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Methods of Creating  
Images

Origins of the Climate  
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Political Attitudes and  
Perceptions

Medical History of Infectious  
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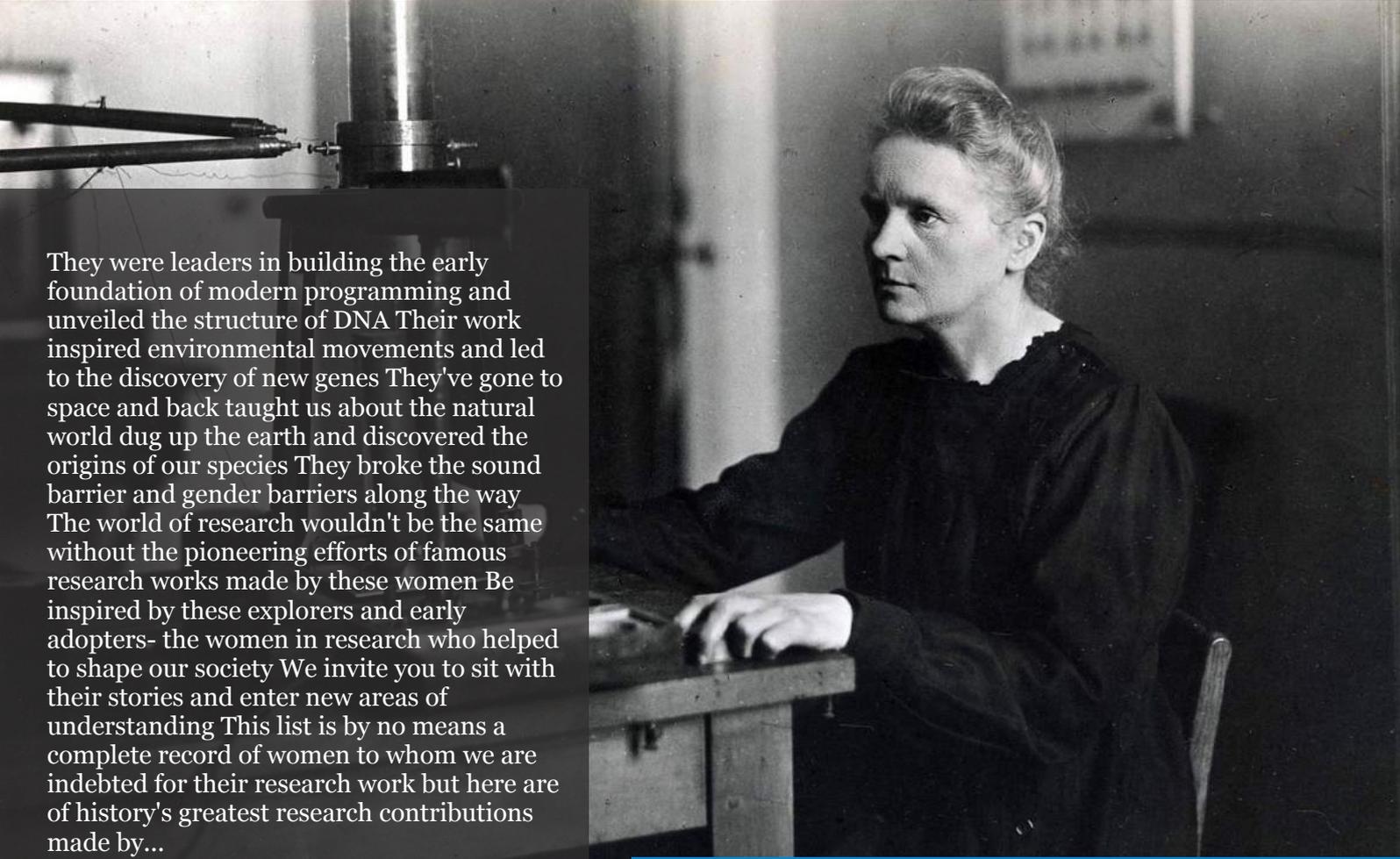
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# Re-Considering the Origins of the Climate Emergency: War, Finance, and the State

*Dr. Tim Di Muzio & Dr. Matt Dow*

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most important and recurring debates in the field of International Political Economy and international affairs are the links between capitalism, fossil fuel energy and climate change (Ajl 2021; Albert 2020; Brand and Wissen 2018; Daggett 2019; Di Muzio 2015; Di Muzio and Dow 2022; Gill and Benetar 2020; Goods 2021; Kuzemko et al 2019; Malm 2016; Newell 2021; Newell and Lane 2017; Paterson 2021; Pirani 2018; Siebert 2020;). In these debates, the origins of our current climate emergency is rooted in how Britain became the first country to become reliant on mass production and consumption coal (fossil fuels) for economic growth, industrialization, as well as social reproduction (Di Muzio 2015; Malm 2016; Moore 2015. Britain becoming a coal-fire capitalist- imperial global empire deeply influenced and structured the current world order and global political economy which is still locked-into a vicious cycle of path dependency whereby balance of power, production and social reproduction is dependent on energy, predominately fossil fuels (Di Muzio and Dow 2022).

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# Re-Considering the Origins of the Climate Emergency: War, Finance, and the State

Dr. Tim Di Muzio<sup>a</sup> & Dr. Matt Dow<sup>a</sup>

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important and recurring debates in the field of International Political Economy and international affairs are the links between capitalism, fossil fuel energy and climate change (Ajl 2021; Albert 2020; Brand and Wissen 2018; Daggett 2019; Di Muzio 2015; Di Muzio and Dow 2022; Gill and Benetar 2020; Goods 2021; Kuzemko et al 2019; Malm 2016; Newell 2021; Newell and Lane 2017; Paterson 2021; Pirani 2018; Siebert 2020;).<sup>1</sup> In these debates, the origins of our current climate emergency is rooted in how Britain became the first country to become reliant on mass production and consumption coal (fossil fuels) for economic growth, industrialization, as well as social reproduction (Di Muzio 2015; Malm 2016; Moore 2015. Britain becoming a coal-fire capitalist- imperial global empire deeply influenced and structured the current world order and global political economy which is still locked-into a vicious cycle of path dependency whereby balance of power, production and social reproduction is dependent on energy, predominately fossil fuels (Di Muzio and Dow 2022). This article offers a critical political economy engagement not on the origins of climate emergency but on the explanation as to why Britain turned to fossil fuels in the first place. The scope of scholarship is plentiful but can generally be framed into two dominant perspectives. The first comes from what can be called the Malthusian or Neoclassical Economics explanation whereby Britain was forced to transition to coal from previous sources of energy (wind, peat, timber, etc.) because of resource scarcities, predominantly timber, and thereby raising commodity and labour prices (CITE). The

<sup>1</sup> We are aware that the literature is vast and that this is not a complete list of citations, but we hope it is reflective of the main debates.

second explanation usually originates from Marx and has been expanded upon by what we call Ecologically Sensitive Marxism (ESM). Marx and ESM scholarship, although deeply divided, if we were to extract a primary explanation for why Britain turned to coal, it is the capitalist mode of production through the relentless need to exploit labour and nature for capitalist profit. As a result, coal becomes an input into the capitalist mode of production to help accelerate and cheapen both labour and nature exploitation. It should be noted that these are obviously heuristic devices and we by no means want to falsely characterize anyone's work or make any blanket statements that these schools are in any way completely united in their approaches or argumentation. But with this caveat in mind, we will argue that dominant explanations given above for the rise of a 'fossil economy' are far too narrow and fails to consider several crucial factors that might help us explain how British capitalism – and later much of the world - became wedded to coal, and later oil and natural gas (Smil 1994; Unruh 2000; Unruh and Carrillo-Hermosilla 2006; Podobnik 2006; Di Muzio 2015).

To use a familiar metaphor, we will contend that both analyses allow scholars to see a few trees but not the entire forest of a coal-fired British imperial capitalism that rested on carbon energy, financial innovation, and near-constant warfare abroad. We will claim that both analyses largely sidesteps crucial geopolitical factors to focus almost exclusively on developments *within* Britain that contends led to the mass exploitation of coal. After exploring Britain's geopolitical context, we will then challenge the *internal* transition thesis that coal was primarily pursued so that labour could be more fully and perhaps more easily exploited. We do so by considering the rise of the fiscal-military state and its

connection to capitalization, coal, and the expansion of credit within a growing international and outward looking empire. To substantiate our argument, we have divided this article into four main sections and a conclusion. In the first section, we engage with the Malthusian/Neoclassical principal thesis that the transition to coal and steam power had to do with the scarcity or price of wood. The second section addresses the silences we find troubling in both explanations particularly the lack of geopolitical context for the energy transition to coal and steam power. The third section discusses a second major silence: the rise of Britain's fiscal-military state and its connection with coal, capitalization, and the expansion of credit. The article ends with a brief conclusion.

## I. THE DEARTH OF TIMBER THESIS REVISITED

Like Marx (1867)[1976] and Polanyi (1957) before him, Malm's intellectual journey sees him return to England not to find the transition to capitalist industrial production or the emergence of a market society *per se*, but to uncover how a 'fossil economy' developed. Malm is clear that his motivation is to trace why global society finds itself in a climate emergency. Not surprisingly, he argues that while there are other contributors to climate change, the combustion of fossil fuels is *the* leading cause of global warming (Kenner and Heede 2021; IPCC 2022). This is why we must return to Britain, because it is the birthplace of the first nation to exploit coal *en masse* (Nef 1932 and 1977; Wrigley 2010). For Malm, the historical and intellectual task is to uncover why Britain turned to producing and consuming coal in great quantities, when: a) coal was well known and used in antiquity for thermal energy in Britain; b) other nations did not adopt coal and steam power in any great quantities until much later and c) the energy from wood and water appeared to be cheap and abundant while the steam engine was costly and often unreliable until it was modified and improved upon to increase its efficiency.

In his quest to advance a Marxist explanation for the emergence of a 'fossil economy', Malm's main intellectual opponent is the demographic scholar

E.A. Wrigley's (2010) *Energy and the English Industrial Revolution*. Wrigley, among others, argues that the increasing reliance on coal as an energy source largely resulted from necessity (see Thomas 1986; Smil 1994; Malanima 2006; Freese 2016). The reasoning here is that over centuries, Britain denuded most of its forests (or had certain forests protected by Royal decree) causing the price of timber to increase as emphasized by Nef's seminal research (1932 and 1977). Mounting prices for timber due to scarcity, then, was the chief reason for turning to the energy provided by coal. Malm (2015) takes serious issue with this argumentation as his hypothesis articulates that the transition to coal and steam power was mostly about the capitalist desire to exploit wage-labour more fully in pursuit of surplus value in an industrializing Britain. According to Malm and some Marxists, this is the root and continued reason for our current climate predicament (Angus 2016; Foster 2022). Unlike labourers who can be troublesome due to the limitations of their biology or turn to bright ideas like organizing as a collective (union), the steam engine, while requiring a feedstock of coal, did not complain, can work continuously and does not organize to contest working conditions or pay. Most importantly, steam power did not suffer from environmental limitations (the tide) as the British waterwheel did and was able to expand and intensify the working day and thereby further the exploitation of human labour-power (Malm 2013). To be sure, these reasons are more than plausible for the increasing adoption of coal and steam power. But our question is whether these were the *primary* reasons for the transition to greater coal production and consumption? We think not, and to demonstrate this, we must take a closer look at Malm's critique of Nef's 'dearth of timber' thesis.

Malm argues that the leading reason for exploiting more coal and the development of steam power was to subordinate labour power not a country-wide dearth of timber. The evidence he provides is drawn from economic historian R. C. Allen's (2003) thesis who argued that the British industrial elite suffered from high labour prices not high timber costs. Malm also draws on the

works of Hammersley (1957), Flinn (1959), and Steinmueller (2013) who predominantly claim that there was no timber scarcity in relation to using it as a fuel source for ironworks. While Malm admits that there was indeed a popular discourse on the dearth of wood in the two centuries leading up to 1700, he claims that the timber famine was mainly restricted to London with perhaps additional regions being affected from time to time (Malm 2016: 226). In short, Malm claims there was no serious nationwide wood nor energy crisis and therefore, crucially, no *dire need* to turn to coal to provide more energy for industrialization.

On closer inspection, we argue this is not only a simplification of Nef's (1932) thesis but believe these arguments do not sufficiently demonstrate that the dearth of wood thesis is completely inaccurate. We find it strange that Malm attempts to refute the scarcity of timber in England by falling into neoclassical reasoning by focusing on commodity prices as the drivers of history. For example, we know both historically and presently that commodity prices are not reflective of their abundance, scarcity, nor productivity but have much to do with power relations that are embedded in their production, distribution, and consumption (Nitzan and Bichler 2018). Moreover, capitalists are not rational choice actors who only use price as a key determinant for the selection of their energy resource as neoclassical historians would have us believe (Thomas 1986; Clark and Jacks 2007; Wrigley 2010; Allen 2003). The dominant energy source within an energy system is often dictated domestic elites, geopolitics, profitability and accessibility (Di Muzio 2012; Christophers 2021; Hager 2021). Furthermore, even if there was an abundance of timber at inexpensive prices, it does not follow that industrial capitalists would not have turned to coal anyways. In this sense, Malm largely downplays both scientific and technological revolutions taking place in England and elsewhere and the superiority coal has over both timber and water (as sources of energy) in both the economy and in everyday life (Hill 1976; Cipolla 1977; Smil 1994; Goldstone 2002, 2013; Vries 2013; Freese 2016; Ashworth 2017).

We find it interesting that Malm would dismiss the 'dearth of wood' thesis so quickly when Marx's intellectual curiosity into studying capitalism began with investigating the 'theft of wood' in Germany in 1848 (Bensaïd 2021). The debates on growing timber famine in both England and some parts of Europe, especially in urban centres, started in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century which correlated with significant population increases (McNeill 2004; Malanima 2006; Warde 2006; Moore 2015). This is not to argue that Malthus' 1798[1998] thesis is correct - whereby when a population starts to grow exponentially, so too does the consumption of resources and thereby the rise of resource depletion.<sup>2</sup> Britain's 'timber famine' was even highlighted by Engels (1845) and other Marxist scholars who have argued that the timber famine in England was the result of proto-industrialization and the need for iron for the agrarian revolution and for wool and husbandry (Brenner 1976; Warde 2006; see also Watson 2021). Werner Sombart (1916)[2019] highlights that pre-industrial England and Europe could be considered the 'Wooden Age' due to the fact that industry, war/plunder, trade, and social reproduction were largely dependent on access to wood and clear-cut arable land. In 1650, already '170,000 to 200,000sq km of forest land had been cleared' which was roughly 35 to 40 'percent of the continent's whole area' (Malanima 2006: 107). As a result, both England and Europe's 'dearth of wood' is much more multifaceted than just increases in population/consumption or prices but rather, fundamentally, about social transformation, power, and inequality, especially in Britain where war and finance merged in a new and interesting way as will be discussed.

Finally, Malm follows the more controversial opinions of Hammersley (1957) and Flinn's (1959) research on the fact that iron furnaces did not deplete England's wood reserves in any significant way. True or not, neither Hammersley, Flinn nor Malm address the larger transformations in

<sup>2</sup> As a long-standing critique of Malthus and Malthusian based scholarship is the consistent overlooking of how social hierarchies and property relations are fundamental in shaping and reshaping resource scarcities and the gross unequal distribution and consumption of resources across human histories (Angus and Butler 2011; Di Muzio 2017).

Britain's economy that intensified its dependence on wood consumption such as the rapidly expanding wood-dependent industries (e.g., brewing, furniture, shelter/heating, iron, glass, arms, etc.) and the most important of all, shipyards and shipbuilding all required vast amounts of timber (Albion 1952; Nef 1932 and 1977; Fouquet and Pearson 1998; Melby 2012; Moore 2015 Freese 2016; Ashworth 2017; Satia 2018).<sup>3</sup> As Albion (1952) and other historians note, there was indeed a timber problem for the British Royal Navy who had an insatiable thirst for evermore hard and soft timber (McNeill 2004; Davey 2011; Ashworth 2017; Reiver 2019). This is reflected in how King James I, in May 1615, banned the use of timber, especially oak, as fuel by manufacturers that were unrelated to the Royal Navy or shipbuilding industry (Ashworth 2017: 90). This sparked the search for fuel alternatives domestically as well as timber abroad.<sup>4</sup> In 1794, the British Navy consumed almost a quarter of all wood that Britain had circulating in the economy (Davey 2011: 161). As a result, Hutchinson (2012: 581) notes that Britain was a large wood importer, reflective in 1705, when Britain's trade imbalance with the Baltic countries for predominantly timber, iron, and grain was around £500,000 and by 1800 it rose to £2,500,000 (see also Sven-Erik Åström 1970). Lastly, Britain attempted to make their colonies, now known as Canada, the United States of America, India, and the Caribbean Islands into 'Timber Colonies' and 'Naval Stores' to maintain their global navy supremacy in terms of both shipping, trade, plunder and war (Albion 1952; Davey 2011; Melby 2012; Reiver 2019; Smith 2019).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> For example, 'some six thousand mature oaks selected from the forests of Kent and Sussex, the equivalent of a hundred acres of forest, were needed to build Victory alone. In addition, softwoods such as fir and pine—all unavailable in sufficient quantity on the home islands—were imported for the building of the keel, decks, masts, and topmasts' (Reiver 2019: 467).

<sup>4</sup> King James I found anyone 'defying the law was subject to the death penalty' and were instructed to use coal (Ashworth 2017: 90).

<sup>5</sup> Hemp, iron, pitch, tar, flax, and most important of all, timber, 'were the ingredients of British naval, commercial, and economic power. These commodities were as important as oil is in the twenty-first century. British security rested upon a functioning Royal Navy, to protect it from invasion, to

Therefore, by examining Nef's (1932 and 1977) 'dearth of timber' thesis as connected to the ways Britain's economy and social reproduction were fundamentally changing, this leads to a better explanation for the rise of coal consumption within England. As a result, one of the mistakes Malm makes is confusing the terms *energy transition* and *energy addition*. In the former, one source of energy completely substitutes for another, making the original energy source obsolete or used only parsimoniously. In the latter case, the original source continues to be used, perhaps less so to be sure, but is not wholly replaced by the new energy source – in this case of course, coal (York and Bell 2019: 1). In the end, total energy production and consumption increased due to new sources coming online – and coal was a powerful source of energy unlike any other until oil started to be produced in commercial quantities in the late nineteenth century. As Malm would likely agree, we must realize that sources of energy are born in pre-existing power relations of domination and resistance. While there was no discourse of 'economic growth' in early modern England or during the time of the Industrial Revolution, there was undoubtedly a growing concern with 'improvement' for profit by capitalists and state officials (Wood 2002; Cook 2018). Malm would doubtless agree, but it matters how we interpret this capitalist imperative as it relates to coal, the accumulation of money, and the rise of a fiscal-military state with increasing imperial tendencies. We will discuss these factors in more detail below, but for now, we turn to the concept of exploitation and the geopolitical context for the rise of a coal-fired Britain.

## II. EXPLOITATION AND THE GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT FOR THE RISE OF CARBON CAPITALISM

As mentioned above, what Malm presents as his evidence for the transition to coal is an *internalist* Marxist argument for the transition to coal in Britain. The *primary* motive of the capitalists, he contends, is the control and domination of

protect its maritime trade, and to blockade enemy shipping' (Davey 2011: 161).

labourers as a going concern. This is because Malm, following Marx, believes that the source of surplus value (capitalist profit) is the exploitation of labour power. As a Marxist, he must then believe that the concept of ‘exploitation’ he uses means that workers are not paid the full value of their labour power/time during any given production process. So, if the drive and desire of the capitalist is to accumulate more profit, then having more workers to exploit should also be a key goal since workers are the source of all profit in Marxism (Nitzan and Bichler 2009: Chapter 6 and 7). In addition, Malm believes that the transition to coal facilitated the exploitation and domination of workers. But does this contention hold water? In this section, there are at least two main points that challenge Malm’s view on the exploitation of labour and transition to coal and steam power. The first is an alternative non-Marxist understanding of the concept of ‘exploitation’ and the second is examining the geopolitical conditions in which England/Britain finds itself during the transition to capitalism.

Let’s take the issue of exploitation first. The English term originates from French and generally means to take advantage of someone, a situation or something for the purpose of profiting or benefiting oneself in some way (Di Muzio 2013: 156). Notice that this is not Marx’s definition. For Marx, exploitation means workers in industrial production are not paid the full value of their labour time/power and this is *the origin* of the capitalist’s profits – hence the justification for revolution.<sup>6</sup> This is important because if we follow the former definition rather than Marx’s, we do not have to find capitalists waiting in the wings to garner more labour power to make ever greater profit. What this suggests is that the *primary* drive of transitioning to coal was not necessarily the exploitation of labour for profit. Let us be clear. Our argument is not that ‘exploitation’ was an absent factor in a hierarchical society dominated by a class of variegated capitalists. The working class was indeed exploited in ‘satanic mills’ and other places

of work for profit (Polanyi 1957). What we dispute here is that the profit of the capitalist is *solely* the result of exploiting the unpaid time of industrial labourers. The fact that there are mounting fears that automation will replace some forms of labour is telling enough (Banes, Cotton, and Kumar 2022; Holzer 2022). If we are correct, then Malm’s main argument starts to break down, and we must look for other historically convincing reasons for the transition to coal in England/Britain.

While debatable we may be able to distinguish between different forms of capitalism as Marx (1867)[1976] did between commercial and industrial capital. Commercial capitalists are said to rarely produce anything and earn their profits by buying goods cheap in one place (e.g., spices) and selling these goods in another market at a higher price (Wallerstein 1974; Banaji 2020). Industrial capitalists, on the other hand, are said to be the true capitalists whose workers are directed and commanded to produce industrial goods for the market (Brenner 1977; McNally 1988; Wood 2002). But while we can make this conceptual or even analytical distinction, both operate on the principle of cost-plus accounting that originated with double-entry bookkeeping which emerged in Italy in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Braudel 1983). In our view, this accounting method has been continuously refined and now more or less rules the world as there are no capitalists or governments without their accounting books. So, the commercial capitalists – even though they might not be exploiting labour in a factory – make their profit by adding on to the original price of the goods they purchased for sale in a foreign market. In other words, the power of commercial capitalists rested on their ability to carry out long-distance trade and administer the prices to consumers who are unable to carry out this type of trade. There was no point for a commercial capitalist buying a hundred ounces of cinnamon in Sri Lanka for £100 to return to London and sell the same hundred ounces for £100 if their end goal was the accumulation of money. The price will always be marked-up by some percentage. In a similar fashion, industrial capitalism is a cost-plus

<sup>6</sup> We sidestep the infamous transformation problem that has afflicted Marxism here (Marx had to convert labour time into prices, not the reverse) (Howard and King 1989).

accounting system (Douglas 1922). Chieftains of industry figure out the total cost of their products – with labour being a major cost – and add a markup to achieve a certain profit target. This may have been a bit wonky in the beginning for a variety of reasons not explored here, but it is normal capitalist practice today (Vuocolo 2022). What this suggests is that if we are correct, and profit is a result of cost-plus accounting rather than the Marxist understanding of exploitation as unpaid surplus labour. Therefore, Malm’s argument that transition to coal starts to breakdown and a stronger analysis would be to investigate how coal and later on carbon energy was/can be used to exploit (take advantage) and oppress working, gendered, racialized populations globally which happens repeatedly in capitalism (Nore and Turner 1980; Debeir Deléage, & Hémerly 1991; Huber 2013; Preston 2017) In essence, the Marxist interpretation of exploitation has not ever been proven and cannot alone explain the level of prices and capitalist accumulation (Sweezy 1991; Nitzan and Bichler 2009: Chapter 6 and 7).

What we do agree with is that capitalism is all about accumulating more money and this should

be our starting point, not the desire to exploit more workers *per se*. Workers are certainly integral to the functioning of any economy from their work contributions to their purchasing power, but we contend they are not the *direct or immediate* source of capitalist profit. Instead, their labour is a *cost* to the capitalist, which is why, in the first place, there is an ongoing desire, where possible, to cut labour costs. In addition, we can verify this empirically. If Marx and his followers are correct, we would expect to find a strong correlation between the number of employees and the profitability of a firm (Nitzan and Bichler 2009: 173). Table 1.0 ranks the top ten Fortune 500 companies in 2021 by profitability and shows the number of employees they ‘exploit’. As is clear to see from the data, there is no correlation between the number of employees and a company’s profitability. Table 2.0 is even more damning and ranks the top ten firms by number of employees and shows their level of profit in 2021. Again, we should expect to find that there is a strong correlation with the number of employees per firm and their profitability if the exploitation of labour time is indeed the ‘true’ source of capitalist profits.

*Table 1:* Top 10 Fortune 500 Companies by Profit and Number of Employees<sup>7</sup>

Company	# of Employees	Profit (m)
Apple	147,000	\$57,411
Saudi Aramco	79,800	\$49,286
SoftBank Group	58,786	\$47,052
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China	438,787	\$45,783
Microsoft	163,000	\$44,281
Berkshire Hathaway	360,000	\$42,521
Alphabet	135,301	\$40,269
China Construction Bank	373,814	\$38,282
Agricultural Bank of China	462,592	\$31,293
Meta Platforms	58,604	\$29,146

<sup>7</sup> [https://fortune.com/global500/2021/search/?fg500\\_profits=desc](https://fortune.com/global500/2021/search/?fg500_profits=desc) (accessed 4/8/2022).

*Table 2: Top 10 Fortune 500 Firms Ranked by Number of Employees Showing Profit<sup>8</sup>*

Company	# of Employees	Profit (m)
Walmart	2,300,000	\$13,510
Amazon	1,298,000	\$21,331
China National Petroleum	1,242,245	\$4,575
State Grid	896,360	\$5,580
Hon Hai Precision Industry	878,429	\$3,456
China Post Group	827,231	\$4,698
Volkswagen	662,575	\$10,103
US Postal Service	569,987	-\$9,176
Sinopec Group	553,833	\$6,205
Compass Group	548,143	\$169

The data is telling – the corporations with the highest number of workers do not rank in the top ten companies by profitability. In fact, the US Postal Service with 569,987 employees ran at a loss! Again, this is crucial for Malm’s argumentation because he wants to persuade us that the transition to coal was all about the exploitation of workers and therefore greater capitalist profits. But if we are correct that the origin of profit is in cost-plus accounting and the ability and institutional power to markup prices, then we must look at other reasons for the unique exploitation of coal in England rather than capitalists yearning for the exploitation of the working class. Part of the answer, we contend, is in understanding the geopolitics of the time<sup>8</sup>.

As many scholars have argued, capitalism must be viewed as having geopolitical origins (Bhambra 2021; Heller 2011; Anievas and Nişancıoğlu 2015; Di Muzio 2015; Moore 2015; Di Muzio and Dow 2017). This does not mean that the internal social relations of a political community are of no interest – far from it – which is the entire point of focusing on England’s exceptional transition to coal energy and how it fuelled its particular configuration of capitalism. But these relations

are not isolated, they are international, and England was deeply embedded in an international system of violence and money at least since the Viking raids (8<sup>th</sup> century). Arguably, this international engagement escalated during the so-called ‘age of exploration’, colonization and the transatlantic slave trade (Mies 1986; Vries 2013; Di Muzio 2015; Moore 2015). Moreover, since capitalism is primarily about the accumulation of money, we argue here that we should focus on violence and the acquisition of money (McNally 2020). As a more complex market economy started to develop as commoners were increasingly dispossessed of their customary right to land and subsistence, creating mass pauperism, so too did another problem arise (Marx 1876[1976]; Polanyi 1957; Thompson 1963). This problem was the dearth of money, and at least by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, this was recognized as a stubborn fact (Wennerlind 2011). The main reason for the dearth of money problem was that by custom and faith, ‘real’ money was thought to be gold and silver – two metallic substances limited by their scarcity. This fact not only afflicted England but also most Western European countries. If the accumulation of money and power was the goal of the upper echelons of the European social hierarchy – and it was - then more gold and silver needed to be found. Lacking their own abundance of gold and silver mines, Europeans set out on a quest to find these metals

<sup>8</sup> [https://fortune.com/global500/2021/search/?fg500\\_employees=desc](https://fortune.com/global500/2021/search/?fg500_employees=desc) (accessed 4/8/2022).

abroad - largely by violent acquisition. Columbus was the first, and while he may have been looking for a western route to the eastern trade with Asia, it is also clear from his diary that what he wanted most was gold (Vilar 2011: 63ff). The relationship between gold and power was inescapable – it raised armies, it serviced debts and it built castles and palaces – physical displays of power over subordinates within the social hierarchy of a political community. But the acquisition of silver and gold also required developing what we might call an assemblage of violence – and this not only required money but also greater energy than wood or water could provide (Nef 1994; Hall and Klitgaard 2014). While Malm focuses on waterpower and textiles, our focus is squarely on iron, steel, war, colonialism, and slavery in the making of British capitalism within the international context of the desire of elites to accumulate money and maintain or aggrandize their power (Williams (1944)[1980]; Brewer 1989; Bhambra 2021). This is reflected in Ashworth's statement that British industrial development was dependent on:

...a policy of nurturing domestic industry behind a wall of tariffs, skill in imitating and subsequently transforming foreign (especially Asian) products, unparalleled exploitation of African slave labour, rich resources of coal, a monopoly of trade with British North America, aggressive military prowess and, not least, a relatively efficient body for the collection of inland revenues (2008: 1047).

This now leads us to the production of coke and the steam engine.

While iron was extracted from the earth, the shaping of this ubiquitous metal required heat energy. Originally, steel – an alloy of iron and carbon – could be made with charcoal – a source of energy created by heating wood with minimal oxygen. But as energy historian Vaclav Smil (1994: 150) points out, charcoal was friable and therefore, not an ideal source of heat for making pig iron or steel.<sup>9</sup> Though the exact date of its use

<sup>9</sup> Moreover, as Smil notes, deforestation occurred around furnace sites, making charcoal far from ideal as a fuel source for smelting iron (1994: 150).

is debatable, the invention of coke and smelting iron is typically attributed to the ironmaster, Abraham Darby (Flinn 1959). Coke was far superior to charcoal for blast furnaces and required evermore coal. Moreover, Newcomen's steam engine was created around the same time, creating more demand for iron and therefore coal for making coke. We can begin to see the positive feedback loops.

Though there were certainly precursors, Thomas Newcomen is largely credited with inventing the steam engine that revolutionized British capitalism. Newcomen was an ironmonger, and he had a problem to solve unrelated to the exploitation of labour: how to remove water from tin mines (Freese 2018). The steam engine soon replaced horsepower, while more metal and more coal could be extracted from the 'subterranean forest' as water was more effectively pumped from pits (Sieferle 2001). But the question remains why were more coal and metal needed in the first place? In other words, why was Britain first to industrialize? We suggest, following the work of Priya Satia (2018), that the answer was almost exclusively the construction of an assemblage of violence centered on weapons to defend property at home and expropriate land and resources abroad. As Satia responded in a forum discussing her important research:

Certainly, the relationship between economic and military expansion is older than the eighteenth century...but the particular logistical challenges of Britain's eighteenth-century wars – fought abroad on an increasingly mass scale with firearms – triggered the Industrial Revolution. It happened in Britain because everywhere else war was not the thing transpiring abroad that stimulated industrial resourcefulness at home, but a proximate and destructive struggle. The rivalrous dynamics between the corporate partners that made up what we call the British imperial 'state' were also key. By the end of the century, Britain was the global firearms depot, supplying them to its allies against Napoleon in millions. No other European country came close (2018: 465).

The quote is revealing and connects with Brewer's work on the fiscal-military state. Rather than focus on waterpower and textiles like Malm, Brewer reminds us of the apparatus of violence being constructed within Britain as it faced the outside world as a growing naval power. First, 'the changes of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were concerned not with domestic regulation but with enhancing the government's ability to wage war' (Brewer 1989: preface, np). As we will discuss below, this coincided with what Dickson (1967) called a 'financial revolution' in Britain after the creation of the Bank of England in 1694. It is worth mentioning here that Malm's work makes no connection between the expansion of credit and the industrial development of war capacity – a big oversight in our view if we want to study the links between capitalism, fossil fuel energy and climate change. The second thing Brewer (1989: 23) draws our attention to is the elite focus on naval power, whose capacity tripled in size from 1680 to 1780. According to Brewer, no other European power focused on naval power as much as Britain (1989: 26). This is of crucial importance for understanding the increasing extraction of coal and metal from the earth. As Brewer notes:

The total fixed capital required to form a large navy was therefore enormous. In the first half of the eighteenth century the British navy boasted twenty ships of the first and second rates, approximately forty vessels of the third rate, as well as an additional 120 smaller vessels of the fourth, fifth and sixth rates. If we assume that the costs of ship construction had not risen since the late seventeenth century, then the entire fleet amounted to a capital investment of nearly £2.25 million whose replacement cost was approximately 4 percent of national income. This can be compared with the total fixed capital in the 243 mills in the West Riding woolen industry in 1800, which has been estimated at £402,651 with an average of £1657 per textile mill. The fixed capital in one of the largest sectors of the nation's most important industry was therefore a mere 18 per cent of

the fixed capital required to launch the British navy (1989: 27).

Based on this observation, we are in accord with Satia's statement that 'war was the environment of economic transformation' in Britain and at the heart of the industrial revolution founded on making the material for the projection of violence and this *required* coal (2018: 465; see also Di Muzio 2015).

Furthermore, the economic historian Carol Cipolla cites Hicks' reflection that:

[Early cotton machinery] fits better as an appendage to the evolution of the old industry than in the way it is usually presented as the beginning of the new.... Would it have been impossible, if capital could have been raised and if the regular waterpower of Lancashire had been available, for something very like it to have occurred, say in fifteenth-century Florence? There is continuity between the eighteenth-century development of Lancashire and the West Riding and the pre-Industrial Revolution world. There might have been no Crompton and Arkwright, and still there could have been an Industrial Revolution (1977: 211).<sup>10</sup>

There is little doubt that the production of wool and textiles were important for the rise of capitalism in Britain as a money-making enterprise (Beckert 2014). But they were far from decisive in creating an industrial society tied to near-constant warfare, the transatlantic slave trade, and the conquest of new territories – in short, empire (Vries 2013). This capitalist empire required an assemblage of violence to protect its supremacy in the world economy. This is reflected by the fact that 'by 1695 there were 140 joint stock companies with a total capital of £4.5 million, more than 80 percent had been formed in the previous seven years. By 1717, total capitalization had reached £21 million' with most of the companies aimed at overseas trade (Kindleberger and Aliber 2005: 47). In comparison, at the height

<sup>10</sup> Building on the work of precursors, Samuel Crompton invented the spinning mule. Richard Arkwright spearheaded the water frame.

of Britain's textile production, it only accounted for '10 percent of Britain's GDP during the nineteenth century', employed one in six workers in manufacturing, and cotton fiber imports only yielded a total tax income of £9.8 million out of £542 million between 1793 to 1815 (Vries 2017: 131 – 2). Far from the desire to exploit labourers in a Marxist sense, the British capitalist class had the desire for profit, and this meant preparing for violent conflicts at home and abroad since power and resistance are inevitably intertwined (Gill 2008).

In fact, as Polanyi's (1957) study suggests, the paupers and poor of Britain were a problem for the elite who did not know what to do with them. As is recorded in the literature, all manner of measures were proposed to deal with this dispossessed class of people – including Bentham's Panopticon which was to be run for profit (Marx 1876 (1976): Chapter 28; Thompson 1967; Foucault 1975). If Malm's thesis is correct, the dispossessed would have been immediately exploited for capitalist profit, but in fact, this is in no way what happened historically. The paupers were a plague for the elite and largely criminalized, not a horde that could be turned into instruments of profitable exploitation. Why for instance, if the exploitation of humans is the precise origin for profit, would you expel humans from England to Australia and before 1788 to North America? Again, we remind readers that our argument is not that people were not exploited in the sense of being taken advantage of in hierarchical power relations, but that Malm's Marxist explanation is incorrect logically and historically. This brings us to our alternative account below.

### III. THE BIRTH OF CARBON CAPITALISM

So far, we have demonstrated that the transition to coal and a more capitalist industrial society in Britain was tied to the accumulation of money and state investment in the means of destruction. What is missing are the links between the capitalization of the British state and the creation of the Bank of England. Like most societies who adopted gold and silver as their official money, Britain suffered from a 'dearth of money' problem

primarily due to the scarcity of gold and silver (Wennerlind 2011). While a number of proposals were suggested, eventually the Crown in Parliament settled on the proposal to create a Bank of England (1694) whose issues of credit would be backed by a largely unknown horde of silver (Carruthers 1996; Davies 2002). As Wennerlind's (2011) study suggests, this created the first widely circulating credit money which acted to stimulate more state spending for war (see also Desan 2014). According to Brewer 'between 75 percent and 85 percent of annual expenditure went either on current spending on the army, navy and ordnance or to service the debts incurred to pay for earlier wars' (1989: 31). In comparison, the United States Defence Department budget for 2022 stands roughly at \$US715 billion which accounts for around 10 percent of the federal budget. Moreover, O'Brien (2001) notes that Britain's *fiscal exceptionalism* was primarily from its distinctive tax system, the design of the Bank of England, and willing lenders which granted them the ability to service its national debt throughout the long eighteenth-century (1688 – 1815) of warfare and colonialism (see also Dickson 1967). From 1692 to 1815, 'Britain's debt rose from 5% to over 200% of GDP...The funds raised were not used to finance productivity or enhance infrastructures, but instead to pay for overseas wars' (Ventura and Voth 2015: 2). In fact, the largest capitalized entity in Britain was not a company but the British state (see also Di Muzio 2015: 94ff). What this means is that investors were not only investing in the power of the British state to tax the population, but more importantly, to wage war, colonize, enslave and expand and protect its commercial empire (Di Muzio 2007). And wage war, it did (see Table 3).

Table 3: British Military Campaigns from 1688 – 1815

War and Duration
Nine Years' War (1688–1697)
Williamite War (1688–1691)
King William's War (1689–1697)
War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714)
Queen Anne's War (1702–1713)
War of the Austrian Succession (1742–1748)
King George's War (1744–1748)
1st Carnatic War (1744–1748)
Jacobite rising of 1745 (1745–1746)
Father Le Loutre's War (1749–1755)
2nd Carnatic War (1749–1754)
Seven Years' War (1756–1763)
French and Indian War (1754–1763)
3rd Carnatic War (1757–1763)
Anglo-French War (1778–1783)
American Revolutionary War (1775–1783)
French Revolutionary Wars (1792–1802)
War of the First Coalition (1792–1797)
Haitian Revolution (1793–1804)
War of the Second Coalition (1798–1802)
Irish Rebellion of 1798 (1798)
Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815)
War of the Third Coalition (1803–1806)
War of the Fourth Coalition (1806–1807)
Peninsular War (1808–1814)
War of the Fifth Coalition (1809)
War of the Sixth Coalition (1812–1814)
Hundred Days (1815)

As Brewer notes, ‘after 1688 the scope of British military involvement changed radically. Britain was at war more frequently and for longer periods of time, deploying armies and navies of unprecedented size’ (1989: 22). This would have been impossible without the extraction of coal, the production of iron and steel and a bank willing to extend the government of the day credit based on

its sovereign power to tax its population. As Marx suggested ‘...capital comes dripping from head to toe, from every pore, with blood and dirt’ - to which he should have added war (Marx 1867(1976): 926)<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_wars\\_involving\\_England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wars_involving_England) and

Another blind spot we find in Malm's analysis is his theorization of energy. Malm, like Marx, largely treats energy as a swappable auxiliary in the capitalist mode of production (Alam 2009).<sup>12</sup> This is why Malm (2016: Chapter 15) has little problem in arguing that capitalism started with the waterwheel and why contemporary capitalism could function with renewable energy. Yet, most scholars argue that renewable energy cannot sustain the current energy-intensive world economy and its forms of social reproduction (Zehner 2012; Friedrichs 2013; Di Muzio 2015; Trainer 2019; Dow 2022). Another issue is his distinction between thermal and mechanical energy and their roles in the economy and society, which is very similar to Marx's problematic separation between 'productive' and 'non-productive labour'. Here, mechanical energy and productive labour is seen as the primary source of capitalist profit and non-productive labour exists outside of capitalist social relations (generally the household). This is seen in how Malm's (2016) critique of Wrigley's (2010) thesis downplays the emergence of coal becoming embedded in everyday life. Wrigley argues that England's energy transformation was the result of its ability to utilize coal throughout the economy and society allowing it to out-produce its ecological constraints. On the other hand, Malm paints a narrative that British supremacy in the world economy and the origins of fossil capitalism is anchored only when capitalist owners deployed coal based mechanical energy in the factory. Simply put, for Malm, the birth of the fossil economy is the fusion of coal with industrialism, not when coal or fossil fuels also becomes inseparable from everyday life and financialization. This, once again, conflates capitalism with industrialism but more importantly most of the world's production of CO<sub>2</sub> comes from fossil fuels producing electricity, heat, and transportation at 73.2%, not from industrial

<sup>12</sup> Marx clearly states: 'Raw material may either form the principal substance of a product, or it may enter into its formation only as an accessory. An accessory may be consumed by the instruments of labour, as coal under a boiler, oil by a wheel, hay by draft-horses, or it may be mixed with the raw material in order to produce some modification thereof (1887: 127).

production which accounts for 24.2% (Ritchie, Roser, and Rosado 2020). As a result, if we want to limit the looming climate emergency, we need to decarbonize much more than the factory-floor.

In our view, we see Britain as the first country to link the accumulation of money with the monetization of energy as Britain came to use coal as its primary source of energy for war, colonization and the enslavement of Africans among other things. As Peter Vries (2013: 292) reminds us 'the amount of labor power that became available to Great Britain thanks to the introduction of steam power' in 'labor-equivalents of adult male laborers' increased from 17 million in 1840 to 411 million by 1896 or 11.7 invisible steam servants for every 1 inhabitant of Great Britain. Yet, we must also keep in mind that Britain's ability to service its debt was also critical for maintaining its global empire. Consequently, capitalization, debt, violence, and energy became the central drivers of Britain's economic growth as Britain established a debt-based monetary system (Vries 2013; Hall and Klitgaard 2014; Di Muzio and Robbins 2016). Here it is good to keep in mind that the only way to expand economic growth is through the 'destruction, despoliation, and commodification of the natural world of limited and finite resources' (Di Muzio and Robbins 2016: 11). Intentionally or not, the British Empire gave birth to carbon capitalism, which is a world order and global political economy that has locked most of humanity into a vicious cycle of path dependency whereby production and social reproduction requires evermore fossil fuels, even in the age of climate change and the looming catastrophic threats and events that could follow. This path dependency reinforces how global energy consumption, carbon emissions, financial power and inequality are intertwined, as seen in how countries and people who have large fortunes consume far more energy than those countries and people who do not. At present, this seems unlikely to change (Kenner 2019; Ritchie, Rosado, and Roser 2020; Dow 2022).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In this article we have argued that carbon capitalism was born over three centuries ago, but not specifically to subordinate and exploit waged labour as Malm's Marxist account of a 'fossil economy' implies. In the end, if humanity wants to prevent the looming climate emergency Malm's treatise provides crucial historical insight of how carbon energy accelerated industrialism. But to better understand the complexities and relationships between climate change, the capitalist world economy, and social reproduction, we need more in-depth analysis of how and why the carbonization of everyday life continues and even expands. Therefore, we need to start focusing more on capitalism and current forms of social reproduction that prevent decarbonization and reinforce most of humanity's (although extremely unequally) carbon energy path dependencies (Newell 2021). More fundamentally both global political and economic elites continue to tether geopolitical power, finance, and economic growth to the production and consumption of fossil fuels, and this has made the world order fall to a standstill at the crossroads of possible futures (Dow 2022; Lucas 2022). This is why we have stressed that more factors were at work in the development of a coal-fired British imperial capitalism – specifically, the timber problem, the construction of an assemblage of violence using coal and coke to further capitalist accumulation, the financial revolution and the capitalization of the state's power to tax the population and wage war abroad. In sum, we are currently witnessing a global power struggle between social forces of right, center, and left in how to solve the looming climate crisis which is rapidly deteriorating democracies across the globe. This struggle over the future of energy is rather reflective of Timothy Mitchell's thesis especially when he stated '[f]ossil fuels helped create both the possibility of modern democracy and its limits (2011: 1).' In the coming years ahead, those limits might become more pronounced.

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# Neo-Revisionism and the Origins of the First World War

*Dr. Robert C. Moore*

## ABSTRACT

An ancient ghost is going around the Western World promoting a 'novel' thesis that claims to be based on a 'fresh' look of the subject in question. Although the 'novelty' of this 'thesis' is meant to appear innovative and based on 'new' research, it can be easily traced back to its origins. The alleged 'new' thesis was invented by a reinvigorated revisionism of the First World War unfolding an agenda of pushing the responsibility for its unleashing away from Germany and Austria- Hungary to France, Russia, Great Britain, and Serbia. A few historians in England and Germany – with a different focus - are trying to leave the vast international historiography on the origins of the war behind and turn the conclusions, that once were a 'consensus' internationally, upside down.

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# Neo-Revisionism and the Origins of the First World War

Dr. Robert C. Moore

## I. THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF NEO-REVISIONISM

An ancient ghost is going around the Western World promoting a ‘novel’ thesis that claims to be based on a ‘fresh’ look of the subject in question. Although the ‘novelty’ of this ‘thesis’ is meant to appear innovative and based on ‘new’ research, it can be easily traced back to its origins. The alleged ‘new’ thesis was invented by a reinvigorated revisionism<sup>1</sup> of the First World War unfolding an agenda of pushing the responsibility for its unleashing away from Germany and Austria-Hungary to France, Russia, Great Britain, and Serbia. A few historians in England<sup>2</sup> and Germany – with a different focus - are trying to leave the vast international historiography on the origins of the war behind and turn the conclusions, that once were a ‘consensus’ internationally, upside down.

In some cases, a ‘new look’ at events may be necessary and innovative, but in this case the ‘new’ thesis is simply trying to topple an existing consensus for other purposes, considering that it cannot provide any new sources or aspects that could change the picture.<sup>3</sup> From an American perspective this is comparable to the revisionism regarding the issues of slavery and civil war, and how these issues have shaped the division of the founding and subsequent events of the republic. In both cases, in Germany as well as in the United States, revisionism is projecting a glorified past<sup>4</sup> to forge a new consensus in the present that is based on a set of assertions that cannot be sustained by closer scrutiny.<sup>5</sup> This approach is trying to eradicate critical statements about each country’s past, blaming it on ‘other’ states, groups and individuals, that have originated in the 1960s

<sup>1</sup> A selection of relevant studies, Stefan Schmidt, *Frankreichs Aussenpolitik in der Julikrise 1914. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Ausbruchs des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Muenchen, 2009), Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War* (Cambridge, MA, 2011), idem., *July 1914. Countdown to War* (London, 2014); Nicholas A. Lambert, *Planning Armageddon. British Economic Warfare and the First World War* (Cambridge, MA, 2012); Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers, How Europe went to War in 1914* (London, 2012), [German transl., idem., *Die Schlafwandler, wie Europa in den Ersten Weltkrieg zog* (Muenchen 2013)]; Herfried Muenkler, *Der Grosse Krieg, die Welt 1914-18* (Berlin 2013) and several articles that will be discussed further below; for a detailed overview, Alan Kramer, “Recent Historiography of the First World War, Part I”, *Journal of Modern European History* 12 (2014): 5-27, Part II, 155-174 that is providing an in-depth discussion on the variety of new publications.

<sup>2</sup> English revisionism is typically focused only on Great Britain and its role in 1914, although the methodology is similar, Matthew Seligmann, “Naval History by Conspiracy Theory: The British Admiralty before the First World War and the Methodology of Revisionism”, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 38 (2015): 966-984

<sup>3</sup> John F. V. Keiger, “The War explained: 1914 to the Present”, in: *A Companion to World War I*, ed. John Horne (Chichester, UK 2010): 19-31

<sup>4</sup> As an example, see the recently published report of the Trump Commission, *The 1776 Report*, ed. The President’s Advisory 1776 Commission (Washington, D. C., 2021): 10-16, that is trying to use certain portions of American history (leaving out the ‘dark sides’) to be taught affirmatively for the “Task of National Renewal” at present; James Grossmann, executive director of the American Historical Association has pointed out that this report is “not a work of history, but cynical Politics” in order to distort real events: “This report skillfully weaves together myths, distortions, deliberate silences, and both blatant and subtle misreading of evidence to create a narrative and an argument that few respectable professional historians, even across a wide interpretive spectrum, would consider plausible, never mind convincing.” Quoted from, Michael Crowley, Jennifer Schuessler, “Trump’s 1776 Commission Critiques Liberalism in Report Derided by Historians”, *New York Times* (Jan. 21, 2021)

<sup>5</sup> Compare in contrast to the report the “1619 Project”, Jake Silverstein, “Why we published the 1619 Project”, in: *New York Times Magazine* (Dec. 20, 2019) and also the 12 essays published in the magazine on August 14, 2019

and are deemed negative and destructive.<sup>6</sup> Revisionism is all about evading critical issues and blaming the messenger for the ‘inconvenient’ message, trying to deflect criticism about the past to avoid addressing it in the present.

In the case to be examined here, the German role in unleashing the First World War, the ‘new’ approach grew since the late 1990s<sup>7</sup> from a snowball to a small avalanche that sees itself as a reaction to the end of the Cold War and German reunification, suggesting a necessary change of view of the events of 1914. A new group of historians is claiming that Germany does not bear much responsibility for unleashing the war of 1914 and is therefore eligible for an exit from the ‘claws’ of the European Union and a return to the full ‘sovereignty’ of the *Kaiserreich* in 1914.<sup>8</sup> What is ‘novel’ about this tendency is the fact that the ‘new’ research is not arguing with an open ‘visor’ but is using a camouflage, pretending to be either a result of a ‘complex’ analysis of the international

system<sup>9</sup>, or based on cultural’ history<sup>10</sup> or both, or it is claiming an unorthodox thesis that was allegedly overlooked and is now established for the first time.<sup>11</sup>

This may sound novel and innovative, but as Stephen Schuker has pointed out in his review of Clark’s ‘Sleepwalkers’, it turns out to be “old wine in new bottles”.<sup>12</sup> The assertion of neo-revisionism, that their thesis is based on ‘new research’ is misleading, because what they call ‘new’ is crucially resting on materials that originated in the 1920s. The only ‘novel’ thing is

<sup>9</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, states on p. xxix: “This book strives to understand the July Crisis of 1914 as a modern event, the *most complex* of modern times, perhaps of any time so far”; Karen Rasler, William R. Thompson, “Strategic Rivalries and complex causality in 1914”, in: *The Outbreak of the First World War, Structure, Politics, and Decision Making*, ed. Jack S. Levy, John A. Vasquez (Cambridge, UK, 2014) give an overview regarding the different ‘models’; regarding ‘systemic’ causes: Keiger, “War explained”, 24-25; systems analysis seems to be a convenient retreat for revisionism, because its general perspective only allows an overall statement of the failure of the ‘system’ avoiding a closer look at its parts, Guenther Kronenbitter, “Diplomatisches Scheitern: Die Julikrise 1914 und die Konzertdiplomatie der europäischen Großmächte”, in: *Am Rande Europas? Der Balkan - Raum und Bevölkerung als Wirkungsfelder militärischer Gewalt*, ed. Bernhard Chiari, Gerhard P. Gross (Muenchen 2009): 55-65

<sup>10</sup> Dominik Geppert, Andreas Rose, “Machtpolitik und Flottenbau vor 1914, Zur Neuinterpretation britischer Außenpolitik im Zeitalter des Hochimperialismus”, *Historische Zeitschrift* 293 (2011): 401-437, based on the ‘new’ research of British historians, 403: “In the following, some new approaches from the military and diplomatic history as well as from the *cultural history* of politics will be used (...)” (all translations by author)

<sup>11</sup> As an example, Rainer F. Schmidt, “*Revanche pour Sedan* – Frankreich und der Schlieffenplan. Militärische und bündnispolitische Vorbereitung des Ersten Weltkriegs”, *Historische Zeitschrift* 303 (2016): 393-425, who claims that the French Government had ‘detailed knowledge’ of the Schlieffen plan that until this day was overlooked which was used to force Germany to unleash the war in 1914; Terence Zuber, *Inventing the Schlieffen Plan: German War Planning 1871-1914* (Oxford, 2002), is advancing the thesis that the Schlieffenplan never existed and Germany’s posture in 1914 was defensive and supposed to be determined to answer an attack from the Franco-Russian Alliance; Annika Mombauer, “Of war plans and war guilt: the debate surrounding the Schlieffen Plan”, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28 (2005): 857-885, called Zuber’s thesis, 879: “(...) a falsification of history”.

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Schuker, “Old Wine in New Bottles”, *New Criterion* (January 2015): 83-85

<sup>6</sup> *The 1776 Report*, 29-33; in case of Germany it is Fritz Fischer and his pupils, Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 560

<sup>7</sup> See the review of Niall Ferguson’s ‘Pity of War’, Thomas G. Otte, “Neo-Revisionism or the Emperor’s New Clothes: Some Reflections on Niall Ferguson on the Origins of the First World War”, *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 11 (2000): 271-290

<sup>8</sup> See the ‘revisionist’ manifesto by German historians that is confirming and ‘celebrating’ the ‘paradigm’ shift in historiography, Dominik Geppert, Andreas Rose, Cora Stephan, Thomas Weber, “Warum Deutschland nicht allein schuld ist”, *Welt.de* (Jan. 4, 2014)

that the ‘new’ look wants to turn the established consensus upside down, negate the criticism that has been heaped on Germany and Austria-Hungary and throw old accusations against the Entente powers. The real origin of these allegedly ‘new’ assertions can be traced back to the propaganda of the German leadership in 1914 and the ‘innocence’ campaign<sup>13</sup> of the German Foreign Office against the Versailles Treaty in the 1920s, that has started, financed, and implemented the campaign with the goal of propaganda and manipulation aiming at the domestic and international audience to create sympathies for the ‘German’ cause.<sup>14</sup>

Although the neo-revisionist authors like to obscure the events of 1914 that led to war, and despite gaps<sup>15</sup> in the sequence of documents, we do know what has happened during those ‘39 days’.<sup>16</sup> All the Great Powers seemed genuinely surprised about the assassination of the Austrian heir to the throne on June 28, 1914, and nothing would have come of it, if not a change happened in the beginning of July 1914. While in 1913 the German leadership obviously was not ready for

the ‘Great War’, a year later they thought differently.

The *Reichsleitung* had shifted its posture and was now ready to support Austria-Hungary’s request for a punitive expedition, a war against the state of Serbia, that easily could escalate in a war between the great powers.

The calculations of the German leadership in 1914 were two-fold. Not only were they trying to boost Austria-Hungary’s status in the Balkans, but if the Entente powers would decide to prevent Austria’s war against Serbia, the *Reichsleitung* was determined to take any intervention as a threat against the central powers, and would respond with war as long as they could put the blame on Russia and France, they were determined to eliminate as a Great power anyway.

It is important to note, that the real change – compared to the years before – happened in Germany, where the crucial decision-makers, Kaiser Wilhelm II. and the Chancellor, were suddenly in agreement over the ‘necessity’ to give its ‘only’ ally a blank cheque for a war against Serbia knowing very well that without their support Austria could and would not go to war against Serbia. Although in February 1913, roughly a year before, the German Chancellor, Bethmann Hollweg, had dismissed similar scenarios and had warned the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Berchtold, that Russia in case of an Austrian war against Serbia will not stand by idly and would probably intervene, signaling his non-approval.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Hermann J. Wittgens, *The German Foreign Office Campaign against the Versailles Treaty. An Examination of the Activities of the Kriegsschuldreferat in the United States* (Ph. D. University of Washington, 1970); idem., “War Guilt Propaganda conducted by the German Foreign Ministry during the 1920s”, *Historical Papers* 15, 1980, 228–247; Immanuel Geiss, “Die manipulierte Kriegsschuldfrage”, *Militaergeschichtliche Mitteilungen* 36 (1983): 31–60; idem., “The Outbreak of the First World War and German War Aims”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 1 (1966): 75–91; Ulrich Heinemann, *Die verdrängte Niederlage. Politische Öffentlichkeit und Kriegsschuldfrage in der Weimarer Republik* (Göttingen, 1983): 54–151; Wolfgang Jäger, *Historische Forschung und politische Kultur in Deutschland* (Göttingen, 1984): 46–68; Erich J. C. Hahn, “The German Foreign Ministry and the Question of War Guilt in 1918–1919”, in: *German Nationalism and the European Response 1890–1945*, ed. Carol Fink, Isabel Hull, James MacGregor Knox (London, 1985): 43–70; Holger Herwig, “Clio Deceived: Patriotic Self-Censorship in Germany after the Great War”, *International Security* 12 (1987): 5–44

<sup>14</sup> Geiss, “Outbreak”, 75–78

<sup>15</sup> Herwig, “Clio deceived”, 16–17, is pointing to several gaps in the German documents for the July Crisis caused by the *Reichsleitung* itself during the crisis and after the war.

<sup>16</sup> The term ‘39 days’ was used as a title for a study in the 1920s, Eugen Fischer, *Die kritischen 39 Tage, von Sarajevo bis zum Weltbrand* (Berlin, 1928)

<sup>17</sup> *Die grosse Politik der Europäeischen Kabinette 1871–1914, Sammlung der Diplomatischen Akten des Auswaertigen Amtes*, ed. Johannes Lepsius, Albert Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Friedrich Thimme, 40 Vol. (Berlin, 1922–1927) [cited from now on as GP with No.], Vol. 34 (1), Dok. No. 12818, “Der Reichskanzler von Bethmann Hollweg an den oesterreich-ungarischen Minister des Auesseren, Grafen von Berchtold”, 10. 2. 1913, 346–348; John C. G. Roehl, *Wilhelm II., Into the Abyss of war and exile, 1900–1941* (Cambridge, UK, 2014), 917–953; similar Moltke’s letter to Conrad on Febr. 10, 1913 printed in, Conrad von Hoetzendorf, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, Vol. III (Wien, 1923): 144–151, where he is warning Conrad, if Austria is provoking a war in the Balkans it may be difficult to find an “effective motto” for the justification of war for the German people if the provocation is originating from Austria-Hungary.

But the chancellor had also told the Austrians that this was the wrong time and envisioned a better one later, when – according to Bethmann - there will be a chance to go into the conflict “with conditions that are much more favorable to us.”<sup>18</sup> Sixteen months later the Chancellor obviously thought that now the favorable conditions are met and supported the Austrian war against Serbia based on a scenario that can be called ‘indirect provocation’<sup>19</sup> stating now – contrary to his former insights - that this war could be ‘localized’ and Russia had simply no business to intervene. The rationale for this ‘indirect provocation’ scenario was based on the premise that the German leadership – from an official point of view - could not be identified as the instigator and supporter behind Austria’s claims towards Serbia hoping to show to the world that the decision about peace and war was up to the intervention of Russia, while Austria was just following its legitimate interests. Germany was ready to jump on this opportunity to sustain its self-assumed superiority over France and Russia, whose military potential was growing that has made a German ‘victory’ in the future – according to Moltke - more unlikely.

Specifically, in France the Government was weary about the German threat and had improved the armaments of the Entente powers to be ready to defend themselves. Initially, the German calculations proved successful, as the Russians mobilized their troops ‘first’ on July 30, 1914 and reacted as predicted. Germany could now point to the ‘Russian threat’ and start the war under the camouflage of a ‘forced war of defense’.

In the beginning, everything had been going according to ‘plan’, with the exception that

<sup>18</sup> GP 34 (1), Doc. 12818, 347

<sup>19</sup> GP 39, Doc.15560, “Der Reichskanzler von Bethmann Hollweg an Kaiser Wilhelm II.”, 18. 12. 1912, 9-11, 9: “It is certain that a war with Russia would also mean for us a war with France. On the other hand, there are many indications that it is doubtful whether England would intervene actively if Russia and France appear as the ones who have directly provoked us (...) Statements such as from Haldane and the like only indicate that England would retroactively - initially only diplomatically – act in favor of a defeated France. Under these circumstances we have a chance if we *avoid any provocation.*” (*emphasis by author*)

England did not stay neutral, which put the first dent in Bethmann Hollweg’s ‘indirect provocation’ scenario. Other setbacks followed and the ‘superiority’<sup>20</sup> calculations of the German leadership collided with the realities of war. In short, propaganda and manipulation to make the public believe in the German version of events started in 1914, and, repeating and clamoring to the statements of justification of the *Reichsleitung* in 1914 as part of the later campaign of deception, the German leadership created a special heritage for mainstream German historiography<sup>21</sup> that is lasting until today. The avalanche of studies that was published between 1914 and 1945 were all part of a campaign of ‘patriotic self-censorship’<sup>22</sup> that was focused on justifying the decisions of the German leadership that led to war in 1914.

The strong linkage between the interest of the *Reichsleitung* and historiography in creating a record that either pushed the responsibility for unleashing the war simply on the Entente (the radical ‘ambush’ version) or claiming “that Europe slid into war unknowingly”, that no “nation harbored aggressive tendencies” and “fate or providence designed this cruel course of events”<sup>23</sup> (the moderate version), was finally interrupted by the German historian Fritz Fischer<sup>24</sup>, who published a study in 1961 that cut the ‘umbilical cord’ of agreement between politics and historiography, stating that Germany carried the main responsibility for unleashing the war. Therefore, nationalistic minded historians in

<sup>20</sup> Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg, *Betrachtungen zum Weltkrieg, 2 Vol.* (Berlin 1919, 1921), Vol. 2, 15: “The belief in German superiority was almost unlimited. This unconditional belief in a German victory [...] was [...] a moral factor of immense value and crucial importance.”

<sup>21</sup> See the initial contributions from leading German historians at the time like Marcks, Darmstaedter, Oncken, and Uebersberger, *Deutschland und der Weltkrieg*, ed. Otto Hintze et. al. (Leipzig, 1915), that is an example for the close connection regarding the ‘ideas of 1914’ between the political leadership and historiography to justify unleashing the war; also Friedrich Meinecke, *Die deutsche Erhebung von 1914, Vortraege und Aufsaezte* (Stuttgart 1915); Rudolf Kjellen, *Die Ideen von 1914, eine weltgeschichtliche Perspektive* (Leipzig, 1916)

<sup>22</sup> Herwig, “Clio deceived”, 5

<sup>23</sup> Herwig, “Clio deceived”, 7-8

<sup>24</sup> A move that revisionist historians are still grumbling about, Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 560

Germany cried foul still defending the German leadership in going to war, which – as Holger Herwig has pointed out – has raised “basic questions concerning the role of the historian in society, scholarly integrity, decency and public morality.”<sup>25</sup>

In its ‘new’ appearance, revisionist historiography has always avoided closer scrutiny of primary documents, basically pushing a reinterpretation of the events of 1914 and before, that is not based on ‘new’ or any archival sources (except for anecdotal evidence), as Christopher Clark, a major representative of the new direction, admitted in 2013 during a public discussion with other historians on German TV. In fact, as Stephen Schuker has pointed out, Clark in his study ‘Sleepwalkers’ may have dipped into original sources, but only “enough to sprinkle archival holy water on his footnotes” while “his synthesis rests upon the work of others.”<sup>26</sup> During the discussion on German TV, it was also admitted that the real reason for Clark’s attack on the Entente powers is his crusade against the issue of the German *Sonderweg*, that he was fighting in his earlier books on Kaiser Wilhelm II. and Prussia, providing a ‘cleansed’ picture of the *Kaiserreich*<sup>27</sup> before 1914, demanding – based on his re-interpretation on the origins of the First World War - a change of direction in German schoolbooks<sup>28</sup> - similar to the Trump-Commission

in its report regarding the ‘teaching’ in American classrooms, promoting a “patriotic education”<sup>29</sup> to avoid what they call “destructive scholarship” that “shatter the civic bonds” of society.<sup>30</sup>

Looking at the events in Europe between 1914 and 1918, we can summarize them as follows: instead of acknowledging and admitting the ‘mistake’ of the German leadership unleashing a war in 1914 - taking responsibility for it - and negotiating a serious settlement with the Allies after the defeat in 1918 (accepting the end of monarchy), the representatives of the old elites in the Foreign Office and the General Staff did the opposite and betted on the proposition of denying any responsibility of unleashing the war. They initially thought to invoke the usual ‘oblivion’ clause<sup>31</sup> that was used previously insisting that it doesn’t really matter who initiated the war and Germany should be welcomed again at the ‘concert’ of the great powers after the closure of the Versailles peace conference. They obviously did not understand that times had changed and – considering the millions of victims and the destruction they had caused in France-nobody was willing to do ‘business as usual’. Instead, the representative of the Allies insisted on the causation principle: those countries who had unleashed the war in 1914 had to pay restitution.<sup>32</sup> This principle was not entirely new, as Germany in 1871 made France for unleashing the war in 1870 pay a restitution of 5 billion Francs (200 million German Franken).<sup>33</sup>

The ruling elites in Germany demonstrated that they were more interested in trying to conserve their old, privileged positions, signaling that they would not accept the fact that Germany had – together with its allies – the main responsibility

<sup>25</sup> Herwig, “Clio deceived”, 7: “And is a nation well-served when its intellectual establishment conspires to obstruct honest investigation into national catastrophes, upon which past, present and future vital national interests can be reassessed?”

<sup>26</sup> Schuker, “Old Wine”, 85

<sup>27</sup> Christopher Clark, *Wilhelm II* (Harlow, 2000); in a positive review Geoff Eley, *German History* 20 (2002): 251-253, is noting the ‘cleansed character’ of this ‘biography’ admonishing John Roehl for pointing out the Kaiser’s antisemitism and the implied thesis of German continuity; idem., *Iron Kingdom, The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947* (London 2006); [German transl., idem., *Preussen, Aufstieg und Niedergang 1600-1947* (Muenchen, 2007)] In his introduction, 9-16, Clark is criticizing the Allies for their ‘ending’ of Prussia in 1947 and is complaining about the thesis of the German *Sonderweg*, that is supposed to have falsely showed the history of this ‘fabulous’ state in the wrong light, whose real legacy is that of a lasting feeling of ‘vulnerability’ in the middle of Europe

<sup>28</sup> The discussion was broadcast on Phoenix TV and is available on U-Tube; Michael Grandt, “Kriegsschuldfrage

1914: Historiker fordern das Umschreiben von Schulbüchern”, [www.koppperlag.de](http://www.koppperlag.de) (Nov. 4, 2013)

<sup>29</sup> *The 1776 Report*, 19

<sup>30</sup> *The 1776 Report*, 18

<sup>31</sup> Fritz Dickmann, “Die Kriegsschuldfrage auf der Friedenskonferenz in Paris von 1919”, *Historische Zeitschrift* 197 (1963): 1-101; Eckart Conze, *Die Grosse Illusion* (Muenchen 2018): 383-385

<sup>32</sup> Philipp M. Burnett, *Reparations at the Versailles Peace Conference. From the Standpoint of the American Delegation*, 2 Vol. (New York, 1965): Vol. I, 67-70

<sup>33</sup> Franz Gutmann, *Das Franzoesische Geldwesen im Kriege, 1870-1878* (Strassburg 1913), 193-419

for unleashing the war in 1914. Although they had reluctantly offered a 100 Billion Marks as restitution for the damages (without any interest starting in 1925) tied to the territorial integrity of Germany, they wanted to separate any reparations from the claim of the Entente towards the causation of war. Schizophrenic as it is, it was acceptable to pay damages but not to address the issue of causation.<sup>34</sup> But only if Germany was responsible for unleashing the war, it made any sense to also pay reparations.

Instead of focusing on a peaceful development of a new, democratic Germany, in an act of 'national' defiance, representatives at the Foreign Office decided to start an 'innocence' campaign over the alleged 'sole guilt'<sup>35</sup> issue against the Versailles Treaty for domestic and international purposes. Domestically, because the old elites in Germany – having lost the monarchical order and now forced to deal with a republic – did not want to admit that they caused an unnecessary war, and internationally they chose to undermine the validity of the Treaty and minimize the obligation to pay reparations. In doing so, they turned the accusations<sup>36</sup> against Germany around towards the Entente creating a conspiracy myth over the alleged war aims of the Allies to use them as a weapon against France, Russia, Great Britain and

Serbia.<sup>37</sup> A specifically established 'guilt section'<sup>38</sup> in the Foreign Office was heading the campaign and was determined to fight these accusations with a reversal of arguments that are still used – with modifications – by revisionist historians today.<sup>39</sup>

Its strategy was twofold: first of all – it was crucial to appear 'objective' and stay under the radar screen of the public and the Allies – the 'guilt section' decided to run their 'innocence' campaign<sup>40</sup> through 'front' organizations with neutral sounding names, founding the *Zentralstelle fuer Erforschung der Kriegsursachen*<sup>41</sup> ('Center for the Study of the Origins of the War') and its pseudo-scientific journal *Die Kriegsschuldfrage* ('the War-Guilt Question', renamed in 1929 to *Berliner Monatshefte*), to be able to agitate an international audience and disguise the campaign's real origins. For domestic purposes they founded the *Arbeitsausschuss deutscher Verbaende*<sup>42</sup> ('Working committee of German associations') to coordinate propaganda activities in Germany to make sure that all the political parties, trade unions and other associations agreed to support the 'national' cause to create a

<sup>34</sup> Conze, *Illusion*, 359-360; Eberhard Kolb, *Der Frieden von Versailles* (Muenchen 2005): 91-110.

<sup>35</sup> See the discussion between the Foreign Minister Brockdorff-Rantzau and General Groener in April 1919, Doc. 79, "W. Groener an U. v. Brockdorff-Rantzau", April 4, 1919, in: *Quellen zum Friedensschluss in Versailles*, ed. Klaus Schwabe (Darmstadt, 1997): 212-218, where Brockdorff-Rantzau is telling Groener about his commitment to the 'innocence campaign'.

<sup>36</sup> These accusations were gathered by the Versailles Commission on responsibility, *Violation of the Laws and Customs of War, Reports of Majority and Dissenting Reports of American and Japanese Members of the Commission of Responsibilities at the Conference of Paris*, ed. Carnegie Endowment for Peace (Oxford, 1919).

<sup>37</sup> See the German answer to the accusations of the Versailles commission advanced in the so-called 'Professor's memorandum' in: *Deutschland schuldig? Deutsches Weissbuch ueber die Verantwortlichkeit der Urheber des Krieges*, ed. Auswaertiges Amt (Berlin, 1919): 56-68, that became one of the central texts of revisionism that contains almost all the arguments to be found in 'Sleepwalkers'.

<sup>38</sup> Werner Frauendienst, "Das Kriegsschuldreferat des Auswaertigen Amtes", *Berliner Monatshefte* 15 (1937): 201-214; Alfons Fonck "Die Schuld der Deutschen am Kriege", *Berliner Monatshefte* 15 (1937): 224-233.

<sup>39</sup> Regarding the details on the 'guilt section', Heinemann, *Niederlage*, 54-73; Wittgens, *German Foreign Office campaign*, 1-50; compare this with the arguments in the revisionist manifesto, Geppert et. al., "Warum Deutschland nicht allein Schuld ist", *Welt.de* (Jan. 4, 2014).

<sup>40</sup> Friedrich Stieve, "Der Kampf gegen die Kriegsschuld luege von 1922-1928", *Berliner Monatshefte* 15 (1937): 194-201; also 35 *curriculum vitae* of so-called 'war guilt researchers' on their own behalf, "Deutsche Kriegsschuld forscher 1919-1929", *Berliner Monatshefte* 7 (1929): 552-590; Herwig, "Clio deceived", 7.

<sup>41</sup> August Bach, "Die Zentralstelle fuer Erforschung der Kriegsursachen", *Berliner Monatshefte* 15 (1937): 272-282.

<sup>42</sup> Hans Draeger, "Der Arbeitsausschuss deutscher Verbaende", *Berliner Monatshefte* 15 (1937): 258-271.

domestic ‘unity’ against the new international order, suppressing any possible dissent that dared to follow a different approach that could have minimized the impact of the campaign.<sup>43</sup> The Foreign Office even managed the ‘findings’ of the investigating committee of the *Reichstag* to avoid a real examination of the role of the German leadership in 1914 that were in contradiction to the ‘innocence’ campaign.<sup>44</sup>

And secondly, the German Foreign Office decided to publish special ‘documentations’<sup>45</sup> on the Entente powers with certain materials either captured during Germany’s invasions between 1914-18<sup>46</sup>, transmitted by the spy Benno von Siebert in the Russian embassy in London before

1914<sup>47</sup>, or simply bought after the defeat from willing collaborators at embassies in former Entente countries.<sup>48</sup> These materials were collected and designed to support the German thesis about France and Russia’s war aims and its ‘initiative’ for unleashing the War in 1914<sup>49</sup>, issuing the core materials used affirmatively by revisionist historians in the 1920s and again in the present. In addition, the German Foreign Office campaign solicited ‘welcome’ help from former Russian generals<sup>50</sup> and translated selective Bolshevik ‘publications’ of documents allegedly demonstrating the ‘will for war’ of the Tsarist regime, creating a common political interest between the two countries that culminated later in several agreements and secret armament activities on Russian soil that were forbidden in Germany by the Versailles Treaty.<sup>51</sup>

All this would not have to be mentioned, if the accusations of neo-revisionism today would not

<sup>43</sup> Heinemann, *Niederlage*, 95-151; an example for this strategy is the *Gutachten* of Hermann Kantorowicz that contained a different approach that was suppressed until the author emigrated in 1933 and his ‘appraisal’ was published later in 1967, Hermann Kantorowicz, *Gutachten zur Kriegsschuldfrage 1914*, ed. Immanuel Geiss (Frankfurt/M., 1967).

<sup>44</sup> Ulrich Heinemann, “Die Last der Vergangenheit. Zur politischen Bedeutung der Kriegsschuld- und Dolchstoß Diskussion”, in: *Die Weimarer Republik 1918-1933*, ed. Karl Dietrich Bracher, Manfred Funke, Hans-Adolf Jacobsen (Bonn, 1987), 371-386.

<sup>45</sup> A good example is the German Whitebook of 1919 that contained documents of Russia and Serbia almost in its entirety to boost the claim of the Russian-Serbian plot suggested in the ‘professor’s’ memorandum, in: *Deutschland schuldig*, 56-68.

<sup>46</sup> For example the Belgian dispatches from Entente capitals between 1910 and 1914, ‘captured’ during the German invasion of Belgium in the archives of Brussels in 1914, which were published as examples on the ‘dangerous’ policies of France and Russia, *Zur europäischen Politik 1897-1914, Unveröffentlichte Dokumente im amtlichem Auftrag*, ed. Bernhard Schwertfeger, 4 Vol. (Berlin, 1919); Clark has picked up on that and laced ‘Sleepwalkers’ with commentaries from dispatches in the archives in Belgium and Holland that point in the same direction; also see the reminiscences by Bernhard Schwertfeger, “Belgische Dokumente, belgische Neutralität, deutsche und französische Aktenpublikation”, *Berliner Monatshefte* 15 (1937): 234-247.

<sup>47</sup> *Diplomatische Aktenstücke zur Ententepolitik der Vorkriegsjahre*, ed. Benno v. Siebert (Berlin, 1921), [engl. transl., *Entente Diplomacy and the World*, ed. idem. (New York 1921)]; regarding Siebert’s role as a spy for the German leadership and the background of these ‘documents’, Stephen Schroeder, “‘Ausgedehnte Spionage’ - Benno von Sieberts geheime Zusammenarbeit mit dem Auswärtigen Amt (1909-1926)”, *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift* 64 (2005): 425-463

<sup>48</sup> Herwig, “Clio deceived”, 20

<sup>49</sup> In the case of the Isvolsky correspondence, *Der diplomatische Schriftwechsel Iswolskis, 1911-1914*, ed. Friedrich Stieve, 4 Vol. (Berlin, 1924); also Friedrich Stieve, *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 1924); Bernadotte E. Schmitt, “July 1914”, *Foreign Affairs* 5 (1926): 132-147, stated already back then about Isvolsky, 133 “(...) in all his correspondence there is not one document, save a telegram of very doubtful authenticity, in which he speaks of war as meditated or desirable or quotes M. Poincaré on Alsace-Lorraine. Throughout, Herr Stieve carefully ignores any French documents - and there are many - which would invalidate his argument.”; regarding the origins of the Isvolsky correspondence; Wittgens, *German Foreign Office campaign*, 175-186.

<sup>50</sup> Sergei Drobrorolski, “Die Mobilmachung der russischen Armee”, *Beitraege zur Schuldfrage*, ed. Zentralstelle fuer die Erforschung der Kriegsursachen, Heft 1 (Berlin, 1922) [predecessor of the journal *Die Kriegsschuldfrage*]; Wladimir A. Suchomlinow, *Die russische Mobilmachung im Lichte amtlicher Urkunden und der Enthüllung des Prozesses* (Bern, 1917); idem., *Erinnerungen* (Berlin, 1924): 353-421.

<sup>51</sup> Manfred Zeidler, *Reichswehr und Rote Armee* (Muenchen, 1994): 171-246.

be similar to the arguments of the ‘innocence’ campaign in the 1920s.

What the revisionist historians today do not want to realize is that their (re-)interpretation of the origins of the war in favor of Germany goes back to the political campaign for territorial revisions during the 1920s<sup>52</sup> that was later used by Hitler to violently turn the new international order upside down and unleash the Second World War.<sup>53</sup> From the very beginning, the German protagonists of the revision of the Versailles Treaty were longing for a war of revanche that included the recapturing of the so-called ‘lost’ territories. Even before Hitler was appointed Chancellor in 1933, the doyen of the German ‘innocence’ campaign, Alfred von Wegerer (editor of the journal *Die Kriegschuldfrage*), subtly threatened war, stating, if the Versailles Treaty would not be revised a nation (he meant Germany) “will resort to the old method of war”, and “things some day will explode of themselves”, because the danger of war, “has in reality scarcely diminished”.<sup>54</sup> Although several treaties (for example the Kellogg Pact) had been signed in that respect, it was no surprise, that Wegerer and his colleagues of pseudo-scientific ‘war-guilt’ research anticipated and predicted the belligerent events of the late 1930s, because this was – if all else failed (in their

<sup>52</sup> Without mentioning the campaign, Andreas Hillgruber, “Revisionismus’ – Kontinuität und Wandel in der Außenpolitik der Weimarer Republik”, *Historische Zeitschrift* 237 (1983): 597-621, but pointing out the continuity of territorial revisionism that Hitler picked up and continued to launch his own policies.

<sup>53</sup> Regarding the connection between the campaign and the Nazis: when Hitler had officially pulled the German signature from the Versailles Treaty in January 1937, the members of the guilt-section of the Foreign Office were in a celebratory mood and published several articles that were bragging about how the campaign became successful, August Bach, “Zur Einführung”, *Berliner Monatshefte* 15 (1937): 177-178 and defended and justified Hitler’s foreign policy.

<sup>54</sup> Alfred von Wegerer, *A Refutation of the War-Guilt Thesis. Introduction by Harry E. Barnes* (New York, 1930): Preface, IX, stating, XI: “With Germany eliminated as a World Power, her military and naval armaments destroyed, and her monarchical form of government overthrown, the delusion was propagated, that the possibilities of future war had not been removed or at least reduced to a minimum. That this dictum was false is as plain today as sunlight.” [German version, *Die Widerlegung der Versailler Kriegsschuldthese* (Berlin, 1928): 5-10].

view) - the only possible way to restore German sovereignty and its status as a great power.

Thereby, the neo-revisionist historians - by trying to revive the old paradigm<sup>55</sup> of the ‘Initiative of the Entente’<sup>56</sup> – are at the same time trying to revive the legitimacy of full German sovereignty, that was taken away by the Allies not after 1918 but after World War II in 1945. It was no accident, that in the early 1960s a new paradigm of the ‘Initiative of the central powers’<sup>57</sup> as an adaptation to the new international situation after 1945 emerged, considering that this was the consensus internationally but unacknowledged by historians in Germany, who were still clamoring for the ‘lost’ territories beyond the Oder-Neisse river, that today are part of Poland.<sup>58</sup> To revive the paradigm of the ‘Initiative of the Entente’ after 1990, is a step back to the 1950s (or 1920s), from a political as well as historiographical viewpoint. Today, some moderate historians<sup>59</sup> use the ‘shared’

<sup>55</sup> Regarding the term ‘paradigm’ and its meaning as a ‘guideline’ and ‘model’ for scientific research, Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Encyclopedia of Unified Science, Chicago 1970, 2<sup>nd</sup> enlarged Edition): 10

<sup>56</sup> Samuel R. Williamson, jr., “July 1914 revisited and revised, the erosion of the German paradigm”, in: *The Outbreak of the First World War*, 30-64 is welcoming the shift of ‘focus’ towards the Entente pointing out the crucial role of Clark’s Sleepwalkers, 39: “None of the European states faced as much domestic turmoil as Serbia. Clark’s recent study, the Sleepwalkers, once again (...), reminds scholars that Serbia bore significant responsibility for the outbreak of the First World War.”

<sup>57</sup> This paradigm was originally represented by Pierre Renouvin, *Les Origines immédiates de la Guerre* (Paris, 1925) [engl. transl., *The immediate Origins of the War* (Yale, Ct., 1928)]; Bernadotte E. Schmitt, *The Coming of the War of 1914*, 2 Vol. (New York, 1930); Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of the War*, 3 Vol. (London 1953-57); Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht* (Duesseldorf 1961); idem., *Krieg der Illusionen* (Duesseldorf 1969); John C. G. Roehl, “Goodbye to all that (again)? The Fischer thesis, the new revisionism and the meaning of the First World War”, *International Affairs* 91 (2015), 153-166, calls it the ‘German’ paradigm.

<sup>58</sup> For more details, Immanuel Geiss, “Die Fischer Kontroverse. Ein kritischer Beitrag zum Verhältnis zwischen Historiographie und Politik in der Bundesrepublik”, in: idem., *Studien ueber Geschichte und Geschichtswissenschaft* (Frankfurt/Main, 1972): 108-222.

<sup>59</sup> The ‘moderate’ revisionism was originally represented by Sidney B. Fay, *The Origins of the War*, 2 Vol. (New York 1928), who distanced himself from the radical version of Stieve and Barnes (Vol. I, 524-534); and Alfred von Wegerer, *Der Ausbruch des Weltkrieges 1914*, 2 Vol. (Hamburg, 1939).

responsibility thesis, others prefer the radical<sup>60</sup> version, stating that France, Russia and England assaulted and ambushed Germany in August 1914, just like the Kaiser had stated in his address on August 4, 1914 and before.<sup>61</sup> The slightly softer version of the latter avoiding explicitly the ‘ambush’ thesis was Bethmann’s assertion in 1914 that the Entente powers had ‘forced’ the war on Germany, and Germany had to ‘defend’ itself, but the result amounted to the same ‘defensive’ posture, that Germany “did not want war”<sup>62</sup> which became later the mantra of revisionism.

Therefore, the following article is focusing on the heritage of the revisionist assertions but will also

<sup>60</sup> The radical version was originally represented by Harry E. Barnes, *The Genesis of the War* (New York, 1926), who relied heavily on the Isvolsky correspondence of Stieve; regarding Barnes’ collaboration with the ‘guilt-section’ of the German Foreign Office, Wittgens, “War Guilt Propaganda”, 228-243; in Germany this version was promoted by the German ‘innocence’ campaign and by the head of the ‘guilt section’ of the Foreign Office, Stieve’s, *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg* and countless books and pamphlets against ‘Poincare and Iswolski’ at the height of the French Ruhr occupation starting in 1923

<sup>61</sup> Kaiser Wilhelm propagated the active scenario of the *Ueberfall* (‘ambush’) of the Entente powers, *Die politischen Reden Kaiser Wilhelms II*, ed. Michael A. Obst (Paderborn, 2011), Dok. 208, S. 362: “During the most peaceful period, we have been *ambushed* in an outrageous way. In the just defense of our interests, having maintained peace for 25 years the sword has been pressed into my hand”; a similar scenario was propagated by Moltke, who predicted an ‘ambush’ for 1917 by the Entente with Russia as instigator, Ansgar Jansen, *Der Weg in den Ersten Weltkrieg, das deutsche Militair in der Julikrise* (Marburg 2005): 496; in 2014 the ‘ambush’ metaphor by the Kaiser was used by Stefan Scheil, “*Mitten im Frieden ueberfaellt uns der Feind*”. *Vergessene Wahrheiten des Ersten Weltkriegs – Die Schuld der Sieger in den Debatten der zwanziger Jahre* (Berlin, 2014) to revive the radical approach of the German leadership of 1914 and the campaign in the 1920s

<sup>62</sup> Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg, *Kriegsreden*, ed. Friedrich Thimme (Berlin, 1919), is emphasizing the defensive character of the war avoiding the ‘ambush’ metaphor, but nonetheless creating the myth of the ‘forced war of defense’ as a way to justify the war domestically and internationally, asserting the ‘initiative’ of the Entente powers, see his speech on July 31, 1914, 1: “Should the sword be forced into our hand, we will be fighting with a clear conscience and the knowledge that *we did not want war*.”; and on August 4, 1914 he is pointing towards the Entente before the German *Reichstag* (Parliament) directly, 4: “Russia has put the fire torch on the house (...) We are in a forced war with Russia and France.”

demonstrate, that the thesis of neo-revisionism is based on the sources that were published in the 1920s or secondary literature of revisionist origin, and that the alleged ‘novel’ scenarios like the ‘Balkanization of the Franco-Russian Alliance’<sup>63</sup> or the ‘Balkan inception scenario’<sup>64</sup>, are *deus-ex-machina*<sup>65</sup> inventions (like in a theatre play, a novel or a movie), to boost and justify the paradigm of the ‘Initiative of the Entente’. These ‘inventions’ are designed to solve a serious problem for revisionism: attempting to close the empirical gap for the ‘initiative’ between the history preceding the July Crisis of 1914 and the crisis itself.<sup>66</sup>

In general, it is well-known that the ‘initiative’ fomenting the crisis came from the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia that served as a justification for the demands of the Austrian government, attaching the assassination to the state of Serbia.<sup>67</sup> That’s why from the beginning in 1919, the gap had to be filled by conspiracy myths<sup>68</sup> stating or insinuating<sup>69</sup> that the Russians had somehow helped the Serbians to initiate the assassination of the Archduke.<sup>70</sup> And, countering the charge (in a reversal scenario<sup>71</sup>) that Germany had unleashed the war in 1914, the Foreign Office and the revisionist historians (like Hans Delbrueck) launched the conspiracy myth that the Franco-

<sup>63</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 293-301

<sup>64</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 349-358

<sup>65</sup> A *deus-ex-machina* is latin for ‘God from the machine’, a term for a certain intervention (from above) in classical Greek theatre, that was supposed to push the plot in the ‘right’ direction.

<sup>66</sup> That the Balkan scenario has an essential meaning for Clark’s study demonstrates the fact that he has also published it separately, Christopher Clark, “The Balkan Inception Scenario: Serbia and the Coming of War in 1914”, in: *Bid for World Power?*, ed. Andreas Gestrich, Hartmut Pogge von Strandtmann (Oxford, 2017): 262-287

<sup>67</sup> Wegerer, *Refutation*, states the opposite, 320

<sup>68</sup> An example for the ‘Russian-Serbian conspiracy’, Hans Delbrueck, *Kautsky und Harden* (Berlin, 1920): 37-40, that we will address further below

<sup>69</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 411-412

<sup>70</sup> Delbrueck, *Kautsky und Harden*, 37-40; Wegerer, *Refutation*, 325-327

<sup>71</sup> Wegerer, *Refutation*, 324: “Consequently, the charge of deliberate plotting in the Austro-Serbian conflict applies not to the Dual Monarchy but rather to the Belgrad Government and to the organizations upon which this government depended and from which it derived its support.”

Russian Alliance was supporting Serbian claims towards Austria-Hungary looking for a 'pretext' to start a war against Austria-Hungary following the motto that 'offense is a better defense'.

Considering the limited space available here, we will take a few crucial examples from Clark's study 'Sleepwalkers' as the new 'revisionist synthesis', as William Mulligan<sup>72</sup> has called it, to demonstrate how the new revisionism is operating. Thereby, discussing major issues to demonstrate that Clark's core arguments are typically resting on 'like-minded' literature from the 1920s that also was used and supported by the 'innocence' campaign, which is following and confirming a similar viewpoint to support the paradigm of the 'Initiative of the Entente'. A closer look at this study is revealing that behind its 'complexity' façade, Clark's inquiry is not only reviving all the *topoi* of the German innocence campaign and its materials but is also - through relentless agitation - consistently trying to shift responsibility for all the crisis and the wars before 1914 and the World War to France, Russia, England and Serbia.

## II. THE 'AMBIGUITIES' OF UNLEASHING THE WAR IN 1914

Before we will examine the revisionist *topoi* in more detail, we need to address a central ambiguity regarding the unleashing of the war in 1914 that has been exploited by the German leadership in 1914 and revisionist historiography ever since<sup>73</sup>, confusing the issue of who was the aggressor that has started the war and who was the defender.<sup>74</sup> Both want to make it look like that

<sup>72</sup> William Mulligan, "The Trial continues: New Directions in the Study of the Origins of the First World War", *English Historical Review* 538 (2014): 639-666, 658.

<sup>73</sup> The author is basing the following presentation on, *Julikrise und Kriegsausbruch 1914. Eine Dokumentensammlung*, 2 Vol., ed. Immanuel Geiss (Hannover, 1963/1964), that is presenting roughly 1,200 documents of all the participants and is providing an overview for each period of the crisis.

<sup>74</sup> Another attempt in this area was Terence Zuber's attack on the Schlieffen plan that basically tried to 'prove' that the plan didn't exist, that Germany's posture was defensive and that the real 'offensive' war plan came from the Franco-Russian Alliance, Terence Zuber, *Inventing the Schlieffen Plan: German War Planning 1871-1914* (Oxford, 2002): 264-265; this was successfully refuted by German historians at a

the war was started by the Entente powers or leaving it open in the sense that nobody 'wanted' war and that the war simply 'broke out' like a plague that had descended on Europe.

Although this does not make any sense (wars do not break out like volcanoes), it is meant to be a serious explanation that emphasizes a 'catastrophe'<sup>75</sup> avoiding the necessary clarity in pointing out whose activities has caused and started the war.<sup>76</sup> Clark calls it the "familiar paradox", and attaches the start of the war to the Entente powers: "The war that needed to be fought defensively in the West *had* to begin aggressively in the East"<sup>77</sup> to counter the obvious fact, that the German army through an offensive invading Luxembourg and Belgium first had started the war in order to defeat France. Not only is this a reversal of the chain of events, but Clark is omitting several issues, that would run counter to his paradigm.

First, it was Germany who in its support of Austria-Hungary had 'indirectly provoked' Russia and started the crisis, while the Russian Government answered with a compromise solution regarding the conflict between Austria and Serbia and only announced mobilizing its forces as a reaction to the Austrian declaration of war against Serbia on July 28, 1914. And secondly, it was Germany - after issuing an ultimatum - that declared war on Russia on July 31, 1914 initiating the beginning of the war through

conference in 2004, demonstrating that Zuber's thesis were not based on primary documents but on distortions and false assertions, Gerhard Gross, "There was a Schlieffen Plan", in: *Der Schlieffenplan. Analyse und Dokumente*, ed. Hans Ehlert et. al. (Paderborn, 2006): 117-160 [engl. transl., *The Schlieffenplan, International Perspectives on the German Strategy for World War I* (Lexington, KY, 2014): 85-135], Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, signals agreement with Zuber's distorted interpretation of the Schlieffen plan, 216 (note 123, 603).

<sup>75</sup> The first to use the term 'seminal catastrophe' was George Kennan, *The Decline of Bismarck's European Order: Franco-Russian Relations, 1875-1890* (Princeton, 1979): 3, which was afterwards constantly repeated by other historians.

<sup>76</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 553, calls it "defensive patriotism" trying to 'equalize' the enthusiasm to go to war between the different countries, leaving out the specific reasons for each case.

<sup>77</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 504.

violating the Eastern border to Russia first.<sup>78</sup> This move may have been widely criticized internally by Tirpitz and others<sup>79</sup>, foreseeing that this declaration of war – as a contradiction to Bethmann’s ‘indirect provocation’ scenario – would later mess up (as Clark has called it) the “complexities of the war’s causation”<sup>80</sup>, but nonetheless is demonstrating who took the initiative to implement the attack. The ‘indirect provocation’ scenario was based on the premise that Austria would do the ‘direct’ provocation of Russia threatening war against Serbia, while the German leadership was in the background and offered being the ‘peaceful’ mediator. In addition, the German leadership made a move that haunts the depiction of the history of the July Crisis until today: it avoided creating documents (or destroyed them), that could reveal their true motives to give Austria a blank cheque, so there is only one account of the meeting at July 5<sup>th</sup>, 1914. Everybody knew that in case Russia had to defend Serbia against Austria-Hungary’s attack, the *casus foederis* would kick in and Germany was going to engage with Russia and France to support Austria. With Austria’s ultimatum to Serbia, the game was on and Austria had created the *casus belli* that was desired by Germany, being ready to take on France and Russia, although both claimed that it was Russia that had made the decision regarding peace and war.

And then, after Germany and Austria had turned down all proposals for compromise (as the only measures to prevent war), Germany incited Austria to declare war on Serbia on July 28, 1914 to create the desired *fait accompli*, while Russia –

taking this as a serious challenge – implemented a ‘countervailing’ strategy and announced the mobilization of its forces, but also proposed – at the same time – ceasing it would require Austria modifying its ultimatum and give up its war against Serbia. The German leadership now had the choice to decide about peace or war. Russia had resisted their scheme and now the second part of its ‘indirect provocation’ scenario was kicking in: either they would accept a compromise (they only favored further ‘talks’ between Russia and Austria) or had to go to war.

In deciding the latter, it was the German leadership that had initiated the conflagration with its declarations of war on Russia, three days later on France<sup>81</sup> and through the invasion of Belgium it was cutting off any chances of a peaceful compromise. After the German military decided to mobilize on July 29, Bethmann Hollweg, following his scenario of ‘indirect provocation’, convinced the General Staff to wait until Russia announced their mobilization making sure it looked like Germany was forced to respond to the ‘Russian threat’, creating the ‘mythology’ we still have to deal with today.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, the war was started ‘aggressively’, but not in the East by Russia, but in the East and West by Germany, although in the East an offensive against Russia was temporarily on hold because the German General Staff had a different priority: defeating France first.

The war was started, as even the Chancellor admitted in his memoirs in 1919, because Germany and specifically the General Staff had claimed ‘superiority’ towards the other great powers<sup>83</sup>, pointing out how *inferior* France and

<sup>78</sup> Alfred von Tirpitz, *Erinnerungen* (Leipzig, 1922): 241 [engl. transl., idem., *My Memoirs*, 2 Vol. (New York, 1919), Vol. I, 365, Jansen, *Weg in den Ersten Weltkrieg*, 427

<sup>79</sup> Detailed discussion, Jansen, *Weg in den Ersten Weltkrieg*, 427; Tirpitz, *My Memoirs*, Vol. I, 364-368, is not criticizing Bethmann Hollweg for his declarations of war against Russia and France but is also admitting “it was madness to give the enemy pretexts for war.”

<sup>80</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 527, 551; Tirpitz, *My Memoirs*, 350, is admitting that the German leadership has given “the enemy pretexts for war” and is confirming indirectly the provocation scenario, although he is conceding only ‘missteps’ and ‘incompetence’ that “is our guilt” (p. 358) and is sticking to the thesis that the Entente powers have caused the war

<sup>81</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, is omitting – among other events – the declaration of war and the fake news about French border violations as a justification for the German declaration of war towards France.

<sup>82</sup> Holger Afflerbach, *Falkenhayn. Politisches und militärisches Handeln Im Kaiserreich* (München, 1996): 150-168; idem., “Die militärische Planung des Deutschen Reiches”, in: *Der Erste Weltkrieg. Wirkung, Wahrnehmung, Analyse*, ed. Wolfgang Michalka (Weyam, 1997): 280-318; Annika Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke and the Origins of the First World War* (Cambridge, UK, 2001): 200-226.

<sup>83</sup> Bethmann Hollweg, *Betrachtungen*, Bd. 2, 15: “The belief in German superiority was almost unlimited. This unconditional belief in a German victory [...] was [...] a moral

Russia really were and that this was the guiding moral principle for unleashing the war. It also was the major source of confidence already displayed during the crisis that had fired up the civilian leadership to take the risk of war. The Russians – on the other hand – knew about their shortcomings because their mobilization would last almost four weeks, while the German mobilization was completed in 12 days or shorter.<sup>84</sup> As part of the Moltke-Schlieffen plan, Germany had ‘special forces’<sup>85</sup> stationed close to the border to Belgium and Luxembourg, which were immediately ready to start the attack on France, focusing on the *Coup de Liege* as the assumed gateway to victory, when they trespassed the Belgian border violating its neutrality on August 4, 1914.<sup>86</sup> This is also the reason, why Germany was not in a hurry to mobilize any forces during the July Crisis. Crucial army units were ready to strike and could move forward by a days’ notice.<sup>87</sup>

It is part of the ambiguity of the beginning of the war that until this day there are hardly any studies on the German mobilization<sup>88</sup> in 1914 and how the invasion of Belgium ties in with German war aims and the strategic objectives of the Moltke-Schlieffen plan<sup>89</sup>, while there are plenty of studies

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factor of immense value and crucial importance.”; Afflerbach, “Militarische Planung”, 283.

<sup>84</sup> Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke*, 228

<sup>85</sup> That is how Germany was able to implement a surprise attack of Belgium to cross over to France, Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke*, 226-250

<sup>86</sup> Regarding the *Coup de Liege*, T. H. Thomas, “Holland and Belgium in the German War Plan”, *Foreign Affairs* 6, (1928): 315–328; Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke*, 95-100, points out that the coup de Liege was necessary, because Moltke did not want to violate Dutch territory; Jansen, *Weg in den Ersten Weltkrieg*, 494-495

<sup>87</sup> Details see, Jansen, *Weg in den Ersten Weltkrieg*, 156-157

<sup>88</sup> See the rare, somewhat ‘detailed’ account by Arden Bucholz, *Moltke, Schlieffen and Prussian War Planning* (New York, 1991), 300-312, who seems mesmerized by technical details but is missing the point on a strategic level that makes his presentation of the planning for and the actual event of mobilization appear incoherent and confusing; one of the few exceptions, Jansen, *Weg in den Ersten Weltkrieg*, 123-176, regarding Bucholz’ confusion, 170-172

<sup>89</sup> Annika Mombauer, “German War Plans”, in: *War Planning 1914*, ed. Richard F. Hamilton, Holger H. Herwig (Cambridge, UK, 2009): 48-79; idem., *Helmuth von Moltke*, 182-225; Afflerbach, “Militarische Planung”, 279-285

on the Russian mobilization. These studies typically emphasize how Germany was ‘forced’ to react, not having made any ‘war’ preparations at all.<sup>90</sup> In short, until today, historiography is still influenced by the agenda of the German leadership and their scenario of ‘indirect provocation’ that typically is omitted by revisionist historians, who, like Clark, are still defending the *Reichsleitung* in stating that the German strategy in July 1914, “was not, strictly speaking, a strategy centered on risk, but one that aimed to establish the true level of threat posed by Russia.”<sup>91</sup> Clark - according to his paradigm - is making sure whenever it’s possible throwing the initiative for escalation and war on the side of the Entente (and away from Germany) – typically through a ‘side wipe’<sup>92</sup> - following the goal of his study to question the established consensus between historians that Germany carries the main responsibility for the war.<sup>93</sup>

Until today, the calculation of the German leadership and their scenario of ‘indirect provocation’ has achieved its main goal: maintaining the ambiguity of the war’s beginning that leaves enough room to push the responsibility onto the Entente powers specifically Russia and Serbia, making sure that not the action but the reaction gets blamed for its initiative. In reaffirming the legitimacy of the Austro-Hungarian war against Serbia, revisionism is renewing the justification of the activities of the *Reichsleitung* in 1914 even today. That Germany had their own blueprint since 1905 in the

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<sup>90</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 503, 509: “The Russian general mobilization was one of the most momentous decisions of the July Crisis. (...) It came at a moment when the German Government had not yet even declared the State of Impending War (...)” Clark is omitting that Germany – as part of their ‘indirect provocation’ scenario did not have to make obvious war preparations, as their ‘special’ forces were ‘ready’ at a days notice to strike at the border to Luxembourg and Belgium

<sup>91</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 419

<sup>92</sup> In discussing several ‘preventive’ war scenarios (implying the intention for war on the other side) of the German General staff, Clark is trying to transport his paradigm through a question attached to a speculation, 417: “(...) why would St. Petersburg *risk launching a continental conflict* now, when it was half-prepared?”

<sup>93</sup> As the cover text of the German edition, Clark, *Schlafwandler*, is pointing out; Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 560.

Schlieffen-Moltke plan that was designed to ‘wrestle down’<sup>94</sup> and defeat France first and deal with Russia later, goes – in revisionist accounts – widely unnoticed. The German leadership knew that trying to achieve a decisive victory in the East was for several reasons impossible, and therefore it decided to seek victory first in the West. It was Moltke’s answer to the ‘two-front’ war dilemma, understanding that they could not deal with both fronts at the same time. For Moltke, seeking a quick victory in the East seemed impossible due to the large spaces on Russian territory, its swamps and fortified crossings that a German offensive like in the West against France was considered pure “folly”.<sup>95</sup> They understood that Russia considering its vast space might be pushed back and the Baltic States and the Ukraine could be turned into vassal states of Germany, but Russia could not be defeated like France.

In short, Moltke decided to follow Schlieffen<sup>96</sup> in his belief that the war would be decided in the West and the emphasis of the German war plan was clearly focused on the defeat of France, while Moltke expected that a few divisions in the East were enough to put the Russians on hold and – considering the delay in Russian mobilization – there would be enough time to counter any possible attack, while additional divisions could be transferred from the Western theatre of war. This was based on the calculation that the Russians were not a real threat and that Germany and Austria could start an offensive later that would drive the Russian army far back with the option of negotiating a favorable peace after France was eliminated.<sup>97</sup> In fact, being at first

defensive in the East helped the German leadership with their claim of the Russian threat and the later ‘attack’ on East Prussia confirmed the official ‘ambush’ propaganda, besides any other motivation of the German General Staff to scrap the *Grosse Ostaufmarsch* in April of 1913.<sup>98</sup>

Clark, who does not deal with the actual war or the Eastern Front, is trying to exploit the ambiguity of the Russian mobilization as an alleged threat to Germany. That the war started for Germany on the ‘defensive’ in the East with only a few divisions, was a deliberate choice of the German General staff and helped to make it look like as if the Russians were the attackers, while the crucially deemed victories were first sought in the West.<sup>99</sup> If Russia would have been a real threat as it was asserted for propaganda purposes, Schlieffen and Moltke simply would have had to implement a different ratio of the available forces, rather than throwing most of them to the West for the offensive against France. The discrepancy in numbers was discounted anyway: Moltke did not consider ‘inferiority’ in numbers as crucial and favored quality over quantity.<sup>100</sup> Although Clark is trying hard to insist on the “complexity of the war’s causation”<sup>101</sup>, asserting that Russia began the war ‘aggressively’ in the East, war was declared and started by Germany before Russia had even mobilized any soldiers (and by now permitted any military action by either party), whose slow implementation also contributed to their first loss at the battle of Tannenberg.<sup>102</sup> Russia’s loss was Germany’s gain and confirmed Moltke’s estimate that the Germans were qualitatively superior to the Russians. In the words of Bruce Menning, for Russia the “result

<sup>94</sup> The term in German at the time was “*niederwerfen*”

<sup>95</sup> Dennis E. Showalter, “The Eastern Front and German Military planning, 1871-1914, some Observations”, *East European Quarterly* 15 (1981): 163-180, 171; Grawe, *Feindaufklärung*, 431-436

<sup>96</sup> Regarding the original Schlieffen plan, Gerhard Ritter, *Der Schlieffenplan. Kritik eines Mythos* (Muenchen, 1956)

<sup>97</sup> Afflerbach, *Militaerische Planung*, 281-284, regarding Germany’s goals, 285: “The goal was to achieve continental hegemony. Politicians had fully relied on the military and on its assurance of total military victory (...) and no one doubted that this would be achieved. (...) The German government wanted more than annexations, it wanted to break up the Entente and achieve hegemony. In terms of this goal, annexations were only details.”

<sup>98</sup> Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke*, 101-105

<sup>99</sup> As Moltke had told Conrad already in February 1913, Conrad, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, Vol. III, 145: “On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of mobilization considerable parts of these forces are able to provide aside of the protection issue an *offensive* posture.”

<sup>100</sup> The ratio for deployment between West and East was 73:9, Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke*, 228-229

<sup>101</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 551

<sup>102</sup> David Stone, *The Russian Army in the Great War, the Eastern Front, 1914-1917* (Laurence, KA, 2015): 54-80; Paul Robinson, “The Pre-war Origins of Russia’s Defeats in 1914 and 1915: Re-examining Norman Stone’s *Eastern Front*”, *War in History* 22 (2015): 47-65

during the initial period of conflict was catastrophic failure (...).<sup>103</sup>

Beyond exploiting the ambiguities of the beginning of the war, neo-revisionism outlook in pushing the responsibility for unleashing the war on the Entente powers is still where it was in the 1920s: in the case of Russia, historians like Clark are still asserting that its primary goal was capturing the Turkish Straits and Constantinople<sup>104</sup> and in the case of France it was retrieving Alsace-Lorraine<sup>105</sup>, while from this viewpoint Germany had no political agenda and – logically in reverse to the threat of ‘encirclement’ of the Entente powers – was basically on the defensive.

That Germany had a clear agenda for starting the war, trying to eliminate France and Russia from the equation of international relations as a factor that had ‘disturbed’ and caused ‘problems’ for German *Weltpolitik* to seek political hegemony in Europe<sup>106</sup>, is typically ignored and the Entente is burdened with causing the war.

### III. THE REVISIONIST METHODOLOGY AND ITS ‘CITATION CHAIN’

Clark’s program in ‘Sleepwalkers’ may be somewhat disguised but should be obvious to the informed reader: through his narrative he is trying to make it look like as if the Entente powers had caused all the crisis and wars before 1914 and beyond, having transferred the initiative from the central powers to France, Russia, England and Serbia. Thereby, he follows a special technique. For example, pointing out all the available anecdotal evidence of potential misdeeds and the war preparations of the Entente emphasizing the ‘documentations’ of the 1920s issued by the ‘guilt’ section of the German Foreign Office, while the ‘initiatives’ of the central power are nowhere to be found. Clark’s narrative is just turning the known events upside down and are retold from a

<sup>103</sup> Bruce Menning, “War Planning and Initial Operations in the Russian Context”, in: *War Planning 1914*, 80-119, 80-81

<sup>104</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 348, 486; like *Wegerer*, *Refutation*, 232

<sup>105</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, is talking about the French aims more indirectly, 167

<sup>106</sup> Afflerbach, *Militaerische Planung*, 285

different angle that suits his paradigm. It is easy to imagine, how excited revisionist authors<sup>107</sup> must have been, when in 2012 Clark’s study was published considering that the paradigm of the ‘Initiative of the Entente’ has not been revived through a large study since 1939, when Alfred von Wegerer’s *opus magnum*<sup>108</sup> had been released.

The playbook they are all using is quite simple: gather the usual revisionist materials from the 1920s, see what the non-revisionist literature might reveal for the paradigm, combine these to provide the impression you are not only depending on the former and see what you can find in the different archives that may contain ‘dispatches’ (from Belgium and Holland) regarding certain war-mongering allegations about France and Russia. It does not matter that these are merely third-party opinions, they will create the right ‘atmosphere’ and disposition that will enhance the allegations against the Entente powers as such. It also may be helpful to invent new ‘speculations’ that could explain gaps in the record like the ‘Balkan inception scenario’ that will sound novel and innovative. Look for specific statements by decision-makers like Poincare and Izvolsky to make France, Russia, England and Serbia look determined to go to war and point towards controversial details to detract the reader insinuating that during the course of events something ‘must be wrong.’

Then, pick up the usual topics from current revisionist sources and repeat them to create a quotable ‘record’ for the present which can be used by other historians, who may have a propensity towards your paradigm, but are not necessarily fully convinced, looking for empirically valid ‘evidence’. Create in this respect as many ‘auxiliary hypotheses’<sup>109</sup> as you can, to

<sup>107</sup> As we can see with Samuel Williamson, “July 1914 revisited and revised, the erosion of the German paradigm”, who is welcoming Clark’s study to shift the focus from Germany and Austria (p. 42-47) to France, Russia, England and Serbia (p. 47-56), praising a “more nuanced and complex assessment” (p. 34)

<sup>108</sup> Wegerer, *Ausbruch des Weltkrieges 1914*

<sup>109</sup> Fort his term and its use, Imre Lakatos, “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programs”, in: *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Imre Lakatos, Alan Musgrave (Cambridge, UK, 1965): 117

possibly underline your point how manifold France and Russia have tried to ‘encircle’ and force the war upon the central powers. In addition, avoid any crude allegations<sup>110</sup> that may sound improbable and eschew the German documents<sup>111</sup> (they could be still dangerous) that could put your paradigm into question. Just use those ‘sources’ that genuinely incriminate the Entente powers and be easy on Germany and Austria-Hungary. Clark has demonstrated that revisionist arguments will thrive better through ‘insinuation’ and ‘indirect presentation’ avoiding simple or crude assertions as much as possible. Only when dealing with the personnel of the Entente, a few negative anecdotes will create the ‘right’ environment and put their actions in the appropriate context.<sup>112</sup> All revisionist studies follow the motto ‘the more dirt the merrier’, but it is crucial how it is presented. The playbook of neo-revisionism to excuse the central powers is simple: turn away the focus from Germany and Austria-Hungary and all the ‘bad’ things, that led to war in 1914 and put the focal point on the Entente powers and their preparations for war, a playbook Clark has implemented in his study quite efficiently.

A recent example of the ‘citation chain’ of neo-revisionism will demonstrate how the ‘chain’ is working. In 2016, in a major journal in Germany, the historian Rainer F. Schmidt, published an article trying to pin the

responsibility for unleashing the war in 1914 on the Franco-Russian Alliance and Poincare making it look like France took revenge for the defeat in 1870, thereby relying heavily on Clark’s study and other recent revisionist literature. One of his ‘auxiliary hypotheses to prove his point – besides taking over all the ‘radical’ *topoi* Clark has advanced including the ‘Balkan inception scenario’<sup>113</sup> - is that France allegedly had offered Russia ‘unlimited’ loans to finance their armaments in 1912, an assertion, that Schmidt has picked up from Clark.<sup>114</sup> Clark in turn has picked it up from a Soviet source<sup>115</sup> from 1961 (we will address further below), but nonetheless Clark’s allegation through Schmidt has now become part of the official record and can be quoted with a reference to Schmidt’s article.<sup>116</sup> Nobody is worried that this allegation might be wrong (the loans were limited to 500 Million Francs per year for five years, as even Clark has pointed out<sup>117</sup>), and that Schmidt has indirectly corrected it in the next sentence, but the reader is supposed to remember that France has offered Russia ‘unlimited’ financial support to build up its arms against Germany. For the sake of throwing dirt at the Franco-Russian Alliance it serves its purpose, even more so when it comes from a ‘respectable’ and ‘new’ study where the reader is assuming that its sources are solid taking these statements at face value. Also, it is not accidental that Rainer F. Schmidt in his essay has picked up all those items from Clark he needed to support his radical thesis that France has ‘forced’ the World War on Germany.

<sup>110</sup> See the ‘recommendations’ for revisionism by L. L. Farrar, *American Historical Review* 95 (2000), 1695-1696, in his review of Edward E. McCullough, *How the First World War began. The Triple Entente and the Coming of the Great War of 1914-1918* (Montreal, 1999), 1696: “McCullough’s book provides a case study of *how not to write revisionist history*. It demonstrates that provocation is a stimulating but crude game whereas revisionism is a subtle art, more rapier than hammer. A more measured approach might have won over more scholars than his take-no-prisoners style.”

<sup>111</sup> *Die deutschen Dokumente zum Kriegsausbruch*, ed. Max Graf v. Montgelas, Walther Schuecking, collected by Karl Kautsky, 4 Vol. (Berlin 1919) [engl. transl., *The Outbreak of the World War, German Documents collected by Karl Kautsky*, translated by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (New York, 1924)]

<sup>112</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 433-450 where he – as an example - characterizes Maurice Paleologue as a liar, fantast and war monger but exploits his writings for his crusade as much as he can

<sup>113</sup> R. Schmidt, “Revanche pour Sedan”, 405

<sup>114</sup> R. Schmidt, “Revanche pour Sedan”, 409, is quoting ‘Sleepwalkers’ several times, Note 39, 40, 42, 46, 47, 55, 58, 72

<sup>115</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 307, note 233, 622

<sup>116</sup> R. Schmidt’s article is quoted by Lukas Grawe, “Report from Paris. The German Military Attache in France, Detlof von Winterfeldt, and his views of the French Army, 1909-1914”, *War in History* 26 (2019): 470-494, 483 (note 75), 486 (note 89) regarding Poincare’s ‘war preparations’ in connection with Plan XVII, that was allegedly underestimated by the German General Staff

<sup>117</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 308, is admitting the ‘truth’ on this subject on the next page, but for agitative purposes is also advancing the ‘unlimited’ version without any qualifications

To assert dubious allegations like this, is not only typical for Clark's study. It is part of the program of revisionism to uncritically pick up third party 'opinions' that are supposed to serve the purpose of agitation to demonstrate how the Entente powers have operated. In a way, all revisionists follow the motto that the ends justify the means (if there are 'quotes' available), and the truth of these allegations does not seem to concern its authors. They only reflect critically on sources which do not fit their paradigm.<sup>118</sup> Although sometimes there are problems that are difficult to overcome. Take the treatment of the German 'innocence' campaign of the 1920s: leave it out or mention it on the side to preempt potential criticism?

Revisionist authors<sup>119</sup> typically leave it out, while Clark has found a clever, although insufficient solution for the problem: he is trying to 'preempt' criticism towards the 'uncritical' use of his sources by banning this subject to a note in his introduction. Therefore, he can avoid dealing with the campaign head on and can avoid revealing to his readers the affirmative connection between the official publications of the campaign and his study. He obviously thinks creating an 'alibi' through a note will prevent others from finding out that he is using these one-sided 'documentations' to 'prove' his core arguments. In short, he is mentioning it but downplaying the real significance of the campaign in general and for his study, stating in the spirit of *Selbstverharmlosung* (making oneself appear as harmless as possible) that the Foreign Office just 'sponsored' the 'activities' of some alleged 'scholars'.<sup>120</sup>

But, contrary to Clark's statements, the guilt-section of the Foreign Office was the instigator of the campaign, has founded and financed the 'front' organizations, was the central

<sup>118</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 298-299, where he is refusing Poincare's explanation for Isvolsky's simplifications, stating that, "These are plausible suppositions, but the evidence suggests that they are wrong."

<sup>119</sup> Williamson for example (and many others), "July 1914 revisited and revised, the erosion of the German paradigm", 31, is not mentioning it

<sup>120</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, xxiii, note 2, 564; as a contrast to Herwig, "Clio deceived"

motor for all the publications against the Entente powers and has tried to influence leading German and American historians (Fay and Barnes), a circumstance that is obviously too damaging for Clark to admit. It is understandable that everybody in Germany after 1945 – specifically its historians – wanted to forget about a campaign where several of their colleagues were involved that was part and parcel of the process of territorial revisionism in the 1920s and 1930s, which has mobilized and prepared the country for another war. It was common in the 1950s – as a convenient explanation - to stick to the myth that the Allies and the Versailles Treaty were responsible for all the subsequent events justifying the rise of Hitler and the Second World War.

Clark's overall strategy in his study (following L. L. Farrar's recommendation) is typically avoiding statements that could out him as a radical revisionist or citing claims that the Entente powers are responsible for the war. But, here and there, he cannot help reminding the reader of his viewpoint, and what his study is all about, stating: "The Triple Entente that went to war in 1914 still lay beyond the mental horizons of most statesmen." And alluding to their alleged war aims in an 'indirect' way: "It was hard to imagine the circumstances in which France might be willing to chance its arm for the Russians in the Balkans and even harder to imagine Russians marching to Berlin for the sake of Alsace and Lorraine."<sup>121</sup>

The following example will demonstrate Clark's methodology reviewing one of the most indispensable pillars of revisionism: Poincare and the alleged change in French foreign policy between 1912 and 1914.<sup>122</sup> According to Clark, Raymond Poincare, the new Prime Minister of France in 1912, was ready to support Russian adventurism in the Balkans and a more aggressive military policy that culminated in a proposal that France would join Russia trying to pre-empt an Austrian intervention in Serbia. In short, Clark is suggesting that Poincare proposed to Russia and England a "preemptive"<sup>123</sup> military intervention

<sup>121</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 167

<sup>122</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 294

<sup>123</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 298

towards Austria to stop them from attacking Serbia in 1912. This statement – improbable as it seems – is meant to be an allegation that shows France and not only Germany would contemplate a ‘preemptive’ strike before 1914 or during the July Crisis, although if we look at his source, nothing can be found that would confirm this charge.<sup>124</sup>

In fact, this assertion comes close to the ‘holy grail’ of revisionism of the World War: being able to show that even beyond the Izvolsky<sup>125</sup> correspondence France and Russia were not only “capable of escalating a Balkan crisis into a continental war”<sup>126</sup> but also had the *intention* to do so even before July 1914, countering the statements of the Versailles Commission on responsibility. Although Clark should know better than promoting such an improbable scenario, it seems evident that he has done so to harm France and Russia making Germany and Austria look better. His study follows the mantra, if you think the central powers are bad, France, Russia, England and Serbia are worse. On the other hand, if this can be clearly demonstrated, revisionism would be able to prove its paradigm of the ‘Initiative of the Entente’ and could be closing the ‘evidence’ gap between the alleged aggressive activities of France and Russia in 1912 and the unleashing of crisis and war in 1914 that Clark wants to shift to the Entente.

The only problem with this scenario is that it is unconfirmed by any documents: Clark has picked it up from a source, that is a late Soviet indictment of France from the early 1960s.

Everybody knows that politically sensitive literature published in the Soviet Union had to

<sup>124</sup> Narodny kommissariat po innostram delam (Hg.), *Materialy po istorii franko-russkikh otnoshenii sa 1910-1914 gg: sbornik sekretnykh diplomaticheskikh dokumentow byvshego Imperatorskogo ministerstwa inostrannykh del*, Moskau 1922, S. 297

<sup>125</sup> Regarding the role of Izvolsky in non-revisionist literature, Robert H. Allshouse, *Alexander Izvolski and Russian Foreign Policy, 1910-1914* (Ph. D. Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH, 1977); Carol D. Taylor, *The troubled Entente, Alexander Izvolsky and Russia's diplomatic Relations with France and Great Britain, 1906-1910* (Ph. D. State University of Albany, NY, 2008)

<sup>126</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 293

follow the official line by the Communist party that was still set on confrontation with the West. But even if we discount that, the study by itself is in its essential conclusions not based on primary sources from France and Russia, instead it is based on Soviet and Western revisionist literature including the Izvolsky correspondence of the 1920s, that is trying to blame France and Tsarist Russia for its aggressive policies.<sup>127</sup> Unfortunately, the Soviet author, Valerie I. Bovykin, twenty years later, when Russia pursued Détente with the West, took the opposite route and retracted these unproven accusations against France and Poincare with a large *mea culpa* in an article, that was published in 1979 in a British journal, where he confessed that all these accusations are not based on facts and need to be acknowledged as a ‘false’ version of the origins of the First World War.<sup>128</sup>

In short, Clarks allegations against France and Russia, Poincare and Izvolsky, based on this study, were effectively retracted by its author in 1979, but nonetheless he repeated them in 2012, treating Bovykins accusations still at face value and using them as a major source for his study.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>127</sup> Valerie I. Bovykin, *Is istorii vosniknovenija perwoi mirowoi woiny; Otnoshenija Rossi I Franzii w 1912-1914 gg.* (Moscow, 1961); (engl. transl., *The history of the development to the First World War, relations between Russia and France, 1912-1914*); see also the review, Georg von Rauch, “Neue sowjetische Literatur zur Vorgeschichte des Ersten Weltkrieges”, *Jahrbuch fuer die Geschichte Osteuropas* 12 (1965): 572-582.

<sup>128</sup> Valerie I. Bovykin, “The Franco-Russian Alliance”, *History* 64 (1979): 20-35, 34-35: “In the course of the struggle over the question of responsibilities for the outbreak of the First World War, which began to develop already in its first days, many false versions were put out. I will refer only to one of them. As a result of the efforts of Poincare, who not without foundation acquired the nickname of ‘Poincare-War’, the interpretation has found currency in the historical literature, that France was drawn into the war by the Russian clash with Germany, in spite of the pacificatory steps of French diplomacy. I myself have been concerned with the study of Russo-French Relations on the eve of the First World War and was able to convince myself that *this version is contradicted by the facts.*” (*emphasis by author*)

<sup>129</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, is using Bovykin’s study as a source over 15 times in the notes of chap. 5 (609-623), note 84, 89, 110, 197, 198, 201, 208, 226, 233, and chap. 6 (623-634), note 39, 99, 105, 129, 133, 149

It is no surprise, that Clark is not mentioning Bovykin's later retraction, because this would have invalidated one of his crucial sources for bashing the Franco-Russian Alliance.

Similarly, he is refusing Poincare's explanations over the correct rendering of his conversations with Izvolsky in his memoirs, pointing out that his statements have no credibility whatsoever<sup>130</sup>, even asserting that Poincare his manipulated his diary (without any proof)<sup>131</sup> following the accusations of other revisionist authors.<sup>132</sup>

The story of the alleged 'aggressive' Franco-Russian Alliance may be one of the 'high' points of 'Sleepwalkers', where Clark has gathered against Poincare and Izvolsky all the available arguments from like-minded sources<sup>133</sup>, but aside of several contradictions that remain unresolved<sup>134</sup>, these mixture of false assertions, assumptions and speculations is based on Stieve's *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg* and other revisionist literature that reaffirmed similar statements.<sup>135</sup> Despite the fact, that Clark is spreading the sources for his unproven accusations between different authors

of revisionist origin,<sup>136</sup> it confirms our thesis that his assertions are not based on primary documents but on the opinion of others, that are following the same line like the original source by Stieve. Another example will illustrate this point further, considering this is a scenario that can be found in every revisionist account that deals with France and Poincare.

It is an alleged conversation between Alexandre Millerand, the French minister of war at the time and the Russian military attache in Paris, Count Ignatiev, on Dec. 19, 1912, that is supposed to show that France was inciting Russia on Serbia, while the Russian representative was defending the official line of caution. This is a scenario, coming right out of the 1920s, demonstrating its political 'use' for Germany and Russia, who were both agitating against France and Poincare for different reasons. Germany agitated against the Versailles Treaty and the new Bolshevik Government was trying to keep the same distance from 'old' France and Tsarist Russia, justifying its refusal not to pay back the loans borrowed from France by their predecessors before the war. As odd as it is, the dubious Millerand-Ignatiev conversation, which was first published by the official Soviet newspaper 'Izvestia' in 1922, never became part of any other documentary publication.

It can only be found in revisionist literature, first reported by Stieve, *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg*<sup>137</sup>,

<sup>130</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 294, note 183, (619); Raymond Poincare, *Au Service de la France, neuf annees des souvenirs*, 10 Vol. (Paris, 1926-1933), Vol. 2, 334-339, is pointing to his contemporary dispatches to his Ambassador in Russia, George Louis, with whom he clarified his understanding of the *casus foederis* that Clark is leaving out

<sup>131</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 503-504, note 51, 655; as Strachan has stated in the case of S. Schmidt, the 'absence of documents counts as the proof of guilt'

<sup>132</sup> S. Schmidt, *Frankreichs Aussenpolitik*, 256-258

<sup>133</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 293-313

<sup>134</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 298; if Poincare really had made the offer for pre-emption why would Sasonow in mid-November have to ask "London and Paris, how they would react to an armed response by Russia" already knowing the answer through Poincare's alleged proposal, when he was supposed to have incited the Russians

<sup>135</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, Chap. 5, note 77 (613), 182 (619), 190 (619),

<sup>136</sup> Besides the already mentioned studies of Bovykin and Stieve, Clark's allegations in crucial areas are resting on George F. Kennan, *The Fateful Alliance, France, Russia and the Coming of the First World War* (Manchester, 1984)[*Sleepwalkers*, note 177, 619], who also needs to be located in the revisionist camp, stating, 249: "(...) the only two that had what might be called clear expansionist motives were the two parties to the Alliance – France and Russia", and regarding the Central Powers, 253: "Germany was, after all, a satiated power (...) and stood to gain little from a major war on the Continent."; Stefan Schmidt, *Frankreichs Aussenpolitik in der Julikrise* (Muenchen, 2009), to whom Clark feels his "account is substantially indebted", is also promoting the 'change' thesis, which Clark is quoting from him in *Sleepwalkers*, note 181 (619), on Poincare's talks with Izvolsky on Nov. 4 and 7, quoting Kennan and Stieve (S. Schmidt, *Frankreich*, 246-259, note 590, 593, 596, 604, 615, 619, 626, 629, 639)

<sup>137</sup> Stieve, *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg*, 118 who is quoting the 'Izvestija' report

being part of S. Schmidt's, *Frankreichs Aussenpolitik*<sup>138</sup> and is also carried by Clark, who is quoting it not from Stieve, but from the Boyykin study, bearing in mind the necessity for the diversification of his 'sources'.<sup>139</sup> As the last example demonstrates: the 'quotation chain' is alive and well and there is no revisionism without Stieve's *Isvolsky editions* which mainly contain the crucial assertions for all the allegations against France and Russia. Failing to show any sources, Stieve has invented the thesis of 'change' in French Foreign Policy (to offset the change in German policy in July 1914), that Poincare has 'incited' the Russians, that a World War was very much alive in Poincare's and Isvolsky's thinking and that they had included this in their "willingness to go to war".<sup>140</sup> In other words: all these allegations are – for political reasons - made up by Stieve and the German campaign and have nothing to do with the policies of Poincare.

In November 1912, after disagreeing with Isvolsky's depiction of the conversations between the two, Poincare notified his ambassador in St. Petersburg, George Louis, to relay his version of the talks with Isvolsky to the Russian Foreign Minister, Sasonov. It was an attempt to correct the Ambassador's statements, pointing out that he is opposing Isvolsky's simple-minded *casus foederis* interpretation ('if Russia goes to war, France will follow'). In his dispatches, Poincare stated that France was only committed to its obligations contained in their alliance agreements no more and no less.<sup>141</sup> The real issue with Poincare and his policies is that he was one of the few politicians who were steadfastly in opposition to the Germans, on the question of

responsibility<sup>142</sup> and on reparations, and - through his opposition before, during and after the war - became their main target of negative propaganda in the 1920s.<sup>143</sup>

The difference between the two interpretations of the *casus foederis* is crucial. While Isvolsky wants Poincare to commit to a simple formula following Russia at every step (irrespective of the real Russian Foreign Policy), Poincare, who wants to avoid any Russian adventures and prefers the status quo (in the Balkans and at the Turkish straits), is pointing out, that France' commitment according to their military convention will get them only involved, if Germany will attack France. This means if Austria-Hungary would attack Serbia and Germany would not get involved France would not be engaged in any warlike activities. Isvolsky knows this but in his crusade to convince Sasonov, he is hoping to get France to commit to more, meaning, that France will help the Russian Government, even if an Austrian attack on Serbia is provoked by Russia. This may be Isvolsky's thinking but not Poincare's nor the Russian leadership's, who never showed (as even the Isvolsky correspondence suggests<sup>144</sup>) any interest in a scenario like that. Russian Foreign Policy wanted to protect the integrity of Serbia but

<sup>138</sup> S. Schmidt, *Frankreichs Aussenpolitik*, 258, note 639

<sup>139</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 301-302, note 208 (621)

<sup>140</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 297-301, 304-308; Stieve, *Isvolski und der Weltkrieg*, 45, 81, 85, 97, 99, 107, 109, 119, 138, 147, 159, 160, 177, 178, 189, 205

<sup>141</sup> Poincare's reports and dispatches are published in, *Documents diplomatiques français relatifs aux origines de la guerre de 1914*. (Paris, 1929-1959). Première série: 1871-1900, 16 Vols., Deuxième série: 1901-1911, 14 Vols., Troisième série: 1911-1914, 11 Vols. (hereinafter cited as 'DDF' with series and vol. no.), Poincaré's report about his meetings in Russia, DDF, Sér. 3, Vol. 3, Doc. 264; his exchange of dispatches with Ambassador Louis in November 1912, DDF, Ser. 3, Vol. 4, Doc. 361, 468, 469, 487, 494

<sup>142</sup> Raymond Poincare, *Les Origines de la Guerre* (Paris, 1921) [engl. transl., *The Origins of the War* (London, 1922)]; idem., "The Responsibility for the War", *Foreign Affairs* 4 (1925): 1-19; the German answer, Bernhard Schwertfeger, *Poincare und die Schuld am Kriege* (Berlin, 1922)

<sup>143</sup> John F. V. Keiger, *Raymond Poincare* (London, 1997): 193-311; idem., "France's unreadiness for war in 1914 and its implications for French decision-making in the July Crisis", in: *Outbreak of the First World War*, 252-272, is openly criticizing the accounts of S. Schmidt, *Frankreichs Aussenpolitik*, and Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, pointing to their lack of documentary evidence, that neither Poincare or anybody else in his cabinet, "was willing to risk war or encouraged Russia recklessly." (p. 254)

<sup>144</sup> Stieve, *Der diplomatische Schriftwechsel*, Vol. 2, Doc. 549, 558, 562; for the official Russian documents, see *Die internationalen Beziehungen im Zeitalter des Imperialismus* (hereinafter called 'IBZI' with Vol. No.). Series I-III, ed. Otto Hoetzsch (Berlin, 1942), Series III, Vol. 4/1, 18.10.-4.12.1912; regarding origins and issues of the edition, Derek W. Spring, "The unfinished Collection. Russian Documents on the Origins of the First World War", in: *Forging the Collective Memory: Government and International Historians through Two World Wars*, ed. Keith Wilson (New York, 1995): 63-86

did not want to become the locomotive for Serbia's expansion towards the South or any other direction.

Sasonov and the Russian leadership were rather putting the brakes on Serbia's ambitions towards an Adriatic port as much as they could, opting – as a great power - conservatively for the status quo and against any changes, also understanding the resistance of Austria-Hungary.

In fact, Sasonov is asking France and England in November 1912 what they will do, if Austria would use violence against Serbia, and their answer is stating that this is first up to Russia to make that decision and not up to them, demonstrating again that this decision – just like in 1914 – would solely depend on the Austro-Hungarian treatment of Serbia and military intervention would not be a goal by itself. In short, the crucial action to start a conflict would be coming from Austria-Hungary and not from Russia, although revisionist accounts are trying to insinuate the opposite. Izvolsky is acting on his own when he is trying to get a commitment from Poincare that goes beyond the military convention of the alliance and seems to have involved an offensive scenario by Russia or France.

But this is exactly what the neo-revisionist thesis used by Clark, R. and S. Schmidt and others is alleging. They want to demonstrate that it was France and Poincare in 1912, as well as in 1914 who have incited Russia to support Serbia and – through a conspiracy against the central powers - are responsible for unleashing the war in 1914.<sup>145</sup> Clark is even going beyond that, trying to alter a scenario that we know from the Riezler diary, which is demonstrating how the German leadership has calculated: on July 8, 1914 Bethmann Hollweg is explaining to his young advisor what a great opportunity the crisis is

<sup>145</sup> As Hew Strachan, "The Origins of the First World War", *International Affairs* 90 (2014): 430-439 is stating in his review of the publications of Stefan Schmidt and Sean McMeekin, 437: "Schmidt clearly wanted to uncover a conspiracy when writing his book but could not produce sufficient evidence to do so. McMeekin finds himself in the same position but is not daunted in his determination to shift the primary responsibility. (...) He construes the absence of papers as the proof of guilt."

offering, because – if the war comes from the Balkans - Austria-Hungary will be involved and Germany will automatically have its support.<sup>146</sup>

Therefore – in the revisionist scenario – Clark is reversing Bethmann Hollweg's explanation and is projecting it on France and Russia, stating, that this was the only opportunity where France was in the driver's seat knowing that Russia was involved counting on their support to initiate the conflict against Germany and Austria-Hungary they were allegedly both envisioning.<sup>147</sup>

The crucial difference is that for Bethmann's German-Austrian calculation we have a primary document with the Riezler diary, while Clark in his reversal scenario has nothing to show for: his allegations regarding the French leadership are pure speculation and only based on the overall thesis that Poincare had an interest to incite Russia because he 'wanted' the war against Germany, which is unconfirmed by any primary sources. Instead of acknowledging that the crucial point for this scenario was the German support for Austria, the Chancellor withheld in 1912 and 1913, but turned into a commitment on July 5, 1914, Clark and his followers are sticking to the assertion that it was France's support for Russia that has caused the war. In short, the real change in foreign policy that caused the war did not occur in France during Poincare's reign, but happened in Germany during the July Crisis in 1914. Since 1919 revisionism is trying to establish the fact, that Germany's 'blank cheque' for Austria was no big deal, but in reverse Poincare's support for Russia – of course already given in 1912<sup>148</sup> – has made the conflict possible and the war inevitable.

It is no accident, that Poincare and Isovsky became the perfect target of German propaganda in the early 1920s - already under attack by German-friendly groups in France ('Poincare-la-guerre'<sup>149</sup>): it started already in 1914 and was

<sup>146</sup> Kurt Riezler, *Tagebuecker, Aufsätze, Dokumente*, ed. Karl D. Erdmann (Goettingen, 1972): 184

<sup>147</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 422-423

<sup>148</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 409

<sup>149</sup> John F. V. Keiger, *Raymond Poincare* (London, 1997): 193-239

enhanced by French revisionism<sup>150</sup> during and after the war. These were people, who were on the ‘payroll’ of the German Foreign Office trying to establish a separate peace to get out of the two-front situation.<sup>151</sup> The forces in France that blamed the war on Poincare were inclined to strike a deal with the Germans, but were too weak to deliver (compared to 1940) while there was another hurdle too large to overcome: the German conditions for a separate peace, that seemed steep and were even refused by German- friendly people in France, who were bent on ending the war they had blamed on Poincare.<sup>152</sup> In contrast to that, Poincare was steadfast and never held back to point out German responsibility<sup>153</sup> for causing the conflict and came across as a very uncompromising defender of the Versailles Treaty.<sup>154</sup> This culminated in the event, when Germany refused to pay reparations, that Poincare invoked France’ power by the treaty and – together with Belgian forces - occupied the Ruhr area to exert pressure to collect Germany’s obligations.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Fernand Gouttenoire de Toury, *Poincare a-t-il voulu la Guerre? Poincare et Isvolsky contre Georges Louis* (Paris, 1920); Gustave Dupin, *Considerations de la Responsabilite de la Guerre* (Paris, 1921); Alfred Pevet, *Les Responsables de la Guerre* (Paris, 1921); *Les Carnets de Georges Louis*, ed. Ernest Judet, 2 Vol. (Paris, 1926); Ernest Judet, *Georges Louis* (Paris, 1925); Alfred Fabre-Luce, *La Victoire* (Paris, 1924); Emile Laloy, *Les documents secrets des Archives du Ministere des Affaires Etrangere de Russie, publies par les Bolshevik* (Paris, 1919); Matthias Morhardt, *Les Preuves, le Crime de droit commun, le Crime diplomatique* (Paris, 1922); Un Livre Noir, *Diplomatie d’avant Guerre et de Guerre d’apres les document des Archives russe*, ed. Ernest Marchand, 5 Vol. (Paris, 1919-1922)

<sup>151</sup> The documents regarding German-French relations during the war, *L’Allemagne et les Problemes de la Paix pendant la Guerre Mondiale, Documents extraits des archives de l’Office allemande des Affaires Etrangeres*, ed. Andre Scherer, Jacques Grunwald, 4 Vol. (Paris 1962-1978): Vol. 1, Doc. 133, 148, 264, 268, 282, 287, 300

<sup>152</sup> *L’Allemagne*, Vol. II, Doc. 160, 162, 164, 172, 198, 227, 231, 295, 298

<sup>153</sup> Poincare, *Les Origines*; Schwertfeger, *Poincare und die Schuld*.

<sup>154</sup> This is not supposed to mean that the Treaty was flawless, Sally Marks, “Mistakes and Myths: The Allies, Germany, and the Versailles Treaty, 1918–1921”, *Journal of Modern History* 85 (2013): 632–659

<sup>155</sup> Keiger, *Poincare*, 274-311

In the historical context of the fall of 1912 Austria-Hungary’s threat to attack Serbia in the Balkans (to counter their territorial gains in the First Balkan War and their demand for a port on the Adria coast) was a realistic concern of all the powers, but was mitigated by peaceful measures. For example, what was proposed by Poincare many times, was a conference of the great powers to deal with the issue putting pressure on Serbia, Bulgaria and Turkey, proposals which were implemented later by the Ambassador’s conference in London starting in December of 1912, which could have also served as a model for the solution of the crisis in 1914.<sup>156</sup>

The Izvolsky correspondence, blown up by revisionists, is – closely examined - only a partial source for Russian Foreign Policy before the war that is as a stand-alone source not only one- sided but – besides any contradictions - an expression of Izvolsky’s politics. The case is obvious: the revisionist authors have taken the politics of the Russian Ambassador in Paris as the official line of Russian Foreign Policy because it satisfied the political needs of the German campaign.

Izvolsky was striving to extend its influence towards the Russian Foreign Office considering that he had been a former Russian Foreign Minister, who was downgraded to an Ambassador in 1910, constantly trying to use his ‘clout’ and connections to sway and impress the central office in St. Petersburg.<sup>157</sup> To utilize the correspondence

<sup>156</sup> It also does not seem accidental, that there are only a few studies regarding the concert of Europe that could have been an arbiter of the crisis in 1914, R. J. Crampton, “The Decline of the Concert of Europe in the Balkans, 1913-1914”, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 52 (1974): 393-419; Richard Langhorne, *The Collapse of the Concert of Europe* (New York, 1981): 97-121

<sup>157</sup> See as examples for the non-revisionist literature, Eugenia C. Kiesling, “France”, in: *The Origins of World War I*, ed. Richard F. Hamilton, Holger H. Herwig (Cambridge, 2003): 226–265; Keiger, *Poincaré*; idem., *France and the Origins of the First World War* (London, 1983); Gordon Wright, *Raymond Poincaré and the French Presidency* (Stanford, 1942); Eugen Weber, *The Nationalist Revival in France, 1905–14* (Berkeley, 1959); M. B. Hayne, *The French Foreign Office and the Origins of the First World War, 1898–1914* (Oxford, 1993); Robert A. Doughty, “French Strategy in 1914. Joffre’s Own”, *Journal of Military History* 67 (2003): 427–454; Elizabeth Greenhalgh, *The French Army and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2014)

of an Ambassador without any other documents, whose credibility is already dubious, when the real decisions are made at the central office, may be a politically clever move but certainly not a scientifically sound research approach.

In short, the revisionist assertion, that France under Poincare had assumed an offensive posture, that changed the *casus foederis*, incited the Russians and even got ahead of them when it came to aggressively pursuing Austria-Hungary<sup>158</sup>, is based on pure speculation and a wishful interpretation of the Izvolsky correspondence that was edited by the German propaganda campaign for political purposes to agitate against France and the Treaty of Versailles. Therefore, it is not a surprise that no serious historian – except the revisionists - has used this ‘documentation’ as an affirmative source after 1945.<sup>159</sup>

#### IV. THE BALKAN INCEPTION SCENARIO – A CONSPIRACY MYTH

One of the special highlights of Clark’s ‘Sleepwalkers’ is his ‘Balkan inception scenario’<sup>160</sup>, a ‘linguistic’ solution that probably Lakatos had in mind when he talked about saving a “theory with the help of auxiliary hypotheses” that “represents degeneration”.<sup>161</sup> The Balkan scenario is pure speculation without any sources, but nonetheless

<sup>158</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 293-299

<sup>159</sup> One of the examples is Keiger, *Poincare*, and the other non-revisionist literature cited above.

<sup>160</sup>Regarding the situation in the Balkans, Andrew Rossos, *Russia and the Balkans* (Toronto, 1981): is showing the ineffectiveness of Russian foreign policy, 207-212; Richard C. Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912-1913* (London, 2000): also demonstrates the failure of the Russian Balkan Alliance policy, 139-143; Ronald P. Bobroff, *Roads to Glory. Late Imperial Russia and the Turkish Straits* (London, 2006); Dominic Lieven, *The End of Tsarist Russia. The March to World War I and Revolution* (New York, 2015): 245-290; Edward C. Thaden, *Russia and the Balkan Alliance of 1912* (University Park, PA, 1965), has criticized the German studies until 1945 and Soviet literature for their handling of Russian foreign policy in the Balkans, being ignorant of important documents that appeared in the ‘IBZI’ series between 1938 and 1940; Thaden is also pointing out, that German writers until 1945 have, 9: “often accepted uncritically the subjective judgements of contemporary non-Russian diplomats and journalists” (...) and, 11: “exaggerated the influence of Isvolsky and Hartwig.”

<sup>161</sup> Lakatos, “Falsification”, 117

an ‘invention’ that can claim a certain novelty. Clark defined it as an active pursuit of the Franco-Russian Alliance:

“By the spring of 1914, the Franco-Russian Alliance *had constructed* a geopolitical trigger along the Austro-Serbian frontier. They had tied the defense policy of three of the world’s greatest powers to the uncertain fortunes of Europe’s most violent and unstable region.”<sup>162</sup> (*emphasis by author*) By this definition it seems clear what Clark had in mind: France and Russia are actively using Serbia as a ‘geopolitical trigger’ and have automatically tied their fortunes to whatever happens in the Balkans, that was not meant to be accidental. It means in case of an ‘incident’ (like the assassination of the Archduke) that the trigger is finally pulled which could become the ‘pretext’ for war in a subsequent crisis. Thereby, the scenario has several components: on the one hand, Clark is tying in France and Russia with Serbia, which in his mind is responsible for the assassination of the Archduke anyway. On the other hand, he is alluding that Russia is also a part of this, being linked through the Russian military attache in Belgrade, Colonel Artamonov, to the “Serbian underground networks”, covering up the Russian support for the ‘Black Hand’ by Artamonov<sup>163</sup>, who - according to Clark – later denied having anything to do with “the plot to kill the archduke.”<sup>164</sup> Clark is not saying directly that the Russian General Staff was involved or had the idea for it (he thinks the idea for the plot came from Colonel Dimitrijevic, chief of military intelligence of the Serbian General Staff) whose activities in Bosnia were financed by Russia through Artamonov, alluding to a Russian-Serbian collusion leaving it up to the reader to draw the ‘right’ conclusions.

<sup>162</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 350

<sup>163</sup> See his statement regarding these events on invitation of the Berliner Monatshefte, Victor A. Artamonov, “Erinnerungen an meine Militaerattachezeit in Belgrad”, *Berliner Monatshefte* 16 (1938): 583-602

<sup>164</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 411-412 is referring to a report regarding interviews he conducted with a few former decision-makers of 1914 in the late 1920s, Bernadotte E. Schmitt, “Out of their Own Mouths”, in: idem., *The Fashion and Future of History, historical Studies and Addresses* (Cleveland, OH, 1960): 43-64

Also, Clark is admitting that there may be no documents to prove it, but his scenario has “a line of maximum plausibility for it”, considering that “virtually all those who took part were habituated to a milieu that was obsessed with secrecy” and that the “collusion between the Serbian state and the networks implicated in the plot was by design furtive and informal.”<sup>165</sup> In short, if the background of the scenario is considered in all its aspects, for Clark it is not implausible, that the Russians (together with the French) not only laid the ‘trigger’ but may have also had their ‘invisible’ hand in pulling it, because of their interest in the Turkish straits, looking at the Balkans as their *hinterland* where Russian influence could become crucial to “securing ultimate control of the Ottoman choke-point on the Bosphorus.”<sup>166</sup> Although it is pure speculation, creating a connection between the Balkans and the Turkish straits Clark is hoping to raise the credibility of his scenario, because now he can present a familiar sounding motive, some assumed ‘evidence’<sup>167</sup> and a ‘line of plausibility’ that is supposed to appear logical to the reader.

Clark has invented the ‘Balkan inception scenario’ as an event, that serves as the ‘trigger’ as well as the ‘missing link’ that connected the Entente powers with the assassination of the archduke and the beginning of the actual July Crisis in 1914. In establishing that, he also wants to justify one of the general *leitmotifs* of his study, that Austria Hungary (like Germany) – already weakened through Serbia’s pan-slave propaganda - was beleaguered by its enemies and had to defend itself against the onslaught of Serbia and the Entente powers. That’s why it is surprising that - after he has confirmed his ‘Balkan inception scenario’ in all possible variations at least six times previously<sup>168</sup>, he – in his last chapter – is denying that this scenario was meant to be an

active “plan or plot” or that there was “any necessary or linear relationship between the positions adopted in 1912 and 1913 and the outbreak of war in the following year” leaving his readers puzzled with the explanation that the scenario only “supplied the conceptual framework within the crisis.”<sup>169</sup>

In his conclusions, Clark is issuing – like a politician – a statement of ‘plausible deniability’. First, he is affirming, then he is denying it and then reaffirming his scenario again, which seems to signal his true attachment to his ‘invention’. Now he gives the reader two options: either the ‘Balkan inception scenario’ is valid (“France and Russia, at different paces and for different reasons, constructed a geopolitical trigger along the Austro-Serbian frontier”), or is not valid (no active “plan or plot”) and just a “conceptual framework”, but right after this limitation he is repeating the second part of the original scenario (“Russia and France thereby tied the fortunes of two of the world’s greatest powers (...) to the uncertain destiny of a turbulent and intermittently violent state.”<sup>170</sup>) confirming again its active part.<sup>171</sup>

Clark could have been more cautious and added the words ‘probably’ or ‘presumably’, but he chose not to do that, because that might confirm to the reader that this scenario is somewhat based on speculation, that would go against his intentions. In an interview in 2014 in Germany where his study made the biggest ‘splash’, Clark confirmed the active version of the ‘Balkan inception scenario’ and its role as a ‘link’ (*Verzahnung*) between the events before and during the crisis that led to war. Thereby, he stated that on the “geopolitical border an ignition charge was constructed” and “in doing so, *they created* a linkage that led to the World War”.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>165</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 47-48

<sup>166</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 347

<sup>167</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 346-349, is basing his thesis on the Russian ‘special conferences’ as a reaction to the Liman v. Sanders crisis that have “revealed how urgent the Russian preoccupation with the straits have become”, while the ‘hinterland’ speculation is derived from Bovykin (347, note 129, 631)

<sup>168</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 350, 364, 412, 450, 497-498, 504, 536, 559

<sup>169</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 558-559

<sup>170</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 559

<sup>171</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 350

<sup>172</sup> Clark in an Interview with Andreas Kilb, “Diese Staaten waren alle Boesewichte”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ.de, July 28, 2014): “Der Kriegsrat zeigt gerade, wie stark sich die Briten auf eine ententistische Politik im Balkan eingelassen haben. Sie lassen zu, dass an dieser geopolitischen Grenze eine Zündladung installiert wird. Damit schaffen sie die *Verzahnung*, die zum Weltkrieg

This clarification by the author is a validation that his *dementi* in the last chapter is not serious and must have had a different function. The contradiction does not appear accidental: Clark is using this scenario six or seven times to remind the reader that France and Russia created a ‘geopolitical trigger’ at the Austrian-Serbian border as an *active* scenario<sup>173</sup> without any restrictions or qualifications and would even repeat it in the last chapter. In his other ‘affirmations’ he is also confirming the crucial relevance of the scenario for the crisis: that it was “central to the outbreak of the war”<sup>174</sup>, that the “Austrian threat to Serbia constituted a ‘pretext’ (...) for activating the alliance” and if the “trigger [had] not been pulled”<sup>175</sup> the “Balkan inception scenario” would not have become “an imminent possibility.”<sup>176</sup>

To resolve these inconsistencies, we need to consider the overall posture of his study and its contradictions that are not limited to the case of the ‘Balkan inception scenario’. Clark’s whole study is a mix of political agitation against the Entente powers (and Serbia) and the *Verharmlosung* (downplaying) of the activities of Germany and Austria-Hungary. That means the reader on the one hand is exposed to a barrage of propaganda and threat analysis about the Entente, while the central powers are considered harmless and speculations by the author about France and Russia - in an unusual and uncommon procedure - are made and then retracted or restricted through a qualifying *dementi*. In fact, there is a pattern that goes through his study like a common thread: whenever the author thinks that he has pushed his alarmistic analysis of the danger of the Entente powers and their alleged ‘war scenarios’ *vis-a-vis* Germany and

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führt.” (*emphasis by author*); also, he argued similarly in another interview with the same newspaper, Andreas Kilb, “Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkriegs. Die Selbstzerstörung Europas”, (FAZ.de, Sept. 9, 2013) where he asserted - after confirming the Balkan scenario - that the Franco-Russian alliance only existed, “to collectively make war against a third party: the German Reich.”

<sup>173</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 350, 364, 412, 450, 497-498, 504, 536, 559

<sup>174</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 558

<sup>175</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 364

<sup>176</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 412

Austria-Hungary too far, when he is coming to close to the radical position that only the Entente had an interest in the war and probably forced it upon the central powers, he is issuing a *dementi* that is supposed to function as a verbal counterweight to absorb the shock of his previous statements.<sup>177</sup>

Clark is making a verbal concession but - after that - will immediately continue to furnish a qualification of the *dementi* avoiding that the reader will take the original *dementi* too seriously, understanding that a *dementi* that is too strong could harm his paradigm. The danger is obvious: if the alleged threat by the Entente powers is reduced to ‘zero’ his whole scenario might not be valid anymore. The following example is a case in point: after a statement that the Russian Government has realized achieving their goal to capture the Turkish straits is only possible during a general European war (“which in effect meant a war begun in the Balkans”), and in which they could only be assured of the support of its Western allies, he is trying to restrict his speculative inclinations just like he has done in his conclusions with the ‘Balkan inception scenario’, issuing a *dementi*, that is trying to deny what he has just laid out: “We need to draw an important distinction: at no point did the French or the Russian strategist involved a plan to launch a war of aggression against the central powers. We are dealing with *scenarios*, *not plans* as such.”<sup>178</sup> (*emphasis by author*) With this *dementi* the effect of this statement is two-fold. First, Clark has ‘equalized’ the playing field between all participants how the war has started, giving Germany a free pass downplaying its initial aggression against Luxembourg, Belgium, and France in the West, and secondly, he is denying that he has assumed the radical position that would suggest a plan for war by the Entente powers.<sup>179</sup> But, he is also limiting the *dementi* in the next sentence reminding the reader, that the

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<sup>177</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, examples for this strategy, 63, 353, 558-559

<sup>178</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 353

<sup>179</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 486, uses the term ‘designs’ on the straits that were a reinforcing factor to “stand firm over the threat to Serbia” in July 1914, which was translated in the German version as ‘Plaene’ (plans), *Schlafwandler*, 622.

Entente powers were careless in their arms policies and did not consider “to which the balance of ‘military threat’ had tilted against Germany” quoting British and French assessments that noted “that the military situation has altered to Germany’s detriment”, revealing the real motive for his study that France and Russia are the ones that had threatened Germany insinuating that they – through their behavior – may have caused the war.

In addition, he is trying to blame Britain – as the posterchild for the ‘Triple’ Entente acquiescing to the Balkan scenario – that England was fully “aware of the risks posed by the ‘Balkanization’ of the Entente security policy” understanding that “if triggered in the right way”, a “Balkan quarrel” could be transformed “into a European war”.<sup>180</sup> With this qualification he has brought the scenario to the forefront although limiting his *dementi* to the intentions of the strategist of the Franco-Russian Alliance. The restrictions of the *dementi* are significant: simply because there was no ‘plan’ to start a war that he can prove on the side of the Entente– from his point of view – does not mean the alleged threat regarding Germany had a lesser impact, because Russia’s aggressive ‘designs’ in the Balkans to capture the straits, need to be considered the ‘real’ cause for the July Crisis and war.<sup>181</sup>

In general, while his introduction and his conclusions are designed to be ‘reasonable’, Clark wants to appear being a moderate (revisionist) who asserts in his last chapter that “the crisis that brought war in 1914 was the fruit of a shared political culture”<sup>182</sup>, distributing the responsibility for the war somewhat between all participants. With this vague and inaccurate statement, Clark is maintaining that the central powers were not the ones that unleashed the war in 1914. But his main text (through constant agitation against the Entente including the ‘Balkan inception scenario’) has all the features of radical revisionism that

wants to show – following the Kaiser’s verdict<sup>183</sup> – that the Entente powers including Serbia have caused the war in 1914. Germany and Austria-Hungary – although they may have made a ‘few mistakes’ (‘panicking over the Russian mobilization’<sup>184</sup>) – were the ‘real’ victims, while France and Russia forced the war on the central powers. Not accidentally, an American expert on Germany, has told Clark in a discussion in 2014, that his study reminds him of the revisionism of Harry E. Barnes, an assertion that Clark has refused and called ‘absurd’.<sup>185</sup>

Although a detailed comparison between the ‘Sleepwalkers’ and Barnes ‘Genesis’ is difficult to do in a few pages, there is ample evidence that this judgment is completely justified. If we leave certain specifics related to the different times aside and examine the core similarities between the two studies, the common ground is striking. All the main accusations by the ‘Sleepwalkers’ against the Entente powers and Serbia are also part of Barnes ‘Genesis’, who received most of his clues regarding Poincare and Isvolsky from the same source Clark is dwelling on: Stieve’s *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg*.<sup>186</sup> Although Clark is not mentioning Barnes or his study at all, the most crucial *topoi* of revisionism, that Clark has revived in his study are also part of Barnes’ ‘Genesis’ and can also be found in certain publications of the German campaign<sup>187</sup> which kept in close contact to Barnes in the 1920s and – after the publication

<sup>183</sup> See Clark’s quote of the radical position of the Kaiser as an explanation for the crisis supported by Bethmanns reflections, *Sleepwalkers*, 420-421.

<sup>184</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 525

<sup>185</sup> The discussion was reported in the German Press, Patrick Bahners, “Geopolitischer Fatalismus ueberall”, *Franfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Sept. 24, 2014): N 3

<sup>186</sup> For the publication of the Isvolsky editions, Barnes is basically devoting a eulogy to Stieve, Barnes, *Genesis*, note 9, 151: “The reader may well be reminded here that Dr. Stieve is the world’s foremost authority on the Russian documents involved in the question of pre-war diplomacy. His five-volume edition of these documents, *Der diplomatische Schriftwechsel Iswolkis*, 1911-1914, has superseded the earlier collections by Laloy und Marchand.”

<sup>187</sup> For example, Count Max Montgelas, *The Case for the Central Powers. An Impeachment of the Versailles Verdict* (New York, 1925): [German original, *Leitfaden zur Kriegsschuldfrage* (Berlin, 1923)]; Wegerer, *Refutation*; Stieve, *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg*

<sup>180</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 353

<sup>181</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 346-349

<sup>182</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 561

of Genesis - invited him to Germany twice to lecture about the origins of the war.<sup>188</sup> Needless to say, that Barnes study was also translated with funds from the Foreign Office and published in Germany in 1928.<sup>189</sup>

A few examples should suffice to demonstrate the core similarities: almost all the crucial topoi of revisionist origin are present. From the alleged 'change' in French Foreign Policy after Poincare became Prime Minister in January 1912 and the new *casus foederis* definition in relation to Russia<sup>190</sup>, the Balkans as the preferred place of war to achieve the Entente's objectives<sup>191</sup>, the secret cooperation between Colonel Dimitrijevic, and the Russian military attache, Artamonov, to assert or at least insinuate the involvement of Russia and Serbia in the assassination of the Archduke<sup>192</sup>, the already mentioned dubious Millerand-Ignatiev conversation<sup>193</sup>, the alleged 'blank check' France gave to Russia in 1912<sup>194</sup>, the same Poincare quotes used by Izvolsky regarding the *casus foederis*<sup>195</sup>, France' alleged war preparations in 1912 that Clark extended even to a preemptive strike against Austria-Hungary<sup>196</sup>, the war aims of the Entente - 'recovering of Alsace-Lorraine' and the 'capturing of the Turkish straits' - which were only possible to be realized by a general European war that finally happened as a result of the July Crisis<sup>197</sup>, that Poincare was relying on the 'victory' outlook for the Triple Entente to prevail in a war against the central powers to redraw the map of Europe<sup>198</sup>, to Clark's 'Balkan inception scenario' that Barnes described - as a plan of Poincare's - the "spark to be lighted in the Balkans and the world war would be certain", assuming - as Clark has pointed out -

<sup>188</sup> Wittgens, "German War-Guilt Propaganda", 238-247

<sup>189</sup> Harry E. Barnes, *Die Entstehung des Krieges* (Stuttgart, 1928); regarding the background, Wittgens, "German War Guilt Propaganda", 242-243

<sup>190</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 294-298; Barnes, *Genesis*, 98-99

<sup>191</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 297; Barnes, *Genesis*, 103

<sup>192</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 411-412; Barnes, *Genesis*, 141, 169, 170, 314

<sup>193</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 301-302; Barnes, *Genesis*, 112

<sup>194</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 409; Barnes, *Genesis*, 113

<sup>195</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 298; Barnes, *Genesis*, 114

<sup>196</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 298; Barnes, *Genesis*, 97-99

<sup>197</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 348-349; Barnes, *Genesis*, 111

<sup>198</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 300; Barnes, *Genesis*, 391

that Russia "effectively held a trigger" in his hands and was "free any time to instigate a continental war in support of their Balkan objectives."<sup>199</sup>

During the actual crisis in 1914 the explanation why the crisis has escalated and turned into war is also similar, and for revisionism old and new the only viable solution would have been either that Serbia would have accepted Austria's ultimatum or the Franco-Russian alliance and Britain - as the Kaiser had suggested in a telegram to the Tsar - should have become 'neutral' spectators<sup>200</sup> in a war between Austria and Serbia. That a compromise solution could have saved the peace, as Britain, Russia and Italy had suggested, does not seem an option: both Barnes and Clark prefer the explanation that the diplomatic talks between Russia, Austria and Germany were just a ruse "to lull to sleep as much as possible the enemy's fears"<sup>201</sup>, Grey's proposal for a conference of the remaining four powers - as Clark is stating - was a "non- starter"<sup>202</sup>, and they both quote the Russian General Dobrorolski (in 1914 in charge of mobilization), who has afterwards asserted his opinion - Clark and Barnes take as 'fact' - that at the meeting of the Russian Council of Ministers on July 24 and 25, 1914 "war was already a decided thing" and that all the diplomatic

<sup>199</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 293, 350; Barnes, *Genesis*, 388

<sup>200</sup> *Outbreak of the World War*, Doc. 359, Wilhelm II. to Tsar, July 29, 1914, 315: "I therefore suggest that it would be quite possible for Russia to remain a spectator of the Austro-Serbian conflict without involving Europe in the most horrible war she ever witnessed."

<sup>201</sup> Both quote the same Russian secret protocol dated Nov. 8, 1912, *Sleepwalkers*, 483-484; Barnes, *Genesis*, 362, (without any source) under the heading of "Bogus Nature of Sazonov's Diplomatic Proposals" (358-364); the secret protocol in question was captured by the German troops in the East and was originally published by Gunther Frantz, *Russlands Eintritt in den Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 1924): Doc. 82, 236-237; but already in this edition the next two documents (No. 83, 84) demonstrate, that the protocol Barnes and Clark are quoting was later replaced by order of the Chief of the Russian General Staff, Shilinsky, that a telegram, signed by him is the only valid procedure to open war like activities, stating that even border provocations by the enemy are not to be considered a pretext for war, 237-239; needless to say - despite it was replaced as a document back then - revisionists like Clark are quoting it even today

<sup>202</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 495; Barnes, *Genesis*, 503-508 is trying to make it look like as if France and Russia have refused Grey's conference proposal

telegrams exchanged later “were nothing but the staging for a historical drama.”<sup>203</sup>

For both authors, the Balkans is the crucial area from where the ‘spark’ is flying that finally ‘ignited’ the ‘Balkan inception scenario’, which led to crisis and war, creating an automatism to avoid a precise rendering of the July Crisis in 1914 pointing towards Russia and France, who allegedly had caused it. In fact, that there is a ‘crisis’ at all, is the product of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia, and not just the assassination of the Archduke, which did not have to turn into a crisis between the great powers at all. As a cause for the crisis Barnes and Clark both assert the assassination of the Archduke (‘an assault of the dual monarchy’), using almost the same term for the policies of the Franco-Russian alliance. It is about Serbia and the Balkans when they either call it “Balkanizing” (Barnes<sup>204</sup>) or “Balkanization” (Clark<sup>205</sup>), considering that these slightly different terms mean the same: in both cases it is supposed to signal the importance of the Balkans as a place “over which a European war might be provoked”<sup>206</sup> (Barnes) or - as Clark has put it as a transfer of Bethmann Hollweg’s thinking in July 1914 from Germany to France as a reversal of sorts - emphasizing the French initiative “that a war of Balkan origin was the scenario most likely to trigger a full Russian participation in a joint campaign against Germany”.<sup>207</sup>

In either case Barnes and Clark want to demonstrate that the commitment of the Franco-Russian alliance to Serbia was the cause of the war (not the German support of Austria-Hungary), pretending it was caused by the assassination plot that probably was initiated by the Entente to create a pretext for an intervention. What Barnes calls the “Balkanization of the plot”<sup>208</sup>, Clark calls the “Balkanization of the Franco-Russian Alliance”<sup>209</sup> or – with more

sophistication - the ‘Balkan inception scenario’<sup>210</sup> that for both works is the ‘missing link’ to explain the escalation of the crisis 1914, because France and Russia created the ‘spark’ or ‘trigger’ as the means to start a war. Both scenarios resemble a baseless conspiracy allegation founded on assertions by Clark and Barnes without any primary sources that would either connect France or Russia with the assassination or as ‘starters’ of the war for the control of the Turkish straits or the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine. Barnes’ and Clark’s presumptions are based on the allegation that France and Russia wanted war, while Germany and Austria were trying to prevent it.

Barnes in 1926 as well as Clark in 2012 are laying out assumptions speculating about a possible connection between the ‘spark’ in the Balkans and the unleashing of the war.<sup>211</sup> The real difference between Barnes 1926 and Clark 2012 is their methodology: while Barnes did not mince any words and openly embraced conspiracy scenarios like his constant references to the ‘Russian-Serbian plot’ and the ‘Poincare clique that has started the war’, Clark is cautious in his wording and prefers more indirect accusations and the insinuation of a plot. Clark’s ‘Balkan inception scenario’ is one of the very few explicit statements in this regard, that he has also republished separately to underscore its importance.<sup>212</sup> As we have pointed out before, Clark has probably learned from other cases, how not to write revisionist history that may transport the same message but prefers a different packaging smoothing out the ‘radical’ allegations around the edges.<sup>213</sup>

Clark’s ‘Balkan inception scenario’ is definitely a re-issuing of the conspiracy myths of the 1920s,

<sup>203</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 486; Barnes, *Genesis*, 337

<sup>204</sup> Barnes, *Genesis*, 98, 103, 110

<sup>205</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 293

<sup>206</sup> Barnes, *Genesis*, 111-112

<sup>207</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 297, 422

<sup>208</sup> Barnes, *Genesis*, 110

<sup>209</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 293

<sup>210</sup> The German translator created the term ‘Balkan Katalysator Szenario’ (Balkan catalyst scenario), that seems closer to the intended meaning, Clark, *Schlafwandler*, 452

<sup>211</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 346-349, 484: “The robustness of the Russian response fully makes sense only if we read against the background of the Russian leadership’s growing anxiety about the future of the Turkish straits.”

<sup>212</sup> Clark, “The Balkan Inception Scenario”, in: *Bid for World Power*, 262-280

<sup>213</sup> See L. L. Farrar review, *American Historical Review*, 1695-1696, that has pointed out “how not to write revisionist history”

which can also be deduced from the fact that in connection with the ‘scenario’ he is quoting extensively from the same letter cited by Hans Delbrueck in 1919, the doyen of the German historians at the time and a supporter of the German campaign, who has been a constant propagator of a “Russian-Serbian plot”<sup>214</sup>, topoi that were also used in the Professor’s memorandum<sup>215</sup> and by other propagandists of the German campaign like Stieve<sup>216</sup>, Montgelas<sup>217</sup> and Wegerer<sup>218</sup>. The crucial difference between them is the sourcing: while Delbrueck and others are quoting from the original source in the German Whitebook in 1919<sup>219</sup>

Clark is using the same document but is quoting from Stieve’s *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg* <sup>220</sup>, bearing in mind the need for the diversification of his sources. It is a letter, that Sazonov has supposedly written to the Russian envoy in Belgrad, Nikolai Hartwig, in May of 1913, which seems dubious to begin with, because it never appeared in any other documentation since, German or Russian (like the Millerand-Ignatiev conversation), aside of the issue that we do not know if and what Hartwig related to the Serbian Government. The content of the letter is supposed to be a link between Russia and Serbia and an encouragement for the Serbs to claim certain lands from Austria-Hungary in the future, while

<sup>214</sup> Hans Delbrueck, *Kautsky und Harden* (Berlin, 1920), Appendix, “Die russisch-serbische Verschwörung”, 37-40 quotes from the original publication in the German Whitebook; idem., “Did the Kaiser want the war?”, *Contemporary Review* 119 (1921): 322-332; answer by J. W. Headlam-Morley, “A Reply to Professor Delbrueck”, *Contemporary Review* 119 (1921): 333-345; also the answer by Karl Kautsky, *Delbrueck und Wilhelm II* (Berlin, 1920): 9-12, who has disputed that there ever was a ‘Russian-Serbian plot’ and stated that Delbrueck’s accusation that France, Russia, England and Serbia had agreed upon war against the central powers beforehand is nowhere to be found and must be considered an unproven allegation

<sup>215</sup> Weissbuch 1919, *Deutschland schuldig*, 65

<sup>216</sup> Stieve, *Iswolski und der der Weltkrieg*, 178

<sup>217</sup> Montgelas, *Case for the Central Powers*, 77-78

<sup>218</sup> Wegerer, *Refutation*, 326-327

<sup>219</sup> The letter appeared in full length only in the German *Weissbuch* edited by the Foreign Office, *Deutschland schuldig*, “Sazonow to Hartwig”, May 6, 1913, 98-101.

<sup>220</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 349-350 (note 137, 632) quotes from Stieve, *Iswolski und der Weltkrieg*, 178, who quotes from the Whitebook 1919, 99.

the letter is a request by Sazonov the Serbs should avoid any war with the Bulgarians, because this would mess up the Russian strategy in the Balkans. To base a full-fledged conspiracy scenario to start a war on this document, even if it would be authentic, is more than a stretch.

Even Sidney B. Fay, a moderate revisionist who is also using Stieve’s ‘Izvol’sky’ correspondence extensively, is criticizing Stieve and Barnes and their radical conspiracy scenarios like the “Balkanizing of the Franco-Russian Alliance” or the “Franco-Russian war plot”, asserting that the radical revisionists like Stieve and Barnes have exaggerated Poincare’s and Isvolsky’s influence, and having taken the latter’s dispatches too much “at his own valuation.”<sup>221</sup> In addition, Fay is also pointing towards a typical procedure of revisionism, that is practiced by Stieve and Barnes (as well as by Clark): quoting a document selectively and leaving out those passages that do not fit their preconceived thesis. In this case, Fay is criticizing that Stieve<sup>222</sup> and Barnes<sup>223</sup> have both suppressed Sazonov’s statements at the ‘special conference’ in December 1913, where he is saying that he wants to preserve peace and the status quo in the Turkish straits and the Balkans, and only intervene, if somebody else would do so before them, pointing out Barnes’ and Stieve’s “misleading and unwarranted conclusions”. These conclusions presume that Russia and Sazonov were pursuing their goal to ‘secure’ the Turkish straits, having been converted to the idea of a World War by Poincare and Izvol’sky.<sup>224</sup> Due to his careful line of arguing Fay is not discussing his findings and the impact for historiography any further, but has established a record that radical revisionism through its threat analysis is striving to manipulate its readers with the selective use of crucial documents and ‘misleading’ and ‘unwarranted’ conclusions.

The reason why Clark is hiding his radical inclinations and his knack for conspiracy explanations has several reasons: he wants to appear as a ‘neutral’ observer who is basing his

<sup>221</sup> Fay, *Origins*, Vol. I, 524

<sup>222</sup> Stieve, *Isvolsky and the World War*, 189

<sup>223</sup> Barnes, *Genesis*, 139

<sup>224</sup> Fay, *Origins*, Vol. I, note 299, 527

statements on primary sources, delivering ‘scientifically sound’ judgements, and - despite obvious similarities – he wants to avoid being compared with Harry E. Barnes, whose mission to “whitewash”<sup>225</sup>

Germany extended even to Hitler, the Second World War<sup>226</sup> and the Holocaust<sup>227</sup>, which made him a ‘taboo’ person in the historical sciences. In the early 1960s, Barnes not only published a defense of the thesis of David Hoggan on the Second World War excusing Hitler and Germany<sup>228</sup>, but he even appealed to the German Government not to accept the ‘victory tale’ of the ‘winners’ of the war suggesting that they should start an ‘innocence’ campaign just like in the 1920s, that he deemed successful in every respect.<sup>229</sup>

Harry E. Barnes, consistent in his ‘love’ for Germany - not even immune to Hitler and the Holocaust - became the negative posterchild of revisionism, although his main arguments against the Entente powers are still very much alive in the writings of neo-revisionist historians today. Clark is trying to bridge an obvious dilemma: on the one hand he wants to adopt the radical thesis of Barnes, but on the other hand he is trying to avoid naming him considering that Barnes has extended his ‘excuses’ for Germany far beyond the

acceptable consensus that may include unleashing a war but not the Holocaust.

## V. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is also important to note that revisionist attempts to distort the activities of the German Government and Hitler unleashing the Second World War in 1939 and afterwards were – also in Germany in the 1960s - clearly refused and given an unambiguous answer, thereby revealing that both revisionism’s were operating with the same technique.<sup>230</sup> In the mid-1980s, a dispute again between historians about National Socialism, World War II and the Holocaust demonstrated that a majority in Germany would not tolerate excuses or absurd ‘offsets’ about the victims of certain countries in World War II in order to make Germany look better.<sup>231</sup> Only when it comes to the origins of the First World War, German historians do not seem to care about the distortions of revisionism, which suggests that there are other considerations that drives the silence.<sup>232</sup> For example, when one of the first revisionist challenges was issued by Terence Zuber regarding the Schlieffen plan in 1999,

<sup>230</sup> Gottfried Jasper, “Über die Ursachen des Zweiten Weltkriegs. Zu den Büchern von A. J. P. Taylor und David L. Hoggan”, *Vierteljahrshefte fuer Zeitgeschichte* 10 (1962): 312-340; also see the different contributions in, *Kriegsbeginn 1939. Entfesselung oder Ausbruch des Zweiten Weltkriegs*, ed. Gottfried Niedhart (Darmstadt, 1976); and *The Origins of the Second World War*, ed. Esmonde M. Robertson (London, 1971)

<sup>231</sup> Regarding the dispute of the historians in Germany in 1986-87 and their contributions to the debate, *Historikerstreit. Die Dokumentation der Kontroverse um die Einzigartigkeit der nationalsozialistischen Judenvernichtung*, ed. Piper Verlag (Muenchen, 1987); Charles Maier, “Jenseits des Historikerstreits. The significance of the controversy”, *German Politics & Society* 13 (1988): 3-8; idem., *The unmasterable past: History, Holocaust, and German national identity* (Cambridge, MA, 1988)

<sup>232</sup> In a review of the ‘Sleepwalkers’ in Germany, the historian Gerd Krumeich suggested that Clark is finally providing a narrative that does not accuse Germany of any misdeeds and is excusing it for ‘unleashing’ the First World War, Gerd Krumeich, “Die deutsche Sehnsucht unschuldig zu sein”, *TAZ.de* (March 3, 2014): “In the long run it is unbearable that only we should have had a terrible, destructive past.”, repeating afterwards the ‘topoi’ of the German campaign Clark is basing his statements on; It seems like Krumeich prefers German ‘innocence’ over the real events of unleashing the war in 1914

<sup>225</sup> Barnes, *Genesis*, 296: “Many will doubtless allege that this chapter constitutes a well-nigh complete ‘white-washing’ of Germany as far as immediate responsibility for the World War is concerned, and the writer frankly admits that such is the case.”

<sup>226</sup> Harry E. Barnes, “Revisionism and the Historical Blackout”, in: *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace. A critical Examination of the Foreign Policy of Franklin D. Roosevelt and its aftermath*, ed. Harry E. Barnes (Caldwell, Id. 1953): 1-78; idem., “Pearl Harbour after a Century”, *Left and Right* 4 (1966): 1-132

<sup>227</sup> Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust. The Growing assault on Truth and Memory* (New York, 1993): 49-83

<sup>228</sup> David Hoggan, *The forced War. When peaceful Revision failed* (Costa Mesa, CA, 1961) [first published in Germany, *Der erzwungene Krieg* (Tuebingen, 1962)]; Lipstadt, *Denying*, 137-156

<sup>229</sup> Harry E. Barnes, *Revisionism and brainwashing: a survey of the war-guilt question in Germany after two World Wars* (1962) [German transl., idem., *Die deutsche Kriegsschuldfrage. Eine Rechtfertigung David L. Hoggans* (Tuebingen, 1964)]

stating that the plan did not exist and Germany in 1914 invaded Belgium only for defensive purposes to thwart the war plan of the Franco-Russian alliance, German historians initiated a conference in 2004 and published the results to refute Zuber's thesis.<sup>233</sup>

When Clark's 'Sleepwalkers' was published, a major revisionist challenge to the international consensus far more serious than Zuber's regarding the Schlieffen plan, no conference was held and all that could be heard from German historians was ominous silence if not tacit approval.<sup>234</sup>

There has been a discussion in Potsdam at the *Militaergeschichtliches Forschungsamt* (where the conference on Zuber occurred) after Clark's study was published, and German historians voiced their dissent, but this can hardly be counted as a serious answer to Clark's "entdeutsche Anklageschrift"<sup>235</sup> ('de-Germanized indictment') of the Entente countries.<sup>236</sup> If Zuber's "falsification of history"<sup>237</sup> focusing on the Schlieffen plan demanded an answer through a conference and a publication, Clark's study would require something similar considering that his distortions apply to the complete preceding

history and the July Crisis based on similar techniques like Zuber's.<sup>238</sup>

In addition, a conference with a clear rebuttal of Clark's thesis in all areas (item by item) would have made clear that Clark's attempt for a revival of the paradigm of the 'Initiative of the Entente' throwing the debate back to the 1950s or worse to the 1920s and 1930s<sup>239</sup> would not be accepted, considering that he is on the same level like Zuber whose thesis seem to fit very well into Clark's concept of excusing the central powers and specifically Germany.<sup>240</sup> There were certainly some voices, who at the centennial of the war in 2014 spoke up and criticized the new tendency<sup>241</sup>, but the pendulum in Germany regarding the views of the responsibility for unleashing the war in 1914 has swung back again and today it seems more like it is accepted – like in the 1920s – that France and Russia are responsible for the war.<sup>242</sup>

In a recent answer to his critics in Germany<sup>243</sup> Clark is trying to defend himself against the main charge that in his study he has excused the *Reichsleitung* unleashing the war in 1914. To refute these allegations, he is stating that regarding Germany he has at least attached a co-responsibility mentioning German plans for 'preventive' war up to 1914. Also, he seems

<sup>233</sup> *The Schlieffen Plan. International Perspectives on the German Strategy for World War I*, ed. Hans Ehlert, Michael Epkenhans, Gerhard Gross (Lexington, KY, 2014): 13 [German original, *Der Schlieffenplan*, ed. idem. (Paderborn, 2006)]

<sup>234</sup> The only professional summary of the discussion in 2014, Michael Epkenhans, "Der Erste Weltkrieg – Jahrestag Gedenken, neue Forschungen und Debatten einhundert Jahre nach seinem Beginn", *Vierteljahrshefte fuer Zeitgeschichte* 63 (2015): 135-165, shows the triumph of revisionism, 153: "On the whole, one can agree with Clark here (...); and is downplaying the revisionist publications in general; reviews of Clark's study in 2014 in Germany were overwhelmingly positive

<sup>235</sup> Roger Chickering, "Deutschland im Ersten Weltkrieg, Betrachtungen zur Historiografie des Gedenkjahres", *Archiv fuer Sozialgeschichte* 55 (2015): 1-50, 3

<sup>236</sup> Berthold Seewald, "Besessen von der deutschen Kriegsschuld", *Welt.de* (Oct. 25, 2013), whose short article is written from Clark's perspective 'demonstrating' that he was able to answer any criticism from the 'experts' in Potsdam with 'charm' and 'rhetorical foil'

<sup>237</sup> Mombauer, "War plans and war guilt", 879

<sup>238</sup> As Mombauer, "War plans and war guilt", 857-885, has shown in detail

<sup>239</sup> As Hew Strachan, "Origins of the First World War", has correctly claimed, 438: "In many ways, Clark and others have taken the debate back to where it stood then [the 1920s and 1930s] – and where it remained until the 1960s."

<sup>240</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 216, emphasizes the Zuber thesis that the Schlieffen plan, "was not a 'war plan'" (Zuber cited in note 123, 603) omitting the fact that Zuber's thesis was summarily refuted at a conference and through a publication that Clark is not mentioning at all

<sup>241</sup> Volker Ullrich, "Zuendschnur und Pulverfass", *Die Zeit* (Sept. 26, 2013); Heinrich A. Winkler, "Und erloese uns von der Kriegsschuld," *Zeit Online* (July 31, 2014), John Roehl, "Erster Weltkrieg. Jetzt gilt es loszuschlagen", *Die Zeit* (June 1, 2014); Michael Hesse, "Der Krieg war im Oktober 1914 verloren, Interview mit Hans-Ulrich Wehler", *Frankfurter Rundschau* (Dec. 18, 2013)

<sup>242</sup> An example for this is the publication of R. Schmidt, "Revanche pour Sedan", who blames France and Poincare for unleashing the war in 1914

<sup>243</sup> Christopher Clark, "Von Nationalisten, Revisionisten und Schlafwandlern", idem., *Gefangene der Zeit* (Muenchen, 2020): 287-304

concerned about the criticism that his study is a step backwards to the 1950s or worse to the revisionism of the 1920s<sup>244</sup>, denying that his depiction of the events of 1914 has anything to do with it. Although Clark is trying to mend fences and is even ‘thanking’ his critics for their ‘seriousness’ suddenly kowtowing to the ‘self-critical’ historical culture in Germany<sup>245</sup>, he is increasing his complexity scenario for the July Crisis in 1914 to “ultracomplex”<sup>246</sup> and is praising the neo-revisionist literature<sup>247</sup> he so heavily relied on in his study. Clark is still insisting that these ‘novel’ inquiries have thoroughly refuted Fritz Fischer’s paradigm of the ‘Initiative of the central powers’, pointing out that Fischer’s thesis that Germany has ‘planned’ to go to war has been disproven by these new studies.<sup>248</sup>

In fact, he is pointing out that the historians who have created the neo-revisionist literature (including himself) are not “revisionists”, because they are not members of an “organization” or a “gang”<sup>249</sup>, trying to refute a negative label that – in his mind - should only be used for the denial of the Holocaust.<sup>250</sup> Clark’s answer to his critics shows a familiar picture: through his strategy of *Selbstverharmlosung* he is again downplaying the revisionist ‘contours’ of his study denying the fact that his thesis has originated in the German campaign and his publications<sup>251</sup>, emphasizing the assumed ‘novelty’ of his secondary sources but omitting the fact that his study is only a summary of the opinions of others while he has no primary sources to show for. The only novel thing is a statement regarding his motive: according to him ‘Sleepwalkers’ has originated over the “annoyance at the slick and selfish Anglophone commemoration of 1914”<sup>252</sup>, while Germany

seems to have become the country, where he can enjoy a “foreigner’s bonus” and a certain degree of “fool’s freedom”.<sup>253</sup>

As we have demonstrated in this paper, the revival of the revisionist enterprise is a replacement of science and its methodology with arbitrary assertions, selective sourcing, and conspiracy scenarios just like the Trump Commission has shown in its ‘1776 Report’. If this type of inquiry would become the norm, it would be the end of the discipline as we know it, only subject to arbitrary whims of the individual historian and the political interests the author is trying to promote.<sup>254</sup> The result would be a ‘free for all’ where everybody could invoke science as a cover to propagate their individual opinions. Specifically, historical sciences, which seem under the pressure to conform<sup>255</sup>, need to be independent from any political currents and should be able – as a German historian has pointed out 50 years ago, “to understand to acknowledge, but not to hold harmless or being evasive or apologetic, but also not to accuse or condemn *cum ira et studio* (...)”, going beyond “a mere opinion” and becoming an overall guidance that science needs to be.<sup>256</sup>

<sup>244</sup> Clark, “Revisionisten und Schlafwandler”, 292

<sup>245</sup> Clark, “Revisionisten und Schlafwandler”, 304

<sup>246</sup> Clark, “Revisionisten und Schlafwandler”, 302

<sup>247</sup> Clark, “Revisionisten und Schlafwandler”, 297-300 is mentioning like-minded historians like Geppert, Kiessling, McMeekin, S. Schmidt, Williamson, Kronenbitter, and others, whose works we have cited previously

<sup>248</sup> Clark, “Revisionisten und Schlafwandler”, 300

<sup>249</sup> Clark, “Revisionisten und Schlafwandler”, 300

<sup>250</sup> See his Interview, “Kollektive Emotionen”, *Der Spiegel* 28 (2014): 42-43

<sup>251</sup> Clark, “Revisionisten und Schlafwandler”, 292

<sup>252</sup> Clark, “Revisionisten und Schlafwandler”, 302

<sup>253</sup> Christopher Clark, “Preussenbilder im Wandel”, *Historische Zeitschrift* 293 (2011): 307-321, 308

<sup>254</sup> Like the authors of the revisionist manifesto in 2014, Geppert et. al., “Warum Deutschland nicht allein Schuld ist”, *Welt.de* (Jan. 4, 2014)

<sup>255</sup> William H. McNeil, “Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians”, *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 1-10

<sup>256</sup> Andreas Hillgruber, “Quellen und Quellenkritik zur Vorgeschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges”, in: *Kriegsbeginn 1939*, 369-395, 369-370

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# About Some Methods of Creating Images in the Lyrics of Mikhail Matusovsky (To the Characteristic of the “Poetics of Artlessness”)

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## ABSTRACT

Based on the material of two lyrical works by Mikhail Matusovsky, the article identifies and analyzes the characteristic features of the author's poetic handwriting, taking into account his creative manner, the researchers refer to the literary movement known as the “poetics of artlessness”. This poetic trend, which has become widespread in Soviet poetry, is distinguished by the underlined democratic nature of the verbal space, the simplicity of compositional design and similar features, works “poetics of artlessness” are addressed to the reader “from the very bottom”.

**Keywords:** lyric poem; literary movement; “poetics of artlessness”; figurative means; tropes; stylistic figures; semantic layer; addressee; lyrical subject.

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*Based on the material of two lyrical works by Mikhail Matusovsky, the article identifies and analyzes the characteristic features of the author’s poetic handwriting, taking into account his creative manner, the researchers refer to the literary movement known as the “poetics of artlessness”. This poetic trend, which has become widespread in Soviet poetry, is distinguished by the underlined democratic nature of the verbal space, the simplicity of compositional design and similar features, works “poetics of artlessness” are addressed to the reader “from the very bottom”.*

*On the example of “programmatically” works of the poet, it is demonstrated that lyric works made in the traditions of this poetic movement seem absolutely clear and easy to understand only at the first reading. A more thorough philological analysis makes it possible to reveal the qualities of lyrical structures that testify to the depth and versatility of the content contained in them.*

*The article also describes the ways and techniques of creating imagery, which play a leading role in complicating the semantic plan of poems (interacting individual tropes (comparison and metaphor) and the system of tropes functioning in the lyrical structure). The essential role in giving versatility to the meaning of the poems of the stylistic figures used in lyric texts is demonstrated, as well as the design of poems as detailed appeals to the addressee, the grammatical signals of the presence of which take place in both poems and correlate with the signals of the lyrical subject.*

*Keywords:* lyric poem; literary movement; “poetics of artlessness”; figurative means; tropes; stylistic figures; semantic layer; addressee; lyrical subject.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Mikhail Matusovsky is known primarily as a songwriter, whose lyrics are (“Moscow Nights”, “School Waltz”, “What’s So Troubled in the Heart”, “At a Nameless Height”, “Boat”, “Where Does the Motherland Begin?”, “My Black Sea” and many others) for more than half a century have often been perceived as folk – so great is their popularity and inexhaustible demand. One no less attention deserves other facets of this personality’s work: prose works, his essays by a war correspondent and, of course, lyric creativity. The originality of M. Matusovsky’s lyrics, expressed, among other things, in the originality of the verbal fabric of lyric works, from our point of view, has not been fully investigated and deserves a very close and diverse attention not only to philologists, but also representatives of interdisciplinary trends focused on the study of various cultural phenomena (first of all, in this case, we mean linguoculturology, psychopoetics, philological hermeneutics and some other branches of humanitarian knowledge).

Literary scholars sometimes call the stylistic tonality inherent in most of M. Matusovsky’s lyric works “poetics of artlessness” (N.L. Leiderman and M.N. Lipovetsky). In a similar way, the style of works is usually defined, where the author “opens a poetic text towards the reader, who

came, as they say, from the very bottom, speaks to him in his language, emphatically democratic, seemingly the most ordinary” (emphasis added. – I. Z.) [Leiderman, Lipovetsky 2003: 226].

However, the “ordinariness” of the stylistic tonality of many lyric works attributed to those created in line with the “poetics of artlessness” is only *apparent*, and it is formed as a result of the very painstaking and skillful work of the artist of the word with linguistic material, which is based on a deep knowledge of the native language in all its manifestations (that is, not only the literary language as the most extensive part of the national language and its core, but also all other communicative-speech spheres), but also on a refined sense of language, on an impeccable linguistic taste.

According to the majority of researchers, genetically genetically “poetics of artlessness” goes back to tradition of Russian choral lyrics, formed over many centuries. It was on the basis of Russian choral lyrics in the nineteenth century that the lyrical work of such famous Russian poets as Ivan Nikitin and Alexei Koltsov, as well as poets who united in the 70s of the nineteenth century in the “Surikov literary-musical circle”, was formed and gained wide popularity: C.D. Drozhzhin, F.S. Shkulev, E.E. Nechaev, P.V. Oreshin, A.P. Chapygin, as well as young S.A. Yesenin (representatives of this association are often called surikov’s poets). At the same time, “the very phenomenon of choral lyrics as the genetic soil of the author’s poetry is still awaiting its study, but it is obvious that the origin and functional role of choral lyrics in the life of the Russian people determined, on one side, its connection with the deep archetypes of popular consciousness, with the sacred-mythological anthology. and, on the other side, with the life of the people, with a lively aesthetic consciousness, its role as one of the foundations of mass culture” [Leiderman, Lipovetskiy 2003: 226].

However, in the 19th century, the tradition of “poetics of artlessness” was rather local in nature, being embodied in only a few poetic works, which are still perceived as brilliant examples of this stylistic trend in literature. These are, in

particular, lyric poems by A. Koltsov: “Good people, tell me”, “Don’t sing, nightingale”, “Don’t make noise, rye” and others, which later became popular romances.

The tradition of “poetics of artlessness” acquired a much greater spread in Soviet times, becoming “one of the most powerful artistic trends – it feeds the work of such great poets as S. Yesenin, P. Vasiliev, M. Isakovsky, V. Bokov, M. Matusovsky, S. Alymov, N. Tryapkin, on this basis such artistic streams as the work of the New Peasant poets (in the 1910s–1920s) and “quiet lyrics” (in the 1960s–1970s)” (emphasis added. – I. Z.) [Leiderman, Lipovetsky 2003: 226].

It should be noted that the “poetics of artlessness”, developed by representatives of the lyric genre of the Soviet period, is on a rather unsteady line between genuine art and “mass culture”, to which literary theorists have repeatedly drawn attention. The poems created in this manner sometimes seem “quite simple” (exactly this way the poets I. Selvinsky and S. Kirsanov spoke about the poetry of A.T. Tvardovsky), but the paradox is that, according to their stylistic assignment, they should seem as such – “quite simple”.

It seems that the lyrics of Mikhail Matusovsky are an example of a large-scale embodiment of this tradition in the poetic work, relying, on the one hand, on the most ancient type of collective poetic creativity – choral lyrics, and on the other, on the achievements of a number of representatives of the lyric genre “golden” for Russian literature of the 19th century.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

We have already had to analyze in some of the publications the originality of a number of lyric works by M. Matusovsky in the aspect of its conditioning precisely by the chosen poetical and stylistic manner, that is, following the principles of “poetics of artlessness” (see, for example: Zaitseva 2016-b). The material for these publications was mainly lyric works dedicated to the poet’s small homeland – Donbass and the city Lugansk in particular: “I returned to my homeland. The oncoming birches are rustling...”

(1946), “Crickets in the shade of a thistle...” (1974), etc.

This publication analyzes two lyric poems by M.L. Matusovsky, which can be attributed, from our point of view, to the author’s “programmatically” works, since they figuratively set forth the ethical concept of the artist of the word, aesthetically embodied his life principles: “The foul weather were dictating me the lines...” (1946) and “In the damp earth-huts, in twilight of the trenches...” (1975). Both works are “touched upon” by the military theme, although there is no reason, as it seems to us, to directly assert that these are military lyrics: the mention of the war, the introduction into the lyrical structure of clearly referring to war details is endowed in this case with a number of functions, which will be discussed further. The analyzed poems are separated from each other for almost three decades, which, from our point of view, also needs to be paid attention to: at least this allows us to compare the poet’s views on the moral code of personality, which is described in both works, and also to compare the features of the individual author’s manner.

When analyzing the poetic works of M.L. Matusovsky used both general scientific and general philological methods (observations, generalizations, descriptions) and special linguistic methods, focused primarily on the analysis of artistic speech: semantic-stylistic, contextological analysis, proposed by M.N. Kozhina method “word – image” [Kozhina et al. 2020: 33–34], as well as the method of complex analysis of a poetic work.

### III. RESULTS AND ITS DISCUSSION

Typical of M.L. Matusovsky’s “simplicity”, which is expressed primarily in the semantic and stylistic compositional features of the verbal space of his poems, is noted by almost all interpreters of the poet’s work [see, for example: Leiderman, Lipovetsky 2003; Matusovsky Mikhail Lvovich 2005 and other sources]. Meanwhile, the poet’s works look simple and unpretentious in their verbal design only at the initial level of their comprehension; upon closer examination, with an

approach at least with elements of analyticism – both for readers and, of course, for specialists-researchers – this property of lyric poems is seen in a completely different way.

Let us turn to the analysis of a specific poem written immediately after the end of the Great Patriotic War, in 1946.

The bad weather dictated the lines to me.  
In a damp dugout, at night or during the day,  
I’ve been rhyming for over four years  
Concrete with iron and lead with fire.  
And if these records of the past  
When I meet you, I will reread it for you  
Let him come to you again today  
At least the taste of gunpowder in the mouth.  
And you, embraced by the same feeling  
Long gone and forgotten days  
Maybe you will stop with excitement

Before my infantry muse [Matusovsky 1982: 23; hereinafter, the texts of poems by M.L. Matusovsky are cited from this source, indicating the page number in brackets; translation of poems into English by Lyudmila 31: Lyudmila 31].

The verbal fabric of the given poem is clearly focused on colloquial speech (of course, on the colloquial literary, and not the colloquial vernacular variety of the latter, as evidenced by the obvious predominance of common lexis with some “inclusions”: *colloquial* in their stylistic coloring are such lexical units, like *for over four years* (with ‘the thing that exceeds the required or set amount of something is redundant’); *reread* (‘read again, again’); *let (come to you)* (= ‘let’) [The Big Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language 2000: 502, 822, 1046].

However, along with the predominance of colloquial features in the poem, there is also a “light” shade of bookishness, which in itself contradicts the literally understood “simplicity” of the lyrical structure, since it creates the interaction of at least two stylistic layers that “oppose” each other (and this is only the first of features, which in connection with the achieved research goal should be paid attention). The

presence of bookishness is ensured by the introduction of abstract nouns (*feeling, excitement*) into the lyric text, which are also used in grammatical forms, which at the present stage of the functioning of the Russian language (starting from the middle of the 20th century) are perceived as somewhat archaic, since among the forms of the creative case with variant suffixes of abstract nouns the first of these is dominant; the second is perceived as somewhat archaic.

In addition to those indicated in the poem under consideration, you can find several more linguistic elements that form a rather weakly expressed, but still present book stylistic layer, among which: the participle embraced, formed from an obviously bookish verb (“EMBRACE ... *Book.* = Hug” [Big Explanatory Dictionary of Russian language 2000: 694]; the use of the noun – poetic word *Muse* in grammatical form with a two-syllable ending. The two-syllable endings of the instrumental case in the feminine noun of the first declension, as noted by the authors of the reference book “The grammatical correctness of Russian speech. The experience of the frequency-stylistic vocabulary of variants” [Graudina et al. 1976], firstly, by the middle of the twentieth century, they were practically displaced from use; the remaining in use word forms with two-syllable endings (secondly) function mainly in poetry, “where they serve the requirements of rhythm and rhyme” [Graudina et al. 1976: 133].

The system of figurative means, functioning in the lyrical structure, also, of course, contributes to the enrichment of the meaning embedded in it with new facets (respectively, its expansion and deepening), since due to the formed figurative semantics, various kinds of connections between its individual components are actualized, including associative and subtext. A rather voluminous system of figurative means functions in the poem, mainly consisting of verb metaphors: *the foul weather were dictating (me the lines); (I) was rhyming the concrete with iron, and the lead with fire; (let you feel) the taste of gunpowder on lips.* This system also includes two epithets, one of them is a detailed metaphorical epithet: *(you) all caught with those feelings of the past days – and before (my) Muse, called infantry.* This system of

tropes, in addition to fulfilling the function typical for figurative and pictorial means – figurative concretization of the content contained in a work of art – significantly enriches the lyrical structure with additional semantic shades, deepening and expanding and, accordingly, complicating its semantic-aesthetic plan.

It is as a result of such a linguistic embodiment in the lyric structure that the author’s conceptual meaning is formed, created on a constant kind of “transversion” of two elements: war, which forever left a mark on the soul and consciousness of the lyric hero, and creativity, without which he cannot imagine life in any conditions, including in a war situation. It is the disclosure of the author’s conception in a figurative form that is primarily promoted by all the tropes functioning in the poem, which are distinguished by a pronounced author’s individuality, such as, for example, *my Muse, called infantry.*

No less important for the aesthetic embodiment of the author’s conception is the stylistic figure consistently used by the author – *inversion*, referring to which the poet places important semantic accents in the text and achieves the necessary intonation pattern: while the colloquial intonation predominates in the text, there are still elements of solemn intonation, emphasizing the importance for the lyric subject of the words from his lips.

The compositional design of the lyric text as a message to the addressee, clear grammatical signals of the figurative concretization of which are present in the poem, contributes to the creation of a philosophical-relaxed and at the same time trusting tone of the poem. These are, first of all, the pronouns of the second person singular - three uses in different case forms: *(I read) to you; let you (feel); you ... (forgotten time).* The system of grammatical forms, with the help of which the image of the addressee is embodied in the poem, clearly correlates with the system of grammatical “signals” of the presence of the lyric hero in the poem. This is, firstly, the personal pronoun of the first person singular, used four times: *three* times – in the form of the nominative case (I): *I (was rhyming); I (read); I*

(describe); and *one* time – in the form of the dative case (me): (*weather were dictating*) *me*. The possessive pronoun mine, which refers to the lyrical subject, whose significance is enhanced by the inclusion in the figurative turnover, functions in the same system: *before my Muse, called infantry*.

The poem “In the damp earth-huts, in twilight of the trenches...”, created by M.L. Matusovsky in 1975, upon first reading it, seems to have been written in an even more understandable (simple) language than the poem analyzed earlier:

In the damp earth-huts, in twilight of the trenches—  
I've never met the bad people there.  
The soldier, whom I've never known,  
Gave me the caporal without any word.  
Your letter with the risk and extraordinary  
The signalman as usual to me was carrying.  
By turning the wheel of car with all his might,  
The driver's got me to the headquarters staff.  
As angel, though hardly any wing could point,  
The doctor bent to me in military hospital.  
It seems to me that here Russia had collected  
The best of all, that could be gathered ever  
(p. 117).

Almost all the vocabulary involved in the creation of the given poem belongs to the common vocabulary. In the lyrical structure, two tropes also function: an expanded artistic *comparison* (*As angel, though hardly any wing could point, / The doctor bent to me in military hospital*) and an expanded *metaphor* (*here Russia has collected / All the best that it could only*), the significance of which is in the formation of the figurative frame of the work is, of course, very weighty, but their number is very small (for comparison, in the previously analyzed poem, equal to the one considered in volume, the system of tropes is formed by at least five components).

In connection with the noted features of the analyzed lyric poem, a special role in the formation of the aesthetic, conceptually meaningful for the lyrical subject of meaning is acquired in it by the *methods of organizing* the

linguistic material selected by the author – first of all, the compositional design of the work by the author and the stylistic figures used by him. However, the actual stylistic figures in this text, as well as tropes, are few, which confirms the attitude of the representatives of the “poetics of artlessness” noted by the researchers to the unpretentiousness of the lyrical text. This is, firstly, the *inversion* characteristic of the poetic work of Mikhail Matusovsky, observed in several sections of the lyric text (for example: *By turning the wheel of car with all his might, / The driver's got me to the headquarters staff*), and the *enjambement* technique implemented at the junction of the last two lines, who, according to our observations, can also be attributed to a particularly preferred poet [for more details, see our work: Zaitseva 2017]: *It seems to me that here Russia had collected / The best of all, that could be gathered ever*.

As already noted, with the “simplicity”, albeit seeming, of the verbal appearance of a lyric work, a special load falls on its compositional design, which can be observed in this case as well. The division of the entire 12-line text into six equal parts, complete in the semantic and intonation terms, contributes to the creation of the *effect of kaleidoscopicity*. In front of the addressee-reader, replacing each other, concrete-shaped pictures pass, in which the moments of manifestation of the best qualities of a person are captured – actions that often require extraordinary efforts from the individual, sometimes on the verge of death (parts two – fifth). Compositionally, the semantic layer of concrete-shaped pictures is framed by two two-line fragments of a more abstract nature, also autonomous in intonation and semantic respect, but at the same time clearly semantically correlating with each other: *In the damp earth-huts, in twilight of the trenches – / I've never met the bad people there* and *It seems to me that here Russia had collected / The best of all, that could be gathered ever*.

Placed in “strong” positions for the perception of an artistic text – the *beginning* and *end of the poem* – these fragments cover the “kaleidoscope” of concrete-figurative pictures, enclosing it in a kind of ring. This, in our opinion, gives grounds to

qualify this phenomenon as a method of a circular composition of a special – *conceptual-semantic* – character. In the issue of the author’s appeal to it, the content contained in the central (most voluminous) part of the lyrical structure is aesthetically generalized on a different – more abstract and, as a consequence, more significant in the moral and philosophical plane – level, acquiring, respectively, and greater conceptual significance.

In this case, the lyrical subject of M.L. Matusovsky first “leads” the reader from the general message in the first of the six couplets to more specific figurative sketches in the next eight lines, and then back to the aesthetic generalization in the final two lines, which gradually enhances the initial message to the addressee. As a result, we observe an obvious deepening of the meaning perceived during the initial, relatively superficial, acquaintance with the lyric work.

This happens, firstly, due to the actualization of connections that have already developed at the verbal level of the lyrical structure (*the content-factual* layer of a literary text, in the terminology of I.R. Galperin) – in particular, contextual (as, for example, in the phrase *twilight of the trenches*); secondly, due to the connections formed at the associative and subtext levels. So, for example, the nomination “angel” clearly functions in the poem not in one, but in several meanings – at least in two, stylistically different: ‘a supernatural disembodied creature, a messenger of God, patronizing man (usually depicted as a winged youth)’ and ‘ideal, embodiment, personification of something positive (*bookish*)’ [Big Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language 2000: 39].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Lyric works by M.L. Matusovsky, as has been demonstrated, serve as a very convincing illustration of the definition of “poetics of artlessness” proposed by N.L. Leiderman and M.N. Lipovetsky. According to these researchers, when creating works in the stated manner, the poet, speaking to the reader “in an emphatically democratic, seemingly ordinary language,” at the

same time organizes lyrical discourse in this way, which “draws the reader into the space of poetry, leads him into the depths of meanings hidden in familiar words and phenomena signified by them” (emphasis added. – I. Z) [Leiderman, Lipovetskiy 2003: 226].

At the first acquaintance with the lyrical works of Mikhail Matusovsky, as a rule, one gets the impression that we are dealing with only a figurative sketch based on the author’s memories, which is made by fairly simple language means, with a completely “transparent” content.

However, with a more attentive perception, in particular – in the process of the ongoing complex philological analysis, the researcher is convinced that the poet’s lyric poems in the overwhelming majority turn out to be much more complex semantic and aesthetic phenomena, the semantic versatility and depth of which is due to various kinds of connections that are formed in the lyrical structure (associative, intra-, extratextual, subtextual).

In the course of a long and painstaking work with linguistic material, the talented poet manages to give the verbal fabric of his work that very lightness and simplicity of syllable, which allows an inexperienced reader to consider a work of art as written “usual” language for him (that is, using those speech means that are commonly used by native speakers in everyday communication).

Thus, the “poetics of artlessness” should, from our point of view, be qualified as a special style system that uses forms that have developed in the depths of mass culture to solve artistic problems, but in a transformed form: modernizing, updating and deepening their semantic and aesthetic plan with using various means and ways of creating imagery.

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# Political Attitudes and Perceptions of Batswana: The Implications for Sustainable Economic and Human Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

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## ABSTRACT

Botswana stands out among sub-Saharan African nations for its economic and human development. The central aim of this paper is to consider what makes Botswana different. This paper asserts that the attitudes and perceptions of Batswana (i.e., the people of Botswana) contribute to the nation's economic and human development. It considers how Batswana's attitudes and perceptions differ from populations in other sub-Saharan African countries and the implications of such differences in explaining what makes Botswana's economic and human development patterns stand out from other sub-Saharan African nations. This paper's findings indicate that political attitudes and perceptions of the people in sub-Saharan Africa, such as Botswana, are essential and should not be ignored as factors influencing economic and human development success. Furthermore, it suggests there may be something different about how democracy and governance operate in Botswana that shapes attitudes and perceptions relative to other sub-Saharan African nations.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Sub-Saharan Africa has one of the fastest-growing populations in the world. Its population increased from 227 million in the 1960s to just over 1.1 billion in 2021 (World Bank, 2019; O'Neill, 2023). At the same time, sub-Saharan Africa has remained one of the poorest regions in the world. While sub-Saharan Africa has made considerable

progress in ending extreme poverty since the 1990s, it still lags behind other world regions (World Bank, 2018).

Nevertheless, some sub-Saharan African nations stand out regarding their economic and human development relative to other countries on the sub-continent. Botswana is one such nation.

Botswana is one of Africa's most politically stable nations with the longest continuous multiparty democracy. With more than fifty years of uninterrupted civilian leadership, it has a good human rights record, a reputation for progressive social policies, and a government that has made significant capital investments (BBC News, 2018).

Over the past fifty years, Botswana has transformed itself from one of the world's poorest countries to one of the strongest economies in sub-Saharan Africa. This paper considers what makes Botswana different regarding its economic and human development compared to most sub-Saharan African nations. It asserts that the attitudes and perceptions of Batswana (i.e., the people of Botswana) contribute to the nation's economic and human development record. It examines Batswana's political attitudes and perceptions about their nation's economic and political well-being. More specifically, this paper considers how Batswana's attitudes and perceptions differ from populations in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa and how these differences in attitudes and perceptions make Botswana stand out from other sub-Saharan African nations regarding economic and human development.

## II. WHAT MAKES BOTSWANA DIFFERENT

According to the United Nations Development Programme (2019), Botswana's human development index score was among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. The Human Development Index (HDI) measures a nation's population's health and standards of living. In 2021, the average sub-Saharan nation had an HDI score of .547, which was .185 points below the world's average and .342 below the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries. Sub-Saharan Africa's HDI was .085 points below South Asia's, with the second-lowest HDI score. Between 1990 and 2017, Botswana's HDI score grew from .586 to a high of .722 (United Nations Development Programme, 2023). Botswana's 2021 HDI value of .693 was down from .713 in 2020. Only Mauritius (.802) and Seychelles (.785) had HDI scores above the world average among the sub-Saharan African nations. In addition, in 2021, only South Africa (.713) and Gabon (.706) had HDI values higher than Botswana.

Several facts immediately stood out in determining what makes Botswana's economic and human development different from the average country in sub-Saharan Africa. Botswana is more urban, by 22 percentage points, than the average sub-Saharan African nation. Its population's median age was 3.3 years older, and its life expectancy was 5.3 years longer.

Botswana is better educated than populations in the average sub-Saharan African nation. Gender equality is much higher in Botswana. However, the percentage of women holding parliament seats was significantly lower than the average sub-Saharan African nations (United Nations Development Programme, 2019). Finally, according to the Ibrahim Index of Governance, Botswana's 68.1 overall governance score in 2021 was among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. Only Mauritius (74.9) and Seychelles (73.4) scores were higher (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2023).

Lekorwe, Molomo, Molefe, and Moseki (2001) attributed Botswana's success on the subcontinent to several things. First, the nation's

institutions' performance and holding of regular and free elections are anchored by a democratic tradition that blossomed after independence.

Second, Botswana's political system and government institutions enjoy an exceedingly elevated level of legitimacy. Third, most of the population approved of the government's performance in education, health care, basic service delivery, fighting crime, and creating jobs. Fourth, Botswana has received praise for its economic success as a capitalist model on the sub-continent. Lastly, the people of Botswana were passive when it came to politics. Thus, the country has established a democratic tradition and institutions over the recent years that have contributed to its success (Lewin, 2011).

According to Leith (2005), Botswana's political system and economic interests, working with solid traditions, reliable institutions, good leadership, and sound policies, have contributed to its economic and human development success. Botswana's governance is a multiparty constitutional democracy that provides for the indirect election of the president and the popular election of a National Assembly. It also has local councils whose power is limited by the central government's rights (Britannica, 2023). Its elections are generally free and fair, and civilian authorities maintain effective control over the security forces (U.S. Department of State, 2023).

Leith (2005) also points out the economy's structural transformation after independence, investment in physical and human capital, and income distribution in the nation as contributing factors. Mulinge (2008) attributed Botswana's economic and human development success to the nature of the country's ethnic relations. He notes that starting in the days of independence, Botswana had very little ethnic tension, and the focus has been more on national awareness than tribal consciousness. However, Mulinge noted that this might be changing.

Governance is another area where Botswana differs from the average sub-Saharan African country. Governance has been defined as the exercise of political authority, managing society's

affairs, and the process of decision-making and implementing those decisions at all levels of government (United Nations Development Programme, 1997; Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 1995; Sheng, 2012). Gisselquist (2012) said good governance was a "catchy shorthanded way" to discuss political and economic institutions' functioning and outcomes. Of late, there has been much talk about "good governance," and good governance" in Botswana" is thought to be a contributing factor to its economic growth (Lewin, 2011).

Botswana has made considerable progress in human development in the 50-plus years since its independence, going from an impoverished, low-income country to an upper-middle-income country with the aspiration of becoming a high-income country (The World Bank, 2023). Sebudubudu (2010) noted that good governance in Botswana has resulted in policies favorable to people experiencing poverty and programs that educated, improved health, and created progressive social structures that enhanced the overall capabilities of the population. He noted that democratic governance has been responsive to the entire population's needs, and good governance has resulted in wise use of the nation's natural resources. However, Leftwich (1994) asserted that development may have resulted from politics, not good governance. Thus, he felt that a determined and robust state with a powerful and competent bureaucracy influenced Botswana's human development.

Hope (2000) claims that Botswana's economic and human development success could be attributed to the nation's commitment to decentralization and the notion of local governance, and according to Hope, decentralization and local governance had been more far-reaching and impactful in Botswana than "any other African country" in the post-independence era. Decentralization has resulted in local authorities significantly influencing personnel administration, budgeting, and capable chief executives' appointments. Ghebremusse (2018) credited Botswana's success to its abundant mineral wealth and how the nation has managed those revenues. Niemann

(1993) explained that Botswana's domestic success resulted from its foreign policy stance in Southern Africa. He maintained that Botswana's past foreign policy consisted of avoiding actions that legitimized White minority rule and not taking steps to give South Africa a pretext for intervening in the nation's affairs.

Niemann also attributed Botswana's stability to its elite or petty-bourgeois and governing class. He noted that the social classes' bureaucratic function has increased since independence. The bureaucratic class's behavior has given them much control over social resources and other state benefits, thus raising concerns about the role of class in Botswana politics in the future.

Finally, economic and human development status in Botswana has been attributed to its media's cutting-edge democratizing role. Zaffire (1993) noted that the media in Botswana was uniquely positioned among sub-Saharan African nations to effectively pressure the government to maintain an atmosphere of openness and democracy.

This paper posits that in addition to good governance, solid institutional performance, democratic traditions, trust, sound policies, and good ethnic relations, the people of Botswana's attitudes and perceptions are contributing factors to the nation's economic and political status when compared to populations in other sub-Saharan African countries. Additionally, because of Botswana's history and governance patterns, the people's attitudes and perceptions would be significantly more supportive of the political system and institutional decision-making than populations in other nations. Thus, the views and opinions of Botswana contribute to explaining differences in the nation's economic and human development status, and their opinions are often quite different from populations in the average sub-Saharan African country.

### III. METHODS

The Afrobarometer Survey Round 8 Merged data, which included 34 countries, was the data source for this study. The data for Round 8 was collected between 2019 and 2021. Afro-barometer conducted face-to-face interviews with national

probability samples that generated a cross-section of voting-age citizens (18 and older) in thirty-four countries. A random selection method is used at every stage, producing a probability proportionate to the population size. The sample design included 1,200 or 2,400 cases with a sampling margin of error of +/-2.8 percentage points or +/-2 percentage points (Afrobarometer, 2023).

Geographically, fifty-four countries make up the continent of Africa. These African nations are usually divided into five geopolitical regions. Northern Africa, which is above the Saharan Desert, includes the countries of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia, and today is considered Arabic and culturally and politically different from those countries south of the desert. The four regions below the Saharan Desert are called sub-Saharan Africa or Black Africa: Central Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa. Because this study focused on the nations of sub-Saharan Africa, the respondents from the two North African countries sampled in the Afrobarometer 2022 merged dataset, Morocco and Tunisia, were excluded from the analysis. Of the sub-Saharan African nations, there were no respondents in the study from Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritania, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Somalia, and South Sudan.

The remaining nations of sub-Saharan Africa were further divided into three groups based on the World Bank Analytical Classification. Respondents from Botswana made up a fourth group. The three economic groups based on the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita were identified as upper-middle income, lower-middle income, and lower-income economies. The nations in the low-income economies had a GNI per capita of less than \$1,135 in 2021. The nations in the lower-middle income economies group have a GNI per capita between \$1,136 and \$4,465, and those in the upper-middle income economies group had a GNI per capita between \$4,466 and \$13,845. The Seychelles is the only sub-Saharan African nation with an economy in the

high-income category, but no Seychelles respondents were included in the study in 2021.

According to the World Bank Analytical Classifications, 46.9 percent of the sub-Saharan nations in the study were classified as low-income, 38.8 percent as lower-middle-income, and 12.5 percent as upper-middle-income nations (see Appendix 1).

It was felt that, like Botswana, the attitudes and perceptions of respondents from the more developed nations would be more impactful as an influencer of economic and human development than those from lesser developed nations. They were expected to be better educated, more urban, and more politically aware. However, it was also felt there was a uniqueness about Botswana's people that made their attitudes and perceptions different from the other developed sub-Saharan African nations. Because it is theorized that attitudes and perceptions of the nation's population could influence economic and human development, several variables covering the government's job handling select problems, the national and personal economic conditions, the functioning of democracy and the electoral system, and perceptions of trust and corruption in the nation were chosen for analysis.

The test hypothesis is that there is no difference in the proportional response of Botswana and those of individuals in either upper-middle-income, lower-middle-income, or lower-income economies. Independent-sample proportional mean tests were examined to test the hypothesis. The independent-sample proportions test provides significance and confidence intervals for differences in two independent binomial proportions (IBM, SPSS Statistics, 2030). The Wald test was used to determine if a set of independent variables were proportionally different at the .05 level (Analytica Datalab, 2021). The variables were also factor analyzed to reduce the variables into clusters that shared a common theme. Finally, variables were created and saved using the factor analysis procedure, and a model of the factors influencing perceptions of a country's overall direction was considered. Binary logistic regression predicted the variables

influencing positive perceptions of the country's direction.

#### IV. FINDINGS

Respondents were asked to identify what they thought was the most important problem facing their nation. These problems were divided into ten areas: the economy, financial and income, unemployment, poverty, infrastructure, farming/land/agriculture, education, health and human services, crime, and political matters. The catchall category was other/miscellaneous.

The top five problems identified by the respondents were consistent across the

groupings: unemployment, poverty, infrastructure, education, and political issues. As shown in Table 1, problems related to unemployment and infrastructure were the two most frequently identified. Poverty would be the third, followed by human services, crime, education, and political issues. There were two data patterns when identifying the nation's most important problem that was noteworthy. The average proportion of the population choosing unemployment and finance/income got smaller as you went across country classification groups. However, the pattern was reversed among those identifying the economy, infrastructure, education, and human services as the most important.

*Table 1: Most Important Problem Facing Your Nation*

	Botswana	Upper Middle-Class Countries	Lower Middle-Class Countries	Lower Class Countries
Economy	2.5	4.1	5.6	8.5
Financial/Income	5.2	2.2	3.7	2.6
Unemployment	44.5	31.0	16.7	6.3
Poverty	10.9	6.3	9.7	15.7
Infrastructure	7.3	19.1	24.6	27.6
Farming/Land/Agriculture	4.1	4.9	4.2	4.1
Education	4.1	7.0	7.6	8.0
Health/Human Services	5.3	5.0	9.8	10.3
Crime	4.4	9.7	6.6	8.4
Political	6.1	7.5	7.3	5.4
Other/Miscellaneous	6.0	3.1	4.3	3.1

There was little consistency across country classification grouping regarding perceptions of the nation's most important problem. The largest proportion of Botswana (44.5 percent) and the respondents from upper-middle-class countries (31.0 percent) identified unemployment as the most important problem facing their nation. At 6.3 percent, unemployment was not even among the top five problems identified by respondents in low-income countries. Concerns over unemployment were slightly higher in lower-middle-income countries at 16.7 percent. However, unemployment was only the second highest proportion of respondents in the lower-middle-income countries. Among the

lower-income countries, infrastructure was the problem identified by the largest percentage. On average, twenty-seven-point-six percent of the respondents in the lower-income countries felt that issues like transportation, roads, housing, electricity, the water supply, and communication were among their country's most important problems.

An equally large percentage of respondents from the lower-middle-class countries identified infrastructure as the most important problem facing their nation (24.6 percent). However, only 7.3 percent of the respondents from Botswana felt the same, almost twelve percentage points lower than the respondents from the other

upper-middle-class countries. In comparison, the second-highest percentage (10.9 percent) of Botswana identified poverty as the nation's most important problem. Less than sixteen percent of the respondents from the other three country classification groups felt that poverty was an important issue. Less than 10 percent of the respondents in any grouping said that health and human services were the most important problems. When it came to issues pertaining to education and matters of political governance, the percentage in all three country classification groups ranged from four to eight percent.

#### V. THE JOB THE GOVERNMENT IS DOING HANDLING ISSUES FACING THE NATION

This section of the study analyzed perceptions of the government's job handling of concerns in four areas: 1) political and safety, 2) human services, 3) improving the nation's infrastructure, and 4) handling economic conditions. The socio-political issues concerned conditions and behaviors related to safety and security. Human services were concerned with issues important to human growth and well-being while improving infrastructure is key to community development and building capacity. The final group of questions involved the government's handling of economic conditions related to improvements in quality of life.

Respondents from Botswana were significantly less concerned about their government's handling of political and safety matters, human services, the nation's infrastructure, and the economy when compared to respondents from the other country classification groups. As shown in Table 2, on average, 72.6 percent of Botswana perceived their government was doing a respectable job managing the select political and safety concerns compared to only 29.1 percent of respondents from upper-middle-income countries, 44.6 percent of those from lower-middle income countries, and 38.1 percent of those from lower-income nations.

Seventy percent or more of Botswana felt their government was doing a respectable job handling crime, and 88.5 percent felt the government was doing a good job preventing violent conflict. However, the percentage of Botswana who felt the government was doing a good job preventing and resolving violent conflict differed significantly from those who felt the government was doing a good job handling crime and fighting corruption. The percentage of Botswana who felt the government was doing a good job controlling violent conflict was almost thirty percentage points higher than those who felt the government was doing a good job handling corruption and nearly twenty percentage points higher than those who thought it was doing a good job managing crime.

*Table 2:* Proportion of the population that expressed positive feelings about the job their government was handling

	Botswana	Upper-Middle-Income Countries	Lower Middle-Income Countries	Low- Income Countries
Political and Safety concerns				
The government is doing a good job of handling crime	69.9	24.7***	45.0***	39.8***
The government is doing a good job of preventing/resolving violent conflict	88.5	36.8***	52.1***	44.7***
The government is doing a good job-fighting corruption	59.3	22.7***	36.6***	29.9***
Human Services				
The government is doing a good job of addressing educational needs	74.4	41.5***	50.5***	43.9***

The government is doing a good job of improving basic health services	68.4	42.3***	49.0***	40.8***
Infrastructure concerns				
The government is doing a good job protecting rights and promoting opportunities for the disabled	85.1	49.0***	47.5***	38.7***
The government is doing a good job of providing water and sanitation services	64.5	35.6***	43.3***	37.3***
The government is doing a good job maintaining roads and bridges	60.1	40.1***	46.4***	39.7***
The government is doing a good job of providing a reliable electric supply	78.9	49.2***	50.1***	36.8***
Economic concerns				
The government is doing a good job managing the economy	67.2	25.9***	36.4***	31.8***
The government is doing a good job of creating jobs	33.2	14.0***	22.8***	22.6***
The government is doing a good job of addressing the needs of young people	56.6	26.4***	29.1***	27.6***
The government is doing a good job improving the living standards of the poor	68.9	22.1***	27.9***	24.7***
The government is doing a good job of keeping prices stable	54.1	18.9***	24.7***	20.0***
The government is doing a good job of narrowing income gaps	39.4	13.7***	22.0***	19.0***

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$  HO: Botswana respondents differed significantly from respondents from the respective groups. Probability of significance is based on Independent Samples Proportions Tests, Wald HO test.

Support for the government's handling of the select human service programs averaged around 71.4 percent for Botswana. That percentage was significantly higher than for respondents in the other classification groups. It was more than twenty points higher than it was for respondents from lower-middle-income countries and almost thirty percentage points higher than those from upper-middle and low-income countries. Well over two-thirds of Botswana felt the government was doing a good job addressing educational needs and improving basic health care. That was compared to less than half of the populations in the other country classification groups. Generally, a higher percentage of sub-Saharan African populations felt their governments were doing a better job addressing educational needs than improving basic health services. The response difference within the respective country classification groups on the human services issues was less than two percent, while it was around six

percent among Botswana. This spread suggests more variation among the respondents from Botswana.

This pattern of Botswana responses differing significantly from respondents in the other three groups prevailed on questions regarding the government's handling of infrastructure concerns. The respondents from Botswana were substantially more optimistic about their government's handling of issues about the nation's infrastructure than respondents from other sub-Saharan African nations. For example, on average, 72.1 percent of Botswana had positive feelings about their government's handling of infrastructure concerns compared to 43.5 percent of those from other upper-middle-income countries, 46.8 percent of those from lower-middle-income countries, and 38.1 percent of those from lower-income countries. As high as 78.9 percent of Botswana felt the government was

doing a decent job providing a reliable electric supply, compared to less than 50 percent of the respondents in the other country classification groupings. The proportional differences between upper-middle-income and lower-middle-income countries respondents did not significantly differ regarding perceptions of their nation's ability to provide a reliable electric supply. However, the average low-income country respondents differed significantly from upper and lower-middle-income populations. Over one-third of the respondents in upper-middle-income, lower-middle-income, and lower-income countries felt their governments were doing a respectable job handling water and sanitation and maintaining sanitation services. The closest the collective responses of the other three groups came to 50 percent was on the question of their government promoting opportunities for people with disabilities, and that was 35 percentage points lower than Botswana.

Regarding the government's handling of economic concerns, the respondents from Botswana differed significantly from those in the other groups. For example, on the select variables, on average, 53.2 percent of Botswana felt the government was doing a good job handling the nation's economic concerns compared to 20.2 percent of the respondents in the upper-middle income countries, 27.1 percent in the lower-middle-income countries, and 24.2 percent of the respondents in the low-income countries.

More than fifty percent of the respondents from Botswana felt the government was doing a good job managing the economy (67.2 percent),

improving the living standards of the poor (68.9 percent), addressing the needs of the people (56.6 percent), and doing a good job keeping prices stable (54.1 percent). In comparison, slightly more than twenty-five percent of the respondents in the other three groups felt their nation's government was doing a good job managing the economy or addressing the needs of the young people. In the other three groups, on average, 31.4 percent of the respondents felt the government was doing a good job managing the economy, 27.7 percent felt the government was doing a good job addressing the needs of young people, and 24.9 percent felt the government was doing a good job improving the living standards of the poor.

## VI. PERCEPTIONS OF THE NATION'S AND PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE

Table 3 examines the perceptions of Botswana relative to respondents from upper-middle-income, lower-middle-income, and low-income countries on the direction they felt their nations were going. Among the respondents from Botswana, 40 percent felt their country was going in the right direction. The percentage holding this perception did not differ significantly from the respondents in the lower-middle-income and low-income samples. However, the proportion of Botswana saying their nation was going in the right direction differed from those in other upper-middle-income countries. The difference in the percentage of Botswana stating their country was going in the right direction was sixteen percentage points higher than populations in the other upper-middle-income countries. The key takeaway is that most sub-Saharan Africans felt their country was going in the wrong direction.

*Table 3:* Perceptions of the nation's economic conditions relative to personal economic conditions Percent

	Botswana	Upper-Middle-Income Countries	Lower Middle-Income Countries	Low-Income Countries
Direction of Country				
Going in the right direction	39.7	23.6***	39.4 <sup>ns</sup>	38.2 <sup>ns</sup>

Nation's Economic Conditions				
The country's present economic condition is good or the same	61.0	30.3***	39.9***	37.1***
The country's economic condition is better or the same compared to 12 months ago	64.2	38.8***	46.3***	45.7***
The country's economic conditions will be better or the same in 12 months	77.2	51.1***	68.9***	68.9***
Personal Economic Environment				
Your present living conditions are good	43.4	59.1***	49.1***	45.5 <sup>ns</sup>
Personal Economic Conditions				
Rarely gone without food	75.0	68.0***	61.1***	56.9***
Rarely gone without cash	64.0	49.1***	28.3***	24.2***

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$  HO: Botswana respondents differed significantly from respondents from the respective groups. Probability of significance is based on Independent Samples Proportions Tests, Wald HO test

The table also indicates differences in perceptions of Botswana and respondents from other regions regarding their nation's economic conditions. For example, on average, 67.5 percent of the respondents from Botswana had a positive perception of the nation's economic conditions, compared to only 40.1 percent of the respondents from the other upper-middle-income nations. That figure among the respondents from the lower-middle-income and lower-income countries averaged around 50 percent. Thus, the average difference in the perceptions of Botswana and respondents from other sub-Saharan African populations regarding their nation's economic conditions was as high as 27 percent for those respondents in other middle-income countries and as low as 17 percent for those from lower-middle-income and lower-income countries.

There was an optimistic outlook among sub-Saharan Africans across the continent in general. More than 70 percent of Botswana felt their country's economic conditions would improve or stay the same in the next 12 months. However, among respondents from other upper-middle-income countries, that percentage fell to 51.1, while it averaged around 69 percent for respondents from lower-middle-income and lower-income sub-Saharan nations. When it came to perceptions about the present economic conditions of their nations, a significantly higher proportion of Botswana felt their country's

economic conditions were good compared to the other groups. Surprisingly, a larger percentage of the respondents from lower-middle-income and low-income countries felt the nation's economic conditions were good relative to those in upper-middle-income countries. These patterns prevailed when respondents were asked if their country's economic conditions were better or the same compared to 12 months ago.

A significantly larger percentage of the respondents from Botswana were concerned about their personal economic environment compared to respondents from upper-middle-income and lower-income countries. Only 43.5 percent of Botswana felt the present living conditions were good compared to 59.1 percent of the sub-Saharan African respondents from other upper-middle-income and 49.1 percent of those from lower-middle-income countries. The percentage of Botswana describing their living conditions as good did not differ significantly from those respondents living in lower-income countries (45.5). There were two additional measures of personal economic conditions examined. One asked how often you go without food, and the other how often you go with cash. The percentage of Botswana saying they rarely go without food or cash was significantly higher than that of the other three groups. On average, 69.5 percent of the respondents from Botswana said they rarely went without food or cash. Among the

respondents from other upper-middle-income nations, 58.5 percent said they rarely went without food or cash, 44.7 percent of those from lower-middle-income countries, and 40.5 percent from lower-income countries took this position.

### VII. PERCEPTIONS OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND DEMOCRACY IN THEIR SOCIETY

Views of the functioning of the political system are an important part of good governance and society's overall well-being. Again, the actions and perceptions of Batswana differed significantly from populations in other parts of the sub-continent, but in a surprising way. For example, the percentage of Batswana voting in the most recent national election did not differ significantly from populations in middle-income countries. In both cases, around 71.5 percent of the respondents in Botswana and the

middle-income countries said they voted in the most recent election. The percentage of Batswana that voted in the recent election differed significantly from the respondents in other upper-middle and low-income countries, and the proportional difference was around four points in favor of the respondents from the upper-middle and low-income countries.

Similarly, there were significant differences in the percentage of Batswana who discussed politics relative to the population in the other three groups. A larger percentage of the respondents in the other three groups said they discussed politics more frequently or occasionally than those from Botswana. Seventy-seven percent of Batswana said they discussed politics frequently or occasionally compared to, on average, 80.6 percent of the respondents from the other groups.

*Table 4:* Comparing individual involvement and perceptions of the functioning of the electoral system and the democracy in their country Percent

	Botswana	Upper-Middle-Income Countries	Middle-Income Countries	Low-Income Countries
Individual participation				
Frequently or occasionally discuss politics	77.2	81.0**	80.0*	80.8**
Voted in the most recent national election	72.2	68.3**	71.0 <sup>ns</sup>	76.4*
Perception of the Democracy				
Less national elections were, at minimum, free and fair	91.8	63.0***	71.0***	67.3***
Democracy is preferable to other kinds of government	72.1	62.3***	72.5 <sup>ns</sup>	70.2*
It is a democracy with a few minor problems	70.0	40.2***	44.3***	39.8***
Satisfied with the democracy in my country	59.6	37.0***	42.9***	41.7***

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$  HO: Botswana respondents differed significantly from respondents from the respective groups. Probability of significance is based on Independent Samples Proportions Tests, Wald HO test

The percentage of Africans who say, "Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government" has declined from a decade ago (Gyimah-Boada & Asunka, 2021). Nevertheless, the perceptions of

Batswana regarding democracy were significantly more favorable than those of other African populations. For example, as shown in Table 4, on average, 72.6 percent of the respondents from

Botswana gave a positive response regarding democracy, compared to 50.6 percent of those from other upper-middle-income countries, 57.7 percent from lower-middle-income nations, and 54.9 percent from low-income countries. The only question where the percentage of Botswana differed only moderately from the three other country classification groups was their preference for democracy over types of governments. As shown in Table 4, the percentage difference between Botswana and the respondents from the middle-income countries was not statistically significant at the .05 level. The percentage difference between Botswana and the low-income countries was roughly two percent but statistically significant at the .05 level. However, 72.1 percent of the Botswana respondents preferred democracy compared to 62.3 percent of the respondents from the other upper-middle-income countries. Otherwise, the percentage of Botswana noting that their country was, at minimum, a democracy with a few minor problems was at least twenty-five percentage points higher than the percentage of the respondents from the other three groups. Botswana was the only group where greater than fifty percent (59.6 percent) of the respondents said they were satisfied with the democracy in their county. Finally, there was, at minimum, a twenty percentage point difference

between the percentage of Botswana and those from the other three country classifications that felt their national elections were free and fair. More than ninety percent of Botswana were in this response category.

### VIII. PERCEPTIONS OF TRUST AND CORRUPTION IN GOVERNMENT

Table 5 focuses on two factors that could impact economic and human development in sub-Saharan Africa regarding governing and good governance. The government's success depends heavily on the people's trust in individual political actors and institutions and the citizenry's perceptions of good governance. Botswana was significantly more trusting in their leaders than populations from other nations throughout the subcontinent. For example, on average, 58.2 percent of Botswana said they had somewhat or lots of trust in their leadership. Among the respondents from other upper-middle-income nations, only 44.2 percent, on average, had either somewhat or lots of trust for their leadership. The average percentage of trust in leadership did not differ significantly among the respondents from the lower-middle (54.8 percent) and lower-income (56.7 percent) nations, nor between Botswana and the low-income group.

*Table 5:* Perceptions of trust and corruption among leaders and leadership institutions Percent

	Botswana	Upper-Middle-Income Countries	Lower Middle-Income Countries	Low-Income Countries
Trust				
Somewhat or lots of trust in the Office of the President	51.8	41.9***	53.1 <sup>ns</sup>	53.3 <sup>ns</sup>
Somewhat or lots of trust in the parliament/national legislature	43.5	34.6***	42.9 <sup>ns</sup>	45.0 <sup>ns</sup>
Somewhat or lots of trust in the courts of law	70.4	49.1***	53.3***	49.6***
Somewhat or lots of trust in Traditional Leaders	73.3	49.4***	63.3***	68.7***
Somewhat or lots of trust in Religious Leaders	60.1	56.0***	70.6***	76.3***

Somewhat or lots of trust in local government councils	50.1	34.2***	45.9***	47.8 <sup>ns</sup>
Corruption				
Some or no corruption in the Office of the Presidency	58.8	52.5***	62.7*	59.0 <sup>ns</sup>
Some or no corruption in the parliament/national legislature	62.7	53.8***	59.6**	57.1***
Some or no corruption among civil servants	63.6	63.5 <sup>ns</sup>	61.2 <sup>ns</sup>	58.3***
Some or no corruption among judges and magistrates	79.3	64.4***	62.8***	55.3***
Some or no corruption in local government councils	75.8	61.1***	65.7***	62.0***
Some or no corruption in the Traditional Leaders	85.6	70.2***	78.1***	78.1***
Some or no corruption in the Religious Leaders	77.3	75.0 <sup>ns</sup>	82.1***	84.2***

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$  HO: Botswana respondents differed significantly from respondents from the respective groups. Probability of significance is based on Independent Samples Proportions Tests, Wald HO test

When we examined trust in the Office of the President, the data showed a significantly larger proportion of Botswana expressing either somewhat or lots of trust in the Office of the President than the respondents from the other upper-middle-income countries. However, there was no significant difference between the proportion of Botswana and the percentage of respondents from the lower-middle and lower-income classification groups. This pattern held regarding trust in the parliament/national legislatures as well. The data did reveal that in sub-Saharan Africa, in general, a larger percentage of the population was more trusting in the Office of the President than in the parliament/national legislature. The other measure of trust where the response of Botswana differed significantly from the respondents in the other upper and lower-middle-income country groups was regarding local councils. Botswana was more trusting of local councils in this case. However, the percentage of the respondents from Botswana and those from lower-income countries was 50.1 and 47.8 percent, respectively, but not statistically significant. Botswana was significantly more trusting of the courts of law and traditional leaders than respondents in the other three groups. Conversely, Botswana was significantly

less trusting of religious leaders than respondents from lower- and lower-income nations but more trusting than those from upper-middle-income nations.

Corruption was also examined as a measure of good governance. Botswana was more inclined to perceive that corruption is not a major problem in their country than populations from other sub-Saharan African nations. As shown in Table 5, respondents were asked about the level of corruption in the Office of the President, the national legislature, civil servants, judges and magistrates, local government councils, traditional leaders, and religious leaders. On average, and across the seven questions, 71.9 percent of the respondents from Botswana were inclined to say there was some or no corruption in their nation. This difference was almost ten percentage points higher than respondents from the other upper-middle-income nations. The percentage difference between the respondents from Botswana and those from the low-income countries was around eight percent. The difference was five percent greater for Botswana than the lower-middle-income respondents.

Only the respondents from the low-income countries did not differ significantly from Botswana on corruption in the Office of the President. Nearly 60 percent of respondents in both groups said there was not much corruption in the Office of the President. Respondents from other upper-middle-income countries were significantly less likely than Botswana to feel corruption in the Office of the President. In contrast, those in lower-middle-income countries were significantly more likely to perceive corruption. Likewise, the difference between Botswana and the respondents in the upper-middle and lower-middle-income countries did not differ in their perception of corruption among civil servants. The percentage of all three groups indicating that there was not much corruption among civil servants exceeded 60 percent. The difference in the percentage of Botswana and those in the other upper-middle-income countries perceiving corruption among religious leaders was insignificant. In both cases, the percentage with this perception of little or no corruption among religious leaders was around 75 percent. In comparison, it exceeded 82 percent for the respondents from the lower-middle-income and those in the low-income groups. When it came to perceptions of corruption being minimal regarding judges and magistrates, local government councils, and traditional leaders, the percentage of Botswana

with this view was at least 15 percentage points higher than the respondents in the other three groups.

## IX. EXPLAINING BOTSWANA SUCCESS

Table 6 examines the factors influencing sub-Saharan Africans' positive perceptions of their country's overall direction. Respondents felt their country was either going in the "right" or "wrong" direction. A dummy variable was created with "right direction" being coded one (1) and "wrong direction" coded zero (0). All of the variables in the previous sections were factor-analyzed to create a set of independent variables. Altogether, thirteen independent variables were created. These thirteen variables fell into five categories. The first category was the "government handling of" select issues (i.e., economic concerns, infrastructure, political concerns, and human development). The second category is related to economic conditions (i.e., the nation's economic environment and personal economic well-being). The third category is related to democracy (i.e., perceptions of democracy and individual participation). The fourth category was about trust in the leaders and institutions and likewise was the fifth category. A dummy variable was created for respondents from Botswana and used as an additional control variable.

*Table 6:* Factors influencing positive perceptions of the overall direction of the country

	$\beta$ (sig) (S.E.)	Exp (B)
The government handling economic concerns regarding the nation	.405*** (.023)	1.499
The government handling infrastructure-related concerns	.163*** (.023)	1.177
The government handling political concerns	.304*** (.023)	1.355
The government handling human development concerns	.167*** (.023)	1.182
Nation's economic condition	.890*** (.027)	2.436
Personal economic well-being	-.170 (.024)	.0844
Your present living conditions	.276*** (.047)	1.318

Perceptions of democracy as a political system	.272*** (.038)	1.313
Individual participation	-.007 (.023)	.993
Trust in political institutions and leadership groups	1.281*** (.262)	3.599
Trust in legislative bodies	.226*** (.029)	1.253
Corruption in political institutions and leadership groups	-.008 (.254)	.992
Corruption in legislative bodies	-1.044*** (.254)	.352
Live in Botswana	-.642*** (.097)	.526
Nagelkerke R	.404	
Constant	-.838	

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$  Significance based on Wald

These variables explained .404 percent of the optimism variation about the country's path. Living in Botswana was a significant indicator in the model, but not in a positive way.

The data suggested that living in Botswana could be associated with a .642 decline in having a positive perception of the country's overall direction and only a fifty-two percent chance that you felt the country was going in the right direction. This finding suggests that living in Botswana does not guarantee that one is happy with the country's direction.

The finding suggests that the likelihood of having positive perceptions of the country's direction was increased with positive perceptions of the government's handling of the select issues. For example, a positive perception of the government's handling of economic concerns was associated with a one-and-a-half times greater chance that you felt the country was moving in the right direction. A positive increase in one's perceptions of the government's handling of the country's economic concerns was also linked to a significant increase (.405) in feelings that the country was moving in the right direction. The government's handling of political concerns (i.e., crime, violent conflict, fighting corruption) was also noteworthy when it came to having a positive perception that the country was moving in the

right direction. Individuals with a positive perception of the government's handling of political matters were 1.35 times more likely to feel that the country was moving in the right direction. A respondent's favorable position on the government's handling of political matters was associated with a .304 increase in the dependent variable. While increases in perception of governmental handling of infrastructure and human development significantly contributed to increases in perceptions of the country's general direction, their impact on the perceptions that the country was moving in the right direction was negligible. Nevertheless, a person with a more positive perception of the government's handling of infrastructure and human development was one times more likely to have a positive perception of the country's direction than a person with a negative perception.

As a cluster of variables, the nation's current economic condition was the strongest indicator of confidence in the country's direction. A positive increase in the respondent's perception of the nation's economic conditions was associated with a .890 change in the perception that the country was headed in the right direction. Those with a positive perception of the nation's economy were two-and-a-half times more likely to think the country was moving in the right direction. Perceptions of one's economic environment were

not a significant factor influencing perceptions of the country's overall direction. On the other hand, feelings about one's economic conditions were a factor, but not to the same extent as perceptions of the nation's economic conditions. Respondents with a more positive perception of their living conditions were one point seven times more likely to feel the country was moving in the right direction. A one-unit increase in perception of present living conditions was associated with only a .276 increase in the perception of the nation's overall direction.

While good governance appeared to influence perceptions of the country's overall direction in sub-Saharan Africa, the influence of democracy as a political system and interests in politics was minimal in the larger picture. Individual participation in politics had no significant bearing on the overall perceptions of the country's direction. Regarding perceptions of democracy as a political system, perceptions of the country's direction were positive and significant. A respondent with a more positive perception of democracy as a form of government was one point three times more likely to have a positive perception of the country's overall direction. An increase in positive perceptions of democracy represented a .272 increase in the overall positive perceptions of the country's direction.

Regarding governance, trust was a stronger factor influencing perceptions of the country's direction than corruption among sub-Saharan Africans. Perceptions of corruption in political institutions and leadership had no significant bearing on perceptions of the country's overall direction. Such was not the case regarding trust in political institutions and leadership groups. Those with greater trust in political institutions and leadership groups were 3.6 times more likely to perceive the country's overall direction positively. Increased trust in legislative bodies was associated with a .226 increase in positive perception of the country's direction.

Furthermore, those respondents were 1.2 times more likely to think the country was moving in the right direction.

## X. DISCUSSION

As hypothesized, Botswana differed significantly from respondents in the other country classification groups in what they perceived as the nation's most important problem.

Surprisingly, this included those respondents in other upper-middle-income countries too. Unemployment was a huge issue for Botswana to the extent that it was thirteen percentage points higher than respondents in the other upper middle-income groups and nearly thirty points higher than those from other sub-Saharan African nations. Despite its high middle-income ranking, job creation in Botswana has lagged behind other nations, and inequality remains a major problem (World Bank, 2023). Like other nations in sub-Saharan, Botswana has a huge and unprecedented youth unemployment problem that more effective programs are needed to address (Nahomang & Diraditsile, 2016). Among the lower-middle-income and lower-income nations, infrastructure was the most important problem facing the nation.

The findings also showed Botswana as politically more satisfied when compared to other populations in sub-Saharan Africa. On one hand, the results suggest that Botswana was politically attentive in that they discussed politics at an extremely high rate. However, this attentiveness was not significantly different from populations in other sub-Saharan African nations. On the other hand, Botswana did not appear to be as politically aggressive as populations from other nations. The people of Botswana seem to have no problem deferring decision-making to society's formal and informal institutions. The findings showed Botswana's trust in their leadership to be significantly greater than populations in other sub-Saharan African nations, especially regarding the courts of law and traditional leaders. This pattern of trust was supported by the perception of a lack of corruption among the leaders that were politically closest to them relative to other sub-Saharan African populations. Consequently, one must consider that this enhanced trust and lack of perceptions of corruption affords political decision-makers in Botswana more freedom when governing.

The findings also showed that Botswana is more likely than populations in other sub-Saharan African nations to have positive feelings about their government's handling of crucial societal concerns. Over two-thirds of Botswana felt the government was doing a respectable job of handling political and safety concerns, human services, and matters regarding infrastructure. The difference in perceptions on these matters ranged from 26.8 to 35.4 percent. On average, the percentage of Botswana felt the government was doing a good job handling political and safety-related matters was 72.6 compared to 37.2 percent. The difference between Botswana and other respondents from sub-Saharan Africa regarding matters related to human services was 26.8 percent. On the human services question, on average, 71.4 percent of Botswana felt the government handling of human services was good compared to 44.6 percent of populations in the other sub-Saharan African nations. Both Botswana and populations in other sub-Saharan African nations found the job their government was doing handling matters related to infrastructure as important. However, the percentage difference between Botswana and the other respondents from sub-Saharan Africa was 29.3 percent. In other words, Botswana felt safe in the local and national environments. Compared to populations in other sub-Saharan African nations, they also felt their government was adequately taking care of their human service and the country's infrastructure problems.

Botswana were more satisfied with the role that democracy played in their nation.

Democracy was the preferable form of government for their nation. They felt the nation was functioning well as a "democracy" and liked how it worked. This perception was less the case in other sub-Saharan African nations. Also, Botswana people were more confident in their electoral system than populations in other African nations, which could be another factor driving the nation's economic and human development status relative to other sub-Saharan African nations. One could posit that governance and representative democracy in Botswana function from an inside/out perspective or consider a

state-centric relational approach. Bell and Hindmoor (2009) describe the state-centric approach as the government, its administrative agencies, and other public bodies being the central players in the governing process. They would suggest that Botswana's political apparatus has been satisfactorily adopting a range of governing strategies, selecting policy goals, and making policy decisions that satisfy the needs of the people of Botswana. Thus, Botswana's political and state apparatus are the central actors in governance, creating and orchestrating policies and practices that influence the population's behavior and put the population at ease. Thus, the patron-oriented nature of Botswana influences the attitudes and perceptions of Botswana and encourages the population to put the nation's well-being ahead of personal well-being.

This paper considered what made Botswana stand out from other sub-Saharan African nations regarding the country's and individual's personal economic well-being and development. The literature suggested Botswana's political history, absence of ethnic conflict, good economy, richness of material resources, and above-average governance practices were among the factors that set Botswana apart from most sub-Saharan African nations. It also suggested that Botswana was different because the government was the economy's primary driver, and Botswana depended heavily on the government for their livelihood. Therefore, if the government continues to do a decent job managing the economy and the nation's natural resources, anti-government and political tensions among the population aimed at the government will be minimized. This point is also significant because its findings suggest that Botswana emphasizes the nation's well-being over individual well-being. In other words, as long as they have faith in the nation's well-being, they have faith in potential improvements in their well-being. The results show that this is not the case among populations in other sub-Saharan African countries. Other sub-Saharan African populations measured their well-being not by the nation's economic health but personal economic conditions.

## XI. CONCLUSION

This paper's findings indicate that the political attitudes and perceptions of the people in sub-Saharan Africa should not be ignored as a factor influencing economic and human development success. It suggested that optimism among Batswana about their nation's economic future, the role of democracy, and trust in its leadership is an asset to governance and economic development. Furthermore, more research is needed to examine the state's role as an influencer and originator of policy agendas rather than waiting for such agendas to emerge from political forces and external mobilization. Also, research examining what makes individuals place "national interests" (or national well-being) ahead of "personal interests" (or individual well-being) could assist in the achievement of initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

Support for the national interests over individual interests seems to have been a stable force in Botswana over the years. One could argue that rallying around the collective national interests is crucial to government and other institutions in sub-Saharan Africa. Accordingly, the people of Botswana have embraced democracy significantly more than populations in other sub-Saharan African nations. Therefore, further study of democracy in Botswana relative to other sub-Saharan African nations is warranted. In short, future studies should examine the connection between the political and socializing dynamics of the state and its influence on the positive attributes of governance and human development in other prosperous nations such as Botswana.

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## APPENDIX ONE

### World Bank Analytical Classification: 2021

Higher-income Economies (\$13,846 OR MORE)	Upper-Middle-Income Economies (\$4,466 - \$13,845)	Lower-Middle Income Economies (\$1,136 TO \$4,465)	Low-Income Economies (\$1,135 OR LESS)
*Seychelles	Botswana	Angola	Burkina Faso
	*Equatorial Guinea	Benin	*Burundi
	Gabon	Cameroon	*Central African Republic
	Mauritius	Cape Verde	*Chad
	Namibia	*Comoros	*Democratic Republic of Congo
	South Africa	*Congo, Rep.	*Eritrea
		Côte d'Ivoire	Ethiopia
		*Djibouti	Gambia
		Eswatini	Guinea
		Ghana	*Guinea-Bissau
		Kenya	*Madagascar
		Lesotho	Liberia
		*Mauritania	Malawi
		Nigeria	Mali
		*São Tomé and Príncipe	Mozambique
		Senegal	Niger
		Tanzania	*Rwanda
		Zambia	Sierra Leone
		Zimbabwe	*Somalia
			*South Sudan
			Sudan
			Togo
			Uganda

*\*Country not included in the 2022 Afrobarometer Studies*

Source: <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/world-banks-income-groups?tab=table>

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# Coloniality of the Medical History of Infectious Diseases in Rural Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

Infectious diseases such as smallpox, tuberculosis and leprosy have all invaded rural Nigeria at periods when colonial hegemony assumes supremacy over indigenous knowledge systems. The most recent infectious disease, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), spread within an interconnected world in manners that exposed the false assumption that the global North has all the expertise and solutions to salvage devastating health, economic and social impacts of infectious diseases. Adopting a historical research approach which engaged archival records and intergenerational dialogues in Esham, Ekporinya (Ekajuk Kingdom); Egbe, Ndum (Mbube); Bansan-Osokom, Borum, Okundi, Katchuan (Boki); Ishibori (Ogoja); this article argues that responses to infectious diseases' emergencies in rural Nigeria are firmly enmeshed in forms of belittlement and exclusion of the narrative autonomy of the people to handle infectious diseases' emergencies. Findings coalesce to indicate that the 'capacity approach' in handling infectious diseases' emergencies in rural Nigeria is characterized by discernible secrecy; it is non-curative, urban-based and aims at serving the medical needs of 'very important personalities' (VIPs), their immediate dependents and servants.

*Keywords:* infection diseases, public health, coloniality, covid-19, indigenous knowledge.

*Classification:* LCC Code: RA643 .C67

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*and maintains global health inequity. Consequently, capacity building to facilitate indigenous or community-led solutions to infectious diseases' emergencies in rural Nigeria should be focus at unsettling webs of meaning and power in global health; rather than just interrogating local social norms, attitudes, behaviours and practices.*

**Keywords:** infection diseases, public health, coloniality, covid-19, indigenous knowledge.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The medical history of infectious diseases in rural Nigeria is not too different from that of other regions of the African continent. Though colonized and pillaged for over three hundred years, Africa traditions and cultures have displayed vibrancy in accentuating that illnesses, including illnesses caused by infectious diseases, are not derived from chance occurrences, but through spiritual imbalances and social inequalities (Olaniyi & Moletsane-Kekae, 2018). This position no doubt differs sharply from modern scientific medicine of the global North. It is widely acknowledged that African societies were better established and more populous than societies in the Americas and Europe before the colonization of the African continent (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018). African tribes in present day southern Nigeria, such as Nkum, Yala, Boki, Mbube, Yakoro, Yachi, Akaju, Aferike, had been in contact with the Europeans since the early part of the nineteenth-century where they established mutual trade relations with Europeans in oil palm products (Attoe, 1990). Manton (2011) noted that the structure of the

nineteenth-century interactions between Africans and Europeans was largely trade-based. During this period, rich urban life evolved in Africa with major kingdoms and empires created with socially complex towns and cities (Bulhan, 2015; Manton, 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018; Baronqy, 2008). As a result of the increased interaction of African tribes with the Europeans, the production and export of palm products, palm oil and palm kernel, became the mainstay of the nineteenth-century legitimate trade in most African kingdoms and empires, especially kingdoms and empires in southern Nigeria with profit-making as a cardinal priority for the Europeans (Attoe, 1990; Heidegger, 2008). Even though oil palm products had been used locally for a number of centuries, the market-oriented oil palm trade overturned the earlier system of local trade where 'common wellbeing' of community members and 'not profit-making' was the motivation for trade (Attoe, 1990; Galbraith & Klaus, 2019; Granovetter, 1985; Heidegger, 2008). Identified trade routes for the oil palm trade were: Obudu-Ogoja-Bansara route; Itakum-Akaju-Bansara route; and, the Ikerrri-Ezekew-Bansara route (Attoe, 1990).

Special traditional methods were developed for its collection, preparation and processing. Small-scale village producers continued with these traditional methods until the early part of the twentieth century when oil palm products became basic exchange goods for imported manufactured products at local markets (Attoe, 1990). Modern devices for oil palm production were introduced around the 1940s at strategic locations within southern Nigeria to serve as export terminals for European firms, where oil palm products were collected, tested, purified and prepared for shipping overseas (Attoe, 1990). These modern devices for oil palm production were located in places such as Egbe-Mbube, Okundi, Katchuan-Irruan, Borum, Bansan-Osokom, and Bansara (National Commission for Museums and Monuments, 1986). Around this same period, Nigeria's palm oil and kernel export accounted for about 50-70% at the world market (Attoe, 1990), and there were also accounts of widespread incidences of infectious diseases, particularly

smallpox, tuberculosis, and leprosy within southern Nigeria.

This article reflects on how Global-North inspired (colonial) hegemony have always assumed supremacy over indigenous knowledge systems in the handling of infectious diseases' emergencies in rural Nigeria. Specifically, the article interrogates tensions between capacity and autonomy as relating the handling of infectious diseases emergencies, including the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in rural Nigeria. The article argues that capacity building for community health workers to facilitate community-led solutions to infectious diseases' emergencies, particularly COVID-19, spearheads western colonial hegemonies intended to only fill externally predefined lack in capacity within rural Nigeria. This thinking is predicated on a decolonial interpretation of infectious diseases' emergencies which involves the asymmetrical and pyramidal constitution of global politics and the world order. The article critiques the assumption that there is a singular system of modern knowledge which pervades the mental universe and supposedly provides answers for every human problem across the globe (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020). In the context of this article, decolonial thinking believes that Eurocentric conceptions of humanity are rooted in racist and sexist social classifications, racial hierarchization and capitalist approaches of medical care. Findings of this article have implications for public health research in terms of explicating the complex interrelationships between socio-political factors that affect health and wellbeing in rural Nigeria.

The paper is divided into three major parts. The first part discusses the methodological design through which evidence for the article emerged. The historical research approach consisting of archival records and intergenerational dialogues was employed for data collection in Esham, Ekorinya (Ekajuk Kingdom); Egbe, Ndum (Mbube); Bansan-Osokom, Borum, Okundi, Katchuan (Boki); Ishibori (Ogoja) communities. The second part of the article discusses empirical evidences relating to the handling of infectious disease's emergencies in rural Nigeria where

participants showed self-awareness in decoding the interconnectedness of the world in the era of global capitalism. They distinctively showed that infectious disease' emergencies unpack the essential character of European imperialism and colonization project which focuses at willfully destroying the autonomy of the rural people to solve their health emergencies, including emergencies relating to infectious diseases. The concluding part of the article reiterates that interventions for responding to infectious diseases' emergencies in rural Nigeria are framed from the perspective of colonial medicine. Consequently, this distorts and erases narratives of the capacity and autonomy of the rural people to effectively respond to their health emergencies.

## II. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The methodological design for the study wherein evidence for this article emerged was the historical research design which engaged archival records from the Ogoja Local Government Council collections, and intergenerational dialogues involving traditional heads and clan heads (80 persons); men group (80 persons); women group (80 persons); youth group (80 persons); and combination of all groups (80 persons) in Esham, Ekorinya (Ekajuk Kingdom); Egbe, Ndum (Mbube); Bansa-Osokom, Borum, Okundi, Katchuan (Boki); Ishibori (Ogoja). This research design enabled a simultaneous exploration of medical practices as being culture-bound and historically contingent social forms while also analyzing coloniality as an instrument of Western conquest and continual domination (Beck, 1999). The research design also involves the review of literature that interrogated tensions between capacity and autonomy as relating the handling of infectious diseases emergencies, including the COVID-19 pandemic in rural Nigeria. Articles published in PubMed, Google Scholar, MEDLINE and Web of Science database searches were reviewed. These included data from regional and international organizations that addressed infectious diseases emergencies, including the COVID-19. Specifically, data from: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA); African Union COVID-19 Response

Fund; the Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy (CDDEP); the International Society for Infectious Diseases (ISID); and World Health Organization (WHO) were reviewed. No date restrictions were imposed on the retrieved data or information from these organizations, and all types of research studies, including systematic reviews, cohort studies, case-control studies, case series, case reports, randomized controlled studies, and cross-sectional studies were explored. This was explored in order to ensure the qualitative element of diversified methods. It was essential to explore all sources of information in order to generate the best understanding of infectious diseases emergencies within rural contexts. Searches were confined to articles written in English and published in a peer-reviewed or organizational journal in order to retain the integrity of the informational source. Data was content analyzed using the circular hermeneutic process described by Ricoeur (Baronqy, 2008). This allowed for an interpretation to emanate from a series of analytic steps and it recognized the relationship between the interpreter and the interpretation.

### *2.1 Coloniality of Response to Infectious Diseases' Emergencies in Rural Nigeria*

Apart from the latest COVID-19 disease, no evidence accounted with certainty on when, where, and how other infectious diseases appeared in rural Nigeria. However, findings suggest that the reason why it proved difficult to trace the origins of other infectious diseases in rural Nigeria is because until colonialism, there was a lack of a standardized medical lexicon for these diseases among tribes that made up rural Nigeria. Koplow (2003) provided a clue that some of the best evidence about the origins of infectious diseases epidemics come from war records. He argued that in about 1350 B.C, there was an account where the Hittite armies were devastated by a fatal infectious disease that apparently originated among the Egyptian prisoners of war who were captured in Syria. This disease killed the Hittite king, Suppiluliumas I, as well as his son and successor, Arnuwandas II, and led to a period of degenerative instability within the

Hittite empire. Similarly, smallpox he also argued killed about one-quarter of Athens's soldiers and countless civilians around 430 B.C undermining that city-state in its competition with Sparta. Koplow (2003) further accounts that Alexander the Great's foot soldiers, while invading India in 327 B.C, suffered from a fatal infectious disease believed to be smallpox.

The study findings recognized that outbreaks of infectious diseases do occur in an irregular geographic pattern. Within rural Nigeria, it was described that the transmission patterns of infectious diseases follow this shape: first, the diseases spread through relatively close contacts where the disease is either propelled through the air for short distances or passed along by immediate physical contact with a diseased person or with his or her clothing. Proximity is required for dispersion of infectious diseases. Second, they do appear in an acute, manifest form, these cannot be carried secretly or without visible symptoms. Third, infectious diseases never struck the same person twice. This means that anyone who contracted the diseases and manages to survive them incurs lifelong immunity. Fourth, infectious diseases affect humans exclusively and not any other organism.

As regard the autonomy of rural Nigeria in handling infectious diseases, especially the COVID-19 pandemic, participants showed self-awareness in decoding the interconnectedness of the world in this era of global capitalism. Their assertion affirms that they already know enough. Participants recognized that COVID-19 additionally unpacks the essential character of European imperialism and colonization project. They argue that at the core of capacity building for handling health emergencies in rural Nigeria is the willful destruction of the autonomy of the rural people to solve their health emergencies, including emergencies relating to infectious diseases. Externally funded capacity building according to them, begins with the notion that the rural people lack capacity to handle health emergencies themselves. This notion fails to see and build on already-existing autonomies among the rural people. Participants aver that capacity building

for handling health emergencies entails the production of subjects without addressing root causes that elevate the vulnerability of the rural people to exploitations during health emergencies.

There were references to the grant of US\$27.33 million approved by African Development Bank (AfDB) to the African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC). Although the grant was awarded under three key components; technical assistance and capacity building alone which goes back to foreign 'experts' or 'partners' in the global North took US\$19.33 million, while institutional support and contribution to the African Union COVID-19 Response Fund took just US\$7 million and US\$1 million respectively. Thus, the coloniality of health emergencies in rural Nigeria was seen to manifest in negligence, acquiescence and utter disregards for the fatal implications of global inequality; that is, a consistent preference for orthodox or western capacity and medicines against local or indigenous capacity and medicine. Participants note clearly that it is not the health emergencies that are political, but it is the global systems that govern these health emergencies that are political. They recognized that these global systems consist of a structure of terror that is empowered by inverting life and death. Coloniality here is represented by "*... modern sovereignty which is exerted by controlling mortality as life has come to depend on the deployment of overturning life and death...*" (Excerpt from the combined Intergenerational Dialogue at Esham on 25 May 2021). This is in consonance with Mbembe's (2019) view that late modern sovereignty relies on the power to create a group of people who, unceasingly confronted by death, live at life's edge. This right to kill is what according to Mbembe (2019) keeps colonial terror, biopower and a state of siege in former colonies alive. Participants also showed that the deployment of basic techniques of territorial state power to control COVID-19 and other infectious diseases in rural Nigeria constitute coloniality. Participants insisted that the dynamics of health emergencies in rural Nigeria are of slow violence, as the power

over who gets treated or vaccinated is externally outsourced.

This insistence further falls in line with the reality that capacity building for health emergencies in rural Nigeria unfortunately holds a prominent place in grant applications, deliverables, metrics for success, and funding programmes for so many of the global health initiatives. ‘Successful’ global health initiatives in this light are those whose capacity building aims to promote partnership in ways that partners with established experience build knowledge or practice in communities that are less resourced. Trainings are often provided, workshop offered, and mentoring provided to build capacity. Regrettably, this capacity building has only led to one directional approach (of the expert to learner) that fails to leverage opportunities for all parties to learn from and engage each other. Santos (2014, p.19) affirms this by arguing that:

The truth of the matter is that, after five centuries of “teaching” the world, the global North seems to have lost the capacity to learn from the experiences of the world. In other words, it looks as if colonialism has disabled the global North from learning in noncolonial terms, that is, in terms that allow for the existence of histories other than the universal history of the West.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) added to argue that the Global South had been invented and reproduced as the geography of poverty; thus, there is a reluctance to tap into the long history, experience and knowledge of Africans in tackling health emergencies and pandemics. This is probably due to the historical fact that colonialism destabilized the African people’s self-confidence and agency. Thus, looking to Europe and North America for capacity building to tackle health emergencies would not help Africa at this time as there are bigger troubles in Europe and North America than in Africa. This pandemic provides an opportunity for Africa in particular and the Global South in general to showcase ‘endogenous knowledge’, the ‘southern theory’, ‘theory from the South’, ‘epistemologies from the South’ (Santos & Meneses, 2019), and ‘epistemic

freedom’ (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018) as serious initiatives which have become very important now when the rest of the world is experiencing a piece of what the African people and the Global South have been experiencing for over 500 years (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) believes that the power and relevance of epistemologies of the Global South is that they are largely experiential and experimental knowledges.

Pailey (2017) provide examples how the Liberian people improvise protective equipment during the three-year (2014-2016) outbreak of Ebola, which killed about 11,000 people in the West African region. Improvise protective equipment have always been the basis of all inventions in tackling infectious diseases’ emergencies in Africa. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) showed that the Mozambican scholar, Macamo, criticized the tendency of African leaders to ‘copy and paste’ European responses to infectious diseases’ emergencies, especially responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. He stressed that for Europe and the Global North, pandemics may be seen as extraordinary events coming to disrupt their normal lives. But for Africans and the Global South, he argued that “normality” has not been Africa’s reality. He concluded that though Africa may face the same enemy as Europe and the Global North, but Africa does not have the same risk as Europe and the Global North. Leading African Intellectuals (2020) in their open letter to African leaders dated April 17, 2020, highlighted that Africa as a continent is familiar with pandemic outbreaks; thus, Africa stands in an advantaged position to effectively manage large scale crises like infectious diseases’ emergencies, especially the COVID-19 pandemic. This is because Africa has a rich history and experience of dealing with and surviving epidemics and pandemics.

## *2.2 Colonial Relics of Health Emergencies in Rural Nigeria*

The study findings confirmed earliest treatment of infectious diseases in rural Nigeria to include the designation of a god or goddess to which sacrifices were made to honour and appease the

deity when a person is infected. Tribes such as Ekajuk, Boki, Yala and Aferike have cultural practices where therapeutic bleeding to seep the body of excessive humors in order to restore the internal balance that take away the infection. ‘Heat therapy’ was reported to be common in Boki, Yakoro, and Ekajuk. Among the Yachi people, the ‘red therapy’ was reported to be common. This is a therapy where an individual infected with any infectious disease is surrounded with red-coloured blankets, curtains and the

person is made to drink red liquids and use only red implements in treatments. Participants account that it was when the transmission patterns of infectious diseases became more obvious, that was when efforts at isolation and quarantine became common in rural Nigeria. Archival information confirmed the following medical items were delivered in Ogoja district during the peak of the smallpox epidemic in the area between 1940 to 1949.

**Table 1:** Delivered Medical Items in Ogoja District by Colonial Authorities (1940-1949)

Benefiting Communities	Individual Beneficiaries	Medical Items (Drugs)
Katchuan Irruan, Egbe-Mbube, Okundi-Osokom, Kakwagom, Obudu, Ishibori, Borum	All infected persons in the various communities	Zinci; Unguentum Hydrarg.; Oxid. Flav; Unguentum Sulphuris; Unguentum Chrysarobin; Sodii Bicarb; Acetum Ipecacuaha; Acetum Scillae; Liquor, Ammon Acct-Fort; Creta Preparata; Ammon. Carb; Carbolised oil; Infusum Gent.co.Conc; White Disinfectant; Quinine Hydrochloride; Linimentum Terebinthinae; Magnes. Sulph; Carron Oil; Zinc oxide; Creta prep.B.P; Dusting powder

*Source: Intelligence Report. Ogoja Province, District of Ogoja, Sheet No. 2/1925*

Participants noted that at the arrival of the British to the hinterland of Nigeria, they brought with them institutions carried over from other colonial territories. For instance, the colonial Governor-General at the centre was responsible for the execution of policies with the advice of his executive council which composed of chief officials, and could legislate only with the approval of the legislative council. Participants confirmed that the legislative council was the central and most important institution in the colonial political structure that superintended over provinces, though private hospitals that treated general illnesses were allowed to operate in remote villages. In analyzing colonial health facilities, participants drew attention to when Lord Lugard carried out his amalgamation of Nigeria’s southern and northern protectorates in 1914. According to them, the introduction of native administration in southern Nigeria with the establishment of a provincial capital from which

other parts of the province were administered was incongruent with local political structures. They insisted that Lord Lugard introduced *native administration* in southern Nigeria exactly in line with what was obtainable in northern Nigeria. To participants, the powers that *provincial capitals* broker made no sense to the locales, because these powers had not been possessed by them in traditional society. Thus, colonial health institutions assumed a conservative outlook as these undermined indigenous autonomy to handle health emergencies. Even when native authorities were constituted to oversee health programmes or projects, a British officer still asserted powers in the day-to-day affairs of the province, including the administration of health emergencies. Evidence prevail to confirm this same attitude in the handling of the COVID-19 emergency; even as the Seventy-fourth World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) held on 29 May 2021 reiterates that there is need to

strengthen local production of medicines and other health technologies in order to improve access to healthcare during health emergencies. However, the underlying concern on how the local production of medicines and other health technologies in Africa will be received by the Global North in manners that foster capacity sharing, trust and accountability, providing the foundation on which to build other mechanisms for global health security had been deliberately ignored in WHO's advocacy.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) added to argue that knowledge systems that have plunged the world into its current civilizational crisis cannot be the same knowledge systems that hold capacity to take the world out of its present crisis and into the future. That just like the global financial crisis before COVID-19 successfully took the world by surprise; this confirmatory evidence is enough to show that there is an epistemic crisis. A crisis of knowledge which confirms that prevailing knowledge systems of the past five hundred years are no longer capable of predicting challenges and problems as they come, let alone being able to successfully protect people from health emergencies. Wallerstein (2004, p. 58) noticed this epistemic crisis when he introduced the concept of "uncertainties of knowledge" and postulated that "we live in a very exciting era in the world of knowledge, precisely because we are living in a systemic crisis that is forcing us to reopen the basic epistemological questions and look to structural reorganizations of the world of knowledge".

### III. CONCLUSION

The study's findings reiterate that the medical history of infectious disease epidemics, including COVID-19, in rural Nigeria is not given form by the interaction of forces internal to the tribal nations that made up rural Nigeria, but by forces operating on the global system. In this way interventions for infectious diseases' emergencies in rural Nigeria had always been framed from the perspective of colonial medicine. Consequently, this distorts and erases narratives of the capacity and autonomy of rural Nigeria to effectively respond to health emergencies. Thus, the

handling of infectious diseases' emergencies in rural Nigeria is characterized by discernible secrecy; it is non-curative; urban-based and aims at serving the medical needs of very important personalities (VIPs) or the ruling class, its servants, and immediate dependents. The focus of public health in rural Nigeria emphasizes capacity building for community health workers in handling health emergencies and to ensure access to treatment and vaccination, this focus is not due to the benevolence of the Global North, but this serves as a maintenance-plan that ensures the espousal of the belittlement and exclusion of the narrative autonomy of rural Nigeria to rely on community-based solutions to handle infectious diseases' emergencies. This coloniality expressed in capacity building for community health workers to facilitate community-led solutions to infectious diseases' emergencies only spearheads local level behavioural changes without capacitating local community influencers and leaders on how public health practices, from epidemiological modelling to outbreak containment, help to perpetuate global inequalities. Thus, public health has evolved to only manage and maintain global health inequity in rural Nigeria. Accordingly, capacity building to facilitate indigenous-led solutions to infectious diseases' emergencies in rural Nigeria should be focus at unsettling webs of meaning and power in global health, rather than just interrogating local social norms, attitudes, behaviours and practices in rural Nigeria. Providing capacity building for communities within rural Nigeria whose content prioritizes the empowerment of local community influencers and leaders on how public health practices perpetuate global inequalities is therefore a policy imperative.

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# Political Marketing: Factors that influence the Election Decisions

Sanya Kenaphoom

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## ABSTRACT

Political marketing is a way that political organizations, politicians, political leaders, political parties, governments, and NGOs use marketing methods and concepts to create and develop their products and political understanding, Its purpose is to respond to marketing and involve communicating and interacting with the political market to achieve the desired effect. Political marketing is not just advertising management, but also political communication, election campaigning, and a strategy centered on political consumers that is, voters, who act as the drivers of market dynamics and how voters make decisions based on their needs over some time. Political Marketing Elements; (1) Political Product, (2) Push Marketing, (3) Pull Marketing, and (4) Polling. However, there are 3 marketing tools for political campaigns as follows: (1) The classification of marketing segments of the elector is Political Product, Marketing Promotion, and Political Place. (2) The positioning of candidates and parties is the application of political party policies, and the rebuilding of one's image. And (3) Political Marketing Strategies were Sensation, Story, Speed, and Social Media.

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**Keywords:** political marketing; election decisions.

**Author:** Rajabhat Mahasarakham University, Thailand.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Elections are the most important component of a democratic political system because elections are the decisions of the people, those who own sovereignty as to which person or group of persons should be entrusted to exercise sovereignty on behalf of the people (Chaicharn,

W., 2000: 24-27). Elections are activities that demonstrate the participation of the people who own sovereign power through the voting process. to independently select any person or group of persons according to their own opinion, to get representatives to act on their behalf, to use democratic powers to manage the country and protect the interests of the people (Wutdilokpraphan, S., 2011: 11). However, voting behavior in political science has evolved from the interests of academics in two fields. Namely, behaviorist sociologists and political scientists, These scholars first focused on the influence of socioeconomic status on the voting behavior of individuals such as socio-economic status is indicated by occupational education, ethnic or cultural groups, and ethnic groups, as well the stereotypes of women's political participation. Later, attention was paid to the influence of psychological factors or political sentiments such as interest in politics, group affiliation, or party affiliation. some political parties, etc. Such studies should be considered to set goals for the further systematic study of voting behavior in Thailand. (Bunbongkarn, S., & Phongphaew, P., 1984: 7).

In social sciences, the voting theory is divided into three groups: Deterministic Theories, Consciously Rational Theories, and System Theories (Bunbongkarn, S., & Phongphaew, P., 1984: 15-18. However, Klapper (1960:5) proposed the following concepts of the influence of mass media on changing people's attitudes and behaviors; (1) The mass media does not directly influence the people but has indirect influence depending on factors including; (a) Predisposition is that people will have their opinions, values , and inclinations to act before they come into contact with the media. (b) Choosing to receive a message, people will choose to receive a message that is consistent with their opinions and interests and

will choose to interpret the message based on their existing beliefs and values. (c) Personal influence Sometimes news from the mass media passes through the media or opinion leaders before reaching the people. Opinion leaders often intervene with their own feelings, thereby influencing the opinions of the population. (d) Group and its norms. And. (e) Mass media system. (2) The mass media will only be a reinforcement to strengthen people's attitudes, tastes, inclinations, and behavioral tendencies and be ready to express themselves when motivated or when the opportunity arises. (3) The mass media may slightly change people's attitudes and become unstable. It is difficult to change a deeply ingrained or opposing attitude change, it may take some time and a person must be adequately informed. However, the influence of the media on change occurs only if the person is already inclined to change. And (4) The mass media can create an attitude for the people if a person has no prior knowledge and experience about it and must frequently be exposed to the same subject matter as an influence that is acquired in a not cumulative manner. Influences that produce immediate results.

In addition, it is important to affect electoral behavior, in which the importance of a candidate is a campaign, It means an attempt to inform, influence, and mobilize systematically, which could be said to be an inseparable part of the electoral process. Various efforts are made to get candidates to be elected. There are three campaign objectives (Manarat, P., & Thapmongkol, P., 2012: 23–34); (1) Voter persuasion, a group of candidate advocates, to come out and vote openly; mobilizing supporters is an important part of ensuring that candidates get the votes of their target audience. (2) Encouraging hidden supporters to come out and exercise their right to vote, because of the number of non-voting voters, there will be some who support their own candidates to get higher votes. And (3) to change the mind of supporters of opposing candidates to support one's side, to persuade voters who are not their base of voters, which proceedings are prudent and rigorous

because the difficulty and limitations are quite limited.

Thus, an electoral campaign is the format and method used by a candidate to campaign to win an election, the methods used in the campaign included house visits, posting posters, handing out brochures, organizing a public speech, using public relations vehicles, etc.

Political marketing is how political organizations and politicians, political leaders, political parties, governments, and NGOs use marketing methods, and concepts to understand and develop political products and insights to respond to marketing and involve communication and interaction with the political market to achieve desired results (Lees-Marshment, 2012: 2). Political marketing is the idea of an exchange, wherein candidates exchange what they get when voters cast their votes for themselves, that is, attaining a transactional destination (Cwalina, Falkowski, & Newman, 2011: 16; Newman, 1994). Political marketing is where a political party or candidate uses opinion research and analysis of the political environment to produce or support competition for organizations to achieve their goals and make people elected and traded by voting for them (Cwalina, Falkowski, & Newman, 2011: 16; Dominic Wring (1997, 653). However, political marketing is not just about managing ads, but also political communications, and election campaigns, and has a strategy centered on political consumers, and voters, as the drivers of change. of the market and that the voters make decisions based on their needs for a particular period (Busby, 2009: 13).

However, the political environment has many factors influencing elections which may be divided into three major groups (Chantornvong, S., 1987; 60); (1) *Technology change factors*; include computer innovation, creation of member databases, and target groups with computer systems, research data processing, Internet use to communicate with voters, television technology. These have evolved a lot, especially the cable TV and interactive television industries. (Interactive), has a huge impact on the political campaign of the new era. Direct communication with the Direct

Mail system is aimed at building long-term relationships with the electors in the Bangkok gubernatorial elections on October 5, 2008, the technological factors are involved and have a huge effect, developing many Internet communication programs to create websites such as Hi5, Twitter, FaceBook and Kipling, among others. (2) *Factors of change in political structure*; namely Changes in the electoral law in various aspects, for example, the law stipulating campaign budgets, laws prohibiting election incentives through wages, regulations on the use of television and radio in campaigns, laws on donations to political parties, rules for debating by political party leaders, candidates, etc. which in the atmosphere of the Bangkok governor election campaign on October 5, 2008, there was a political conflict atmosphere that caused the campaign to be incomplete during the campaign period, it has a very limited period preventing candidates from campaigning fully. (3) *Factors that change agents of power*; The seven groups of people who have power in the election campaign process are: Political parties, candidates, professional advisers, poll makers, media, interest groups, and voters, the seven groups of people have a connected and continuous impact on elections,

All of which led to major power shifts in politics, and the adoption of marketing strategies in political campaigns. It is a new phenomenon that emerged in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the use of mass media and marketing techniques in political campaigns.

Political Market Infrastructure Kotler (1998: 88) views it regarding McCarthy's Old Marketing Model, or 4'P, (1960). Strategy Like Market Research The marketing variables, namely Product, Promotion, Place, and Price, are included in the election campaign plan. In which the marketing mix model is applied to benefit a non-profit organization, not commercial marketing. This has been challenged by some who consider the "4'P" method to be outdated and flawed (Blois 1987), It is akin to the implied acceptance of the "chimerical nature of elections", with the warning of O'Shaughnessy argued that the marketing structure was too strict for politics. (O'Shaughnessy, 1990: 4). However, amid the

controversy of these scholars, Kotler's (1998) model was accepted by Butler (1963:113) and many others later.

### 1.1 Environment Affecting Elections

Electoral Marketing Segment Classification Political Target Group Classification The idea comes from Market Segmentation. Marketers realize that their products and services cannot satisfy every consumer. Therefore, the target audience of the product must be set to meet the needs of specific consumers, in the same way politicians have to use tools to classify voters, by dividing "elector behavior" into 5 categories, namely; (1) *Functional Value expectation from politicians (Functional Value)*, these voters look for policies that will meet their needs and solve problems, such as economic issues, unemployment, taxes, health benefits, etc. (2) *Social Value Expectations*, these voters will look for politicians who stand on their own values, for example, being a conservative or a liberal be a business leader, they are religious, etc. (3) *Emotional Value Expectations*, this group of electors looked for politicians who were in the collective mood of society at that time, for example, politicians, executives in economic downturns, moral politicians in bad social trends, etc. (4) *Expectation in Conditional Value*, is a group that is looking for a leader to deal with one of the immediate problems, such as the problem of terrorism international war problems, etc. And (5) *Epistemic Value Expectations*, is a group that seeks new things, is dissatisfied with what exists, wants change, presents innovative campaigns, new political innovations are effective for this group of people, for example, the achievements of Bill Clinton presented.

### 1.2 Analyzing the Environment

The repercussions of the political market may show corporate traits that focus more on the credibility of the sources in which they can invest resources in analyzing the environment rather than the credibility of politicians. That is to say, the marketing process can reduce the amount of information in large numbers to be more relevant to the issue, including: through election

campaign planning, broadcasting, newspapers, specialized magazines, and summarizing numerous academic analysis reports. Including information from the Election Poll that political strategists can use as a base for decision-making and understanding of economic conditions. The media and other factors that voters need to pay attention to. The Marketing Mix, however, is the opposite of the environment. (External factors) including: Self-determining the project (Hunt, 1976) defines it as "Controllable factors, this means the collection of strategic, decision-making that organizations can make in respect of their marketing program, known as the marketing mix, which comprises products and services, marketing promotions, distribution channels, and prices.

In addition, factors that are important to political marketing are "political utility", which are external stimuli caused by political activities, whether political actors political situations political processes political styles political products as well as political implications, etc. such as the popularity of the applicant Popularity in political parties reciprocal benefit distribution, voting, public policy guidelines, and future prospects, whether concrete or abstract. Either benefit yourself or benefit your participation. These stimuli influence a person's political decisions in the form of a Political observant, Political participant, or Political partnership (Kenaphoom, S. 2017). where political marketers need to create a "political partnership" which is a sense of collective ownership, such as joint ownership, exertion/funding of joint political movements, sharing responsibility, sharing political roles Sharing the benefits that arise (Kenaphoom, S. 2019). Therefore, electoral behavior based on political partnership is the behavior of people who take part in political activities, especially the exercise of voting rights. "A person always chooses the highest among all that is present."

This article, therefore, aims to analyze the elements of political marketing which is one of the conditional factors influencing the electoral behavior of the voters, details as follows.

## II. POLITICAL MARKETING

In the election campaign process, unless the elector wants systematic political communication, the candidate must properly analyze the Political Market. In which the concept of Political Marketing has a great influence on political communication, academics have given the meaning as follows:

Philippe (1995: 25) Political marketing refers to the application of commercial marketing to political marketing that has only emerged a few centuries ago. Due to product promotion and sales techniques, new methods of marketing operations have advanced a lot. The definition of "marketing" traditionally refers to the methods of establishing a business organization, maintaining and developing the marketing or "customer" of a business, and satisfying its customers. Marketing, therefore, has many roles starting from the production of the product to the end of the product life cycle. In addition to that, political marketing, the purpose of stimulating the people's response to the goals of marketing and political campaigning, especially in elections, is therefore different from the goals of commercial marketing. In general, the people cannot expect direct benefits from short-term elections, the people are not satisfied with anything in return. Therefore, political marketing must take into account the objectives of practical values.

Lees-Marshment, Jennifer (2001: 692) The term "political marketing" refers to the way a political organization (political party/interest group/local government) adopts business marketing ideas and techniques. applied in the search for the needs of the people, changing organizational behavior to meet people's needs, as well as communicating effectively to present a "product" to achieve political goals.

Therefore, the term "political marketing" has been defined to mean that It is an exchange system whereby the seller offers the buyer a representation in return for gaining backing, In which politicians and policies are like products with political parties as a brand and voters as consumers of the product. Political marketing, therefore, means carrying out political activities

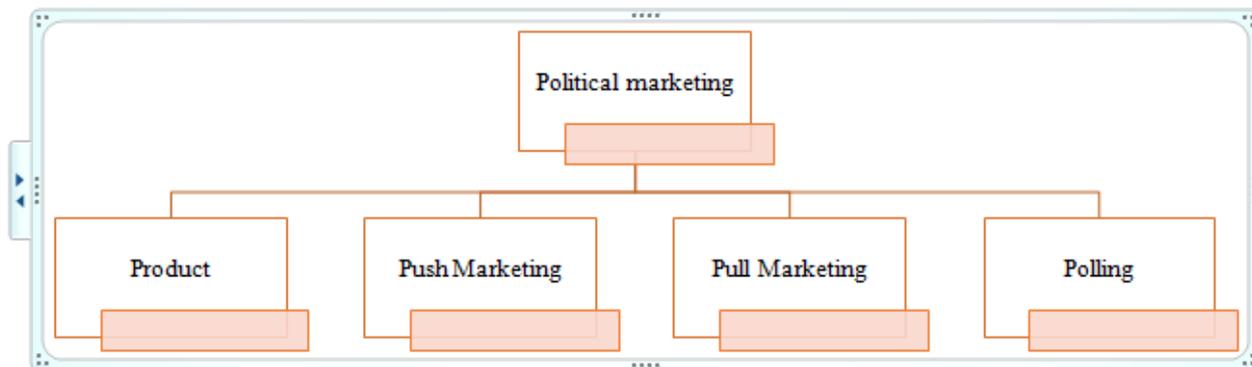
through marketing methods, namely: Research, product development, target group classification, political positioning, advertising, and public relations. As well as strategic planning from the 4Ps principles, marketing has been applied politically to incentivize voters to vote.

Bruce I. Newman, (1999: 3) Marketing refers to the process of bartering whereby the seller or business owner takes goods or services in exchange for money from the buyer or consumer and the means of that exchange. The seller operates using a marketing strategy that consists of four components (4 Ps), which are: (1) The first P: Product or Service (2) The second P: Promotion, (3) The third P: Pricing, and (4) 4. The fourth P: Place.

The principles of business marketing are no different from political marketing principles. In other words, a successful company must have marketing goals by developing products and services to meet customer satisfaction, and by endeavoring to propose ways to improve the

quality of life and maximize benefits at the lowest cost. While political parties present their policy ideas and candidates, they try to reassure the elector through the process of marketing to the electorate to make a purchasing decision on the proposed vision or policy. From the marketing 4Ps principle, it has been applied as the main political 4Ps as follows.

- *Product*, a product for a political party, including policies and candidates. This is considered an important part of any political campaign plan.
- *Push Marketing*, to disseminate information about Policies and candidates pass through party mechanisms. to party members and party supporters at the local level mainly using party media.
- *Pull Marketing*, mainly through mass media such as newspapers, radio, and television.
- *Polling*, is an important tool for obtaining information. to be used to formulate policies and monitor the effectiveness of the campaign.



In addition, four elements of political campaign marketing tools are (1) electoral marketing segment classification, (2) candidate and party positioning, and (3) strategic and action plan.

### III. POLITICAL MARKETING ELEMENTS

The principles of business marketing are no different from political marketing principles.

That is to say, a successful company must have a marketing goal of developing products and services that meet customer satisfaction, trying to offer ways to improve quality of life and maximize benefits at the lowest cost. While political parties

present their policy ideas and candidates, they try to reassure the elector through the process of marketing to the electorate to make a purchasing decision on the proposed vision or policy. the 4 Ps principle, marketing has been applied to the political 4 Ps as follows (Bruce I. Newman. 1999: 3).

### 3.1 Political Product

Political Product Strategy is a political product strategy that involves a decision-making process regarding Political Product attributes, Political Product mix, Political Product lines are things to consider about a product. For products for political parties, the policies and eligibility of candidates are considered essential parts of political campaign plans (Technology and Innovation Education, 2022). Political Product considerations are as follows; (1) Product Concept is an important feature of a product that can meet the needs of consumers. The product must be clear in that product. (2) Product attributes must know what political product is made of, and what are its attributes. (3) Product Feature: The comparison of the company's products with competitors' products has different properties. and must know that our products have something outstanding For example, the distinguishing feature of Dior is that it is a leading product from Paris. And (4) Product Benefit considers the characteristics of the product. And what benefits does the product provide to customers between the promise of the customer and the proof of product characteristics?

### 3.2 Push Marketing

As the name suggests, it is a push, push, if the brand's products are sold through various retail channels, This means that the brand will use the sales force plus the promotion to the middleman, which may be a bad show shop, various retail stores. The intermediary then directs or encourages customers to purchase the brand's product, possibly through advertising or promotion, discounts, exchanges, and giveaways.

Push Strategy is the effect of products through distribution channels to the end consumers, by the manufacturer doing marketing activities which emphasize the use of salesforce and promotion, selling to middlemen who are members of the distribution channel to influence product stock and promote it to the final consumer (Kotler and other, 2005; Winit, W., 2012).

Push Strategy is the use of sales units or middlemen to push products through distribution channels to consumers, employee-level promotions, aimed at middlemen, used in the case of products with good quality and outstanding characteristics over competitors, and product prices high according to the quality level. The company wants to provide financial support to middlemen and sales associates, preferably used in the case of industrial products or products with relatively high prices or fixed products, customers are not familiar with or do not see the need to buy or maybe during product introductions ( Serirat, S. et al, 2003: 152-154).

Therefore, Push Marketing is the dissemination of information about policies and candidates through Party mechanisms to party members and supporters at the local level mainly using Party media.

### 3.3 Pull Marketing

As for Pull, the opposite is true, brand marketing will make its own products more desirable to consumers and pull products through middlemen, and distribution channels. Simply put, brands promote their products through various tools. To the consumers themselves, whether it is advertising, or promotion to motivate consumers to buy products. And if successful, the market will need to arise, and distribution channels, middlemen, and retailers will need that product to sell.

A pull strategy is a strategy in which a manufacturer conducts marketing activities with an emphasis on advertising and promotion to the final consumer to drive demand and purchase the product if the pull strategy is effective. Consumers will need products from middlemen, middlemen will continue to demand products from manufacturers (Kotler and others, 2005; Winit, W., 2012).

The marketing tools used for the consumer market and the business market will differ if the consumer market will use a pull strategy rather than focusing on advertising followed by promotion. Sales and public relations personnel. But in accessing the business market and

marketing, use a more pushing strategy. By focusing on the use of salespeople, followed by sales promotions, and advertisements. and public relations. Some product distribution companies use only a pull strategy or some direct marketing companies use only a pull strategy.

Therefore, Pull Marketing is a campaign mainly through mass media such as newspapers, radio, and television.

### 3.4 Polling

Polls are similar to online surveys where they seek to know the opinions, beliefs, and behaviors of a target audience about a particular subject at that time. Thus, using polls To survey opinions, is the opinions of certain groups of people. to represent the opinions of the entire population.

Polls allow us to collect statistical data to be used to improve or supplement our business's products and services, As well as knowing the trends and needs of the sample, we can sometimes compare the results of old and new polls to see differences and changes. Online surveys and polls are becoming more important nowadays as surveyors want to survey a large population, Most website owners understand the important role of polls, so they add surveys to their websites to allow their customers or website visitors to participate in the opinions or suggestions that website owners need.

Online Polls or Online Poll Creation allows us to easily create polls and reach a broader audience online, as more and more people gain access to the Internet and use the Internet. So online polls are used. To conduct a short-term poll with a certain sample only online. For example, create a poll with Google Forms, users can share links. or copy the link to send to their friends online, This includes other online poll creation websites and applications, for example. These polls are summarized and report statistical data for us to see without having to manually fill out the information for convenience, saving time and money for surveyors.

Polling is therefore an important tool for obtaining information to formulate policies and monitor campaign effectiveness.

## IV. MARKETING TOOLS FOR POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Political campaign marketing tools include (1) electoral marketing segment classification, (2) candidate and party positioning, and (3) political marketing strategy and operations.

### 4.1 Electoral Marketing Segment Classification

#### 4.1.1 Product

The product/service is an important part of the marketing mix in terms of product/service ingredient constituency, consisting of “Party Image” “Leader Image” and “Manifesto”. such patterns are popular among analysts. Each of the aforementioned elements will influence the opinions of the voters in different groups not the same, therefore each segment may be influenced by a point of attention. In addition to the dominance of the image dimension of the party and its leaders, the idea of promoting the image of politicians by using the point of attention has always been a common practice in the form of nonfiction writings by content journalists. covering elections. Therefore, marketing for politicians means “strategizing to weaken competitors by building a marketing image.”

Product means a political product which consists of The Policy Platform and the candidates, both the policies of political parties and politicians as products must go through a selection process,

It starts with being firm in the political ideology that the candidate has for the party, then having to have a consistent image with the party it belongs to while also having to undergo training in personality development. In communication and public speaking in the United States, the electoral campaign to compete for the party's candidate in the presidential election is as intense and resource-intensive as the presidential race but in Thailand. The selection of “candidates” on behalf of the party is primarily aimed at the goal of “election victory” by grading (grading), candidates according to their chances of being elected (Chantornvong, S., 1987: 56; Bruce I. Newman (1999: 106); (1) “Grade A” is a former member of the House of Representatives (MP) in

the last election. and has a very high likelihood of being elected. (2) “Grade B” is a former member of the House of Representatives (MP) in the previous election. But failed the exam in the last election. (3) “Grade C” is a newcomer politician who has done some good for the locality. (4) A “Grade D” is a newcomer politician with little performance and little tendency to be elected.

From past elections to the present, it was found that all political parties had guidelines for selecting candidates similarly based on criteria. "Chance of victory" is the key. Therefore, the phenomenon of snatching a member of the House of Representatives, the transfer of members of the House of Representatives, and the “buying of MPs” allegations against the Thai Rak Thai Party, have been present since the start of the party. The study of political “products” may be a limitation in the process of developing this product, but it is also possible to study the “process of obtaining these products” and their origin.

Adam (2002: 30) stated that for the policies of political parties in the elections campaigns of Western countries, policy and campaign issues are very important. If a candidate can make the elector understand and accept the issue or policy presented and stand out, it will affect electoral behavior.

The way candidates choose the subject of their presentation is often the one that the candidate believes will receive the most popular points based on the polling results, the premise is that issues should be chosen that will bring the candidate's position as close as possible to the opinion of a neutral elector. The presentation of the issue must not be overly complex and at the same time cover what is popular with the masses, with the decision of the electorate based on the information obtained concerning their own basic ideas. Once the data has been gathered, the selector will weigh the importance, for example, if a voter prioritizes abortion, then they will choose a candidate who proposes the issue. Proposals that do not influence the vote could be regarded as weightless (Adam, 2002: 30).

Even in foreign countries, the focus is on the “policy of campaigning” very much, but in the past in Thailand, most of the party's policies are broad policies, lacking a plan of action to focus on leading the economy to its goals, the statement came out and it did not appear that any political party had differentiated the priorities of each policy. In addition, most of the policies have a substance and content that focuses on solutions rather than overall economic development, even the agricultural policy that all parties focus on does not appear to be anything new. And sometimes the policies of the same party conflict with each other. For example, a policy that focuses on stimulating the economy to grow rapidly but at the same time reducing the trade deficit in the country (Chantornvong, S., 1987: 60).

#### 4.1.2 Promotion

It is well known that advertising is an important communication tool that can present a complete marketing process, for political marketing campaign ingredients can be divided into two main parts: “Paid” media usage, and “Free” media. Respect of paid media covers advertising such as posters, prints or radio and television broadcasts, covers Telephone and Direct Mail Marketing, this includes the temporary election campaign with Party Colors, Special Advertising Designs, Slogan Copywriting, and the creation of Symbols to make the election campaign more colorful. The non-paying media is the Publicity that each political party has already received. The strategy of using paid media is not to worry about editing the news, using the well-designed PR principles as a campaign tool through interesting media such as “Photo Opportunities” and News Conferences, Including other story layout designs to improve information about politicians and their political parties.

#### 4.1.3 Place

At the heart of any sourcing or distribution strategy lies in the establishment of a regional distributor network in political terms, including balancing between political parties and representatives of grassroots political parties, for example, in England there is a systemic

membership of political parties at both regional and local levels, the price or value of the political party (Price) (Rattanadilok Na Bhuket, P., 1998).

**Pricing:** In the fourth part of the marketing mix, Philip Niffenegger (1988) gave a convincing rationale about the price ingredient in the political market by briefly discussing several components.

This is related to phenomena occurring in the environment and is interpreted by the voters. It consists of feelings for the country, the economic position of the Party, and mental expectations or suspicions. The term “price” is reflected in the observations of (Reids, 1988, et al.) as “Psychological Purchase”, In other words, it is a comparison of voter behavior to be similar to policy consumer behavior. “Pricing” is necessary to promote the idea of the “Feel–Good Factor” in the electorate. Marketing Research plays an important role in modern elections, with the first recorded US electoral competition since 1951. 1930, many private polling bureaus were born. Opinion polls not only amplify the potential of political party leaders but are also challenging. For political leaders (Elite), who at one time could rely on communication channels to influence the public. Today, we have to face the frequent mistakes of unscrupulous polls to sharpen our electoral strategy and maintain a good vote. Originally, opinion polls were quantitative to explore only demographic characteristics. Recently, politicians have paid particular attention to exploring More psychographics. The rise of campaign research studies has begun to combine the old quantitative research with the Focus Group research model, and other qualitative research models. The resonance of opinion polls is a key element in designing effective marketing mixes when combined with different tactics to help market segmentation. Segmentation is the use of research to group customers into categories based on their preferences, needs, or purchasing power. Once the key characteristics of consumer share are identified, the marketing program can maintain or expand the customer base according to the desired market share. Political strategies are similar, that is, they provide tools for targeting voter groups. The market analysis highlights the

benefits of voter distribution based on Demographic, Psychographic, or Geographic (Smith and Saunder, 1990).

From the point of view of political science, the tendency to determine the base Voices are still a problem caused by psychological pressures causing voters who are still undecided on who to choose, known as the Floating Group, It is, therefore, a great effort to compete for the votes of this people to win the election of the marketing strategy practically, Political organizations use the results of research to help position the party in the best position for the idea of placement. Positioning is an important aspect of political market analysis. Based on Anthony Downs' original theory of political competition, the market model was based on an analysis of how to encourage voters to vote as much as possible. The theory has been widely practiced until recently, many theorists have developed alternative ideas about party positioning, emphasizing the continuity of devotion to public activity and the importance of guiding opinions as well as listening to public opinion.

Smith and Saunders (1990) pointed out that the problem of political viability is the result of “The Fight to the Centre” where political parties fail directly. that cannot differentiate the brand value of a product. through a unique selling point.

4.1.3.1 Picture of America's economic transformation Tony Blair proposes the New Labor policy in England, etc. Targeting Segments is a search for a group of voters by categorizing them into groups that have criteria to be considered. can have many criteria. For example (1) Demographic criteria such as gender, age, education, etc. (2) Geographic criteria are The division of electoral areas into districts, provinces, regions, or states. (3) Electoral strategy criteria are The Top–End States, The Play Hard States, and The Big Challenge States.

4.1.3.2 An example of a voter classification in the United States, in the past, the Democratic Party was a party representing the poor and the minority, while the Republican Party represents the rich and the business. But in the era of

political marketing, the party has created a message tailored to the electorate, causing a change in the new segment, giving rise to a phenomenon known as the "Reagan Democrat". In other words, the Democrats loyal to Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984. And in 1992 and 1996, some Republicans also turned to Democrat Bill Clinton.

In Thailand, such a phenomenon may not be clearly formed because there is only one political party that has been around for more than half a century, the Democratic Party, And the electoral loyalty to the Democratic Party is limited to the middle class, which is very sensitive to the political situation. Changes in electoral decisions are therefore always occurring to classify the segmentation of Thailand, Seymour Martin Lipset's "class" may be used as a criterion for consideration. For example, Rattanadilok Na Bhuket's work on elections versus classes of people in Bangkok in the 1995 and 1996 general elections found that the Democrat Party was elected by the middle class above the lower class, the People's Party elected by the lower middle class than the lower middle class, 1995.

The middle class and the lower classes exercised their voting rights in similar proportions, while in 1996, the lower classes exercised more voting rights than the middle class (Rattanadilok Na Bhuket, P., 1998: 107). However, Newman (1999: 46) argues that accurate electoral classification and proper assessment of needs for proper positioning will lead to political success.

#### *4.2 Positioning of Candidates and Parties*

Product placement is the relationship between segment and product, finding the right point in the right position and being accepted by the sampled electorate. For example, Ronald Reagan positioned Jimmy Carter's "solver problem" while Bill Clinton positioned the "New Democrat" to change. Management 12 years ago under Republican Party In the White House, political positioning is often in harmony with the political ideology of the party. In the past, political ideology was usually stable and unchanged, but nowadays the marketing approach drives political

ideology to change according to research results on people's needs. The presentation of the issues in the campaign is therefore based on the results of research at that time.

Newman, B. I., (1999: 46) proposes a process of political positioning that begins with the party and candidate assessing their own strengths and weaknesses before evaluating the weaknesses and strengths of their competitors. Then the electorate's market share is allocated and the target audience is more likely to choose themselves. The next step is the process of creating an image, that is, impressing the position and personality of the candidate in the minds of the electorate (Newman, B. I., 1999: 46). Therefore, Candidate Positioning can be achieved through communication through media presentations, provided that the branding of the image must be considered to follow the intended audience. At the same time, the political policy itself can be used to emphasize the image of a candidate for positioning. Therefore, it is a political marketing tool for the voters to understand and clearly see the candidate's identity, position, and vision (Newman, B.I., 1999:86). The political position of a candidate can be achieved in two ways:

##### *4.2.1 Use of Political Party Policies*

To create an image, it must be considered following the target audience, while political policies can also be used as part of reinforcing the image of a candidate. The positioning of parties and candidates is important in politics because electors can change decisions quickly.

##### *4.2.2 Rebuilding One's Image*

Altering positions to lead to a campaign advantage, and effective communication with the electorate can lead to electoral victories. However, the positioning of the Party and Candidate using the Party's and candidate's policies and building their image must also be consistent with the current socio-political context.

### 4.3 Political Marketing Strategy and Operations

Definitions, principles, applications, political strategies, political market research, and critical understanding of how political parties use marketing to achieve their goals. Political branding, political marketing within stationary political marketing communication, rational communication, two-way political marketing communication, political delivery marketing, and other matters in political marketing and Democracy (Siriwichai, C. 2021). However, Jenpasit (2021) discusses 4 marketing tactics adopted by politicians, which Ekka Patonthanakul, Chulalongkorn Business School previously addressed on Chula Radio's Biz Genius program on the topic of "Marketing strategies that politicians use in politics" is interesting because of an online election campaign can extract lessons on Digital Marketing, Strategic Marketing, and Personal Branding in many aspects, which has information and opinions Thumbsup contains to confirm some of them. In addition, Dr. Egg said that the 4S that politicians use are Sensation, Story, Speed, and Social Media, details are as follows (Jenpasit. 2019);

#### 4.3.1 Sensation

Dr. Ek (Jenpasit. 2019) states that people use a lot of emotion to make decisions and consider their appearance. When the qualities of political leaders are similar, "Outward appearance" affects the choice of politicians. We can see that there are always celebrities, actors, singers, or famous people walking in and out of politics. Although there are other reasons to come to work here which are all five senses. "Form-taste-smell-sound-touch", Therefore it is used in politics all the time, especially in the face-to-face campaign, touch (eg handshakes, hugs, or even kisses on the cheeks), gave a thing (Give flowers or garlands), take pictures, takes selfies with politicians. These will be very effective, especially in Thailand. The most obvious foreign success is inevitable in the politics of the President of the United States, In 2008, Barack Obama won the election for using social media to represent a black politician. (according to ethnic diversity trends), and the "Change" campaign, playing with the feeling of

"boredom," ultimately won the election at that time (Jenpasit. 2019).

#### 4.3.2 Story

Notice that this election has a lot of new politicians coming in, but how can political parties make people remember this politician?. The answer is that the politician must come with Storytelling about where he came from, and what he had done. To just say that this person is good, honest, and sincere, is not enough, because the values that arise are not much. If we use a way to tell stories about how goodness, talent, or coolness comes from, it will immediately increase the value of that politician. But be careful, one thing is that the Story has to exist. This is consistent with the findings from McCann Worldgroup (2019; Jenpasit. 2019), which stated in the first point that the truth is the most valued currency, consumers question their distrust of their surroundings, even political media, social media, and global institutions. But consumers trust the brand to really understand the consumer, which political party is one of the brands that people choose. We can see that the new political parties have an advantage in this regard, but the old political parties have the advantage that they can communicate the change in the party to the fan base as well.

#### 4.3.3 Speed

What's going on as a trend politician will focus on that, and play with emerging or ongoing trends such as gender bias, LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer). Even the trend of legalizing marijuana affects decision-making as well can be seen from the research of Benjapornrungsikul, P. (2011) "Marketing Factors Influencing the Selection Behavior of Thai Political Party of Electoral People. in Bangkok" in 2011 stated; The results of the research group of 385 people aged at least 18 years found that most of the samples were following the news of their favorite political parties, and found that the bad news of a political party affects the decision to choose a candidate or political party. Therefore, being susceptible to currents, whether positive or negative, has all

political implications, causing political parties to inevitably focus on current trends (Jenpasit. 2019).

#### 4.3.4 Social Media

Social Media, whether Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or LINE, etc. in this era. There are tools or features used in advertising known as "Retargeting" it will immediately tell who is the target audience, then enter a message to each group of people with different needs repeatedly and will be found everywhere. That's why we feel why this politician is so honest with us Because words from politicians are often shown. Including the spontaneous trend on Social Media, especially Twitter, has a noticeable effect on the feelings of the new generation compared to 4-5 years ago (Jenpasit. 2019).

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, political marketing refers to the conduct of political activities through marketing methods, namely research, product development, audience classification, political positioning, public relations, as well as strategic planning from the core. 4Ps Marketing has been used politically to incentivize voters to vote; (1) *Product* means that there is a policy to solve urgent problems with immediate action, a novel policy, a hope for people, an interesting vision for local development, a presentation of history and work experience. of candidates running for election. The personality of the applicant's appearance attracts the decision. (2) *Push Marketing* means knocking on the door of homes, and workplaces in various communities, using the colors of political groups for recognition such as red, orange, green, blue, etc. Continuously held keynote forums and attended forums to show visions of development, communicated politics with people with short, memorable messages, supported by political parties. (3) *Pull Marketing* means having communication through social channels. Media, there is communication through local media, presenting the applicant's image, appearance, and dress, creating a new campaign sign, easy to understand communication, and doing various activities to create a trend. (4) *Polling means* that

there is a public speaking forum to survey the popularity of the area, there is a policy satisfaction survey, a field visit to explore problems in the community to formulate a campaign guideline, and participation in the vision in academic forums. various, constantly surveying their own popularity and political groups.

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