond its growing military posture, Chinese President Xi Jinping's flagship initiative- the '21st Century Maritime Silk Road' aims to enhance maritime connectivity with Southeast Asian and Indian Ocean littoral states, further clarifying China's long-term ambitions in the region. This study examines China's strategic shift toward the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) by analyzing Beijing's evolving perceptions of the region. It analyses China's strategic interests and assesses its expanding military presence in the Indian Ocean.

Keywords: China, Indian Ocean, PLA Navy, Belt and Road Initiative, Great Power Politics, United States

A Three-Level Game: Regional Leaders and Middle Power Strategy in the US-China Competition

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Abstract

As China has significantly narrowed the power gap with the United States while widening it with all other states, the international system is transitioning toward an emerging form of bipolarity. Yet, unlike the rigid and ideologically polarised blocs of the Cold War, this evolving structure is better understood as bipolarity embedded within a multipolar world. While the two poles compete for dominance, a range of influential middle powers continue to exercise agency and, under certain conditions, can shape or even disrupt the balance of power. Existing literature explains middle power behaviour primarily through two lenses. Structural approaches emphasise relative power, material capabilities, and systemic polarity, while domestic-level accounts focus on identity, status-seeking, and political imaginaries. However, these perspectives do not adequately account for the regional institutional contexts in which many middle powers operate. This omission is particularly consequential in regions characterised by “geopolitical in-betweenness”—a structural condition in which states are situated at the intersection of competing power centres and face persistent external pressures. This condition is especially evident in Europe and Southeast Asia, where regional institutions both constrain and enable state strategies.

This study addresses this gap by focusing on regional-leading middle powers—states that occupy pivotal positions within regional institutional frameworks and exercise influence through both material capabilities and institutional leadership. Specifically, it examines cases within the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, where regional dynamics play a critical role in shaping state behaviour. The central research question is: what explains variation in middle power strategies under emerging bipolarity, and how do regional institutions shape these strategies? To answer this question, the study develops a three-level analytical framework that

extends Robert D. Putnam's two-level game theory. Policymakers must simultaneously navigate (1) global systemic pressures arising from U.S.–China rivalry, (2) regional institutional dynamics and inter-state relations, and (3) domestic political constraints and preferences. Strategic outcomes, particularly the pursuit of strategic autonomy, emerge from the interaction of these three levels. Methodologically, the study adopts a mixed-methods design combining in-depth case studies and fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA). It examines six cases—France, Germany, Italy, Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand—across critical periods of intensified U.S.–China competition between 2008 and 2025. This research reconceptualises middle power agency in an era of great-power rivalry, emphasising the central but overlooked role of regional institutions in shaping strategic autonomy and the evolving international order.

Keywords: Middle Power, Strategic Autonomy, Great Power Competition, EU, ASEAN

Trump's Tariffs and Their Geopolitical and Economic Repercussions: A Study of China's Counter-Strategy

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Abstract

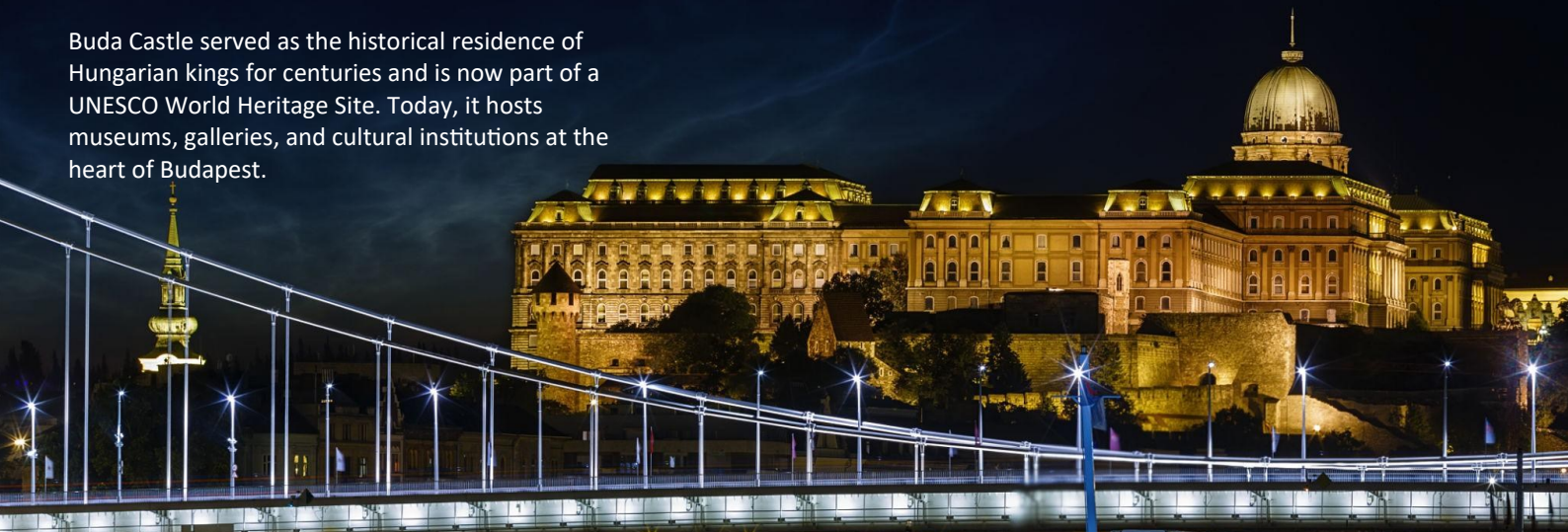
This research paper examines the mechanisms of pressure management in Chinese foreign policy in response to the tariffs imposed by the United States during the second Trump administration (2025–2026). It employs the trade tensions of the first Trump term and the subsequent frictions during the Biden era as a preliminary framework to interpret the current features of Chinese engagement. The study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach to track the trajectories of American tariff decisions and monitor corresponding Chinese responses, while utilising inferential analysis to link China's "cumulative experience" with Trump's policies to the maturation of its current strategic crisis management tools. Moreover, the study is built upon three primary hypotheses: First, that current Chinese behaviour embodies a refined structural resilience strategy derived from a decade of lessons and an acute awareness of the global shifts over the past five years—most notably the supply chain crises resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian conflict. Second, that the Chinese shift toward reducing reliance on personal diplomatic channels—evidenced by the decline in direct communication, telephonic exchanges, and summitry between Presidents Xi Jinping and Donald Trump during the first year of the second term compared to the same period in the first term—constitutes a deliberate Chinese strategic decision. Third, Beijing seeks to leverage the global tariff crisis as an opportunity to bolster international partnerships with the Global South and regional powers to construct parallel economic balances.

The paper yields several core conclusions; it documents a palpable state of diplomatic coolness reflecting a transition toward a reality defined by competitiveness. Furthermore, it concludes that the efficacy of American tariff pressures has diminished in the face of China's capacity for manoeuvring and its

deployment of strategic assets, such as rare earth elements, as geopolitical and trade bargaining chips. The findings affirm that the current confrontation will have several repercussions for the future of political and economic relations between the two countries, and it has led to a re-engineering of international interactions away from traditional globalization concepts, as Beijing increasingly relies on supply chain flexibility and the diversification of international allies to mitigate exposure to American policies, thereby entrenching a reality of long-term structural competition.

Keywords: China, United States, Trump, Tariffs, Rare Earths, Global South

Buda Castle served as the historical residence of Hungarian kings for centuries and is now part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Today, it hosts museums, galleries, and cultural institutions at the heart of Budapest.



Panel 03 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Postcolonial Critique, Knowledge Production and Identity

TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 15:30–17:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Dean Karalekas, *University of Lancashire (In Person)*

- **Same Brand, Different Standard:
A Cross-National Analysis of Multinational Food Product Quality Through a Postcolonial Lens**
Alperen Türkmen and Sude Bayram
Karadeniz Technical University (In Person)
- **Decentering Knowledge or Reproducing Hierarchy?
Questioning Epistemic Hierarchies in the Turkish International Relations Discipline**
Pelın Sönmez and Zehra Yılmaz
Kocaeli University and Van Yüzüncü Yıl University (In Person)
- **The Social Function of Indigenous Surveillance:
Security, Territory, and Collective Life in the Javari Valley**
Nicole Grell Macias Dalmiglio
São Paulo State University (UNESP) (In Person)
- **Reawakening Silenced Trauma:
Comparative Mnemonic Framing of War Crimes Memories among Abkhazian IDPs in the Context of the War in Ukraine**
Tamar Karaia
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (In Person)
- **The Angry Modern: The Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India**
Anwar Alam
Alatoo International University (In Person)

Discussant: Yeghia Tashjian, *American University of Beirut (In Person)*

**Same Brand, Different Standard:
A Cross-National Analysis of Multinational Food Product Quality
Through a Postcolonial Lens**

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Abstract

Despite the widespread reach of multinational food corporations across global markets, systematic inquiry into whether product quality varies according to the development level of target countries remains remarkably scarce. Drawing on postcolonial international relations theory and world-systems analysis, this study examines the nutritional profiles of products sold by major multinational food corporations across 20 states stratified by development level, encompassing developed, developing, and least-developed countries. Employing a sequential mixed-methods design, the study combines comparative regulatory analysis with standardised nutritional profiling conducted by a registered dietitian, using sugar content, saturated fat, salt levels, food additive composition, and NOVA processing scores as core quality indicators. Regulatory capacity is operationalised through each state's degree of alignment with Codex Alimentarius standards and the institutional strength of national food safety authorities. Product data are sourced from Open Food Facts and complementary national food databases. Findings are expected to reveal a systematic pattern whereby nutritionally inferior formulations are disproportionately marketed in states with weaker regulatory frameworks and lower HDI scores, suggesting that product quality differentiation is not incidental but structurally conditioned by asymmetries of power between corporations and host states. These findings are anticipated to contribute to postcolonial critiques of corporate food governance by providing empirical nutritional evidence for what has hitherto remained a largely theoretical argument, while simultaneously offering actionable insights for food sovereignty advocacy and regulatory reform in the Global South.

Keywords: Postcolonial Theory, Multinational Food Corporations, Nutritional Profiling, Product Quality Differentiation, Global South

Decentering Knowledge or Reproducing Hierarchy? Questioning Epistemic Hierarchies in the Turkish International Relations Discipline

Pelin Sönmez & Zehra Yılmaz

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Abstract

Recent debates in global academia increasingly question not only what knowledge is produced but also where, by whom, and within which institutional hierarchies it emerges. This paper examines how the spatial and political restructuring of higher education shapes contemporary knowledge regimes in Turkey. Following a major expansion of the university system after 2006—when nearly 65% of existing universities were established, largely in provincial cities—Turkey provides a distinctive case to examine a central question in Global IR: whether genuinely multi-centric knowledge production can emerge within structurally hierarchical academic systems. The study investigates how epistemic hierarchies are reproduced within the Turkish International Relations (IR) discipline after this expansion. It draws on 90 in-depth interviews and 260 surveys with IR scholars across the country, complemented by a multilayered dataset covering 1,723 faculty members' research interests, regional expertise, thesis supervision, project involvement, publication performance, and citation patterns. Building on Miranda Fricker's concept of epistemic injustice (2007), the paper argues that academic hierarchies in Turkey are not only institutional but also embedded in broader structures of symbolic recognition, cultural capital, and access to global knowledge networks. The findings are organized around four interrelated dimensions: spatial, institutional, epistemological, and social inequalities. Spatially, the analysis reveals a persistent center–periphery divide. Universities in major metropolitan centres such as Istanbul and Ankara benefit from dense academic networks, access to think tanks and policy communities, and greater visibility in scholarly debates, while universities in provincial regions face structural disadvantages including limited academic interaction and weaker institutional infrastructure. At the same time, provincial universities may enable regional specialization and field-based research. Institutionally, the study shows that the distinction between public and private universities alone cannot explain academic

inequalities. Instead, institutional cultures, research incentives, performance regimes, and bureaucratic structures significantly shape research agendas. Interviewees frequently highlighted the influence of performance-based academic management, publication pressures, project-oriented funding, and political sensitivities that contribute to self-censorship. Epistemologically, the Turkish IR discipline largely operates within existing Anglo-American theoretical frameworks, contributing empirical case studies rather than developing grand theory. Nevertheless, the findings suggest potential for middle-range theoretical contributions grounded in Turkey's geopolitical and historical experiences, particularly in areas such as security studies, regional politics, and migration. Finally, the social dimension highlights how class background, cultural capital, language proficiency, overseas education, and international academic networks function as gatekeeping mechanisms that shape access to the disciplinary center and influence scholarly visibility. Overall, the paper demonstrates that the expansion of higher education in Turkey has not eliminated academic hierarchies but has instead transformed and reproduced them across multiple dimensions. The Turkish IR discipline thus offers an important case for understanding how epistemic inequalities operate within semi-peripheral academic contexts and how knowledge production remains embedded in both global and local structures of power.

Keywords: Turkish International Relations, Epistemic Inequality, Academic Hierarchies, Higher Education Expansion

The Social Function of Indigenous Surveillance: Security, Territory, and Collective Life in the Javari Valley

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the social function of the Indigenous Surveillance Team (Equipe de Vigilância – EVU) of the Union of Indigenous Peoples of the Javari Valley (UNIVAJA), examining how security practices are embedded in broader processes of territorial governance and collective life reproduction in the Brazilian Amazon. Rather than approaching surveillance as a purely technical or coercive activity, the paper argues that the EVU constitutes a socio-political practice rooted in Indigenous territoriality, relational knowledge, and community organization. Located in a highly contested border region marked by the expansion of illegal fishing, mining, and transnational criminal networks, the Javari Valley has become a central site for the reconfiguration of security practices. In this context, the EVU emerges not only as a response to the absence or insufficiency of state protection, but as an autonomous system of territorial monitoring grounded in local knowledge, intercommunity coordination, and ethical commitments to the protection of life and territory. The paper advances the argument that the EVU performs a dual function. On the one hand, it operates as a mechanism of territorial defense, producing intelligence, monitoring illegal activities, and deterring external threats. On the other hand, it functions as a social institution that reinforces collective identities, political organization, and interethnic cooperation.

This duality challenges dominant understandings of security as a state-centered and militarized practice, revealing instead a form of security that is inseparable from care, kinship, and territorial belonging. Methodologically, the study is based on qualitative research, including document analysis and semi-structured interviews with Indigenous leaders and community members, complemented by field observations conducted between 2022 and 2025. Empirical evidence highlights how the EVU integrates technological tools such as drones and georeferencing with

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Indigenous knowledge systems, creating hybrid forms of surveillance that differ fundamentally from state security apparatuses. By engaging with Critical Security Studies and debates on sovereignty, the paper proposes a rethinking of surveillance beyond its association with control and domination, framing it instead as a collective and life-oriented practice. The analysis contributes to broader discussions on plural security regimes and the role of Indigenous actors in redefining security in frontier spaces.

Keywords: Amazon, Indigenous Surveillance, International Security, Territorial Governance, UNIVAJA, Violence

**Reawakening Silenced Trauma:
Comparative Mnemonic Framing of War Crimes Memories among Abkhazian IDPs
in the Context of the War in Ukraine**

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Abstract

The 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine has initiated significant debates about collective memory in post-Soviet societies affected by unresolved conflicts and displacement. This paper explores how the war in Ukraine has reactivated silenced memories of war crimes, violence, and forced displacement among Abkhazian IDPs, who have experienced long-term displacement since the early 1990s. The analysis focuses on how the invasion transforms previously unspoken trauma into public narratives through comparative mnemonic framing, especially where both conflicts are seen as driven by the Russian Federation. This research is grounded in theories of collective memory and trauma narration, drawing on Laub's concept of testimony and belated trauma as well as Subotić's scholarship on memory politics in post-conflict societies. This theoretical framework facilitates analysis of how trauma, previously unarticulated due to socio-political constraints, becomes narratable in response to new geopolitical shocks. The war in Ukraine is conceptualized as a mnemonic catalyst that reopens suppressed testimony and reshapes memory narratives within a contested political context. The research uses focus groups and semi-structured in-depth interviews with Abkhazian IDPs, analyzed through narrative analysis and thematic coding within a trauma-sensitive interpretive approach. The study considers both explicit narratives and the presence of silences, emotional hesitations, and delayed articulation of trauma.

The findings indicate that the severe socio-economic crisis of the early 1990s, along with displacement and unresolved conflict, prevented open discussion of trauma, including war crimes. As a result, trauma remained largely within family and community memory. The exposure of atrocities in Ukraine, especially the Bucha war crimes, served as a powerful trigger that reopened what respondents call "old

wounds" and shaped new narratives, particularly the idea that "before Bucha in Ukraine, there was Abkhazia in Georgia." This reopening of trauma also led to ambivalent debates among IDP communities and CSO representatives about whether it is too late to discuss these experiences and whether public narration might harm fragile peace processes. The paper argues that the war in Ukraine has transformed long-silenced trauma into publicly negotiable memory, while highlighting the tension between testimony, recognition, and peace in societies affected by unresolved displacement and contested memory politics.

Keywords: Memory Politics, IDP from Abkhazia, Mnemonic Trigger, Trauma

The Angry Modern: The Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India

Anwar Alam

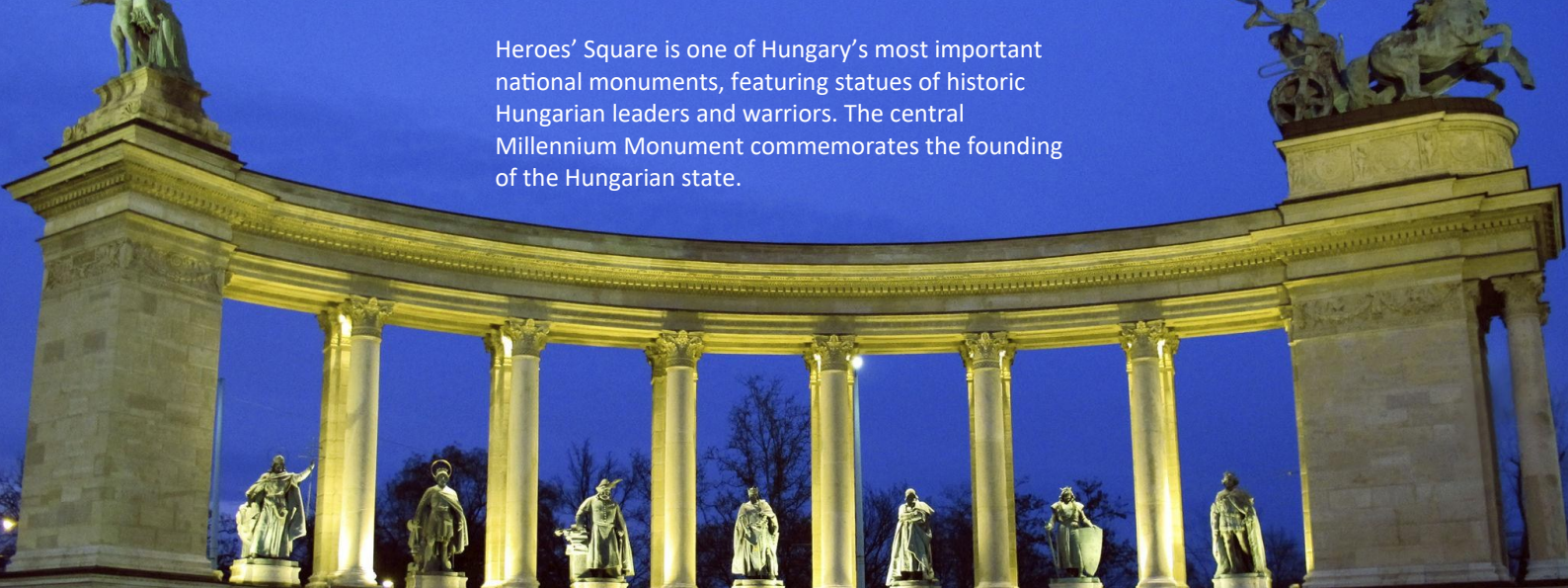
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Abstract

Since the coming of the Modi government in India in 2014, the issue of Hindu nationalism has been widely discussed, particularly within the established European discourse of fascism and nazisim. This paper, while acknowledging the modern roots of Hindu nationalism and Its aspiration to share 19th century European vision of homogenised, authoritarian nation state, argues how the Hindu nationalism, in many ways, differ with its European varieties in the forms, discourse and operational dimensions. In other words, this paper first explores the process and factors that has made a section of upper caste Hindu to to reject its own deeply embedded pluralistic world view and seek a reconstruction of a homogenised Hindu identity against its plural ethos. The paper, then, explores the limit of ideological appeal of Hindutva to Indian society and concludes that unlike the development of fascism and Nazisim, the Hindutva trajectory is a permanent marker of Indian society and politics without necessarily undergoing the process of European forms of collective violence- both in scale and intensity.

Keywords: Modern, India, Hindu, Nationalism



Heroes' Square is one of Hungary's most important national monuments, featuring statues of historic Hungarian leaders and warriors. The central Millennium Monument commemorates the founding of the Hungarian state.

Panel 04 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Small States, Foreign Policy and Strategic Adaptation

TUESDAY // 7 July 2026 // 15:30–17:00 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: **András Varga**, *University of Public Service (In Person)*

- **Small State Foreign Policy Strategy in a Fragmenting World Order
The Case of Hungary-US Conservative Relations**
Bálint Timár
University of Public Service (In Person)
- **The Examination of 'Keystone State' and 'Economic Connector' Concepts
in the Case of Italy**
Adam Sashalmi
University of Pécs (In Person)
- **Diplomatic Relations Between Brazil and the United States in the Context of Lula 3 and
Trump 2 – An Analysis Based on Peter Burke's Book Ignorance**
Carlos Augusto Martins
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (In Person)
- **European Integration Process in the Western Balkans and the Dynamics of
Europeanization**
Müge Palancı Keskin
İstanbul University (In Person)
- **Centralised and Still Autonomous?
City Diplomacy Beyond Western-centric Approach**
Fedor Zolotarev
University of Pécs (In Person)
- **Observer Status as an Institutional Visibility Strategy for Small States: Hungary's
Experience with the Organization of Turkic States**
Ali Kılıçarslan Topuz
University of Public Service (Online)

Discussant: **Ekrem Ok**, *Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University & Cesran International (In Person)*

Small State Foreign Policy Strategy in a Fragmenting World Order The Case of Hungary-US Conservative Relations

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Abstract

The study examines an example of small-state international advocacy in the post-bipolar order, Hungarian-American conservative relations at both governmental and non-governmental levels from 2014 to 2025. Through the case study, the paper aims to demonstrate how a small state can gain significant influence and establish close ties with a great power through conscious, novel relationship-building. In the conceptual framework of asymmetric alignment, a small state cannot use material power, so it can establish cooperation and alliances through various means of soft power, like media relations - especially political opinion leaders -, think-tank networks, and elite-level relations. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of small-state diplomacy, soft power, and the functioning of international political networks.

Keywords: USA, Hungary, Conservative, Small-state, Foreign Policy

The Examination of 'Keystone State' and 'Economic Connector' Concepts in the Case of Italy

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Abstract

This paper aims to test the hypothesis that Italy could function as a 'keystone state' or 'economic connector' within the bloc-based world order. A significant number of scientific publications and policy papers of international organisations argue that the world system has been changing. This process could result in a world of diverse economic and political blocs rather than a globalised economy. The paper acknowledges the existence and relevance of global geopolitical bloc formation as a phenomenon in the evolution of international relations. The blocks have been forming around the two major political and economic powers, the United States and China. The foreign policy of these powers influences the speed of the process. According to the theories, keystone states and economic connectors could provide the indirect links between the blocks, especially as economic mediators. To test the hypothesis, the paper compares the criteria of the two concepts with Italy's characteristics and situation. This means, on the one hand, analysing Italy's position and international relations through a geopolitical approach, in terms of the concept of 'keystone state'. On the other hand, the concept of 'economic connector' is primarily examined through the analysis of various economic indicators, such as international trade and investment statistics. Furthermore, also compares with the data of the 'economic connectors' pre-defined in the literature. The research primarily examines Italy's relations with China and the Western World (the USA and the EU). The research eventually demonstrated that the characteristics of Italy could make it possible to have a role in international relations, such as a 'keystone state' or 'economic connector'. However, the examined state also faces significant barriers to assuming this international role, including weaknesses in its domestic economy and internal political and economic divisions.

Keywords: Keystone State, Economic Connector, Geopolitics, Blocks, Italy

Diplomatic Relations Between Brazil and the United States in the Context of Lula 3 And Trump 2 – An Analysis Based on Peter Burke's Book Ignorance

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Abstract

Conceptually, pan-Americanism can be defined as the historical relations between Brazil and the United States of America since Brazil's independence from the Kingdom of Portugal in 1822, with the United States' subsequent recognition in 1824, making it the first nation to recognize Brazil as an independent country. Since then, the two countries have maintained good diplomatic relations, with moments of greater closeness, such as those that occurred between 1941 and 1946 and from 2019 to 2023, or periods of distancing, as happened from 1966 onward when Brazil was governed by successive military governments. However, there has never been a rupture or vassalage. During Jair Bolsonaro's government, the process known as "automatic alignment" took place. For the first time, it carried the mark of a tribal and sectarian identitarianism linked to the global far right. Automatic alignment consisted of aligning Brazilian interests with those of the USA. With the beginning of Lula 3's government in 2023, relations between the historical partners returned to institutional normality. However, Trump's rise to power altered this dynamic. Through the systematic imposition of tariffs on various sectors of the Brazilian economy, as well as the imposition of embargoes through the Magnitsky Act — under which senior officials of the Republic were personally sanctioned, including banking restrictions and prohibition of entry into the United States, even to attend the UN General Assembly — the relationship was severely strained. For much of 2025, relations between the historical allies suffered a series of provocations, notably those artificially engineered by subversive elements working alongside Republican congressmen in Washington. However, during the 2025 UN General Assembly, a brief meeting between Lula and Trump occurred, representing, for pan-Americanism, a rare alignment of the stars that ultimately eclipsed all sorts of movements contrary to the pragmatic history of relations between the two great nations. It must be noted that the rapprochement was anchored in the brief meeting held at the United

Nations. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the trade imbalance heavily in favour of the USA and the lack of certain Brazilian products for the average American consumer ultimately facilitated the process of rapprochement. James Scott, cited by Burke, presents us with the concept known as "thin simplifications". This means that, when taking the drastic measures related to what in Brazil became known as the "tariff shock," the American government did not consider all scenarios. It is possible to affirm that the moves were made from an erroneously ideological perspective on the part of Trump's Republican administration. On the Brazilian side, what was observed was the use of the diplomatic apparatus (Itamaraty) as the main actor in conducting negotiations to seek a possible solution to the case. In the end, the historical relations between Brazil and the United States were resumed, even amid the marked ideological differences between the centre-progressive Brazilian government and the authoritarian experiment in the United States since Donald Trump's rise to power.

Keywords: Regional, Tariffs, International Politics, Brazil-US Relations

European Integration Process in the Western Balkans and the Dynamics of Europeanization

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Abstract

Following the dissolution of the Yugoslav Federation, the concept of the Western Balkans emerged as a significant term in international politics. The fragmentation of this region led to numerous political and social challenges, particularly ethnic conflicts rooted in nationalism. In the post-Cold War era, the Western Balkans has also become one of the key regions striving for integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. This study examines how the European integration process in the Western Balkans has been shaped through the dynamics of Europeanization. Europeanization refers to the process through which the norms, values, and policies of the European Union influence and transform the domestic political and social structures of candidate and potential candidate countries. In this context, European integration in the Western Balkans has not only triggered institutional reforms but has also led to broader transformations in identity, belonging, and political discourse. The European Union has played a central role in promoting reforms in areas such as democratization, rule of law, and human rights through its enlargement policies and conditionality mechanisms. The prospect of EU membership has served as a strong incentive for countries in the region to improve governance standards and align with European norms. Financial assistance programs and institutional frameworks have further supported this transformation process. However, Europeanization in the Western Balkans is not limited to technical or institutional change. It also involves complex identity dynamics.

While the discourse of a European identity has gained strength, national identities have been redefined, often in tension with historical narratives and regional identities. The Balkans have frequently been constructed as the “other” in European discourse, complicating the relationship between regional and European identities. Despite progress, the European integration process in the Western Balkans faces

several challenges. Ethnic divisions, border disputes, and competing nationalist projects, such as the visions of “Greater Serbia” and “Greater Albania,” continue to hinder regional stability and cooperation. These factors make the process of Europeanization more complex and contested. Moreover, although the EU has supported legal and institutional reforms, their implementation has often been constrained by domestic political dynamics and security concerns. This demonstrates that Europeanization is not only a normative process but also one shaped by power relations and political struggles. In conclusion, the Europeanization of the Western Balkans presents a multidimensional and sometimes contradictory process. While the EU provides a strong framework for democratic transformation and institutional reform, it also contributes to the emergence of new hierarchies and forms of exclusion between European and Balkan identities. Therefore, Europeanization in the region should be understood as both a transformative and a negotiated process shaped by identity, politics, and power.

Keywords: Western Balkans, European Union, Europeanization, Normative Power, Identity

Centralized and Still Autonomous? City Diplomacy Beyond Western-Centric Approach

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Abstract

City diplomacy has transformed from a phenomenon within globalization into a research field that collocates with challenging the traditional primacy of nation-states in International Politics. The current worldwide scholarship predominantly analyzes this phenomenon through the lens of liberal democratic and decentralized governance models that came from the Western schools of thought. This perspective risks overlooking the distinct logic and practices of city diplomacy emerging within illiberal, centralized states. This study addresses this gap by asking: what are the key features of city diplomacy in centralized governance systems, and how do they constitute an alternative to Western-led models? To answer this, the study implies a comparative analysis of city diplomacy in four states – Russia, Belarus, China, and Iran. Despite their differing positions in the international system, each presents a challenge to the liberal order and demonstrates a unique mode of international city engagements. This research argues that in these contexts, city diplomacy is not an exclusive form of paradiplomacy for greater autonomy, rather a functionalized instrument of state foreign policy. It operates within hierarchical governance structures that provide channels for international collaboration while imposing political limits. Employing a qualitative comparative case study approach, the work identifies and illustrates common criteria of this centralized city diplomacy model. These criteria include state-driven agenda for internationalization, the role of cities in implementing national strategies, and the management of transnational city networks. By moving beyond the Western-centric paradigm, this study contributes a nuanced understanding of the multiple discourses and practices of city diplomacy. It offers a more comprehensive framework for analyzing subnational diplomacy in a rapidly evolving global environment.

Keywords: City Diplomacy, Non-Western States, Eurasia, liberalism, Governance

Observer Status as an Institutional Visibility Strategy for Small States: Hungary's Experience with the Organization of Turkic States

Ali Kılıçarslan Topuz

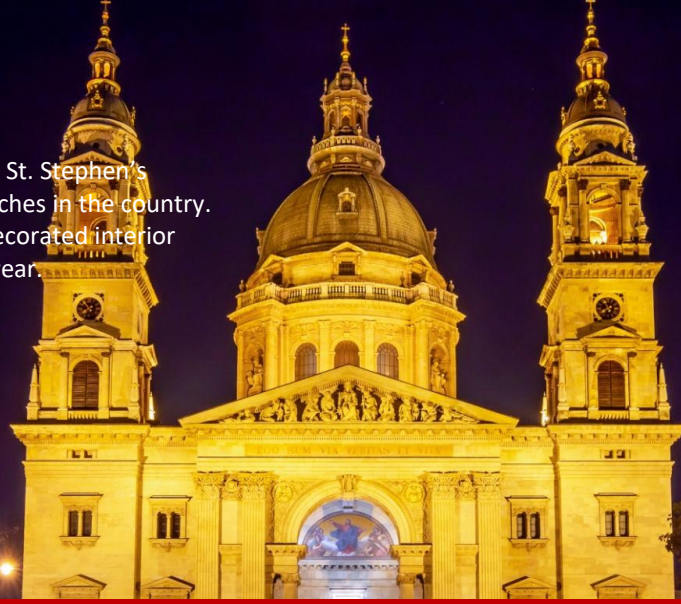
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Abstract

The literature on international relations frequently highlights how small states turn to various institutional and diplomatic strategies to compensate for their limited material capacities within the international system. Among these strategies, participation in international and regional organizations, enhancing visibility, and expanding diplomatic maneuvering space are key tools. This study aims to examine Hungary's acquisition of observer status in the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) in 2018 within the framework of small state theory. The central question of the study is whether observer status serves merely as a symbolic form of membership for Hungary, or whether it functions as a strategic tool that enhances diplomatic visibility and foreign policy effectiveness. The research analyzes Hungarian government documents, OTS summit declarations, leaders' statements, and the diplomatic and institutional interaction processes that developed in the post-2018 period, based on qualitative methods. The findings indicate that observer status has increased Hungary's visibility within the OTS, created new channels of engagement in the fields of energy, transportation, education, and economic cooperation, and significantly heightened institutional engagement with the opening of the OTS Representation Office in Budapest. The study argues that small states can expand their international visibility and diplomatic maneuvering space by utilizing limited yet flexible institutional tools such as observer status. In this context, the Hungarian example provides a contemporary case study for the literature on small-state behavior and participation in regional organizations.

Keywords: Small State Theory, Observer Status, Organization of Turkic States, Institutional Visibility, Hungarian Foreign Policy

Named after Hungary's first king, St. Stephen's Basilica is one of the largest churches in the country. Its impressive dome and richly decorated interior attract millions of visitors every year.



Panel 05 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Populism, Identity and Belonging in Comparative Perspective

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Tamar Karaia, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University *(In Person)*

- **Populist Expression in Sub-Saharan Africa:
An Archetype Analysis of New Generation Populists
Neo Sithole**
University of Szeged (In Person)
- **Reimagining Belonging:
Hungary, Populism, and the Turkic World
Mustafa Burak Şener and Büşra Özyüksel**
Eötvös Loránd University and Independent Researcher (In Person)
- **Right Populism from A Bibliometric Perspective: 1994-2025
Meltem Hasançebi and Tuncay Odabaş**
Haliç University and Giresun University (In Person)
- **Patriots for Europe:
Rebranding the Far-Right and Reshaping Power in the European Parliament after the
2024 Elections
Vladimer Grdzlishvili**
*Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Institute of Political Sciences of Ilia State
University (Online)*
- **Common Goods and the Global Governance of Essential Resources:
A Goods Legal Theory Perspective on Fundamental Rights
Alessandra Camaiani**
Università della Campania (In Person)

Discussant: Tamás Dudlák, Eötvös Loránd University *(In Person)*

Populist Expression in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Archetype Analysis of New Generation Populists

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Abstract

The global resurgence of populism has prompted renewed scholarly interest in how populist politics manifests outside the Western context. This presentation examines populist expression in Sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on political leaders from South Africa, Uganda, and Kenya. Drawing on visual analysis and critical discourse analysis, the study investigates how populist leaders construct and perform their political identities across distinct historical and sociopolitical contexts. Rather than simply labelling leaders as populists, this study identifies the specific repertoires — socially shared discursive templates — through which populist actors legitimise their authority and mobilise mass support. Building on Casullo's (2019) framework, the analysis focuses on three key repertoires: the patriotic military man, the social leader, and the successful businessman. The study adopts an intergenerational approach, distinguishing between Old School Populists of the 1990s and New School Populists whose rise began in the 2010s. Among the former, Uganda's Yoweri Museveni and South Africa's Jacob Zuma exemplify the patriotic military and militant repertoires, drawing legitimacy from anti-colonial struggle credentials and reinforcing their personas through symbolic acts like military attire and liberation-era songs.

New School populists such as Julius Malema and Bobi Wine adapt this template ideologically rather than biographically, deploying revolutionary symbolism — most visibly the red beret — to call for new forms of liberation without direct involvement in armed struggle. Kenya's William Ruto presents a contrasting case. In the absence of a dominant liberation narrative, his "hustler populism" foregrounds the successful businessman archetype, with a rags-to-riches story that resonates strongly with Kenya's large informal economy workforce. The findings demonstrate that Africa's diverse political histories fundamentally shape which populist repertoires gain

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traction in different national contexts, highlighting the performative, symbolic, and discursive dimensions of populist leadership on the continent.

Keywords: Populism, African Populism, Populist Leadership, Liberation Politics and Political Legitimacy

Reimagining Belonging: Hungary, Populism, and the Turkic World

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Abstract

This research examines how populist foreign policy is redefining “international belonging” in ways that depart from traditional views of international relations, with specific attention to Hungary’s relationship with the Organisation of Turkic States (OTS). The research question here is: What form does Hungarian populist foreign policy take when engaged with the OTS, which offers an alternative way for Hungary to belong to both Europe and Eurasia? Instead of viewing Hungary’s engagement with the OTS as simply a strategic or materialistic choice, the research questions whether Hungary is rethinking its membership in the EU as part of a larger Eurasian geopolitical area, both culturally and strategically. To demonstrate empirically how Hungary is framing its relationship with the OTS through a combination of sovereign-centred rhetoric, criticisms of liberal internationalism and selective references to Turkic heritage, the study will utilise official speeches, policy documents and diplomatic activities related to Hungary’s observer status in the OTS. Additionally, it will be illustrated how these discourses provide mechanisms for reorienting belonging and therefore create a symbolic connection between Europe and the Turkic world.

As such, rather than merely representing a pragmatic diversification of strategy, Hungary’s OTS policy is an effort to redefine its role in the global order. In addition to contributing to the debate over Eurasian geopolitics, this study makes three additional contributions to the understanding of the field. First, it expands upon securitisation theory by demonstrating that alignment and belonging may be achieved through the construction of identity and emotions rather than solely through the establishment of threats. Second, previous work examining populist foreign policy demonstrates that the category of belonging is being made into a politically contested issue. Finally, this work adds to the literature on Eurasian regionalism by providing evidence that alternative forms of geopolitical imagination

emerge through discursive mechanisms rather than primarily through material interdependencies. Ultimately, it is argued that Hungary's relationship with the Turkic world is indicative of a broader shift in international relations, in which populist leaders are actively creating new geopolitical identities and developing forms of alignment outside existing Western-centric frameworks.

Keywords: Organisation of Turkic States, Hungary, Populism, Critical Discourse Analysis, Political Psychology, Securitisation

Right Populism From A Bibliometric Perspective: 1994-2025

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Abstract

Populism, one of the most important political terms of our time, is used to describe right opposition parties in Europe, left-wing presidents in Latin America, and both right and left presidential candidates in the United States. However, the chameleonic nature of the concept of populism, stemming from its use for both scientific and political purposes, makes it difficult to define. Nevertheless, the fundamental characteristics of populism remain unchanged: it focuses on the relationship between the pure people and the corrupt, evil elites. While the “pure people” are regarded as a distinct and homogeneous group, the corrupt and self-serving elite (including the media, the wealthy, and political institutions) are seen as individuals who protect one another and prioritize only their own interests. Although the concepts of “elite” and “people” are common to both left and right populist movements, right populism possesses some significant additional characteristics. The most important aspect of these characteristics is that the “people” are not only kept under pressure from above by the elite, but are also a segment of society threatened by the presence of “others” who do not share their values. In recent decades, while immigrants have served as the primary “others” for right populists, any group that is not only outside the “people” but also in a hostile relationship with them—due to their sexual orientation; religious/political beliefs, ethnic identity, or behaviour—can also be considered “others.”

In this context, right populists tend to favour authoritarian policies designed to establish order in society and combat the threats posed by these dangerous “others”. Based on all this, the growing interest in right populism forms the starting point of this study. The study aims to determine the bibliometric profile of studies titled “right populism” published in the Web of Science database. The study examined 467 studies published between 1994 and 2025. The data were obtained through a search of the Web of Science database using the keyword “right

populism." The 467 studies were analyzed using the R software program, focusing on variables such as the number of authors, the most prolific authors, the year of publication, the country of publication, and the journal of publication. According to the data obtained from the analysis, 2021 and 2025 are the years in which this concept has been studied the most. In terms of the country of publication, the United Kingdom leads the way. The Journal of Contemporary European Studies is the journal with the highest number of publications in this field. As a result, it is evident that interest in the concept of right populism has increased in recent years. Additionally, by providing a comprehensive overview of the literature on right populism, the study offers important insights to both academics and readers regarding the current state of the field and areas for future development. The findings from the bibliometric analysis aim to guide future research and contribute to the development of more strategic approaches in the field of right populism.

Keywords: Populism, Right Populism, Bibliometric, Web of Science

**Patriots for Europe:
Rebranding the Far-Right and Reshaping Power
in the European Parliament after the 2024 Elections**

Vladimer Grdzlishvili

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Abstract

This study examines the new European Parliament Group Patriots for Europe (PfE) – its origins, ideology, organizational strategy, and electoral impact after the 2024 EP elections. Research aims to determine whether PfE simply reproduces the policy platform of its predecessor, Identity and Democracy (ID), or signals a substantive shift, and to assess how the group's "patriotic" rebranding is intended to broaden its domestic electoral appeal. The research uses a mixed-methods design, combining a structured theoretical framework with quantitative voting and survey data analysis, plus qualitative document examination. It draws on the European Election Study 2024 (EES) to map PfE's ideological positions, Euroscepticism, and voter characteristics, and applies qualitative content analysis to the group's founding manifesto.

The theoretical framework is the Policy-Office-Votes (POV) model, which explains why parties form European Parliament groups by pursuing three complementary logics: policy-seeking (ideological alignment), office-seeking (access to resources, committee chairs, speaking time), and vote-seeking (domestic electoral advantages). Applied to PfE, the POV model tests whether the new group merely reproduces the ID platform or signals a substantive shift, and whether it helps parties capture institutional resources such as committee seats, rapporteurships, speaking time, and funding. Main findings of the research show that: 1) Despite PfE's numerical strength, the bloc failed to obtain senior committee chairs, illustrating the limits of its office-seeking strategy; 2) The group retained the core far-right policy of anti-immigration, Euroscepticism, repeal of the Green Deal and defense of Judeo-Christian values, but presented it through a polished "patriotic" manifesto to appear

more mainstream; 3) Rebranding and the inclusion of new parties such as ANO 2011, Vox and Chega expanded its electoral appeal, contributing to a notable right-ward shift in the 2024 elections; 4) Content-analysis of the manifesto shows high scores on Euroscepticism, opposition to wealth redistribution, an “economy over climate” preference and rejection of EU support for Ukraine, aligning with voter concerns over migration, costs of living pressures and climate policy; 5) PfE's proportional access to EP funding, speaking time and rapporteur opportunity enhances the leverage of its member parties at the national level and could enable a coalition of PfE-linked governments to form a blocking minority in qualified majority voting on EU legislation. Overall, the rapid rise of PfE reshapes EU coalition dynamics, increasing the influence of far-right forces and challenging the pro-EU grand coalition of the EPP, S&D, and Renew Europe.

Keywords: Patriots for Europe (PfE), 2024 European Parliament Elections, Far-right Rebranding, Policy-Office-Votes (POV), Identity and Democracy (ID).

Common Goods and the Global Governance of Essential Resources: A Goods Legal Theory Perspective on Fundamental Rights

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Abstract

This paper develops a theoretical contribution within goods legal theory, exploring how the category of common goods may help rethink the governance of resources essential to the protection of fundamental rights in a global context. The starting point of the analysis is the observation that certain resources cannot be adequately understood as mere objects of legal regulation. Rather, they constitute the material conditions that make the effective enjoyment of fundamental rights possible. Rights such as access to water, environmental protection, or food security depend directly on the availability and preservation of specific resources. For this reason, the legal regimes governing such resources acquire a constitutional and theoretical relevance that extends beyond purely technical or proprietary considerations. Despite this, contemporary legal systems continue to regulate most resources through the traditional proprietary paradigm, based on the distinction between public and private property and on the attribution to the holder of powers of control and exclusion. While this model remains functional to the regulation of economic relations, it reveals important limitations when applied to resources that are structurally connected to the protection of fundamental rights.

At the international level, similar difficulties emerge. Many mechanisms designed to protect essential resources—particularly water, environmental goods, or food security—remain only partially binding for states and therefore struggle to ensure effective protection. As a consequence, the governance of resources that are crucial for the enjoyment of fundamental rights increasingly requires legal and institutional arrangements capable of operating beyond the state dimension. Within this context, the paper examines the theoretical potential of the category of common goods. In goods legal theory, common goods are not defined primarily by their ownership structure but by the function that a resource performs in relation to

the satisfaction of fundamental rights. They may therefore be understood as resources whose availability is indispensable for the exercise of certain rights and whose depletion or exclusion could lead to irreversible harm to protected legal interests. From this perspective, the relevance of common goods does not lie solely in the reformulation of property regimes within domestic legal systems. More importantly, the concept offers a conceptual framework for the governance of resources essential to fundamental rights in a global context.

In a world characterised by increasing interdependence, environmental scarcity, and the transnational nature of many vital resources, the protection of fundamental rights increasingly depends on the capacity of legal systems and international institutions to regulate access to and preservation of such goods. The paper therefore argues that goods legal theory provides a useful conceptual tool for analysing the relationship between rights, resources, and global governance. By shifting attention from ownership structures to the function of resources in enabling the exercise of rights, the concept of common goods highlights a structural connection between fundamental rights and the material resources that sustain them. Recognising this connection invites legal theory and international governance frameworks to reconsider how the legal regimes governing essential resources contribute to the global protection of fundamental rights, while also introducing an intergenerational dimension in their regulation, particularly in the case of scarce and exhaustible goods.

Keywords: Common Goods, Legal Theory, Fundamental Rights, Global Governance, Resource Governance



Matthias Church is renowned for its colorful tiled roof and Gothic architectural style. It played a major role in Hungarian royal coronation ceremonies throughout history.

Panel 06 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Global Governance, International Law and Environmental Security

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: **Ágnes Ijjas**, *Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)*

- **The Cascading Collapse of International Law, Economy and the Environment**
Ivan Kanchev
Independent Researcher (In Person)
- **"No Fund, No Agreement":
Why States Accepted the Loss and Damage Fund at COP27**
Sri Milawati Asshagab
Corvinus University of Budapest (Online)
- **The Complex Interplay between Food Security and Climate Change in the Arab
Region: A Non-Traditional Security Approach**
Navodita-Kumari
University of Allahabad (Online)
- **Between Security and Sovereignty:
The Legal Architecture of SAFE and Its Democratic Implications**
Aleksandra Domalewska
Warsaw School of Economics (In Person)
- **Regional Cooperation and the Challenges of the 21st Century:
A Comparative Analysis of the African Union and ASEAN**
Ramzi Bendebka and Lee Pei May
International Islamic University Malaysia (Online)
- **From Controversy to Regulation: The Dissostichus Case and the Transformation of
Environmental Governance in Antarctica**
Miguel A. Salazar Urrutia
University of Rennes (Online)

Discussant: **Rashed Daher**, *Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)*

The Cascading Collapse of International Law, Economy and the Environment

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Abstract

As of 2026, there have been severe breaches in international law coupled with crises in the global economy and the environment. Despite existing research on these socio-economic issues, there remains a gap in interconnectivity and self-reinforcing feedback loops of these crises. The purpose of this research is to explore this interconnectivity that has the potential to generate a cascading collapse of the global socio-economic order. The war in Iran represents a clear violation of the International Humanitarian Law, the UN Charter, Chapter VII, Article 51. These clear violations of international law are eroding the complex and fragile system of globalisation, while making a global economic crisis unavoidable. The contemporary socio-economic system of globalisation, funded by the petrodollar system, was maintained by international agreements that allowed uninterrupted energy trade supported by an unsanctioned financial system. The contemporary war in Iran blocks one-fifth of the global energy trade, while financial sanctions prohibit the petrodollar recycling system. Therefore, as the tertiary financial system faces the largest debt in history, the secondary manufacturing sector is stagnating due to fuel shortages. The core problem lies in the primary sector, as the blockade of a third of fertiliser supply chains has the potential to trigger a global hunger crisis. This has severely disrupted the 2026 spring fertilising-planting season, and FAO warns that it can lead to disproportionately large yield declines, particularly in the Global South. Hence, the global economy that has been experiencing stagflation and security risk will also be facing a decline in food and energy.

To address these global challenges, this research uses a novel energy production function with separate energy inputs for labour (EL) and capital (Ek). Through this analytical prism, the decline of global GDP will not translate into a cyclical economic crisis but cascading socio-economic crises that would culminate in the worst-case scenarios envisioned by the IPCC. The cornerstone of contemporary

globalisation, the green revolution, has been severely constrained in the past decades by climate change and the lack of cheap energy inputs. The Iran war will push the green revolution to the breaking point, as the decline in planetary albedo will further reduce agricultural yields. The study led by Hansen (2025) has shown that increased global warming was caused by restrictions on the shipping industry's aerosol emissions. However, climate scientists could never have imagined that one-fifth of the global energy supply could be cut off and that vital water and air routes could be blocked. This situation has the potential to metastasise in a rapid reduction of the planetary aerosol masking effect and a decline of the global albedo. The result would be extreme weather events, droughts, and a decline in agricultural yields. In summary, international law, as stipulated in the UN Charter, is eroding, while the petrodollar recycling system, with its unsustainable debt, cannot function properly. As the economic system collapses, climate change is fuelling agricultural and humanitarian crises that could converge into an extinction-level event.

Keywords: Economic Crisis, Petrodollar System, Globalisation, Climate Change, International Humanitarian Law

**“No Fund, No Agreement”:
Why States Accepted the Loss and Damage Fund at COP27**

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Abstract

Why did developed countries finally agree in 2022 to establish a dedicated Loss and Damage Fund, a demand they had successfully blocked for three decades, despite clear financial costs and domestic political resistance? This paper explains that outcome through a structured process-tracing analysis modelled on Bennett, Lepage, and Unger's (1994) multi-hypothesis framework for alliance burden-sharing. Drawing on official COP27 negotiating records, statements by the G77+China and AOSIS coalitions, and contemporaneous media reports, the study tests four competing explanations: (1) collective-action/public-goods logic, whereby rich states disproportionately finance the global public good of climate stability; (2) equity norms, under which CBDR and the “polluter pays” principle became non-negotiable standards of justice; (3) prospect theory, in which both vulnerable and developed states, operating in a domain of losses, accepted a risky new financial commitment to avoid certain reputational and future-cost defeat; and (4) institutional dependence, whereby the imperative to preserve the UNFCCC coalition and prevent a complete breakdown of talks compelled concessions. Process-tracing reveals that the credible threat of “no fund = no agreement” by developing countries created decisive external pressure. This pressure interacted with entrenched equity norms and loss-frame psychology among both sides, while domestic political constraints in donor countries shaped the fund's ultimately limited, voluntary design. An integrated model demonstrates how these mechanisms reinforced one another to produce the breakthrough. The findings extend burden-sharing theory to climate finance governance and generate practical lessons for future COP negotiations on loss and damage, finance, and equity.

Keywords: Loss and Damage Fund, Burden-Sharing, Climate Finance, COP27, Process-Tracing, Equity Norms

**The Complex Interplay between Food Security and Climate Change
in the Arab Region:
A Non-Traditional Security Approach**

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Abstract

Food insecurity is one of the most pressing challenges that has severely crippled the entire Arab region, and climate change has significantly worsened this menace. This intersection between climate change and food security has created challenges that go beyond the traditional security realm. Rising temperatures, depleting water resources, desertification, and extreme weather events like frequent droughts and floods threaten agricultural productivity and undermine the region's ability to meet growing food demands. In this light, this paper aims to analyse the critical nexus between environmental vulnerabilities and socio-economic and political challenges that, to some extent, shape national and regional dynamics in the region. By applying the regional security complex theory, the paper highlights how food insecurity, driven by climate change, functions as a security challenge that destabilizes livelihoods, exacerbates socio-political tensions, and fuels cross-border vulnerabilities. It further highlights the uneven impact across oil-rich and resource-poor states, and the resulting implications for governance, migration, and regional cooperation. By reframing food security and climate change as interlinked non-traditional security issues, the study underscores the need for sustainable adaptation strategies, regional food corridors, and multilateral policy responses to strengthen resilience in the Arab world. To fulfil the objectives of this paper, a qualitative approach has been followed involving document and content analysis of secondary data from international reports and national policy documents of Arab countries.

Keywords: Non-traditional Security, Food Security, Regional Security Complex Theory, Climate Change

**Between Security and Sovereignty:
The Legal Architecture of SAFE and Its Democratic Implications**

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Abstract

The adoption of the SAFE Regulation (Safe Agile Framework for Europe) under Article 122 TFEU constitutes a watershed moment in the constitutional evolution of the European Union's security and defence policy. Originally conceived as an emergency mechanism for addressing economic crises and severe supply disruptions, Article 122 has now been repurposed to enable large-scale defence financing. This unprecedented use of an economic emergency clause effectively bypasses unanimity in the Council and marginalises the European Parliament's legislative role. The article examines the constitutional and institutional implications of this development, arguing that the growing reliance on executive instruments in defence policy raises important concerns regarding democratic accountability and the long-term legitimacy of EU security governance.

Keywords: European Union, SAFE Regulation, Security Policy, Democratic Legitimacy, Militarization

Regional Cooperation and the Challenges of the 21st Century: A Comparative Analysis of the African Union and ASEAN

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Abstract

This paper considers the changing nature of regional cooperation in the 21st century, with a particular focus on the dynamics between the African Union (AU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In a global environment marked by geopolitical realignment and transnational challenges, the research addresses a key question: Is modern regionalism an effective platform for unity or a political instrument of historical capitalist cycles? Using a qualitative and comparative approach, this study assesses their responses to complex issues, including economic integration, security challenges, and environmental sustainability. The findings reveal that, despite the successful institutionalisation of mechanisms for economic development (such as the ASEAN Economic Community), the AU's effectiveness depends on the negotiation of national interests with supranational regimes. In terms of war and peace, both organisations play important roles in conflict resolution, but struggle with uneven adherence to democratic governance. Moreover, the study suggests that regionalism is becoming increasingly essential for addressing "hard questions" such as climate change and migration, which are beyond state control. The research concludes that regionalism is no longer a disguise for aligning with global powers but an integral part of global governance. Through the application of context-based strategies and pillar-based approaches, the AU and ASEAN demonstrate the potential of regional integration to achieve stability and prosperity in an interdependent world.

Keywords: Regionalism, ASEAN, African Union, Economic Integration, Security Challenges, Climate Change

From Controversy to Regulation: The Dissostichus Case and the Transformation of Environmental Governance in Antarctica

Miguel A. Salazar Urrutia

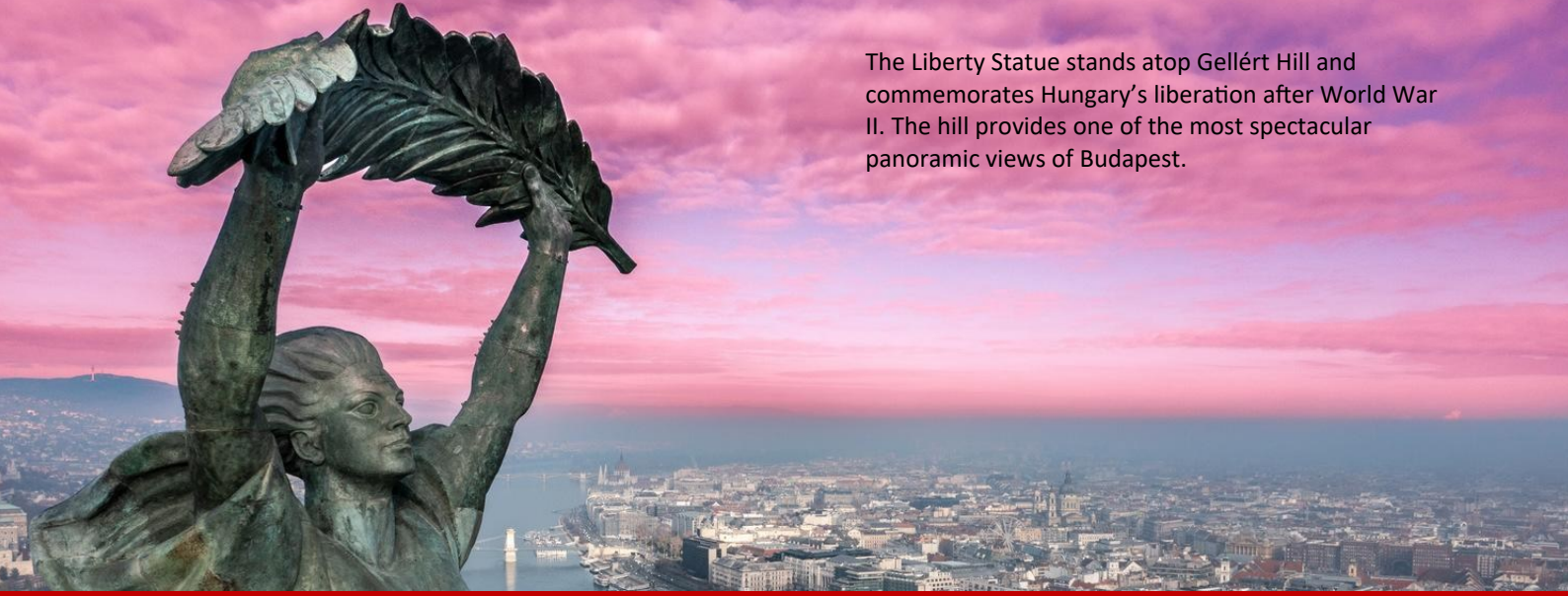
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Abstract

This paper examines how new regulatory instruments emerged in Antarctic governance by analyzing the Dissostichus (Chilean sea bass) controversy in the early 2000s. It focuses on the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) as a key international institution that manages a common marine resource amid scientific uncertainty and geopolitical tensions. The paper employs a qualitative methodology, combining analyses of institutional documents, policy reports, and international negotiations. It also draws on secondary literature in international relations and public policy. This approach allows us to understand how different actors—states, scientists, and environmental NGOs—interact and influence decision-making processes within the Antarctic governance system. The paper's main assumption is that controversies can play a productive role in international governance. Instead of blocking cooperation, they can create pressure for institutional change and the development of new policy instruments. In this case, the Dissostichus controversy, driven by concerns about illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, led to increased tensions but also to new forms of coordination. The paper argues that this controversy acted as a catalyst for the transformation of governance practices. It contributed to the creation and consolidation of regulatory instruments, including monitoring systems, certification schemes, and traceability mechanisms. These instruments are based on scientific expertise and transnational cooperation rather than hierarchical authority. The Antarctic case shows that governance of international commons evolves through negotiation, expertise, and institutional learning. It also highlights the importance of policy instruments in structuring collective action in international contexts where sovereignty is limited. This study contributes to broader debates on environmental governance and international public policy.

Keywords: Antarctic Governance, CCAMLR, Global Commons, Environmental Governance, International Public Policy, Fisheries Governance



The Liberty Statue stands atop Gellért Hill and commemorates Hungary's liberation after World War II. The hill provides one of the most spectacular panoramic views of Budapest.

Panel 07 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Migration, Asylum and Governance

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Rashed Daher, Eötvös Loránd University *(In Person)*

- **Continuity or Transformation?
The Evolution of Italian Migration Governance**
Mariann Dömös
University of Pécs *(In Person)*
- **Experiencing Prolonged Asylum Procedures:
Syrian Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands**
Ibrahim Akkan
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University *(In Person)*
- **Risk or Resource?
Family Migration as a Policy Dilemma in Contemporary Russia**
Vera Peshkova
Institute of Sociology of the FCTAS of the Russian Academy of Sciences *(In Person)*
- **The Role of Financial Institutions in Driving Global Economic Growth and Stability**
Sheila Osei Owusu
ABSA Bank, Ghana *(Online)*
- **Teacher Burnout and the Challenges of Inclusive Education: A Socio-Economic
Analysis of Educational Sustainability within the European Union**
Emina Kovačić Ahmetović
University of Zagreb *(Online)*

Discussant: András Varga, National University of Public Service *(In Person)*

Continuity or Transformation? The Evolution of Italian Migration Governance

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Abstract

This paper examines whether Giorgia Meloni's migration policy represents a substantive transformation in Italian migration governance or a continuation of previous trends. While the securitisation of migration has long characterised Italian policy, recent developments – notably the Italy–Albania agreement, the establishment of reception centres, and the extraterritorial processing of asylum claims – suggest a potential shift. Drawing on securitisation theory and the concept of externalisation in migration policy, this paper shows that Meloni's approach builds on earlier restrictive policies while introducing a new spatial dimension to migration control. By relocating the processing of asylum claims outside the European Union, Italy extends its border governance beyond its sovereign territory, raising fundamental issues about accountability, legal responsibility, and the norms of international protection. At the same time, the policy does not follow an exclusively restrictive approach; through the Decreto Flussi framework, Italy continues to admit third-country workers in a regulated manner, treating migration as an economic resource and reflecting a more deliberate, long-term approach to migration management.

However, integration policies for those already present remain fragmented, despite their central importance. This combination of securitisation and economic rationality demonstrates a shift in Italian migration policy: rather than strictly exclusionary measures aimed at fully preventing migration, the policy is increasingly characterised by an attempt to balance labour market needs with social concerns. The presentation also provides an empirical comparison of the migration policies of recent Italian governments, highlighting both continuities in political discourse and innovations in policy instruments. The analysis situates the Italy-Albania agreement within a broader European Union context, contributing to debates on

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fragmentation, burden-sharing, and the erosion of common asylum standards. Overall, externalisation emerges as more than a policy tool; it is a potential paradigm shift in migration governance, with implications for sovereignty, norm compliance, and the role of non-state actors. This analysis is based on systematic empirical research conducted since 2016, primarily in Rome.

Keywords: Migration, Italy, Migration Policy, Externalisation of Migration Policy, Civic Society

Experiencing Prolonged Asylum Procedures: Syrian Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands

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Abstract

Under EU asylum law, applications for international protection must be decided within six months, with a few reasonable exceptions. However, the Netherlands has frequently extended decision-making times in its asylum process in recent years, leading many applicants to wait long periods. Asylum seekers from Syria have been disproportionately impacted, with decision-making times frequently surpassing twelve months and, in some situations, even exceeding eighteen months. This paper examines the functioning of the extended decision-making process for asylum procedures in the Netherlands, along with its implications for refugees, with a focus on Syrian refugees. It examines how formal extensions of legal deadlines, temporary suspension policy, and administrative backlogs have resulted in a situation where access to a final asylum decision is considerably delayed without formally denying the right to apply for protection. This study is based on qualitative research methods and aims to understand the effects of prolonged asylum procedures in the Netherlands on refugees. Within the scope of the research, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with refugees whose asylum applications had not been finalised for a long time.

This method allows analysis not only of the normative framework of administrative and legal regulations, but also of the concrete effects of these regulations on the daily lives of applicants, their experiences of legal uncertainty, and their expectations for the future. The paper also places Dutch practice within the larger European legal framework by referencing official policy documents, administrative data, and EU asylum law, especially the Asylum Procedures Directive and related Court of Justice of the European Union jurisprudence. The study's findings reveal that extended decision-making times have created uncertainty among Syrian refugees, with significant social, economic, and psychological consequences. Although these

practices are not described as forced return policies under legal processes by the Netherlands authorities, they are perceived by the Syrian refugees as practices to put pressure on them to return. The paper adds to current discussions on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum by analysing the Dutch case, particularly with regard to legal protections, procedural effectiveness, and the balance between fundamental rights and immigration perceptions.

Keywords: Prolonged Asylum Procedures, Syrian Asylum Seekers, Netherlands, EU Asylum Law

Risk or Resource?

Family Migration as a Policy Dilemma in Contemporary Russia

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Abstract

In recent years, migration processes in Russia have become increasingly politicised, revealing a growing tension between economic needs, demographic priorities, and the security logic. Despite the ongoing labour shortage, the legal regulation of migration has been consistently tightened, including with regard to migrants arriving with family members. This raises the question of what place family migration occupies in contemporary Russian migration policy and how it is conceptualised and regulated by different actors. The empirical basis of the study consists of 23 in-depth interviews with representatives of state authorities, 38 - with non-governmental organisations, as well as 24 interviews with researchers specialising in family and migration from Central Asia to Russia. This allows for a comparison of three types of analytical and practical perspectives: managerial, civil society-oriented, and academic.

The paper conceptualises family migration as a distinct field of policy in which fundamentally different interpretative logics intersect. Representatives of state authorities tend to view the family primarily as an object of regulation, and migration as a process to be managed in terms of security, control, and normative order. Within this framework, the family is perceived as a potential risk factor that increases pressure on social infrastructure and complicates the governability of migration flows. In contrast, representatives of non-governmental organisations interpret the family as a sphere of everyday practices, emphasising structural and symbolic barriers produced by the host society and its institutions. In this perspective, the key issues are not control but access to resources, vulnerability, and mechanisms of social exclusion. Finally, the academic perspective seeks to conceptualise family migration as a complex and heterogeneous phenomenon, highlighting the diversity of migrant family forms and the impossibility of a single, unified definition.

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As a result, family migration emerges as a field where competing policy rationalities intersect. On the one hand, it is framed as a source of social risks, which justifies restrictive measures concerning family reunification and long-term residence. On the other hand, it is recognised as a strategic resource that contributes to stabilising migration processes, facilitating the long-term settlement of migrants, and promoting the demographic development of the host society. A particularly important role is played by migrants' children, who act as mediators between the family and the institutions of the host society. However, their potential remains largely outside the focus of policy and is, in many cases, subject to securitisation. The Russian case is of interest to an international audience because it illustrates a broader structural tension characteristic of contemporary migration regimes in post-Soviet space: the coexistence of a demand for long-term migration and a simultaneous tendency to restrict it. The analysis of family migration reveals how these contradictions unfold at the level of specific policies and everyday practices, thereby contributing to international debates on the relationship between control, integration, and human rights in migration governance.

Keywords: Family Migration, Migration Governance, Central Asia, Russia, Risks, Resource Potential

The Role of Financial Institutions in Driving Global Economic Growth and Stability

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Abstract

Financial institutions remain central to the functioning of modern economies, serving as key intermediaries that connect savers, investors, businesses, and governments. In recent years, their role has become even more significant due to rapid changes in the global financial landscape, including economic crises, inflationary pressures, regulatory reforms, and increasing financial integration across countries. This paper explores how financial institutions contribute to economic growth and stability, with a particular focus on their role in facilitating access to capital, supporting business expansion, and promoting efficient allocation of financial resources. The study begins by examining the traditional functions of financial institutions, such as commercial banks, investment firms, and development finance institutions, highlighting how these entities mobilise savings and channel funds into productive investments. It then considers how global financial developments such as the 2008 financial crisis and more recent economic disruptions have influenced the operations, risk management strategies, and regulatory environments of these institutions. These developments have not only reshaped financial systems but have also emphasised the importance of resilience and effective governance. Furthermore, the paper discusses the role of financial institutions in emerging economies, where access to finance remains a critical driver of economic development. In these contexts, financial institutions support entrepreneurship, facilitate trade, and contribute to poverty reduction by enabling small and medium-sized enterprises to grow. At the same time, the study acknowledges the challenges faced by financial institutions, including exposure to global shocks, regulatory constraints, and issues related to financial inclusion. Using secondary data and selected case examples, the paper argues that strong, transparent, and well-regulated financial institutions are essential for sustaining economic growth and maintaining stability in an increasingly interconnected global economy. It also emphasises the need for continuous adaptation to global financial trends and

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highlights the importance of sound policy frameworks that enhance the effectiveness of financial systems. In conclusion, the paper underscores that financial institutions are not only facilitators of economic activity but also critical pillars of global financial stability. Strengthening these institutions, particularly in developing economies, remains a key priority for ensuring long-term, inclusive, and sustainable growth.

Keywords: Financial Institutions, Economic Growth, Global Financial Stability, Financial Intermediation, Emerging Economies

Teacher Burnout and the Challenges of Inclusive Education: A Socio-Economic Analysis of Educational Sustainability within the European Union

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Abstract

In contemporary education, inclusion is established as a fundamental human right and a core pillar of the system. However, its practical implementation often faces numerous obstacles that directly affect the psychophysical well-being of educators. This review paper analyses the phenomenon of burnout syndrome among teachers through the lens of inclusive education challenges, drawing on a systematic review of the literature and reports from relevant institutions across European countries. The aim of the paper is to explore the correlation between the increasing demands of inclusive practice and the incidence of professional burnout within various EU educational systems. While European directives mandate curriculum adaptation and individualised approaches for children with diverse developmental and socio-economic difficulties, the analysis shows that systemic support for teachers varies significantly among Member States.

The paper identifies common European stressors: a shortage of specialist support staff and assistants, increased administrative burdens caused by standardisation, and the gap between inclusive policies and actual resources at the local level. The central part of the paper focuses on the socio-economic dimension of the problem through an analysis of educational sustainability. It examines how disparities in public investment in education within the EU influence the transformation of inclusive policies from normative frameworks into primary drivers of professional exhaustion. The paper argues that "educational sustainability" is jeopardised when teachers are expected to compensate for systemic deficiencies with their own emotional and labour resources. From an economic perspective, burnout results in increased staff turnover, posing a serious challenge to achieving the goals of strategic frameworks. In conclusion, the paper utilises comparative insights into the best practices of individual EU Member States to propose a shift from a model of "individual

responsibility" of the teacher to a model of "systemic sustainability." Inclusive education cannot be successful without a harmonised socio-economic framework that includes continuous supervision, reduced workloads in inclusive classrooms, and targeted investment in the mental health of teachers.

Keywords: Burnout Syndrome, Inclusive Education, Socio-Economic Analysis, Educational Sustainability



Vajdahunyad Castle was designed to showcase different architectural styles found throughout Hungarian history. Surrounded by a lake and parkland, it is among Budapest's most picturesque attractions.

Panel 08 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacssterem Security, Conflict and Environmental Harm

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Emre Demir, *TED University (In Person)*

- **When Geography Stops Being Static:
A Theory of Infrastructure Dependence and Disaster Vulnerability in Armed Conflict**
Vlad Surdea-Hernea and Letitia Roman
The University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna and Central European University (Online)
- **Silent Scars of War:
Reconceptualising Environmental Harm in the Discipline of International Relations**
Anchita Borthakur and Angana Kotokey
Chintan Research Foundation, New Delhi (In Person)
- **Playing God in the Gulf:
U.S. Hubris and Iran's Asymmetric Resistance**
Belay Asmare Aragaw
University of Pécs, Hungary (In Person)
- **Strategic Resilience and Information Warfare:
Hezbollah's Adaptation to Kinetic and Structural Shocks (2023–2026)**
Ágnes Ijjas
Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)
- **Network Competition and Regional Proxy Dynamics:
How External Actors Shape Security Governance Through Afghan Political Networks**
Aftab Hussain
Deakin University (In Person)

Discussant: István Dávid Váczy, *Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)*

**When Geography Stops Being Static:
A Theory of Infrastructure Dependence and Disaster Vulnerability in Armed Conflict**

Vlad Surdea-Hernea & Letitia Roman

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Abstract

The distribution of coercive power in civil conflicts depends on how combatants are organised to use infrastructure. State militaries are infrastructurally dense organisations because their logistics, command, and firepower operate through networked systems that require roads, communications, and power to function at scale. Insurgent organisations are infrastructurally sparse, since their effectiveness rests on decentralised cells and local embeddedness rather than on networked coordination. This organisational asymmetry has a direct implication for how environmental shocks affect conflict. Disasters that disrupt infrastructure impose asymmetric costs on coercive capacity, and they generate two further effects that compound the initial asymmetry. They displace state capacity toward humanitarian provision, which reduces the military assets available for territorial contestation. They also create persistence dynamics, because insurgent gains secured during disruption consolidate through local governance before the state restores operational capacity. We develop these claims within an infinite-horizon dynamic game of territorial competition under stochastic disruption, and we derive equilibrium comparative statics that trace how organisational asymmetry, disruption severity, restoration capacity, control persistence, time horizons, and relative costs jointly determine the magnitude of disruption effects. The argument reframes environmental shocks as perturbations of the organisational foundations of coercion, and it specifies the conditions under which such perturbations transfer territorial control to non-state actors.

Keywords: Infrastructure Dependence, Natural Disasters, Organisational Form, Military Effectiveness, Asymmetric Conflict

**Silent Scars of War:
Reconceptualising Environmental Harm in the Discipline of International Relations**

Anchita Borthakur & Angana Kotokey

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Abstract

This paper intends to highlight an issue that is routinely marginalised in the domain of International Relations (IR)—the impact of armed conflict on the "environment." Drawing from the case study of Afghanistan, a country that has suffered from decades of war and armed conflict, the paper reflects on how the environment is a "silent victim" of war in the country. However, this so-called "silence" is not incidental but actively produced by the dominant ways in which IR has been theorised, and global politics has been framed over the decades. It can be witnessed that "Realism" remains the dominant framework shaping global "common sense" in IR. By naturalising war, treating conflict as normal, and defining security narrowly in military terms, realism renders ecological harm largely invisible. Therefore, the paper argues that an alternative theoretical framework is required, as the problem—the impact of war on the environment—cannot be addressed through minor adjustments within existing paradigms. It requires a more fundamental rethinking of prevailing frameworks, where the very concept of security must be reimagined. If states construct climate change/environmental destruction as a security threat, it gains political salience; if they do not, it remains invisible. In the current context, with multiple conflicts unfolding simultaneously across regions, it is urgent to discuss this issue in the domain of IR, as the impacts of environmental crises do not adhere to political boundaries. Its repercussions can be widespread, affecting communities across the globe, thereby posing a threat to human existence itself.

Keywords: International Relations, Environmental Destruction, Realism, Security, Conflict & Climate Change

**Playing God in the Gulf:
U.S. Hubris and Iran's Asymmetric Resistance**

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Abstract

Despite the very peaceful relationship between the U.S and Iran in the pre-1979 period, the post-1979 relationship between the two states has been marked by escalating tension and antagonism. Because of increasing tensions between the two states, the U.S., together with Israel, launched large-scale strikes against Iran on 28 February 2026, targeting Iran's military, leadership, and nuclear infrastructure. As the global superpower, the U.S was overconfident in its technology, military precision, and the ability of the U.S. military to conduct rapid surgical operations to defeat the Iranian military and achieve regime change within a limited number of days. However, reality proved to be at odds with U.S. expectations, and Iran appears to be asymmetrically resilient to the point that it can challenge the American superpower. Here, the central puzzle this study analyses is why the global superpower, the U.S., has failed to produce decisive outcomes against Iran. Applying a qualitative study methodology through document analysis and process tracing, the study analyses the U.S. hubris and its strategic miscalculations in Iran, Iran's asymmetric resistance strategies, and the interaction between U.S. hubris and Iran's asymmetric resistance. In doing so, the study reveals strategic opportunities for Iran, focusing on its asymmetric resistance tactics that exposed the limits of American superpower, thereby challenging the traditional notion of superpower dominance.

The study further reveals that the asymmetric rivalry between the U.S and Iran produces stalemate and cyclical escalation, not resolution. By analysing the U.S.–Iran asymmetrical rivalry, the study argues the limits of greater power dominance and the emergence of asymmetric resistance strategies in contemporary global geopolitics. Learning from the U.S-Iran case study, the study concludes that power alone cannot determine decisive outcomes, for overconfidence meets adaptation.

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Thus, the U.S. hubris resulted from its strategic miscalculation of Iran's forces, and Iran's asymmetric resilience has introduced a new paradox in international politics: the greater the dominant power's strategic hubris, the more it is tricked by the shadow, which employs smart, asymmetric resilience strategies. Therefore, it is essential to recognise this paradox not only to understand past intervention failures but also to avoid future ones.

Keywords: Asymmetric Security Competition, Gulf Geopolitics, Iranian Asymmetric Warfare, U.S. Strategic Hubris

Strategic Resilience and Information Warfare: Hezbollah's Adaptation to Kinetic and Structural Shocks (2023–2026)

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Abstract

This paper examines the strategic evolution of the partnership between Lebanese Hezbollah and the Islamic Republic of Iran, during the systemic crises of 2023–2026. Historically rooted in the ideological framework of Velayat-e Faqih, the relationship has transitioned from a mentor-client model into a sophisticated interdependent network, positioning Hezbollah as the vanguard of Iran's "forward defense" doctrine. The Kinetic Degradation and Strategic Shock (2023–2026): Assessing the impact of the 2023–2024 Gaza conflict, and the subsequent 2024 Israeli military campaign, which resulted in the decapitation of Hezbollah's senior leadership and the collapse of the Syrian logistical corridor following the fall of the Assad regime. The study provides a critical assessment of the motivational logic and narrative shifts that have characterised the organisation's response to existential threats.

The research identifies two core pillars of Hezbollah's current adaptation strategy: The Information Warfare Pivot: An analysis of how the group's communication strategy evolved from the high-production propaganda of the Nasrallah era to a doctrine of Strategic Ambiguity. Following the 2024–2025 leadership decapitation, the paper explores how the group managed controlled leaks and decentralised messaging to mask internal fractures. This "fog of war" strategy Hezbollah has successfully masked its internal fractures, projecting an image of continued operational coherence despite significant intelligence breaches and the loss of its central oratorical figure. The Enigma of Strategic Silence (2025): An analysis of the group's prolonged operational and rhetorical hiatus throughout 2025, which defied regional expectations. The paper argues that this calculated passivity was not merely a sign of collapse, but a strategic "reboot" period used for clandestine restructuring and the protection of remaining assets following the 2024 decapitation strikes. The analysis focuses on the current 2026 landscape, characterised by the

collapse of the 2024 ceasefire, Tehran's regional ambitions and the Hezbollah as a non-state militia. As Iran's ability to project power via Damascus wanes and Lebanese sovereignty movements intensify, the Hezbollah-Iran nexus is facing an unprecedented structural crisis. The study concludes by evaluating whether the degradation of Hezbollah's command-and-control infrastructure marks the end of Iran's proxy-led deterrence or a pivot toward a more decentralised, insurgent-style resistance, and the broader stability of the Levant. The study concludes that while the "Axis of Resistance" model of 2020 has been structurally broken, Hezbollah is attempting to reinvent itself as a decentralised resistance franchise proving far more resilient than initial 2024 assessments suggested. This transition reflects a broader geopolitical shift where local survival instincts now supersede Tehran's regional power.

Keywords: Hezbollah, Information Warfare, Strategic Silence, Axis of Resistance, Post-Assad Geopolitics, Crisis Communication

Network Competition and Regional Proxy Dynamics: How External Actors Shape Security Governance Through Afghan Political Networks

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Abstract

This paper examines how regional powers systematically exploit Afghan political networks to advance security interests, revealing broader patterns of proxy competition that affect South Asian regional stability and international security governance. The research demonstrates that external interventions in Afghanistan's post-2001 Security Sector Reform (SSR) did not simply impose institutional models but rather shaped the behaviour of existing political networks in ways that fragmented rather than consolidated security governance. The research employs mixed-methods analysis combining network analysis (ENA - Epistemic Network Analysis) with qualitative process tracing. Primary data includes 30 semi-structured interviews with Afghan stakeholders (government officials, security sector leaders, international actors, civil society representatives) conducted between 2024-2025. Secondary data comprises extensive documentary analysis including partnership agreements, funding records, policy documents, and institutional reports. The network analysis maps relationships between external actors, Afghan political networks, institutional constraints, resource mechanisms, and governance outcomes.

The research operates from three core assumptions: First, that structural conditions (constitutional design, financial dependency, institutional capacity) systematically predetermined which networks could access resources and exercise agency. Second, that external actors were not passive funders but active shapers of network behaviour through three distinct mechanisms—direct partnership selection, indirect policy frameworks, and unintended consequences. Third, that local agency operated primarily through network intermediation rather than formal institutional channels, fundamentally transforming the meaning of "local ownership" in security governance. The analysis reveals that Pakistan, Iran, and India systematically empowered different Afghan networks aligned with their strategic interests. Pakistani

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support for Pashtun networks, Iranian backing of Dari speaking groups, and Indian relationships with Northern Alliance remnants created competing patronage systems that fragmented Afghan security governance. These regional actors exploited structural vulnerabilities—constitutional centralisation, financial dependency on external funding, and institutional capacity deficits—to advance proxy competition through local networks. The research demonstrates three mechanisms through which external actors shaped network behaviour: Direct interventions involved conscious partnership selection and resource allocation creating network hierarchies. Indirect interventions operated through policy frameworks and institutional designs forcing network adaptation. Unintended interventions emerged from capacity building programmes and coordination failures that inadvertently strengthened networks competing for control. Critically, local networks developed sophisticated multi-patron strategies, simultaneously accessing competing external supporters to preserve autonomy. This transformed local ownership from collaborative institutional governance into competitive network-mediated control, where different networks served different regional patrons whilst fragmenting national security governance.

The findings illuminate broader South Asian security challenges where regional rivalries play out through local proxies, complicating bilateral relationships and regional cooperation mechanisms. Understanding these network-mediated proxy dynamics becomes crucial for managing regional tensions and designing effective conflict prevention mechanisms. The research suggests that external actors seeking to strengthen state capacity in fragile contexts must account for how structural constraints create opportunities for network competition and regional proxy dynamics. Future regional security architectures must address not only state institutions but also the network dynamics that shape how external interventions affect local governance outcomes.

Keywords: Political Networks, Security Sector Reform, External Intervention, Regional Proxy Competition, Local Agency, Afghanistan



Opened in 1897, the Great Market Hall is Budapest's largest and most famous indoor market. It is an ideal place to experience traditional Hungarian cuisine and local products.

Panel 09 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Geopolitics of Energy and Critical Minerals

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Zoltán Egeresi, *University of Public Service (In Person)*

- **Corridor Geopolitics of Critical Minerals:
India and Türkiye in the Emerging Asian Energy Order**
Kerim Sert
Middle East Technical University (In Person)
- **Energy Security and Transit Dependency:
A Comparative Analysis of China and the European Union**
Ferdi Güçyetmez and Sina Kısacık
University of Bern and Cyprus Aydın University (Online)
- **Moving Beyond Territorial Defence:
Reconceptualising Security Through Energy in Contemporary Conflicts**
Pelin Nur Çağlayan Sert
Middle East Technical University (In Person)
- **Discursive Construction of the Canal Istanbul Projects**
Rabia Büyükpınar
Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University (In Person)
- **Saudi Arabia's Multi-Alignment Strategy in the New Cold War:
Strategic Autonomy across Green Energy and Digital Infrastructure**
Emre Demir
TED University (In Person)

Discussant: László Csicsmann, *Corvinus University of Budapest (In Person)*

Corridor Geopolitics of Critical Minerals: India and Türkiye in the Emerging Asian Energy Order

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Abstract

Energy transition has been changing the material and spatial foundations of geopolitics. This is considered to be the shifting strategic competition from fossil fuels to critical minerals while elevating the importance of infrastructure corridors. This paper brings these two dynamics together through the notion of corridor geopolitics of critical minerals. Focusing on India and Türkiye as emerging middle powers, this study examines how these countries position themselves within critical mineral supply chains and the infrastructure networks that sustain them. It argues that access to minerals alone is insufficient and control over transport corridors and logistical infrastructures is increasingly central to strategic autonomy. By analyzing connectivity initiatives alongside supply chain strategies, the paper demonstrates how corridors function as political and economic spaces where value is added, dependencies are managed, and influence is exercised. This perspective challenges conventional Area Studies approaches that treat regions as fixed and bounded, instead it highlights the relational and networked nature of contemporary geopolitics. The paper contributes to debates on energy transition, multipolarity, and regional reconfiguration by showing how flows of goods and infrastructures together restructure power relations across Asia.

Keywords: Critical Minerals, Connectivity, India, Türkiye, Energy Transition

**Energy Security and Transit Dependency:
A Comparative Analysis of China and the European Union**

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Abstract

Global energy trade is increasingly dependent on a limited number of strategic maritime chokepoints, such as the Strait of Malacca, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Suez Canal–Bab el-Mandeb corridor. These narrow passages constitute critical nodes in the flow between energy-producing regions and consumption markets. For this reason, energy security is no longer solely a matter of access to resources. It is also directly linked to the stability and control of transit routes. Despite this, the literature largely approaches energy security through supply diversification. The structural dimension of transit vulnerabilities remains insufficiently explained. This study addresses this gap by comparatively analyzing the energy security strategies of China and the European Union (EU). Its central argument is that, despite diversification policies, transit vulnerabilities do not disappear but are reconfigured in different forms. Methodologically, the study employs qualitative document analysis based on policy documents, strategic reports, and energy data. The findings reveal two distinct strategies. China seeks to reduce risks by developing land-based energy corridors and pipelines. The EU, by contrast, relies on market-based diversification and increased LNG imports. However, the outcome does not fundamentally change. China remains highly dependent on the Strait of Malacca. The EU exhibits a more geographically dispersed, yet persistent, pattern of transit dependency. These findings suggest that energy security should be conceptualised not as the elimination of dependency, but as its redistribution. Ultimately, transit geopolitics continues to play a decisive role in shaping the global energy order.

Keywords: Critical Energy Maritime Transit Routes, China, European Union, Strait of Hormuz, Strait of Malacca, Arctic

Moving Beyond Territorial Defence: Reconceptualising Security Through Energy in Contemporary Conflicts

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Abstract

This abstract aims to present the evolving nature of security in the context of contemporary global conflicts with an investigation of how its scope has expanded from traditional military concerns to other issue areas such as primarily energy. It is argued that the traditional territorial defense-based approach to security is insufficient in addressing security in a comprehensive sense. In today's interdependent order, limiting security to state sovereignty overlooks the dependencies that affect the everyday life of people. Energy is among the most important of these domains as it directly affects heating, electricity, transportation, food production and affordability of basic goods. The argument is supported through two conflict cases that display how armed confrontation produces security concerns not only beyond the battlefield but also the parties involved in the war. In the cases of Russia-Ukraine and US-Israel-Iran, it is possible to observe that energy is located as an element that spreads into civilian life. The war in Ukraine demonstrates how attacks on energy infrastructure and deterioration of relations with Russia causes insecurity that spreads to a wider region. This insecurity has manifested itself in household shortages, price increases and disrupted access to essential services while states have faced pressure to secure alternative suppliers and stabilize domestic markets.

Similarly, the US-Israel war on Iran presents how military confrontation in an energy rich and energy connected region could create insecurity beyond the borders with the presence of threat of supply disruption, price volatility and uncertainty in global energy markets. Even if energy infrastructure is not the target, which is the target in these cases, the possibility of an escalation affects consumers beyond the immediate war zone. Therefore, it could be argued that these two cases reveal a common pattern that in today's world, energy insecurity is a primary consequence

of contemporary conflict. Through a presentation of these two cases together, this abstract claims that security analysis needs to move beyond a territorial paradigm and adopt a more comprehensive approach encompassing interdependence and vulnerability that ultimately affect ordinary people in and out of war zones. Energy security needs to be regarded as a core component of security architecture almost anywhere in the world due to its power in shaping social and economic stability and political legitimacy. Such a reconceptualization is necessary especially because contemporary wars are not only fought over through territory but also through systems that sustain everyday life.

Keywords: Energy, Security, Interdependence, Russia–Ukraine War, U.S.–Israel–Iran Conflict,

**Canal Istanbul:
The Political Construction of Infrastructural Sovereignty**

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Abstract

The Canal Istanbul Project, which provides an alternative maritime transportation route to the Istanbul Strait, is being implemented to reduce congestion in the strait and ensure that maritime transportation is safe, fast, and economical. The project, which came to public attention in 2011 with an announcement by then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as a "crazy project," has since appeared at rallies, in election declarations, in government programs, and in various official documents. This study aims to reveal how the Canal Istanbul Project has been addressed in Turkey's political discourse since 2011, whether it has undergone a discursive transformation, and the role of these factors in the project's legitimacy. The study's dataset comprises election declarations and politicians' public statements published before general elections in Turkey between 2011 and 2026, as well as government programs and official documents of governments formed after the elections. These texts will be examined comparatively, focusing on two different periods. These periods are divided into Period I (2011-2018) and Period II (2018-2026). This classification is based on the years in which general elections have been held, from 2011—when the Canal Istanbul Project first came to public attention—to the present day. The data collected within the scope of this study will be subjected to critical discourse analysis. Within this scope, the first step will be to identify the key concepts used in election declarations, public statements by politicians, government programs, and official documents regarding the Canal Istanbul Project. Next, the transformation between the discourse and the texts in question will be examined with a focus on the identified key concepts as well. Thus, by determining whether a discursive transformation has taken place, this will be presented its role in establishing the project's legitimacy.

Keywords: Canal Istanbul Project, Infrastructural Sovereignty, Election Declarations, Government Programs

Saudi Arabia's Multi-Alignment Strategy in the New Cold War: Strategic Autonomy across Green Energy and Digital Infrastructure

Emre Demir

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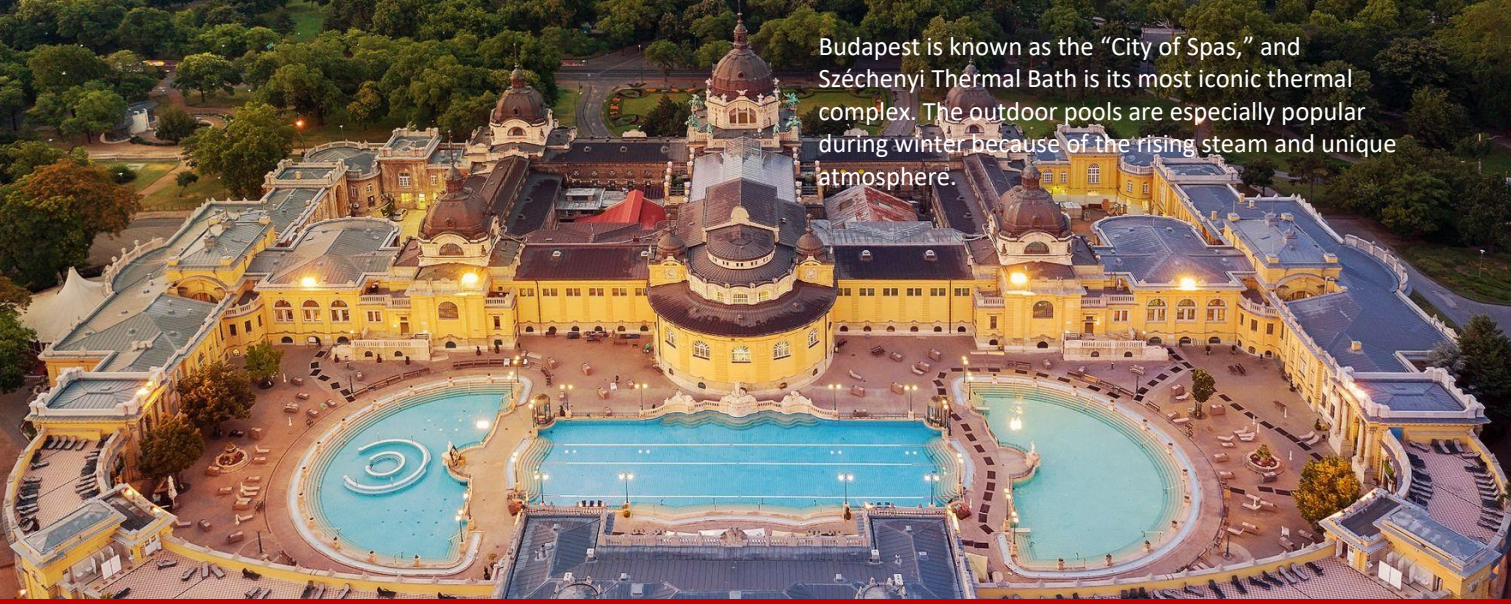
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Abstract

This article examines Saudi Arabia's multi-alignment strategy in the context of the emerging US-China rivalry. As the international order has become increasingly fragmented, middle and regional powers have gained greater room for maneuver. Building on the literature on strategic autonomy, the article argues that Saudi Arabia has responded to great power competition by selectively engaging multiple power centers rather than committing to exclusive alignments. Empirically, the article focuses on Saudi Arabia's green energy and digital technology sectors, two domains central both to Vision 2030 and to contemporary great power competition. It shows that in the green energy sector, Saudi Arabia has aligned closely with China, whose dominance in renewable manufacturing and construction expertise has made Chinese firms critical partners in the Kingdom's energy transition. By contrast, Saudi Arabia's digital strategy reflects a more calibrated form of multi-alignment. While Chinese firms have played a foundational role in developing digital infrastructure and smart city projects, Riyadh has simultaneously deepened cooperation with US technology firms in areas where China lags, particularly advanced semiconductors and high-end AI computing. The article demonstrates that multi-alignment operates as the primary mechanism through which Saudi Arabia pursues strategic autonomy under conditions of systemic rivalry.

Keywords: China, the United States, Saudi Arabia, Green Energy, Digital Infrastructure, New Cold War

Budapest is known as the “City of Spas,” and Széchenyi Thermal Bath is its most iconic thermal complex. The outdoor pools are especially popular during winter because of the rising steam and unique atmosphere.



Panel 10 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanácsterem Political Theory, Biopolitics and Digital Age Challenges

WEDNESDAY // 8 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Rashed Daher, Eötvös Loránd University (*In Person*)

- **Governing Reproduction in the Stagnant Era:
Biopolitics and Governmentality in China's Three-Child Policy**
Pengfei Xu
University of Manchester (*Online*)
- **Artificial Intelligence in Care Work**
Anna Ujlaki
Eötvös Loránd University (*In Person*)
- **Faith as Data?
The Ontology of Religious Data and Its Implications for (In)Equality in the Digital Age**
Judit Lenke Tóth
University of Pécs (*In Person*)
- **When Origins Eclipse Ideals:
Rethinking Equality in the Context of Universal Values**
Saliha Mazlum
Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University (*In person*)
- **Suspended Legal Subjects:
Structural Liminality of Migrant Workers and the Normative Response of Common Good
Constitutionalism**
Tzu-Yu Chiou
Hsuan Chuang University (*Online*)

Discussant: István Dávid Váczy, Eötvös Loránd University (*In Person*)

Governing Reproduction in the Stagnant Era: Biopolitics and Governmentality in China's Three-Child Policy

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Abstract

Since the 2015 end of the one-child policy and the 2021 three-child policy, the Chinese state has faced a deepening demographic crisis: fertility rate fell to 5.63% in 2025, the lowest since 1949. This paper examines how the government has shifted from coercive population control to a subtle biopolitical regime aimed at boosting reproduction. Drawing on Foucault's concepts of governmentality and biopolitics, it argues that the state now treats family, marriage and fertility as governable objects, deploying a composite of legal, economic and discursive techniques to embed population goals into everyday intimate life. Through textual and discourse analysis of central policy documents, official speeches, propaganda materials and local implementation guidelines, the paper analyses four key measures: (1) the 30-day divorce cooling-off period as a temporal disciplinary technology that raises the cost of "impulsive" divorce; (2) the campaign against high bride prices as an economic de-commodification strategy that lowers marriage entry barriers; (3) universal cash child-rearing subsidies as a price-guiding mechanism that frames childbearing as rational homo economicus calculation; and (4) the construction of "new marriage and childbearing culture" as a moral subjectivation technique that recodes fertility as patriotic virtue and personal fulfilment. These measures collectively constitute a micro-physics of power that operates indirectly: instead of direct coercion, the state designs environments that make stable marriage, earlier childbearing and higher fertility appear as individuals' own rational and moral choices. The paper concludes that this represents a distinct "Chinese-style governmentality" in which neoliberal responsibilisation merges with authoritarian coordination and revived Confucian family ethics. While short-term data show modest success, structural gender inequalities and opportunity costs remain unaddressed, revealing both the sophistication and inherent limits of the regime's reproductive governance.

Keywords: Overnmentality, Biopolitics, Three-Child Policy, China

Artificial Intelligence in Care Work

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Abstract

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly taking over some roles traditionally held by humans, its ethical implications demand careful examination. Much of the current social science discourse on AI seems to be divided between two main approaches: one that emphasizes the regulation of AI to mitigate its risks, and another that highlights AI's instrumental benefits to society. However, this presentation explores a third, underexamined approach: what I term the integration-centered approach. In this framework, AI is neither simply a tool to be regulated nor a mere instrument that is useful, but an agent that fundamentally reshapes human relationships and roles. I focus on how AI can be integrated into socio-political relations, using the domain of care work to illustrate how AI transforms our understanding of human vulnerability, inequality, and power dynamics. Care work, formerly carried out by women in the private sphere, is particularly illustrative due to its intrinsic links to exploitation, domination, and gendered dynamics, as demonstrated by both theoretical and empirical research. A key question is whether the introduction of AI in caregiving, now seen as a public problem due to the challenges of ageing societies—whether as assistive technology, humanoid robots, or otherwise—can reduce or perpetuate the inequalities inherent in care relationships. The presentation shows that the delegation of caregiving tasks to AI does not automatically resolve issues of inequality. On the contrary, even in scenarios where AI fully assumes caregiving roles, gender inequalities and power imbalances persist. Finally, I will explain why mistreatment of care robots in care contexts should be understood as a serious ethical concern.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Social Robots, Gender, Global Care Chains, Political Theory

Faith as Data?

The Ontology of Religious Data and Its Implications for (In)Equality in the Digital Age

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Abstract

Religious belief is classified as a special category of personal data under Article 9 of the GDPR, yet the concept of “religious data” remains ontologically undefined. This paper argues that this is not merely a conceptual gap, but a structural problem that shapes how data-driven systems produce and reproduce inequality in digital societies. The analysis builds on a fundamental distinction between data and information. While data is typically structured, formalised, and empirically observable, information is meaning-based and context-dependent. Religious belief occupies a liminal position between these categories: it is not merely descriptive, but expresses identity, interpretation, and a relation to transcendence. Treating faith as data therefore entails an unavoidable reduction with both epistemological and normative consequences.

The central claim of the paper is that religious data constitutes a distinct, meaning-based category that cannot be fully reduced to empirical data structures. To substantiate this, the paper distinguishes between explicit, contextual, and inferential forms of religious data. While explicit religious data is directly disclosed, contextual data emerges from participation and practice, and inferential data is constructed through behavioural patterns and digital traces. In digital environments, religious identity is increasingly not collected but inferred. The paper argues that this shift transforms religious belief into something progressively visible, classifiable, and governable. As a result, faith becomes not only a matter of personal conviction but also an object of data-driven categorisation. This transformation is particularly significant within systems of digital government and data governance, where decision-making increasingly relies on inferred attributes and classification mechanisms. The paper contends that emerging inequalities are not primarily the result of intentional discrimination, but of the structural logic of data categorisation

itself. Religious identity, once translated into data, becomes embedded in systems that shape visibility, access, and control. The paper concludes that recognising the ontological specificity of religious data is essential for defining the normative limits of data governance. Without such recognition, data-driven systems risk extending beyond their legitimate scope, potentially undermining the protection of freedom of religion in digital societies.

Keywords: Religious Data, Data Ontology, Data Vs Information, Inference, Digital Governance, Sensitive Personal Data, Inequality.

When Origins Eclipse Ideals: Rethinking Equality in the Context of Universal Values

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Abstract

Debates on universal values often focus less on what these values mean and more on where they come from. Equality is a clear example of this. The concepts of universality and universal values are frequently associated with colonialism, imposition, and imperialism, which leads some discussions to focus solely on the origins of certain universal values such as equality. This situation prevents the essence of these concepts from being adequately discussed and causes debates to shift toward different axes, even though these values present an ideal framework. In many contexts, discussions tend to focus not on whether equality is a desirable moral ideal, but on whether it is a concept belonging to the West, whether it reflects external pressures, or whether it transforms local traditions. As a result, the debate moves away from the ethical content of equality and instead turns toward its political and historical background. This study argues that contemporary debates on equality point to a broader problem of a shift in focus. Equality, at its core, means that human beings possess equal moral worth, have equal status before the law, and are protected against discrimination. These principles are widely accepted across different societies.

However, public and political debates often evaluate equality primarily through its origins and its geopolitical connotations. In this way, the discussion shifts from the question "Can equality be morally justified?" to the question "To whom does equality belong as a value?" Such an approach risks falling into an error known in philosophy as the genetic fallacy. The essence of this fallacy lies in evaluating the validity of an idea solely by looking at its origin. The fact that equality was historically institutionalized in Western political thought does not determine its moral value. Origins may explain how a norm emerged, but they do not determine whether it is ethically defensible. Confusing genealogy with justification conceptually obscures

the debate. This study does not deny that universal values emerge within historical and political processes. Nor does it ignore the power asymmetries involved in the global diffusion of norms. However, it argues that criticisms focusing solely on origin and political diffusion can overshadow the independent normative evaluation of the value itself. The fact that equality was formulated in the West does not make it culturally exclusive to the West. By placing the moral content of equality back at the center of the discussion, this study aims to contribute to a more constructive debate on universal values. Accordingly, equality should be evaluated primarily not according to its historical source, but according to its normative coherence and moral justification. Such an approach would allow discussions in different contexts to engage more directly with the ethical content of universal ideals and prevent debates from being confined solely to the question of origins.

Keywords: Values, Universal Values, Equality, Origin of Values, Genetic Fallacy

Suspended Legal Subjects: Structural Liminality of Migrant Workers and the Normative Response of Common Good Constitutionalism

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Abstract

Migrant workers occupy a structurally liminal position within contemporary legal orders: neither full citizens nor residents entitled to equal protection, they are suspended at the margins of formal institutional frameworks and rendered persistently vulnerable to what Philip Pettit terms "domination." This paper argues that such liminality is not an incidental policy failure, but a structural product of the classificatory politics embedded in prevailing constitutional orders — a politics that determines and continually re-determines who counts as a protected subject. Drawing on Common Good Constitutionalism (CGC) as its central theoretical framework, this paper examines Taiwan's Employment Service Act and related administrative regulations to analyse how migrant workers are systematically excluded from effective protection of fundamental labour rights through iterative legal reproduction. The resulting condition of legal suspension is not a transitory stage en route to integration, but a durable and self-reinforcing structural norm — one that resonates with this Symposium's concern with liminality as a constitutive, rather than exceptional, condition of global politics. The paper further argues that CGC's theory of affirmative legislative obligation offers a normative basis for disrupting this structure: legislators cannot evade protective responsibilities through passive inaction, and constitutional orders must actively incorporate migrant workers as beneficiaries of the common good. Through a Taiwan–India comparative framework, the paper reveals how cross-border labour mobility produces analogous liminal subjectivities across distinct legal regimes and advances a methodological reflection on integrating liminality theory into constitutional jurisprudence.

Keywords: Liminality, Migrant Workers, Common Good, Constitutionalism, Domination, Affirmative Legislative Obligation



Eger Castle is historically significant for resisting the Ottoman siege of 1552. Today, it serves as a museum complex and one of Hungary's most important historical attractions.

Panel 11 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Middle East Conflicts and Regional Hegemony

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: László Csicsmann, Corvinus University of Budapest *(In Person)*

- **Religion or Ethnicity, Which Comes First:
The Case of Iran Since 1979**
Taner Zorbay
Middle East Technical University *(In Person)*
- **Why States React:
Motivational Patterns in the Gaza Conflict**
Ajtay Gabriella Janka
Ludovika University of Public Administration *(Online)*
- **Regional Hegemony in the Middle East and the Yemen Conflict:
Strategic Competitions of Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates**
Ibrahim Akkan
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University *(In Person)*
- **The US-Israel Wars on Iran:
Causes, War Strategies and Implications**
Syed Adnan Athar Bukhari
Quaid-i-Azam University *(In Person)*
- **Deterrence Failure in the Gray Zone:
A Neoclassical Realist Account of the 2025-2026 Iran Escalation**
Adrián López Fleming and Hani Anouti
University of Barcelona / Geneva Business School and Pompeu Fabra University *(In Person)*

Discussant: Attila Joós, Eötvös Loránd University *(In Person)*

Religion or Ethnicity, Which Comes First: The Case of Iran Since 1979

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Abstract

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 ended not only a regime that lasted for decades but also brought a new actor into world politics. Since then, the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) has been an active regional and international power that everyone has an eye on it. With a constitution based on the Qur'an, the Muslim Holy Book, IRI rules over millions of people with different ethnic backgrounds. Here comes the question of our study, focusing on IRI, whether religion or ethnicity matters for people of a country, and what dynamics have an impact on the structure of a state in the case of IRI. By answering these questions, one hopes to understand the current situation in IRI and the ongoing conflict between IRI and the US-Israel coalition. Our paper starts with a theoretical framework, as well as the main questions and terminology that shape our topic. Then it continues with a brief historical background of the IRI. Following this, our paper examines how religion and ethnicity are structured and appear both at the state and public levels. Also, we will examine the means or apparatus of the Islamic regime while interpreting religion and ethnicity in daily life. Laws and regulations, education, status of women, rights and liberties, opportunities of the public to reach public and private sources regarding religious and ethnic background, status, and the current situation of minorities will be briefly examined in our paper.

Our paper will also examine IRI's regional and global foreign relations, as well as the dynamics of its foreign policy initiatives, focusing on preferences and/or choices based on religious or ethnic priorities of Iranian officials. With recent intervention into the Middle East and conflict with Iran, one can argue that, after Vietnam and Iraq, the US opened Pandora's box, and not only the MENA region but also regional and global balances are shattered once again. Neither Iran seems to be an easy target, nor the US-Israel coalition might get sufficient international public support from

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regional and global actors. The case of the Gulf countries, as well as the Gaza conflict and those of Lebanon and Yemen, seems to have received more international attention/reaction ever since. That is why we aim to lay out our future projections on the topic, and we hope this paper will lead to further studies and a better understanding of the whole matter for readers and researchers in the field.

Keywords: Islamic Republic of Iran, Middle East, Religion, Ethnicity, US-Israel Coalition, Peace and Security

Why States React: Motivational Patterns in the Gaza Conflict

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to collect, compare, and interpret the diplomatic reactions to the Israeli conflict that erupted on 7 October 2023. The paper briefly outlines the historical background of the conflict, then examines the events between 7 October 2023 and 25 January 2025 through a comparative analytical framework, focusing on the responses of international organizations, regional powers, and major global actors. The central research question explores what patterns and differences can be identified in the reactions of various international actors, and how these responses reflect distinct strategic motivations, political constraints, and normative positions. By comparing the behavior of regional and global actors, the study highlights divergences in priorities, consistency, and effectiveness in addressing the conflict. The paper analyses diplomatic developments, mediation efforts, and both successful and unsuccessful ceasefire attempts, with particular attention to how different actors contribute to or hinder conflict de-escalation. It also evaluates the balance between symbolic and material actions in international responses. The research is based on a wide range of sources, including official reports, government documents, United Nations resolutions, statements by international organizations, as well as expert analyses and academic literature.

Keywords: Middle East, Israel-Gaza war, Crisis Diplomacy, Conflict of Interests, International Reactions, Patterns of Reaction

Regional Hegemony in the Middle East and the Yemen Conflict: Strategic Competitions of Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

The Yemen conflict, ongoing since 2014, has evolved into a complex and protracted war, which has become an arena of competition for regional hegemony in the Middle East. This article uses a Neoclassical Realist framework to analyse how three regional actors, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), have used the Yemen conflict as a strategic platform to become regional hegemons. At the systemic level, the fragmentation of the regional order after the Arab Spring and the relative decline of US influence in the region have created opportunities for middle powers to increase their influence. Iran had the opportunity to expand its regional influence by supporting the Houthis in the Yemen conflict. Saudi Arabia has responded with direct military action and is leading a coalition to re-establish an internationally recognised government. The UAE, although initially a partner in the Saudi-led coalition, has gradually shifted its goals to geopolitical and economic influence in southern Yemen by supporting separatist forces. Using qualitative content analysis from official government documents, international reports and academic literature, this study analyses the struggle for regional hegemony in the Middle East. The findings show that all three actors (Saudi Arabia, Iran and UAE) try to maximise their influence through military, ideological and economic means, but none has achieved comprehensive power over the others. By focusing on this highly contested area, this article contributes to broader discussions on regional hegemony, multipolarity and anarchy in the post-Arab Spring Middle East.

Keywords: Yemen Conflict, Regional Hegemony, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE

The US-Israel Wars on Iran: Causes, War Strategies and Implications

Syed Adnan Athar Bukhari

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Abstract

The US-Israel ongoing war against Iran, launched on 28th February 2026, has no end in sight. The joint military operations, including the US Operation Epic Fury and Israel's Operation Roaring Lion, are aimed at dismantling and destroying the Iranian nuclear program, its conventional capabilities and proxy networks, and changing the regime in Iran and bringing one that aligns with the US-Israel interests. Importantly, both states carried out offensive actions against Iran in 2025 through a 12-day war (codenamed as Israel's Operation Rising Lion and the US Operation Midnight Hammer) that were aimed to cripple Iran's nuclear program. In both wars, the US-Israel operations are a mix of lethal kinetic means involving air and missile strikes, and non-kinetic means including cyberattacks and intelligence operations. The 2026 war has regional and global implications, with air traffic disruptions, increasing oil prices and turmoil across the region. Iran has been responding to the US-Israel attacks under its counter-offensives, "Wada-e-Sadiq (True Promise 4)" by targeting the US bases in Gulf states, including Bahrain, the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, its naval assets and missile and drone strikes against Israel, and choking the Strait of Hormuz. The fundamental questions that this paper will try to address are: why do the US and Israel attack Iran? How the US and Israel are attacking under Operation Epic Fury and Operation Roaring Lion; How is Iran responding under "Wada-e-Sadiq (True Promise 4)" as it is engaged in asymmetric and attrition warfare? What is Iran's nuclear controversy that is considered the underlying cause of the conflict? If the war is limited only to nuclear controversy? How much has this war cost so far for both sides? Does the death of Ali Khamenei mean regime change? The paper will also assess the response of regional and extra-regional actors to this war. Last but not least, how can this war end?

Keywords: Iran War, Operation Epic Fury, Iran Nuclear Controversy, Asymmetric War, True Promise

Deterrence Failure in the Gray Zone: A Neoclassical Realist Account of the 2025-2026 Iran Escalation

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Abstract

This paper examines the ultimate failure of Iran's asymmetric deterrence strategy, which led to direct military confrontation with Israel and the United States during the June 2025 "Second Imposed War" and the ongoing 2026 Iran war. For two decades, Tehran relied on a triad of forward-deployed proxy networks, ballistic missile proliferation, and maritime coercion. The goal was to deter the U.S. and Israel through punishment, managing confrontation within the "gray zone" below conventional war. Why did this integrated strategy ultimately fail to prevent a direct military clash? Using process tracing and the Neoclassical Realism framework, this study isolates the causal mechanisms that drove the escalation, ending in a combined Israeli-American attack on Iran. Specifically, we trace how the stabilized balance of power was destabilized by the operational dismantlement of Hezbollah and the attrition of Iranian military capabilities in the "Second Imposed War." We then analyze how these power shifts were interpreted by Israeli and American elites. The premise is that Iran's reliance on the IRGC - Quds Force (IRGC-QF) and the Axis of Resistance was intended to maximize plausible deniability and maintain strict escalation control. By analyzing the concurrent use of proxies, missile strikes, and maritime coercion, the analysis shows they generated an intolerable aggregate threat perception for adversaries, as this deterrence was calibrated to strike directly against Political and Strategic Centers of Gravity (COGs). Ultimately, we conclude that dismantling Hezbollah removed Tehran's primary asymmetric shield, exposing the structural limits of the principal-agent model. Since Iran was forced to rely on indigenous capabilities degraded in the June 2025 conflict, it lost the strategic utility of the gray zone. Stripped of a credible deterrent, this overextended architecture incentivized dominant adversaries to initiate conventional preemption rather than concede to political accommodation.

Keywords: Neoclassical Realism, Deterrence, Iran, Proxies, Axis of Resistance



Esztergom Basilica is the largest church in Hungary and a major center of the Hungarian Catholic Church. Its monumental dome dominates the skyline along the Danube River.

Panel 12 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Education, Labour and Political Economy

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Tamas Dudlak, *Eötvös Loránd University (In Person)*

- **Reimagining Political Science Education:
A Proposal for a Student-Centred Simulation Model**
Ekrem Ok
Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University & Cesran International (In Person)
- **Globalisation and Higher Education Policy: Convergence, Diversity, and Strategic
Management Challenges in the Cases of Germany, France, and Georgia**
Maka Benashvili and Tamar Tsertsvadze
Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University and Caucasus University (In Person)
- **Graduate Unemployment in the Modern Labour Market:
Causes, Challenges, and Possible Solutions**
Susan Aslanova
Baku State University (In Person)
- **Rural Tourism in Uttar Pradesh:
Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy Framework**
Shweta-Mishra and Aradhana Misra
Ambalika Institute of Management and Technology (In Person)
- **Criminal State Capture in Transitional Russia:
A Subnational Analysis of State-Gang Integration (1990–2010)**
Anna Kirsanova
Pioneer Academics (Online)

Discussant: Stephen Roddy, *University of San Francisco (In Person)*

Reimagining Political Science Education: A Proposal for a Student-Centred Simulation aModel Assistant Professor

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Abstract

In an ever-changing and increasingly complex world, higher education teaching methods are undergoing a transformation, shifting from traditional, lecture-based, and instructor-centered structures toward student-centered, activity-based models. As a result of this transformation, it is emphasized that traditional lecturing alone is no longer sufficient. Particularly in the social sciences, which deal with abstract concepts, there is a growing need for hybrid instructional designs that facilitate active student engagement and the development of critical thinking skills. However, the fundamental challenge in this transformation is translating theoretical knowledge into practice. While theories in the applied sciences can be tested in laboratory environments, such opportunities are highly limited in the social sciences. In this context, it is argued that simulations function as laboratories for social science students. As in a physics experiment, simulations enable students to manipulate variables and experience complex social processes first-hand. Built upon these theoretical and pedagogical foundations, the "Leak Protocol" simulation aims to teach concepts such as "intra-party crisis", "information asymmetry", and "political manipulation"- which are often addressed at an abstract level in political science class-through a hands-on experience. Because traditional teaching methods are inadequate for conveying such complex and dynamic processes, this study aims to contribute to the political science education literature by enabling students to directly experience the limits of rational decision-making during moments of crisis and uncertainty, as well as the impact of trust erosion on group dynamics. To this end, this study discusses the pedagogical value of simulation-based teaching methods in political science and international relations education and details the design of the "Leak Protocol" simulation developed for this purpose.

Keywords: Political Science Education, Simulation, Active Learning, Decision-Making Processes, Decision-Making

Globalisation and Higher Education Policy: Convergence, Diversity, and Strategic Management Challenges in the Cases of Germany, France, and Georgia

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Abstract

Globalisation has profoundly reshaped higher education systems by intensifying cross-border policy interactions, accelerating the diffusion of governance models, and redefining institutional priorities. In contemporary international studies, higher education is increasingly understood not only as a national policy domain but also as a strategic component of the global knowledge economy and an important actor within broader governance structures. This paper examines how globalisation influences higher education policy through the dual processes of convergence and diversity, and how these dynamics generate strategic management challenges across different national systems. The study adopts a qualitative comparative research design, focusing on three countries: Germany, France, and Georgia, which represent distinct governance traditions and varying levels of institutional capacity. Germany exemplifies a decentralised and autonomy-oriented model, characterised by strong institutional coordination and a high degree of academic self-governance. France represents a historically centralised and state-led system, where governance reforms have gradually introduced managerial practices while maintaining significant state control. Georgia, in contrast, reflects a reform-driven and transitional system that has undergone rapid transformation since the early 2000s, largely influenced by Europeanisation processes, including participation in the Bologna Process and integration into the European Higher Education Area.

The analysis draws on qualitative data from national policy documents, international reports, and scholarly literature to explore how global pressures, such as internationalisation, performance-based governance, and policy harmonization shape higher education systems. These pressures contribute to increasing convergence in governance frameworks, quality assurance mechanisms, and institutional strategies. However, the study also highlights the persistence of diversity rooted in historical legacies, regulatory environments, and institutional cultures. Central to this analysis is the concept of institutional capacity, understood as the ability of higher education institutions to design, implement, and sustain effective policies and strategic initiatives. The findings suggest that while globalisation

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promotes a degree of policy convergence across all three cases, their capacity to respond strategically varies significantly. Germany demonstrates strong institutional capacity and effective coordination between governance levels, enabling adaptive and coherent strategic management. France exhibits a hybrid model in which centralised governance structures coexist with emerging managerial practices, leading to incremental but uneven transformation. Georgia, despite achieving high levels of formal alignment with European standards, faces ongoing challenges related to limited institutional capacity, fragmented governance practices, and gaps between policy adoption and implementation. This highlights the complexities of policy transfer in transitional contexts, where imported models are not always fully embedded in local institutional realities. The paper contributes to contemporary debates in international studies by demonstrating that globalisation does not eliminate institutional diversity but reshapes it within new governance and strategic management frameworks. It argues that effective strategic management is essential for mediating the relationship between global policy trends and national contexts. The study offers practical insights for policymakers and higher education leaders on how to balance global integration with context-sensitive governance in order to enhance institutional performance and long-term sustainability.

Keywords: Higher Education Policy, Globalisation, Governance, Strategic Management, Institutional Capacity, Policy Convergence

Graduate Unemployment in the Modern Labor Market: Causes, Challenges, and Possible Solutions

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Abstract

Graduate unemployment has become an increasingly significant socio-economic issue in many countries. Despite the expansion of higher education and the growing number of university graduates, many young professionals face serious challenges in entering the labor market. One of the main reasons for this problem is the mismatch between higher education outcomes and labor market demands. Universities often focus on theoretical knowledge, while employers prioritize practical skills, work experience, and professional competencies. Another important factor contributing to graduate unemployment is the lack of practical training opportunities during university education. Many graduates complete their studies without sufficient hands-on experience, making it difficult for them to compete in a highly competitive labor market. In addition, the rapid increase in the number of graduates in certain fields has led to an oversupply of qualified individuals, while the number of available positions remains limited. Furthermore, modern employers increasingly expect graduates to possess a wide range of skills, including digital literacy, critical thinking, communication abilities, and foreign language proficiency. When these competencies are insufficiently developed, graduates may struggle to secure employment. This paper aims to analyze the main factors contributing to graduate unemployment and to highlight the importance of aligning higher education systems with labor market needs. Strengthening cooperation between universities and industries, increasing internship opportunities, and focusing on skill-based education may help reduce graduate unemployment and facilitate a smoother transition from education to employment.

Keywords: Graduate Unemployment, Labor Market Mismatch, Higher Education, Employability Skills, Youth Employment

**Rural Tourism in Uttar Pradesh:
Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy Framework**

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Abstract

Rural tourism has emerged as a significant tool for inclusive growth, cultural preservation, and sustainable development in India. Uttar Pradesh (UP), one of India's most populous and culturally rich states, has increasingly focused on developing rural tourism as part of its tourism strategy. This research paper examines the scope, government initiatives, economic potential, and challenges of rural tourism in Uttar Pradesh. Using recent data from government and policy reports, the study highlights how rural tourism can contribute to employment generation, infrastructure development, and cultural revitalisation.

Keywords: Rural Tourism, Economic Potential, Employment Generation, Uttar Pradesh

Criminal State Capture in Transitional Russia: A Subnational Analysis of State-Gang Integration (1990–2010)

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Abstract

In some countries, organised crime groups ally with and integrate into the state. A specific instance of such collaboration occurred in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, during the country's tumultuous transition to a democratic form of government and mixed economy. The 1990s to 2010s saw a sharp increase in the activity of organised crime groups in urban and rural areas. However, the research on the variation in the extent of state-gang collaboration across Russia is limited.

The main objective of this qualitative study is to determine why organised crime groups in Russia allied with and integrated into state structures to different extents. Drawing on the information from Russian newspapers published between 1990 and 2010, it assesses the case studies of three organised groups that operated in different geographical locations. The collected data is tested against the hypothesis that the existence of a profitable market with entrepreneurial activity and a weak local government, combined with an incentive for the criminal group to exploit inefficiencies in the state, leads to an increased state-gang collaboration. The comparative analysis revealed that although the market and state weakness are the facilitating factors, the number and importance of a gang's incentives ultimately determine the extent of alliance and integration. The chief incentives of Russian organised crime groups included the extraction of resources like money and consumer goods for their own use, as well as the maximisation of profits - reduction of costs and growth of revenue in gangs operating as violent entrepreneurial organisations.

The findings show that organised crime groups may not resort to cooperating with the state if they have other organisations that satisfy their interests, which could include influential businesses or other criminal groups. Moreover, cases with weak state capacity lead to gangs exhibiting more overt, diffuse violence than in places with extensive governmental corruption. Overall, the research paper sheds light on issues of criminal state capture, state-gang collaboration, and the social embeddedness of organised crime groups, adding to the literature on organised crime both conceptually and empirically.

Keywords: Criminal State Capture, Post-Soviet Russia, State-Gang Collaboration, Subnational Comparative Analysis, Criminal Governance, Violent Entrepreneurship



Pécs Cathedral reflects the city's long history dating back to Roman times. The cathedral's four distinctive towers make it one of Hungary's most recognizable religious landmarks.

Panel 13 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Regional Leadership, Hegemony and Non-Western Agency

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: **Taner Zorbay**, *Middle East Technical University (In Person)*

- **Rising Titans?
The Dawn of the Non-Western Agency and the Unfinished Project of a World Order**
Emel Akcali
King's College London (In person)
- **From Demographic Surge to Geopolitical Agency:
Human Capital as the Foundation of Epistemic Sovereignty and Economic Statecraft in Africa**
Pedro Baptista
Minho University (In Person)
- **Trump and Milei and the Theory of Peripheral Realism:
The Politics of Carnal Relations and the Search for Equality Among the Unequal**
Carlos Augusto Martins
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (In Person)
- **Secessionism in Balochistan: Impacts on Neighbouring Countries**
Akanksha Roy and Anwar Shahab
Karim City College (Online)
- **Navigating US-China Technology Competition among Middle Powers:
A Study of Chilean Response**
Andres Bórquez and Dorotea López
University of Chile (In Person)

Discussant: **Adrián López Fleming**, *University of Barcelona / Geneva Business School (In Person)*

Rising Titans?

The Dawn of the Non-Western Agency and the Unfinished Project of a World Order

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Abstract

This paper explores the rise of non-Western agency and its potential to foster a more progressive world order. It maintains that Critical Realism provides the most relevant framework for understanding non-Western agency by bridging the gap between structural determinism and agential potential. This is because the stratified ontology of Critical Realism is well-suited to analyse how actors operate within deep, generative structures that shape the current global order. An examination of the Belt and Road Initiative, Zohran Mamdani, South Africa, and Qatar, demonstrates the causal processes, from normative entrepreneurship to material reimagining, through which non-Western agency emerges today. The findings suggest that, although this agency holds transformative potential through alternative institutions, narratives, practices, and epistemologies, it remains limited by the enduring logics of the global order. The paper concludes that while the non-Western agent is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a more equitable and progressive global order, its realisation depends on addressing internal contradictions and transcending the structures in which this agency is embedded. Nevertheless, the final chapter of this transformative journey has yet to be written, as the constitution of a new world order remains an unfinished project.

Keywords: The Non-Western Agency, the BRI, Zohran Mamdani, South Africa, Qatar, Critical Realism, Global South, Interplural World Order

From Demographic Surge to Geopolitical Agency: Human Capital as the Foundation of Epistemic Sovereignty and Economic Statecraft in Africa

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Abstract

A central paradox in contemporary International Relations and global political economy is the enduring decoupling of Africa's juridical sovereignty from meaningful geopolitical agency. While the continent possesses unprecedented demographic weight—projected to reach 2.5 billion people with the world's largest workforce by 2050—and holds a near-monopoly on critical minerals essential for the green transition, African nations frequently remain passive subjects of, rather than active co-producers in, the global order. This paper argues that the fundamental, yet overlooked, variable determining state agency is human capital. Drawing on UNESCO and World Bank data, we demonstrate that a pervasive developmental crisis—highlighted by a 90% "learning poverty" rate among 10-year-olds in sub-Saharan Africa—undermines both economic transformation and institutional resilience. Consequently, states lack the endogenous epistemic communities required for autonomous statecraft. Bridging critical IR theory with macroeconomic analysis, this paper interrogates how domestic educational failure directly constrains the "epistemic sovereignty" required for effective diplomacy, asymmetric trade negotiations, and moving up global value chains. It concludes that the global economy is dangerously mispricing Africa's demographic trajectory, and that investment in aligned education systems is not merely a soft social policy, but the primary geoeconomic mechanism for converting demographic scale into structural geopolitical power in the 21st century.

Keywords: Global Political Economy, Epistemic Sovereignty, African Agency, Geoeconomics, Demographic Dividend, Critical Minerals

Trump and Milei and the Theory of Peripheral Realism: The Politics of Carnal Relations and the Search for Equality Among the Unequal

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Abstract

The research addresses the geopolitics between Argentina and the United States in the period 2023-2025. A personalist process of alignment that is established between a country in the global south with historical socioeconomic problems and the hegemonic power with clear inclinations towards imperialism. The initial argument is located in the theory of peripheral realism from which the ideal of broad strengthening of relations between States derives from a non-pragmatic policy idealized in the government of Carlos Menem (1989-1999) by then Chancellor Guido Di Tella when he declared that the "carnal love" defended by his government had the purpose of positioning Argentina as a partner in the NAFTA negotiations, which, in theory, would guarantee its entry into industrialization and technology programs (BANDEIRA, 2014: 752).

The theoretical basis for this strategy was peripheral realism, a line of thought according to which International Relations are not anarchic but rather hierarchical. In this sense, there are States that form the rules and others that follow the rules (ESCUDÉ, 1992). During the Menem government, Argentina placed all its chips on a relationship of subordination to US interests with a view to obtaining economic advantages that, in its analysis, would have social repercussions. In the government of Javier Milei, which began in 2023, the historical co-relation established by Hegel and Marx in the work *The Eighteenth Brumaire* of Louis Bonaparte seems to be occurring. While the "carnal love" of the Menem government in the 1990s represented a tragedy, Milei's alignment represents the farcical version or, as Malamud prefers, who sees in Argentine democracy a constant *déjà vu* in which the future looks very much like the past (MALAMUD, 2014:25) The search for a special relationship with the US is confused with a kind of subservience and personalistic adoration of Milei towards Donald Trump. The same was seen in the

Brazilian government of Jair Bolsonaro (2018/2022). In defense of what Milei calls libertarianism, the Argentine government submits international politics to a mimetic version of M.A.G.A. adapted to "Make Argentina Great Again", aligning itself with the agendas of the extreme right against what it calls "woke" culture. In the re-edition of the policy of "carnal love", Milei directs Argentine geopolitics towards allies such as the US and Israel to the detriment of Brazil and China. Historical facts demonstrate that in the case of the Menem government, the search for "carnal love" with the US did not result in significant gains for Argentina, which, despite having made several concessions, did not obtain the gains it considered fair. This was due to Argentina's lack of importance to the US due to the competitive nature of both economies (BANDEIRA, 2014:752-753). In the Milei government, events are still ongoing, and there is no historical distance that would allow a more conclusive analysis of the results in favor of Argentina. However, it is possible to state that beyond the populist rhetoric of both governments, the geoeconomic reality indicates consistent signs that the policy adopted by the current Argentine government is doomed to failure.

Keywords: Realism, Periphery, Argentina, USA

Secessionism in Balochistan: Impacts on Neighbouring Countries

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Abstract

Balochistan as the extensive and most resourceful province of Pakistan has been fighting for its freedom from Pakistan since 1948 itself. Prior to independence and the inception of Pakistan in 1947, Kalot was a princely state under British rule. According to the agreement between the British and Kalot, the sovereignty of Kalot was to be maintained. But the tables turned and the forceful annexation of Kalot by Pakistan in 1948 instigated a feeling of disappointment in the Baloch people. The sovereignty as well as the right to self-determination was violated and the move by Pakistan was termed as treachery by several Balochs. The ethnic group of Balochistan are different from Pakistan in terms of ethnicity. There are cultural and linguistic similarities between Pakistan's Balochistan province and Afghanistan to a greater extent. The Sistan and Balochistan provinces of Iran also have some cultural resemblance to Pakistan's province of Balochistan. The inhabitants of Pakistan's Balochistan province are ethnic Baloch, Pashtuns, Sunni Muslims, Shia Muslims and Hindus. Therefore, ethnicity is also one of the factors contributing to secessionism in Balochistan. Balochistan is immensely rich and a great contributor to Pakistan's economy but unfortunately has always been sidelined in terms of development. The most undervalued province is abundant in Natural gas, iron, gold, petroleum etc but is still indigent. Not only sidelined but Balochistan has always been marginalized in political representation. Presently, secessionism in Balochistan is again in the limelight. Thus, this paper will mainly emphasize on the miseries of Balochistan due to the negligence of Pakistan. In addition to it, the paper will also throw light on the impacts of the secessionist movement in the neighbouring countries.

Keywords: Secessionism, Balochistan, Pakistan, Human Rights, Geopolitical Relations, Geostrategy

Navigating US-China Technology Competition among Middle Powers: A Study of Chilean Response

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Abstract

Amid intensifying US–China rivalry over digital governance, middle powers like Chile face growing pressure to navigate an increasingly fragmented global order. This article examines Chile's response through expert interviews and analysis of three key technology cases involving Chinese firms. The findings show that Chile has adopted a Hedging Strategy, limiting its involvement in sensitive tech projects aligned with US security concerns, while continuing to attract Chinese investment in areas such as electromobility and renewables. The study underscores the combined impact of geopolitical tensions, domestic bureaucratic constraints, and the challenges of engaging with China, whose growing presence still requires a process of mutual adaptation. These dynamics raise questions about Chile's priorities and the limits of its autonomy in this complex context.

Keywords: Chile Foreign Policy, US-China Competition, Middle Powers, Technology Competition



Hollókő is a preserved traditional Hungarian village listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its wooden houses and folk traditions offer visitors a glimpse into rural Hungarian life.

Panel 14 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanácssterem Democracy, Emergency Powers and Civil Society

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Marco Marsili, CEI-Iscte, Portugal *(In Person)*

- **Between Conventional Emergency Management and Exceptionalism:
The European Union's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic**
Yulieth Martinez Villalba
Foreign Policy Observatory - Ministry of Foreign Policy of Colombia (In Person)
- **Democracy under a State of Emergency:
A Comparative Analysis of Symbolic and Discursive Legitimation by Heads of State in
Italy and Germany during Covid-19**
Valeria Carmen Caputo
University of Trieste / University of Udine (Online)
- **Perceptions of Civil Society Activists in Kosovo on the Role of International Military
Presence in Security Governance**
Burim Ramadani
South East European University (Online)
- **The Security Implications of Ideological Stigmatization:
Political Opposition and Asymmetrical Vulnerabilities in Romania**
George-Daniel Nistor
University of Bucharest (In Person)
- **Religious Challenges in the Georgian Socio-Political Environment**
Salome Dundua
Tbilisi State University (In Person)

Discussant: Syed Adnan Athar Bukhari, Quaid-i-Azam University *(In Person)*

Between Conventional Emergency Management and Exceptionalism: The European Union's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

This paper examines the European Union's (EU) response to the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspective of crisis management and emergency politics. It focuses on the European Council, the European Commission, and the Council of the EU, analyzing their interplay and the nature of exceptional emergency measures (EEMs) between 2020 and 2023. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study integrates computational text analysis techniques: large language models (LLMs), Structural Topic Models (STMs), and dictionary-based analysis, alongside a case study of the vaccine export transparency and authorization mechanism. Findings highlight the European Commission's central role in crisis management, challenging the assumption of intergovernmental dominance in crisis decision-making. The study also reveals that, though limited in number, EEMs significantly impacted EU governance by increasing the centralization of decision-making authority in the Commission's hands. These results contribute to discussions on the EU's institutional responses to emergencies, emphasizing the balance between efficiency and democratic accountability.

Keywords: European Union, COVID-19, Exceptionalism, Emergency Management, Emergency Politics

**Democracy under a State of Emergency:
A Comparative Analysis of Symbolic and Discursive Legitimation by Heads of State
in Italy and Germany during Covid-19**

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Abstract

In parliamentary democracies, heads of state are commonly regarded as symbolic guardians of constitutional order and democratic continuity. The Covid-19 pandemic, however, exposed these institutions to a fundamental tension: how to legitimise extensive restrictions on individual freedoms while maintaining fidelity to democratic principles. Rather than approaching this tension solely in institutional or legal terms, this paper conceptualises it as a problem of political communication and symbolic construction. Drawing on Harold Lasswell's insights on political symbols, the study examines how key normative categories—such as freedom, responsibility, solidarity, and constitutional order—are mobilised within presidential discourse to render restrictive measures acceptable and democratically legitimate. In this perspective, symbols are understood not simply as rhetorical devices, but as functional elements that shape the interpretation of political reality and orient collective behaviour.

The paper adopts a comparative research design based on the analysis of presidential addresses delivered by Sergio Mattarella and Frank-Walter Steinmeier during the Covid-19 pandemic. The two cases are selected on the basis of their institutional comparability: from a constitutional and legal perspective, both presidents operate within parliamentary systems and fulfil analogous roles as non-executive heads of state, characterised by limited formal powers but significant symbolic authority. This allows for exploring how similar institutional positions may give rise to different patterns of symbolic legitimation across distinct political and historical contexts. Methodologically, the study employs a mixed approach combining qualitative and quantitative elements of content analysis. The unit of analysis consists of sentences and short textual units in which key normative

concepts are articulated or redefined. These units are systematically coded both in terms of the symbols mobilised (e.g. freedom, responsibility, solidarity) and the functions they perform, in line with a Lasswellian perspective linking symbolic expression to political effects. Alongside interpretive analysis, the study incorporates basic quantitative indicators—such as the frequency and distribution of symbolic categories—to trace patterns and variations across cases and over time. The paper aims to assess whether similar symbolic repertoires are employed across the two cases, and whether these symbols perform comparable functions in legitimising restrictions on individual freedoms, or instead reflect context-specific configurations. By foregrounding the role of symbols in political communication, the study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of how democratic legitimacy is discursively constructed and maintained in times of crisis.

Keywords: Democratic Legitimacy, State of Emergency, Political Symbols, Presidential Discourse, Comparative Politics, Covid-19

Perceptions of Civil Society Activists in Kosovo on the Role of International Military Presence in Security Governance

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Abstract

This paper examines how civil society activists in Kosovo perceive the international military presence, particularly KFOR/NATO, and its impact on security governance, state sovereignty, and institutional capacity. Drawing on a mixed-methods approach that combines structured surveys of 11 active civil society organizations (5.7% of officially active status of registered NGOs) and in-depth interviews with organizational leaders, the study identifies widespread positive sentiment toward international military involvement, while also highlighting concerns regarding transparency and civic-military cooperation. Results indicate that the majority of activists view the international presence as essential for maintaining security and fostering institutional development, yet they call for enhanced local ownership, more open communication channels, and a gradual transition toward local responsibility. Respondents also note the need for continued cooperation. The findings confirm the primary hypothesis that civil society actors perceive the international military presence as beneficial for Kosovo's security landscape and add nuance to secondary hypotheses concerning the scope and nature of that presence. This paper also finds the expressed trust of Kosovo's civil society activists that local security institutions have benefited directly by international military presence up to the operational level of being ready to contribute in peacekeeping operations abroad. By centering the voices of civil society activists, this article contributes empirical evidence to debates on peacekeeping legitimacy, and post-conflict security governance. The study contributes to understanding the role of civil society in assessing the benefits and limitations of international military presence in post-conflict security environment.

Keywords: Kosovo, KFOR, NATO, Civil Society, Security, Peacekeeping

The Security Implications of Ideological Stigmatization: Political Opposition and Asymmetrical Vulnerabilities in Romania

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Abstract

In contemporary democracies, political opposition is increasingly being transformed from a legitimate pillar of governance into an ideologically stigmatized threat. This paper investigates the intersection of domestic political polarization and national security, arguing that the systematic delegitimization of opposition forces creates critical vulnerabilities to asymmetrical threats. Focusing on Romania as a primary case study, this research traces how the extremization of the political opposition concept weakens state resilience in a volatile regional climate. Employing critical discourse analysis and securitization theory, the study examines political and media narratives to demonstrate how domestic stigmatization acts as a threat multiplier. The findings suggest a direct correlation between the intensity of internal polarization and the state's susceptibility to hybrid warfare, cognitive manipulation, and disinformation by hostile actors. Ultimately, this paper concludes that safeguarding the legitimacy of democratic opposition is not merely a political necessity, but a fundamental component of national security.

Keywords: Political Opposition, Ideological Stigmatization, Asymmetrical Threats, National Security, Democratic Resilience, Romania

Religious Challenges in the Georgian Socio-Political Environment

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Abstract

This study aims to determine which factors drive religious conflict between Georgian Muslims and Orthodox Christians: dogmatic and value differences between the religions, or the fear of the dominant religious group that the public performance of religious rituals by the minority will lead to the loss of their dominant position and privileges? The study also aims to analyze the effectiveness of the state's response in the conflict resolution process. The study is based on a qualitative method, namely 'case study'. The work purposefully selects and studies the high-profile religious conflicts in modern Georgia in 2010-2013, in particular those that occurred in the village of Nigvziani, the city of Kobuleti, and the village of Chela between the local Georgian Muslim and Orthodox populations. The study showed that state policy is less focused on resolving religious conflicts at the root and is primarily focused on appeasement rather than in-depth resolution. As a result, the study revealed that state institutions are less able to serve as a neutral "arbitrator" in the regulation of religious conflicts. Despite the adoption of numerous laws, decisions, and regulations by the state at the legislative, formalized level, unresolved or difficult-to-resolve issues persist in practice, hindering mutual acceptance and the perception among ethnically Georgian people of different faiths of themselves as one society. Finally, the research process confirms that the concept of the modern Georgian nation was to some extent based on Orthodox identity, leaving people of other faiths outside the Georgian national identity, and, most of all, the ethnically Georgian but religiously Muslim population

Keywords: Religion, Conflict, Georgia, State, Church



The Tihany Peninsula is famous for its lavender fields, historic abbey, and scenic views over Lake Balaton. It is one of Hungary's most popular summer tourism destinations.

Panel 15 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Maritime Security, Geopolitics and Strategic Projection

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Emel Akcali, *King's College London (In person)*

- **Hormuz and the Illusion of Control:
From the Portuguese Occupation to the Risks of Contemporary U.S. Escalation**
Laércio Eduardo de Araújo
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (In Person)
- **Brazil: Contributions to Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea**
Paula Luz
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (In Person)
- **Projecting Power from the Littorals:
A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Asymmetric Maritime Strategies**
Adrián López Fleming and Jovan Iljev Ciric
University of Barcelona / Geneva Business School and King's College London (In Person)
- **Waterways Security in the Security Complex: A Study of the Red Sea Crisis in Relation to the Gulf States, Egypt, and Yemen (2024-2026)**
Rasha El Baz
New Giza University (In Person)
- **The "New" China's Military Strategy in Africa**
Luís Bernardino
Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (Online)

Discussant: Yulieth Martinez Villalba, *Foreign Policy Observatory - Ministry of Foreign Policy of Colombia (In Person)*

Hormuz and the Illusion of Control: From the Portuguese Occupation to the Risks of Contemporary U.S. Escalation

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Abstract

This article examines the strategic limits of external control over critical maritime chokepoints through a comparative analysis of the Portuguese occupation of Hormuz and the risks associated with a contemporary U.S. escalatory approach in the Strait of Hormuz. The argument does not rest on a simplistic historical equivalence between early modern empire and present-day great-power competition. Instead, it identifies a recurring strategic pattern: outside powers may secure operational access, temporary military superiority, and even prolonged presence in a chokepoint while still failing to produce durable political control, regional legitimacy, and a stable strategic end-state. The Portuguese case is especially instructive because Hormuz was not merely a naval waypoint but a politically embedded commercial node within the Persian Gulf system. Portuguese power first reached Hormuz in 1507, was effectively consolidated in 1515, and lasted until 1622, when Safavid forces, supported by the English, expelled Portugal. The article argues that the central error in Hormuz is the illusion that control of passage automatically yields control of the surrounding political environment. In the contemporary context, a U.S. strategy centered on coercive escalation would operate in a radically different technological and geopolitical setting, yet it could reproduce a similar mistake by overestimating the political utility of military superiority in a chokepoint whose significance derives from its wider regional embeddedness. The comparison is further sharpened by an additional question: whether any externally imposed order in Hormuz can remain stable when it lacks meaningful local or regional consent. The conclusion is that Hormuz repeatedly reveals the limits of domination unsupported by political integration, legitimacy, and a sustainable regional framework.

Keywords: Strait of Hormuz, Portuguese Empire, Maritime Chokepoints, Strategic Overreach, U.S.-Iran Tensions, Coercion and Legitimacy

Brazil: Contributions to Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea

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Abstract

Brazil has been playing an increasingly important role in the Gulf of Guinea, a strategic region on the West African coast rich in energy resources and facing significant maritime security challenges. Brazil's involvement is part of a broader South-South cooperation framework that prioritises historical, cultural, and linguistic ties with African countries, particularly Portuguese-speaking nations. One of Brazil's main contributions to the Gulf of Guinea has been in maritime security. The Brazilian Navy cooperates with African navies through joint exercises, personnel training, and technical support. Notably, the support provided to countries such as Angola, Nigeria, and São Tomé and Príncipe in combating piracy, illicit trafficking, and illegal fishing. This cooperation contributes to strengthening local capacities and regional stability. In addition, Brazil has been promoting diplomatic and institutional capacity-building initiatives, often within the framework of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP). The CPLP serves as a platform for political dialogue and cooperation across defence, education, and maritime governance. The strategic importance of the Gulf of Guinea region lies in its geopolitical and economic position. The region is one of the main maritime transport routes for oil and goods, connecting Africa, Europe, and the Americas. Instability in this area can have global repercussions, affecting supply chains and international energy security. Furthermore, the Gulf of Guinea faces threats such as piracy, terrorism, and transnational crime, underscoring the need for international cooperation. For Brazil, the Gulf of Guinea is part of its "South Atlantic" concept as a priority area for action. Stability in this region is seen as vital to Brazilian maritime security and to the country's role as a global actor. Thus, Brazil's involvement reinforces not only its historical ties with Africa but also its defence and foreign policy strategy. In summary, Brazil's contributions in the Gulf of Guinea reflect a multidimensional approach that combines security, technical cooperation, and diplomacy, highlighting the growing relevance of the Atlantic strategic environment on the international stage.

Keywords: Brazil, Gulf of Guinea, CPLP, Strategic Environment

**Projecting Power from the Littorals:
A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Asymmetric Maritime Strategies**

Adrián López Fleming & Jovan Ilijev Ciric

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Abstract

This paper investigates the future of maritime coercion, examining why and under what circumstances state and non-state actors choose to apply asymmetric or “non-Mahanian” pressure to commercial shipping. Attacking maritime trade incurs significant strategic risks, often generating acute threat perceptions and inviting the pariah status of the aggressor. Why, then, do actors engage in such volatile opposition? This study employs Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to evaluate a series of 20th and 21st-century historical case studies to discern the relative weight of variables such as geography, capacity, objectives, or opportunity within the framework of Neoclassical Realism. We proceed from the assumption that maritime coercion is not pursued for immediate economic profit (e.g. piracy), but as a pragmatic mechanism for strategic gain in an imbalanced power system. By systematically testing critical variables this paper identifies the interactive conditions that make such coercion desirable. Ultimately, we conclude that for actors constrained by inferior conventional military strength, targeting commercial shipping serves as a highly rational, calculated method to project power, disrupt integrated regional economies, and force dominant adversaries into political accommodation. However, under most circumstances, the risks far outweigh the potential benefits. We hypothesize that there are two underlying phenomena that might drive increased reliance on maritime coercion in the future. The first is the radical reduction in costs and in the difficulty of acquiring sufficient means for the coercion (e.g. drones, missiles, targeting systems). The second is the progressive deterioration of the so-called Pax Americana, which would significantly reduce the risks associated with such coercion.

Keywords: Asymmetric Warfare, Maritime Coercion, Qualitative Comparative Analysis, Neoclassical Realism

**Waterways Security in the Security Complex:
A Study of the Red Sea Crisis in Relation with the Gulf States, Egypt, and Yemen
(2024-2026)**

Rasha El Baz

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Abstract

This study examines the role of maritime security as a pivotal linking factor within the "Regional Security Complex Theory" (RSCT) in the Middle East, focusing specifically on the Red Sea crisis and its repercussions between 2024 and 2026. The research addresses a central problem: security threats in the Bab al-Mandab Strait are no longer localized challenges but have evolved into a primary driver deepening "security interdependence" among Egypt, the Gulf states, and Yemen. By applying Barry Buzan's concepts of amity/enmity patterns and the distribution of power, the paper analyzes how drone attacks and non-state actors in Yemen have simultaneously threatened Egyptian national security (Suez Canal) and Gulf strategic security (Vision 2030). This has transformed the waterway into a "security nerve" that organically links the stability of these nations. The findings suggest that the crisis has redrawn the boundaries of the regional security complex by increasing "international penetration" on one hand and stimulating the necessity for an "autonomous" regional security system on the other. The study concludes with a recommendation for a joint security charter to de-escalate maritime corridors from regional conflicts, ensuring the long-term stability of the regional complex.

Keywords: Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), Maritime Security, Red Sea, Security Interdependence

The "New" China's Military Strategy in Africa

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Abstract

The People's Republic of China is recognized by many experts in the current framework of international relations as a global player seeking to assume a global role. China has recently emerged into this reality, as a result of its foreign policy called Going Out Strategy, officially launched in 2001 and more specifically since 2013, as we have seen, after the presentation the Belt and Road Initiative, emerging as an important economic, political, diplomatic, but also security and defense actor, namely in Africa, where its presence is unavoidable and, for many, unquestionable. The presence of Chinese citizens and economic interests in Africa has grown substantially since 2001 due to the expansion of China's trade with African States (and Organizations), financing projects related to the construction of critical infrastructures necessary for the development of these countries, establishing medium-long term strategic partnership economic agreements with clear advantage for Beijing. These partnerships are almost always based on the supply to China of strategic mineral resources, such as oil, natural gas or rare earths (and others) and also the provision of vast plots of land for agricultural production, contributing decisively to the African economy and, increasingly, to Africa's regional and continental security. This model has been designated as Angola mode, for the Portuguese speaking country has been a prime example of how China obtains natural resources while providing loans for construction projects.

Keywords: China, Military Cooperation, Africa, Security and Defence

The Great Reformed Church is the symbolic heart of Hungarian Protestantism. It has also hosted several important political events in Hungarian national history.



Panel 16 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacssterem Geopolitics of the Middle East and Global Order

THURSDAY // 9 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Stephen Roddy, *University of San Francisco (In Person)*

- **Ontological Security and Israel's Search for 'Thick' Recognition**
Karel Franco Valansi
Istanbul Kültür University (Online)
- **What does Israel's Recognition of Somaliland Mean for International System/Order?**
Mehmet Alkış
Dicle University (In Person)
- **The Relationship Between Christian Congregation Membership and the Latent Political Participation Among Overseas Working Filipinos in Doha, Qatar**
Fritz Nathan A. Diaz, Danica Jane A. Araoarao and Danilo D. Tan
University of Santo Tomas and University of Santo Tomas (Online)
- **How China Navigates the Choppy Waters of an Upended World**
Andrew K P Leung
Andrew Leung International Consultants (Online)

Discussant: Marco Marsili, *CEI-Iscte, Portugal (In Person)*

Ontological Security and Israel's Search for 'Thick' Recognition

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Abstract

This paper examines states' need for thin and thick recognition and their influence on foreign policy. Using Israel as its case study, it argues that Israel's need for legitimacy, belonging, and acceptance as a "normal state" in the international system is primarily driven by its ontological security concerns. Israel's self-definition as a Jewish and democratic state and its quest for perpetual security generate contradictions. Its Jewish identity emphasizes its uniqueness while serving as its ideological foundation of becoming a safe haven, a homeland for world Jewry. Israel's democratic identity aligns with universalist values and serves as a commitment to becoming an inclusive state. This study argues that states already have ingrained metanarratives that shape their views of the world, their roles, and their behavior in the international system, helping them navigate ontological insecurities resulting from nonrecognition or misrecognition. Accordingly, Israel swings between three metanarratives; exceptionalism, ghetto mentality, and the Masada complex to reconcile its identity with geopolitical realities. This dissertation also introduces the concepts of "feeling at home" in the international system and "searching for neighbors" as key mechanisms of Israel's foreign policy. Through Israel's relations with its first-tier neighbors (Arab states), its second-tier neighbors (peripheral states), its far neighbors (Western democracies), and international institutions (the UN), this research illustrates how foreign policy functions as an indispensable instrument for ensuring physical and ontological security. This dissertation contributes to International Relations literature by integrating identity and recognition-driven perspectives. It offers a refined understanding of how ontological security shapes states' behavior in contexts of contested legitimacy.

Keywords: Ontological Security, Recognition, Israel, Narrative, Identity

What does Israel's Recognition of Somaliland mean for International System/Order?

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Abstract

This study analyzes Israel's recognition of Somaliland with regard to the international system/order. Somaliland, which is geographically located in the Horn of Africa, is defined as a de facto state due to its possession of a government, constitution, and security forces. Since 1991, Somaliland has been seeking legitimacy and recognition within the international order. As Harvey and Stansfield (2011) point out, the significance of de facto states is influenced by their geopolitical location and resources. However, the independence and recognition efforts of entities such as Somaliland contradict the principle of territorial integrity in the international order. Israel's declaration of recognition is likely to have both global and regional implications. Moreover, statements made by the Trump administration after coming to power in the United States also indicate the global dimensions of the issue. Israel has various motivations for recognizing Somaliland. Somaliland is strategically significant for Israel due to its location in the Horn of Africa and its proximity to the Bab al-Mandab Strait, which connects the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Israel also views Somaliland as a strategic region for countering Iran's influence in Yemen. In addition, it has been claimed that Israel has ill-intentioned ambitions, such as resettling Palestinians in Somaliland. Israel's recognition has also prompted reactions from international actors. States such as the United States, Türkiye, and Somalia, as well as international organizations like the United Nations and the African Union, have expressed diverse responses to this decision. These reactions further reinforce the global and regional implications of the recognition. Since recognition is a political act within the international system, the principles and norms of the international order may be disregarded. The case of Israel's decision demonstrates that recognition functions as a geopolitical and instrumental tool for international actors. In conclusion, this paper argues that the principles and rules of the international order are being changed by power politics, unilateral decisions, and strategic calculations.

Keywords: Somaliland, Recognition, International Order, Israel

The Relationship Between Christian Congregation Membership and the Latent Political Participation Among Overseas Working Filipinos in Doha, Qatar

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Abstract

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) often seek support systems to navigate the emotional and social challenges of living abroad. In Qatar, which houses 242,000 OFWs, Christian congregations have become vital not only for spiritual and socioemotional support, but also as spaces where political discourse organically emerges. These religious communities play a crucial role in shaping political consciousness and mobilizing participation through fellowships, volunteerism, and informal interactions. Despite their growing importance, existing literature on OFW religiosity in the Middle East remains sparse and reductively measures religious impact, neglecting the broader socio-political functions of congregations membership. This study addresses this gap by investigating the relationship between Christian Congregation Membership and Latent Political Participation among OFWs in Doha, Qatar. Grounded in Social Capital Theory, the research emphasizes how engagement in congregant activities cultivates trust, reciprocity, and political skills that result in latent political participation which have the potential to result in manifest political behavior. A sequential quantitative and qualitative approach, with an exploratory and correlational design, is employed. Quantitative data are gathered through surveys with OFW respondents affiliated with selected Christian congregations, while qualitative insights will be derived from using thematic analysis of key informant interviews based on the findings and conclusion of the quantitative component. Initial findings conclude that there is a positive correlation between Christian congregation membership and latent political participation. However, membership has been found to be more strongly associated with higher levels of civic engagement ($r = 0.445$) and less strongly associated with social involvement/awareness ($r = 0.332$).

Keywords: Christian Congregation Membership, Latent Political Participation, Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), Social Capital Theory

**Against Robust Headwinds:
China Realising its Centenary Goal in a Multiplex World**

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Abstract


President Trump began his Second Term with vaunting imperialism, demanding to annex Greenland and to make Canada the 51st American State. He has since abducted President Maduro of Venezuela and seized control of its vast oil reserve, simultaneously threatening Cuba's lifeblood. Along with Israel, he decapitated Iran's decades-long supreme leader, Ali Khamenei and bombed Iran to splinters. America's latest National Security Strategy reveals a historic pivot to the Western Hemisphere while exerting U.S. dominance in the Asia Pacific by "offshore balancing" to counter China, using American assets in the "First Island Chain," centred on Okinawa, and regional military alliances with Japan, Korea, Australia, and the Philippines. Meanwhile, across the globe, Trump continues to fleece countries, allies not exempted, through indiscriminate exorbitant tariffs. China is able to hold its ground, counteracting with a newfound rare-earth global stranglehold. Canada has quickly woken up to defend its sovereignty by diversifying trade to Europe, Asia and other quarters. Likewise, Europe has found its Trans-Atlantic Alliance with the United States much less reliable than assumed.

Meanwhile, China is doubling down on the Global South, resulting in a historic record trade surplus of \$213.62 billion in the first two months of 2026, U.S. tariff regardless. Additionally, as America has become a global energy exporter, the Arab Peninsula is pivoting to China as the world's largest energy customer, shaking the "Petro-dollar" foundation which underpins the greenback. Domestically, China continues to face robust headwinds, including overcapacity, anaemic consumption, worsening demographics, housing-bubble-burst overhang, youth unemployment, "economic involution", local government debt, social and regional disparities, and remaining corruption in high places. Nevertheless, in this multiplex world, China is setting great store by its 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30). It is capitalising

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on a substantial lead in 37 out of 44 cutting-edge technologies defining the 21st century, including AI and quantum computing. This is supported by a vast STEM PhD graduate manpower pool, outnumbering Americans by more than three-to-one. Against America's cutting-edge semiconductor-chip stranglehold, China is developing near-high-end 7-nanometre chips while leapfrogging to alternative breakthrough pathways, such as 3D stacking and chipelets. The Five-Year Plan includes growing the world's largest (lower) middle class from some 700 million to 800 million, driving domestic consumption with supportive social security, health, and education policies. China has already become the world's green energy superpower, with renewable sources accounting for 60% of its total installed power capacity and 40% of total electricity generation, supporting China's energy security amid uncertain geopolitical disruptions. With a measured target growth rate of 4.5%, China remains on track to doubling its 2002 per capita GDP by 2035, a crucial half-way milestone to attaining its final Centenary Goal (100th anniversary of the People's Republic of China) by 2049, realizing China's renaissance dream of becoming an advanced, strong, respected, ecologically-beautiful and harmonious socialist state on par with a medium-level developed country.

Keywords: Imperialism, Multiplex, Five-Year Plan, Technologies, Renaissance



The Turul Monument represents the mythical bird of Hungarian folklore and national identity. Located near Tatabánya, it is considered one of the largest bird statues in Europe.

Panel 17 // Venue: Gombocz Zoltán Hall Security Governance, Strategic Adaptation and Emerging Orders

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Péter Rada, Metropolitan University of Budapest **(In Person)**

- **Securitising the Climate:
China's Discursive Repositioning in Global Climate Governance**
Swati Kanwar
Jawaharlal Nehru University **(In Person)**
- **Emerging Security Technologies and Securitized Governance:
Social Implications for Immigrant Integration in Europe**
Sina Samiee
ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon **(In Person)**
- **The Role of India in US National Security Strategy during the Era of Trump 2.0**
Farzan Safari Sabet
University of Tehran **(In Person)**
- **The Far Eastern Paradox:
Infrastructure Projects and the Divergent Interests of Russia and China**
Olga Zaleskaia
Blagoveschensk State Pedagogical University **(Online)**
- **European Union-Uzbekistan Relations in light of the 2025 Enhanced Partnership and
Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)**
Daniel Haitas
University of Debrecen **(In Person)**
- **Global Governance: According to China in the Face of Contemporary International
Security Crises**
Orazio Maria Gnerre
Institute for the History of the Italian Riformismo **(Online)**

Discussant: Stephen Roddy, University of San Francisco **(In Person)**

**Securitising the Climate:
China's Discursive Repositioning in Global Climate Governance**

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Abstract

The announcement of withdrawal from the Paris Agreement by Trump 1.0 administration in June 2017 marked a major shift in the global climate governance. It resulted in a vacuum in climate leadership. As a result, China strategically repositioned itself as a potential leader in climate diplomacy, leveraging its status as the largest investor and producer of renewable energy. The paper investigates how China seeks to securitise and frame climate change as a core element of its international identity. Through platforms like UNFCCC, COP summits, and BRI, China aims to construct an image of a trusted global leader for global decarbonisation efforts. The study operates at the intersection of securitisation theory and discursive power theory to study the climate leadership transition. In contemporary times, climate leadership is increasingly being securitised as a geopolitical asset by China. It thus, becomes pertinent to understand how it translates in building a narrative to seek legitimacy in global governance. Does China's rise in climate governance signals a transformative shift in the norms and direction of global climate politics or is a strategic recalibration that masks continuity in carbon capitalism.

Keywords: Climate Governance, Energy Transition, Securitisation Theory, Power

Emerging Security Technologies and Securitised Governance: Social Implications for Immigrant Integration in Europe

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Abstract

This paper examines the intersection between emerging security technologies and counter-terrorism governance, focusing on their broader social implications within European societies. As advanced surveillance systems, data-driven risk assessment tools, and digital monitoring infrastructures become increasingly embedded in contemporary security regimes, their role extends beyond technical risk management into the structuring of state–society relations. Building on securitisation theory and governance approaches, the study conceptualises counter-terrorism as a technology-enabled regulatory framework that shapes not only security outcomes but also social integration processes. It investigates how technologically mediated security environments influence perceptions of discrimination, institutional trust, and civic belonging among Iranian immigrants in Germany and France. The research adopts a comparative mixed-methods design, integrating survey data and semi-structured interviews to capture both structural patterns and lived experiences. It develops a mechanism-based model in which perceived discrimination and institutional trust mediate the relationship between securitised governance and integration outcomes, while institutional architecture and socio-economic opportunity structures function as moderating conditions. By focusing on a community that challenges generalised security categorisations, the study contributes to debates on the ethical, social, and governance implications of emerging technologies in defence contexts. It highlights the need to balance technological efficiency with inclusiveness, accountability, and democratic legitimacy in contemporary security systems.

Keywords: Securitisation, Counter-terrorism Governance, Security Technologies, Immigrant Integration, Institutional Trust, Civic Belonging

The Role of India in US National Security Strategy during the Era of Trump 2.0

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Abstract

India during the past 20 years has risen to global status as to becoming the fourth largest economy in a growing multi and in some cases a non-polar world. With the return of US President Donald Trump and the aspect of renewed US hegemony and unilateralism, India's role has come under careful scrutiny given Trump's trade war. Despite recent tensions, India is a significant regional player which plays a crucial part in US Asia Pivot policy as well as a member of the Quad (parallel to AUKUS and ANZUS) alliance in containing China. Albeit this role and policy should be reviewed with considerable scrutiny and assessment as to how much it has been effective. During the second administration of US President Donald Trump, with the publication of the new US National Security Strategy document, India has been highlighted and expected to fulfill a more prominent role in US strategy to the Asia-Pacific region. Not only has this role been mentioned and reviewed, also US-India relations stands at a cusp of challenging regional and geopolitical trends and shifts. the Purpose of this research is to examine India's regional and geopolitical foreign policy and how it plays a role in US region-specific (subcontinent) and geopolitical (Asia-Pacific) policies by applying methods of critical geopolitical analysis and foreign policy analysis under a theoretical framework of balancing by having in mind India's own non-aligned, strategic hedging and strategic autonomy policies.

Keywords: US, India, US-India Relations, Asia-Pacific, Asia Pivot, US National Security Strategy

The Far Eastern Paradox: Infrastructure Projects and the Divergent Interests of Russia and China

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Abstract

This presentation examines the complex dynamics of the “Turn to the East” through the lens of regional integration in the Russian Far East. While official rhetoric from both Moscow and Beijing consistently emphasises a strategic partnership and the rapid development of cross-border infrastructure, the reality on the ground reveals a persistent “Far Eastern Paradox.” Despite significant investments in bridge projects, logistical hubs, and transport corridors, the depth of regional integration remains constrained by institutional, cultural, and structural barriers. The research argues that these infrastructure projects are often driven by disparate national agendas rather than a shared regional vision. For Russia, infrastructure development in the Far East is increasingly viewed through the prism of strategic autonomy and the need for geopolitical alternatives to the West. Conversely, China’s approach is predominantly pragmatic and market-oriented, focusing on resource extraction, logistical efficiency, and the secure supply of resources to its northeastern provinces.

This divergence creates an asymmetrical economic landscape where cross-border cooperation is characterised more by competitive negotiation than by seamless integration. Furthermore, the paper explores how “culture of the wall” policies—stringent security regulations and border management—continue to undermine the efficiency of physical “culture of the bridge” infrastructure. Using the Amur borderland as a primary case study, the analysis identifies how economic asymmetries and divergent security perceptions limit the transformative potential of these projects. By engaging with literature on border integration and regional development, this study deconstructs the assumption that infrastructure alone can overcome historical and political mistrust. The findings suggest that the “Turn to the East” faces significant challenges that are unlikely to be resolved by purely technical or logistical means. Instead, the paper posits that unless both sides address the underlying structural asymmetries and the imbalance in their respective developmental goals, the Russian-Chinese borderland will remain a zone of

strategic hedging rather than true regional integration. Ultimately, the presentation offers a sober assessment of the limits of current regional policy and provides theoretical alternatives for understanding how cross-border ties are negotiated in an era of global strategic competition.

Keywords: Russian-Chinese Relations, Far East, Regional Integration, Infrastructure Projects, Cross-Border Cooperation, Strategic Asymmetry

European Union-Uzbekistan Relations in light of the 2025 Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)

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Abstract

Central Asia is being increasingly recognised as a region of growing strategic importance by various major players in the international arena, and the European Union is certainly no exception to this. One important recent manifestation of this is the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) signed by the European Union and Uzbekistan in October 2025. This upgrades EU-Uzbek relations to a new level, particularly in such areas as trade and investment, foreign and security policy, among others. The agreement is an example of an assertive EU external relations policy able to recognise the strategic importance of various theatres of the international arena and its potential interests there, together with an attempt by Uzbekistan to further pursue its multi-vector foreign policy, in this case, deepening its connections to Western partners such as the European Union. This research shall include an historical overview of European-Uzbek relations dating back to the time of Amir Timur, focusing on his dealings and impact on various medieval European powers. Additionally, it will examine relations between the European Union and Uzbekistan since the latter achieved independence in the early 1990s, including the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed between the two, which served as the framework for relations before EPCA.

Keywords: European Union, Uzbekistan, Central Asia, Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)

**Global Governance:
According to China in the Face of Contemporary International Security Crises**

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Abstract

In recent years, the People's Republic of China and its political leadership have developed a concept of global governance that aligns with the current historical and political phase of transition from a U.S.-led unipolar system to a multipolar order. This concept focuses on the role of supranational institutions in providing a specific framework for cooperation and coordination among major international actors. The aim of the system proposed by China is to create a "healthy" and balanced environment for international relations, one that prevents conflict and enables, among other things, the development of prosperous global trade. On this issue, Xi Jinping spoke extensively at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2017. Since then, many changes have occurred, both in terms of shifting international balances and in the specific conditions of the global economy. At present, the world is experiencing multiple crises that call into question a rules-based international order, rethinking and, in some cases, constraining the role of international law in relations among states and other actors. In light of this, this paper aims to analyze the role that the concept of global governance plays in relation to current events and emerging challenges. How has Chinese diplomacy responded to major global security crises in recent times? How does this intersect with the broader discourse on global governance? Moreover, could this model of global governance have prevented or mitigated the escalation—or even the emergence—of such crises? This study will address these questions both through an analysis of Chinese diplomatic discourse and from an institutional perspective, taking into account the current phase of delegitimization of international institutions, as well as ongoing efforts toward their re-legitimation or even potential re-foundation.

Keywords: China, Global Governance, War, International Institutions, Global Market

Located near Budapest, Szentendre is famous for its narrow cobblestone streets and colorful Baroque houses. The town's art galleries, museums, and Mediterranean-like atmosphere make it a major cultural tourism destination.



Panel 18 // Venue: Faculty Meeting Hall-Kari Tanacsterem Conflict, Security and Hybrid Warfare

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 11:00–12:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Dean Karalekas *University of Lancashire (In Person)*

- **The Gulf Dilemma:
Unintended Consequences of the US/Israel War with Iran**
Ioana Constantin-Bercean
"Ion I.C. Brătianu" Institute of Political Science and International Relations (In Person)
- **Fragile Security:
State vs. People in the Apocalyptic War on Iran**
Sima Baidya
Jawaharlal Nehru University (In Person)
- **Dominance Vacuums and Regional Instability:
Extending Power Transition Theory in the South Caucasus**
Kamala Valiyeva
Istanbul Ticaret University (Online)
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Centro Universitário Integrado, Brazil (Online)
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Maurizio Geri
Ca' Foscari/GMU (Online)

Discussant: Emel Akcali, *King's College London (In person)*

The Gulf Dilemma: Unintended Consequences of the US/Israel War with Iran

Ioana Constantin-Bercean

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Abstract

There are a number of changed circumstances because of the US/Israel war against Iran – militarily, economically, and geo-strategically. However, perhaps the biggest change is psychological. Arab states of the Persian Gulf have long been portrayed as islands of stability in an otherwise volatile region, a repository for tourists, capital, transit trade, and expat relocation. This has been shattered by a war coming not just to their doorsteps but inside their homes. Realizing that their new found vulnerability might be due to their close association with an unpredictable United States, they may begin to seek shelter and safety by diversifying their allies and adopting more independent policies. Or, perhaps their collective shock of real insecurity presents an opportunity to construct a new, inclusive regional architecture, one that makes any repeat of what is happening now highly unlikely – with the real possibility of a secure and stable Middle East. This paper will explore some of the unintended consequences of the Middle East war, starting from the American strategy (or lack thereof), to the effects of the conflict on the energy market, regional and global economy, and, in particular, of the medium and long-term changes of the security alliances generated by this war. The methodological benchmark for analyzing the US-Iran conflict in the Gulf and its consequences involves a five-axis approach: analyzing the nature of conflict (hybrid/attrition), regime resilience (IRGC role), strategic objectives (deterrence vs. regime change), conflict trajectories, and day-after scenarios. Gulf states navigate this dilemma through risk-hedging, balancing, economic protection and, most importantly, rethinking future security partnerships and architectures.

Keywords: Iran, US, Israel, Persian Gulf, Regional Security Dilemma.

**Fragile Security:
State vs. People in the Apocalyptic War on Iran**

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Abstract

The paper aims to examine the fragile nature of the security in the war on Iran. The paper observes, as US and Israel's version keeps changing about the objective of war, the war appears to be the apocalyptic war destroying everything aiming at the end of Iran. The paper critically examines and differentiates the idea of people, regime and the state. As per International Law, state's territorial integrity cannot be violated. Nevertheless, the paper argues that geographies not remain static even at the risk of violating international law. The paper examines the core components of fragile security---the stage from secure to fragile. The paper intends to apply OECD's multi-dimensional fragility as the conceptual tool to understand the consequence of war on Iran. The paper hypothesizes that security is always momentary and temporal. The paper contends that the apocalyptic war on Iran shows that the attack on any country (here Iran) can happen without any reason, can take a shape of full-fledged war with no solution in sight by the warring parties. The paper argues since the beginning of war, people and state responded in unison, in resistance; thus fragile security affected not only the state infrastructures, its leadership, but also people en masse. Last but not the least the paper puts the central question of the relative power in the battlefield to make/unmake a state and its people fragile.

Keywords: Fragile Security, State, People, Apocalyptic War, Iran

Dominance Vacuums and Regional Instability: Extending Power Transition Theory in the South Caucasus

Kamala Valiyeva

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Abstract

This paper argues that the South Caucasus represents a paradigmatic case of a “regional dominance vacuum”, a condition of instability generated by emerging global multipolarity. Building on Patrick Rhomey’s regional adaptation of Power Transition Theory, the analysis contends that conflict in the region is driven not primarily by local military buildups or classic balancing, but by the erosion of Russia’s once-dominant external authority and the failure of any competing power to establish a new, durable order. Theoretically, the paper extends Rhomey’s core idea that conflict is most likely where a dominant power’s influence wanes, rather than where challengers are strongest. While Rhomey applies this framework primarily to Central Asia, this paper demonstrates that the South Caucasus exhibits an even clearer configuration of dominance vacuum dynamics.

The region is defined by the overlapping yet incomplete influence of multiple external actors like Russia, Turkey, the EU, the US, and Iran, none of which possesses the combination of capability, legitimacy, and will to impose stability. This external power parity creates a permissive environment for conflict. Empirically, the study traces the evolution from the post-Cold War period through the 2020 and 2023 Nagorno-Karabakh wars. It shows that Russia’s declining enforcement capacity, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, has hollowed out its role as a security manager. Crucially, major conflicts reignited at moments when Russia’s deterrent credibility visibly weakened, not during periods of Azerbaijani military superiority alone; a finding that challenges neorealist expectations and supports the dominance vacuum hypothesis. The paper further refines the framework by highlighting the role of regional agencies. Unlike other regions where instability remains latent, the South Caucasus features highly mobilised states that actively exploit power vacuums to pursue revisionist goals. This transforms systemic permissiveness into decisive

outcomes, conceptualising the region as a high-intensity shatter belt characterised by short, sharp conflict cycles rather than prolonged stalemates. Therefore, the case of the South Caucasus reveals that dominance vacuums are crucial characteristics of a multipolar world, where global power diffusion translates into regional instability.

Keywords: Dominance Vacuum, Power Transition Theory, South Caucasus, Conflict

The EU's "Global Getaway" as Geopolitical Special Purpose Vehicle: Opportunities and Challenges in the Era of Global Uncertainty

Andrey Kinyakin

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Abstract

One of the most remarkable trends in contemporary geoeconomics and geopolitics is active development of extra-regional integration cooperation, aimed at providing connectivity between different extra-regional actors. Starting to outline in 1990-es it got a special momentum in 2000-2010-es with intensification of processes of interregional and transregional integration worldwide paving the way to emergence of multi-tool integration projects or integration special purpose vehicles (SPVs). The most well-known and significant one is the unfolded since 2013 Chinese "Belt and Road" initiative (BRI). Its active development, global exposure and more importantly geostrategic background contributed not only to intensification of interregional and transregional integration but also to enhancement of competition between global actors, spurring the emergence of the new integration SPVs.

One of the most remarkable cases is the launched by the EU in December 2021 the "Global Getaway" (GG) - the multifaceted strategy/project designed to bolster extra-regional integration cooperation between the European Union and various (national, supranational) extra-regional actors in specific areas such as infrastructure, climate and energy, digital, healthcare, education and research. The GG, which from the very beginning has got not only geopolitical backbone and was promoted as a "worthy alternative" to the BRI, was designed to be an integration multi-tool within "core regions" such as Africa, Indo-Pacific (East Asia), Eurasia (Central Asia) and Southern Europe (mainly the West Balkans). But despite high ambitions and expectations the achieved so far (within almost five-year period) results for the EU's project are rather mixed (not taking into account quantitative - the number (almost 250) launched partnerships - gauge). It is mainly due not only to influence of internal factors - late start, "small-cap" nature (the overall budget is worth 400 billion euros versus 1,2 trillion euros of BRI) as well as rather ambiguous

nature (mainly regulatory (bureaucratic) and value-based approach lacking development orientation and flexibility) but also the action of malevolent external factors. Among the latter is not only enhancing “integration race” with the BRI but also mixed perception within recipients (mainly because of euro-centric approach), troubled resource diverting geopolitical environment (war in Ukraine) as well as ongoing in the EU process of redeeming the traditional strategic partnership (“decoupling” with the United States and adopting the “strategic autonomy” mode). All this leaves an open question, whether the “Global Getaway” is not only an efficient integration SPV but also could it eventually succeed in the long run especially given the surging global uncertainty. Ultimately lots will depend not only on the combination of various (economic, political, sociocultural) factors but also on the EU’s intention to adopt a genuine “win-win” approach (based not only of on geopolitical “de-risking” and “allyshoring” agenda) toward integration cooperation, find a special value for different extra-regional actors and promote a flexible (not value-driven) mode of interaction.

Keywords: Geopolitics, European Union, Global Gateway, China, Belt and Road Initiative, Extra-regional Cooperation, Integration SPV

European Strategy in the Era of Hybrid Warfare: EU and NATO Security at the Intersection of Energy, Resources and Technology

Maurizio Geri

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Abstract

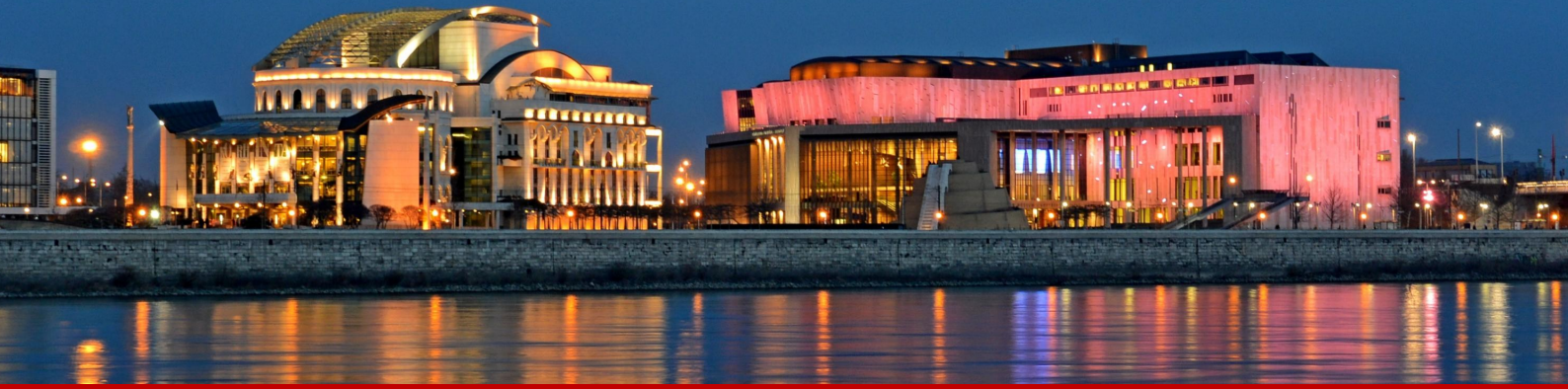
Russian, and, to an increasing degree, Chinese hybrid warfare and destabilization campaigns against Europe have been growing for several years, starting before the invasion of Ukraine and escalating thereafter. Infrastructure sabotage, cyber-attacks, espionage of critical maritime infrastructures, coupled with disinformation campaigns and economic coercion, including interruption of supply and value chains, especially in the energy and technology arenas, are the new battlefields of low-intensity conflicts waged by dictatorships against democracies. Modern warfare is no longer based on the traditional domain of territorial gains, apart from cross-borders cases like Ukraine. This new hybrid model is the future of warfare, a constant conflict with the “weaponization of everything,” as a famous scholar said. Europe has until now been unprepared for this new model, first, because it is composed of democracies, who are united in a defense alliance like NATO, not to attack but to defend, and hybrid war cannot be dealt only by military defense; and second, because the West never understood the so-called “grey zone” that the East sees between peace and conflict: the West traditionally sees a binary state of either war or peace.

This article proposes a new European strategy against hybrid warfare, answering a fundamental question: how should Europe deter, defend against, and defeat current and future enemies like Russia, China, and other rivals, especially in the energy, resources, infrastructure, and technology sectors? This paper makes the case for a European coherent strategy to effectively deal with hybrid warfare in these areas, with stronger civilian-military and public-private collaboration, Western investment in dual-use “Emerging Disruptive Technologies,” and deeper NATO-EU cooperation in these sectors against Russian-Chinese weaponization of them. The topic of this article should be a priority for Western multilateral institutions and

policymakers for at least three reasons. First, the “grey-zone, subthreshold, hybrid campaigns” are increasingly the way competition is being transformed in conflict in the international arena. Second, the transitions in energy and technology are creating what this paper calls the “energy-resources-technology” nexus, meaning the transition to renewables is putting energy security under strain by creating new vulnerabilities (from supply chains to critical infrastructures), while the technology transition needs a great amount of energy (that renewables will not be able to provide), which will create new vulnerabilities (e.g., cyber-attacks, including attacks on infrastructure) and dependencies that can be exploited by dictatorial regimes (e.g., resource and tech value chain weaponization by China). Third, the main findings of this research, coming from secondary sources (analysis) and primary sources (interviews), are that investment in dual-use technologies, stronger civil-military cooperation, and better use of energy/economic tools could help to deal with this nexus and win the competition in these transitions, helping also the European defense integration. Therefore, a new European strategy for the hybrid warfare spectrum, especially in the energy and technology battlefields, is more urgent than ever. A stronger NATO-EU cooperation (at political, operational, and technological levels) is also crucial, requiring a paradigmatic shift in technology and energy innovations as an edge for the West to win the competition.

Keywords: EU, NATO, Strategy, Hybrid War, Energy, Technology

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Panel 19 // ONLINE Eurasian Geopolitics and International Relations

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 14:00–15:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE EURASIAN CONTINENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION, YEREVAN

CHAIR: Tamas Dudlak, *Eötvös Loránd University (Online)*

- **Discussing IR Concepts and Thinking About the Global Order**
Süha Atatüre
Istanbul Gedik University (Online)
- **Rethinking Eurasian Stability Beyond Western Alliance Theory**
Mathieu Grandpierron
ICES, France (Online)
- **The China-Gulf Green Shift:
Fuelling the Renewable Energy Partnership**
Chuchu Zhang
Fudan University (Online)
- **Kazakhstan as a Middle Power:
Domestic Foundations of a Regional Leader**
Houman Sadri
University of Central Florida (Online)
- **The United States Geostrategy in Central Asia
in the Context of a Multipolar World Order 2.0**
Mher D. Sahakyan
Eurasian Continent Research Association (Online)

Discussant: Maximilian Ohle, *Catholic Institute of Vendee (Online)*



Discussing IR Concepts and Thinking About the Global Order

Süha Atatüre

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Abstract

This paper addresses two interrelated issues in the field of International Relations (IR): the conceptual tensions embedded in its core vocabulary and their implications for understanding the trajectory of global order. This study argues that international relations do not evolve through a linear logic of progress, but rather through processes of reconfiguration in which accumulated historical experiences are reinterpreted under specific triggering conditions, acquire new properties, and thereby generate differentiated patterns of restructuring. Building on an analogy to synaptic networks in the human brain, the paper conceptualises international relations as a dynamic and multi-layered web of interactions. From this perspective, IR is more accurately understood as a complex relational configuration than as a sequential or temporally bounded process. This approach acknowledges the discipline's continuity in terms of change and transformation, while emphasising that emerging new forms of order are suppressed by previous concepts. Within this framework, the paper identifies the concept of the "international" itself as one of the discipline's most problematic and under-theorised categories. Despite the profound transformations associated with globalisation, the term continues to carry historically specific assumptions that constrain contemporary analysis. As a result, both scholars and practitioners remain anchored in inherited conceptual frameworks, interpreting present dynamics through analytically outdated lenses. This conceptual inertia not only obscures the underlying logic of the contemporary global order but also limits the discipline's capacity to generate robust interpretations of its future trajectories.

Keywords: Global Order, International Relations, Under-theorised Categories, Globalisation

Rethinking Eurasian Stability Beyond Western Alliance Theory

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Abstract

Experience rooted in a particular European context that relies on exclusive, treaty-based coalitions among formally equal sovereigns operating in an anarchic system. This paper argues that such an understanding of stability and power equilibrium is ill-suited for rethinking stability in Eurasia following the wars in Ukraine and Iran. The paper argues that applying wartime concepts, such as alliances, in a context of peace and on a continent with a wide variety of civilisations and political philosophies is counterproductive. The paper develops the argument of civilizational multipolarity to imagine an order in which several centres of power are engaged simultaneously without requiring subordinate alignment to any single pole. In this view, multi-alignment is understood as a practice through which Eurasian actors seek to preserve room for manoeuvre in a fragmented international order. At the same time, the paper cautions against idealising civilizational multipolarity as inherently emancipatory. The same narratives that support dialogue across civilisations can also reproduce hierarchy, exclusion, and competition. The paper, therefore, argues for a revised theory of alliance and order that takes the role of civilizational plurality seriously in shaping stability, while remaining attentive to its ambivalent and potentially exclusionary effects.

Keywords: Eurasian Stability, Western Alliance Theory, Civilisational Multipolarity

The China-Gulf Green Shift: Fuelling the Renewable Energy Partnership

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Abstract

The evolving dynamics of China-Gulf energy cooperation encapsulate a profound paradigm shift from structural dependency to complex interdependence, reflecting broader global transitions in resource geopolitics. In the era of conventional fossil fuels, the Gulf states, endowed with vast hydrocarbon reserves, served as pivotal suppliers. They met China's substantial demand as the world's leading energy importer, forging a unidirectional trade nexus based on oil and gas flows. Yet, as the imperatives of energy transition accelerate amid climate urgencies and technological innovation, this relationship has undergone a transformative reversal. China has ascended as a vanguard in renewable energy domains, pioneering advancements in solar photovoltaic systems, wind turbines, electric vehicles, and related infrastructure. The Gulf nations, pivoting toward diversification and sustainability, emerge as consumers eager to harness these innovations for their new visions. This reversal not only amplifies collaborative opportunities, encompassing joint ventures in green hydrogen production, smart grid deployments, and carbon capture technologies, but also engenders multifaceted mutual reliance. In this framework, technological transfer, investment reciprocity, and strategic alliances mitigate vulnerabilities and foster resilience. Consequently, the Sino-Gulf energy entente stands on the cusp of deeper integration, promising not merely economic synergies but a reconfigured architecture of global energy governance that underscores the inexorable interplay between innovation, sovereignty, and sustainable development.

Keywords: China, Gulf, Energy Cooperation, Hydrocarbon Reserves, Global Energy Governance

Kazakhstan as a Middle Power: Domestic Foundations of a Regional Leader

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Abstract

Since gaining independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has emerged as the pivotal state in Central Asia. Dominant policy and scholarly narratives often frame the country through the lens of a “New Great Game,” portraying it primarily as a battleground for competition among Russia, China, and the West. While external pressures undoubtedly shape Kazakhstan's strategic environment, this perspective understates the role of domestic political institutions, elite agency, and identity formation in shaping state behaviour. This paper addresses the following research question: *How have Kazakhstan's domestic political institutions, elite strategies, and identity-building processes enabled it to function as a middle power and regional leader despite structural constraints imposed by neighboring great powers?* The paper argues that Kazakhstan should be understood as an adaptive middle power rather than a passive object of great-power rivalry. Drawing on neoclassical realism, authoritarian regime theory, political economy, and constructivism, the analysis demonstrates how Kazakh leaders interpret systemic constraints through domestic institutions, elite networks, and national narratives. Kazakhstan's regional influence is thus rooted not only in geography and resource endowments, but also in deliberate strategies of state-building, managed economic reform, and multivector diplomacy. Empirically, the paper focuses on three interconnected domains: (1) the evolution of political institutions and leadership strategies that facilitate regime consolidation and foreign policy autonomy; (2) resource governance and economic diversification as foundations of state capacity; and (3) Kazakhstan's multivector foreign policy and engagement in regional and international organisations. By integrating domestic and international levels of analysis, the paper contributes to ongoing debates on middle power theory, authoritarian resilience, and Eurasian geopolitics.

Keywords: Kazakhstan, Middle Power, Central Asia, “New Great Game”, Eurasian Geopolitics, Political Institutions

The United States Geostrategy in Central Asia in the Context of a Multipolar World Order 2.0

Mher D. Sahakyan

Eurasian Continent Research Association

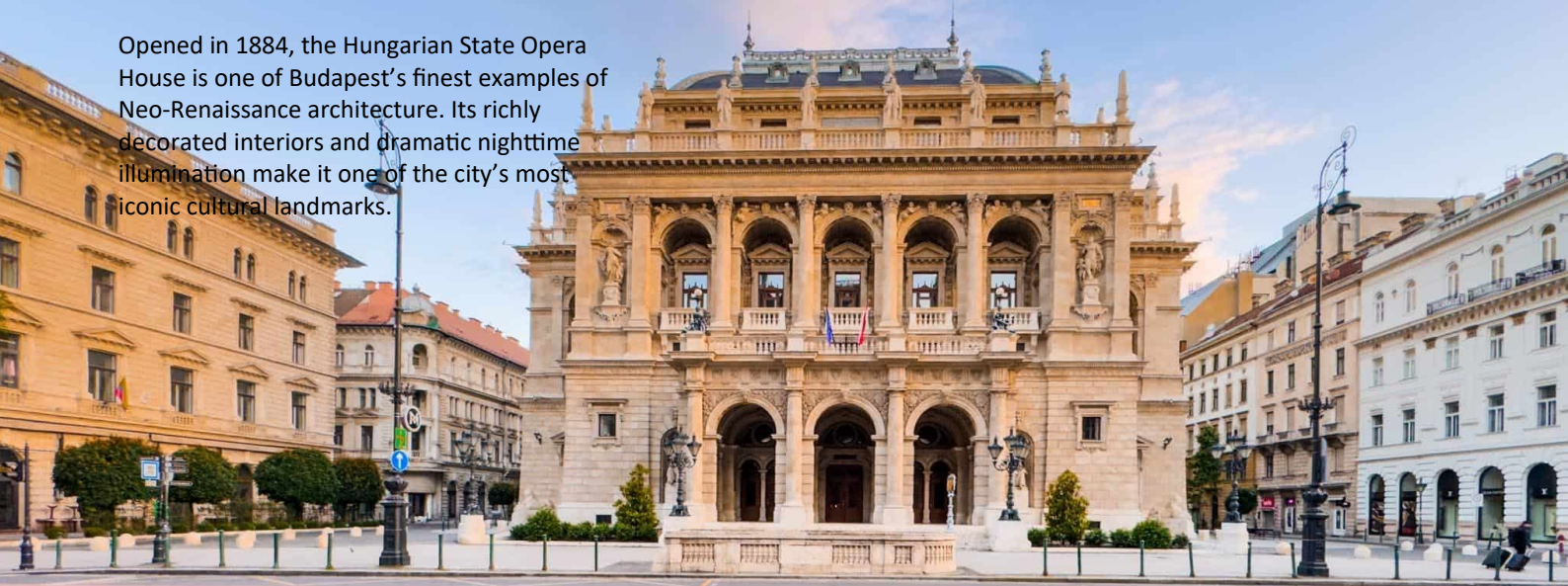
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Abstract

This study seeks to examine the United States geostrategy in Central Asia. It argues that while this region is not a top priority for the United States and its influence diminished after the withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, Russia's changing role, because of the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war, has altered regional power dynamics and provides an opportunity for Washington to utilise selective capabilities in order to compete for regional influence and shift the balance of power. In this region, according to the United States long-term geostrategy among the main aims are shifting regional energy resources towards the European market, in the place of China, step by step seeking strategic influence over main transportation routes, limiting Russia's and Iran's influence in regional economic developments by the help of sanctions, and preventing the region from becoming fully aligned with the Sino-centric pole in the era of Multipolar World Order 2.0.

Keywords: United States, Central Asia, Multipolar World Order 2.0, Geostrategy, Balance of Power

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Panel 20 // ONLINE

War in Ukraine and the Transformation of European Security and Resilience

FRIDAY // 10 July 2026 // 16:00–17:30 // (Budapest, GMT +02:00)

CHAIR: Aleksandra Szczerba, *Jacob of Paradis University (Online)*

- **Sexual Violence Against Women from an Anti-discriminatory Perspective**
Aleksandra Szczerba
Jacob of Paradis University (Online)
- **Mechanisms of Amplifying Anti-Ukrainian Messages Through Proxy Sources: A Cognitive War Perspective and Social Consequences**
Juliusz Sikorski
Jacob of Paradis University (Online)
- **The EU Health Security Architecture in the Context of the War in Ukraine**
Tomasz Marcinkowski
Jacob of Paradis University (Online)
- **The Environmental Footprint of Modern Warfare: An Analysis of the Conflict in Ukraine**
Oliwia Radkiewicz
Jacob of Paradis University (Online)
- **Lifelong Learning as a Functional Dimension of European Union Citizenship**
Marcin Szott
Jacob of Paradis University (Online)

Discussant: Tomasz Marcinkowski, *Jacob of Paradis University (Online)*

Sexual Violence Against Women from an Anti-discriminatory Perspective

Aleksandra Szczerba

Jacob of Paradies University, Poland

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Abstract

This paper examines sexual violence against women from an anti-discrimination perspective, emphasising its structural, social, and legal dimensions. Sexual violence is not only an individual act of harm, but also a manifestation of gender inequality and discrimination deeply rooted in patriarchal norms, power imbalances, and systemic exclusion. The study analyses the extent to which sexual violence is spread and the relations under which it occurs based on the latest survey on gender-based violence against women in the EU. The paper concludes that combating sexual violence against women requires a comprehensive anti-discrimination strategy based on human rights, equality, and institutional accountability. Such an approach is essential not only for protecting individual victims but also for transforming the social conditions that enable violence and discrimination to persist.

Keywords: Sexual Violence, Gender-Based Violence Against Women, Gender Discrimination, European Union

Mechanisms of Amplifying Anti-Ukrainian Messages Through Proxy Sources: A Cognitive War Perspective and Social Consequences

Juliusz Sikorski

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Abstract

The presentation will analyse the role of intermediary sources (*proxy sources*) in disseminating and legitimising anti-Ukrainian narratives. The phenomenon will be examined from the perspective of cognitive warfare, with an emphasis on the fact that its objective is not merely to control information, but above all to influence perception, trust, and how social threats are defined. Intermediary sources, such as pseudo-think tanks, alternative media outlets, quasi-experts, or media entities with opaque affiliations, function as mechanisms of “information laundering”. They obscure the original provenance of a message, lend it an appearance of independence, and facilitate its movement from the peripheries of the infosphere into public debate. In this way, they amplify narratives that delegitimise Ukraine, question the rationale for supporting it, and portray refugees as a burden or a threat. The presentation will discuss the mechanisms that contribute to increasing polarisation, the erosion of social trust, and the normalisation of exclusionary attitudes towards Ukrainians. It will introduce a five-stage model of how *proxy sources* operate: concealment of affiliations, mass replication of content, information laundering, local adaptation of messages, and entry into the media and political agenda. The conclusion will emphasise that countering such phenomena requires not only fact-checking but also the ability to identify proxy signals, greater transparency in information circulation, and cooperation among the media, researchers, public institutions, and civil society organisations.

Keywords: Cognitive Warfare, Disinformation, Proxy Sources, Anti-Ukrainian Narratives, Social Polarisation

The EU Health Security Architecture in the Context of the War in Ukraine

Tomasz Marcinkowski

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Abstract

The presentation will focus on the analysis of the European Union's health security architecture in the context of the consequences of the Russia-Ukraine war, with particular emphasis on the public health dimension of healthcare provision for Ukrainian war refugees benefiting from temporary protection within the EU Member States. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has triggered the largest refugee crisis in Europe since the end of the Second World War, while simultaneously generating significant challenges for the healthcare systems of receiving states. The paper will discuss the principal health needs of refugees, including infectious and chronic diseases as well as mental health problems resulting from war experiences, forced displacement and disruptions in continuity of care. Particular attention will be devoted to tuberculosis (including MDR-TB), HIV, vaccination gaps, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and continuity of care. The presentation will also seek to demonstrate the unequal distribution of refugee migration across EU Member States and the differentiated capacities of national healthcare systems to absorb new patient populations.

A comparative analysis will focus primarily on Poland, Germany and Czechia as key receiving states for refugees from Ukraine, while also highlighting differences in healthcare resources, financing and institutional organisation. The paper will further address the impact of the refugee crisis on EU health security, emphasising the growing importance of preparedness, surveillance, strategic stockpiling and cross-border epidemiological coordination. The final part of the presentation will examine measures undertaken at the European Union level, including the activities of the European Commission, ECDC, HERA, rescEU and the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. The paper advances the argument that the war in Ukraine has accelerated the transformation of EU health policy from a model focused primarily

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on coordination and regulation towards a broader framework of health security governance encompassing systemic resilience, strategic preparedness, institutional interoperability and the development of operational crisis-response mechanisms.

Keywords: EU Health Security, Ukrainian Refugees, EU Governance, Public Health, Preparedness

The Environmental Footprint of Modern Warfare: An Analysis of the Conflict in Ukraine

Oliwia Radkiewicz

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse the environmental consequences of the Russia-Ukraine war and to demonstrate their significance in the context of contemporary security studies. The conflict in Ukraine has led not only to military and humanitarian losses but also to extensive environmental degradation, the effects of which may influence the stability of the state and the region long after the end of military operations. The presentation will discuss the main environmental costs of war, including the destruction of energy and industrial infrastructure, contamination of soil and water resources, increased greenhouse gas emissions from military activities, and threats to nuclear security associated with the situation around the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Particular attention will be paid to the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam as an example of an event with long-term ecological, economic, and social consequences. The analysis will be based on data published by international organisations and reports concerning the environmental impact of the war. The paper argues that the natural environment has become a key dimension of contemporary armed conflicts, and that the environmental footprint of war should be incorporated into international security analyses and post-war reconstruction policies.

Keywords: Environmental Security, Ukraine War, Environmental Footprint, Critical Infrastructure, Climate and Conflict

Lifelong Learning as a Functional Dimension of European Union Citizenship

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Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between lifelong learning and European Union citizenship, arguing that educational policies constitute a functional dimension of citizenship that extends beyond its formal legal status. While EU citizenship is primarily defined by a set of rights established in the Union's legal framework, its effective exercise increasingly depends on individuals' competences and capacities. The study examines how the European Union conceptualises lifelong learning as a means of supporting active participation in social and democratic life. It adopts a doctrinal and policy-oriented approach, combining legal interpretation with an analysis of selected EU policy frameworks in the field of education and skills. The central research question is whether lifelong learning in the EU primarily serves as an instrument of labour market policy or also contributes to strengthening European citizenship in a more substantive sense. It is argued that, although the EU increasingly emphasises civic and participatory dimensions of education, lifelong learning policies remain significantly influenced by economic objectives. This results in a persistent gap between the formal dimension of EU citizenship and the practical conditions required for its effective exercise. The paper contributes to the discussion on the role of education in European integration by proposing that lifelong learning should be understood not only as a socio-economic instrument but also as an essential component of contemporary EU citizenship.

Keywords: Lifelong Learning, European Union Citizenship, Education Policy, Civic Competences, European Integration, EU Law



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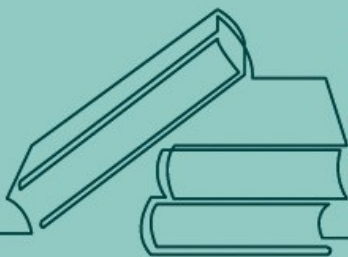
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