

REINTERPRETING SECURITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW TYPES OF RISKS AND CONFLICTS OF GLOBALISATION 4.0¹

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Abstract: This study maps the political, social and economic trends expected for the next 15-20 years, which will determine the processes of the so-called globalisation 4.0, making sure that the changed nature of the risks and their identification are also examined in the light of these prognoses.

Besides analysing the shift in the geopolitical system and the increasing risks that result from new global roles, we also discuss the new, already perceivable security challenges like energy security, the security related aspects of climate change and the risks generated by demographic-change-related urbanisation processes – laying an emphasis on the context of interconnections between these and the 4.0 revolution.

Keywords: security, risk, geopolitical system, globalisation, “Black Swan”.

INTRODUCTION

“At the beginning of the 21st century, international security is undergoing revolutionary changes, led by the powers of globalisation and information technology. From a security point of view, the past one and a half decades have been characterised by unpredictability.” (Szenes, 2005)

We are living in the new wave of globalisation, the era of Globalisation 4.0⁴. The international order is changing fast, and the likelihood of surprising, some-

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⁴ “Shaping the global, regional and industry agendas at the beginning of 2019 will take place in a context of unprecedented uncertainty, fragility and controversy. In a world preoccupied by crisis management at a moment of transformative change we will use the spirit of Davos to build the future in a constructive, collaborative way. ... The World Economic Forum Annual

times shocking, events, which professional literature is starting to refer to as “black swans”⁵, is exponentially increasing. Nassim Nicholas Taleb (2011) uses the black swan as the symbol of highly improbable events. He describes three principle characteristics of such events: they are unpredictable; carry a massive impact; and, after their occurrence, we concoct an explanation that makes them appear less random and more predictable than they are. The astonishing success of Google was a black swan; so was 9/11. Examining the “process of self-deception” of society, he identifies the sensitive points around which society becomes increasingly vulnerable, building on imaginary knowledge.

Due to the complexity and tight interrelation of risks, the defence system is becoming increasingly vulnerable to unexpected events. Par excellence, the challenge is a complicated security net, in which even almost unnoticeable defects become perceivable. Today, ensuring the continuous alertness level of the system and the minimisation of potential defects (to avoid major problems) are fundamental requirements.

Concerns about high-risk events are becoming increasingly reasonable – and, at the same time, one must expect the simultaneous and mutually reinforcing appearance of the impacts of minor, less noticeable failures. The system is more vulnerable and easier to attack – as a result, it is gradually weakening. Taking all these factors into account, a high level of resistibility can be interpreted as a fundamental requirement in the context of security.

The aim of this study is to present how the soft nature of these risk factors influences the reinterpretation of the toolset used for risk identification, with special respect to human aspects and the security challenges resulting from the reorientation of the process generated by the value system of western civilisation. (Garai & Szalai & Szőke, 2017)

From epistemological perspective, our research is constructivist: in this study, we accept the foundations of scientific approaches rooted in the constructivist philosophy of science. These include, inter alia, the questioning of the security of the external, objective world and social reality independent of human activities and knowledge, and a value-neutral scientific method. According to this approach, “the purpose of both lay and scientific knowledge construction is to provide useful, adequate, coherent, stable, or meaningful representation of the world in accordance with particular sets of systemic and sociolinguistic rules and constraints in given contexts” (Maréchal, 2010: p. 220).⁶

Meeting will focus on the strategic ramifications of Globalization 4.0 and its future impact on global cooperation and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.” (WEF, 2019, Global Agenda)

⁵ See: Nassim Nicholas Taleb’s book “The Black Swan – The Impact of the Highly Improbable”. The author is a professor in the Sciences of Uncertainty at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and a researcher of interrelations between uncertainty, probability, and knowledge. His work, published in 2007 and, in reedited form, in 2010, was very popular in the United States and Canada.

⁶ It may be interesting to compare it with the concept of securitization by Barry Buzan.

THE NEW TYPE OF RISKS AND CONFLICTS

Since the 1990s, the international system has been shaped by two, mutually reinforcing, processes. On the one hand, the security architecture, which used to be based on the bipolar conflict of the cold war and its predictability, is becoming more and more obsolete. On the other, as globalisation accelerates, the state-centred system is weakening. In the international system of our days, a significant part of security challenges are rooted not in the states themselves but in non-state actors like terrorist organisations, organised crime groups and transnational business organisations. (Juhász, 2014:10)

The spectrum of geopolitical challenges is growing, partly because the classic, Westphalia type system is eroding (even though the state will remain the key player on a global scale) and partly because the influence of non-state players is growing. (Haas, 2017)

The transition into the new international system carries new types of risks. As a result of emerging security challenges and threats, the classic concept of security, which covers foreign policy and the military, is becoming outdated – meanwhile, the importance of the economic, cyber, environmental and human aspects of the security concept are increasing⁷. The Global Risk Report of the World Economic Forum presented in Davos in 2019, identifies the polarisation of politics and societies, and a weakening of the rules-based international system as headline threats – besides extreme weather, which has been at the top of the global risk factor list for years. The environmental risks category first appeared among the top 5 in 2011 – but in recent years' reports, such risks have become increasingly dominant. According to the Report, climate change, extreme weather and natural disasters have an extremely high likelihood, while their management is more and more difficult, due to the deteriorating geopolitical situation.

The Report refers to fast emerging cyber and technological threats as potential “blind spots”, and societies still fail to recognise the vulnerability of network-based societies – which is a phenomenon that can also be interpreted as a threat in itself. The potential negative impacts of new communication devices on the individual's private life and cultural integrity of societies are worrying. (Szászi, 2019)

Among the security challenges of the 21st century, the maintenance, protection and economical utilisation of the natural and man-made environments that surround people have become tasks which, although far from the traditional military dimensions of security, are exciting and require a complex approach.

A unique trend of this era is the 4.0 technological revolution, which is characterised by a fusion of different technologies, which eliminates the borderline

⁷ One of the new key questions in the 2019 Report is whether the growth of macroeconomic risks may push the international economy into a crisis again – as the global intent for overcoming these risks seems to be weakening. According to the Report, a stop of economic growth and, consequently, a recession are to be expected, yet central banks will have limited power to mitigate the negative impacts of this downturn, as interest rates are still near zero. (WEF Report, 2019)

between physical, digital and biological spheres. (Schwab, 2016/a) Besides the transformation of the different disciplines, the economy and the industry, this phenomenon also raises the question of what the essence of the human being is. (Schwab, 2016/b)

According to forecasts, one of the most dominant trends will be the continual development of technology at a revolutionary rate, robotics, bio- and nanotechnology and the so-called big data phenomenon (i.e. giant data volumes generated by users) being the key areas of this revolutionary development. From an ethical (e.g. artificial intelligence) and security (e.g. cyber attacks) perspective, this development is becoming an increasingly worrying risk factor, while we must also be aware that far-reaching social impacts of the technological revolution (mostly the social tensions generated by the loss of jobs due to automation) are to be expected. (Garai & Szalai & Szőke, 2017)

Meanwhile, the complex security risks posed by the natural environment are also becoming more and more challenging and must be taken into account looking forward. According to research results, the most serious threat factor of contemporary civilisation is the global climate change. “The management of the climate crisis definitely calls for global cooperation and innovation, with the inclusion of a wide range of actors. However, in this increasingly multipolar international system it may happen that competition for resources will strengthen, protectionist tendencies will appear and the scope of partnerships will shrink. ... At the end of the first decade of the 21st century, 21 countries in the world did not have enough agricultural land or water, which impacted the lives of 600 million people. According to forecasts, 1.4 billion people in 36 countries will live in such circumstances by 2025. The two main sources of the lack of water are accelerating urbanisation and population increase.” (Matus, 2018)

Forecasts expect a continuous global population increase throughout the 21st century. (Atlantic Council, 2016)⁸ The world’s population is expected to reach 9 billion already by the middle of the century, and some say this number will be as high as over 11 billion by then.⁹

The demographic problem is full of contradictions,¹⁰ though forecasts expect the formation of a global middle class as a result of the population explosion.¹¹ By the middle of the century, the majority of the Earth’s population are expected to live in cities, which carries challenges mostly in the areas of transport, healthcare, air quality and public utilities. In the context of the revolutionary technological

8 In relative terms, the largest population increase is expected to take place in Sub-Saharan Africa (Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Nigeria). The population of India is likely to exceed that of China in the next decades. (Szőke, 2018)

9 This population explosion is likely to last until 2050, after which stagnation is expected. (The Economist, 2015)

10 A population explosion is expected to be seen in emerging countries, which will eventually lead to the widening of the global middle class. It is becoming increasingly obvious that the developed world will, meanwhile, suffer from the social and economic consequences of ageing.

11 The Rise of Creative Cities and Creative Class (Florida, 2002, 2012)

development expected to take place until 2035, urbanisation as a key trend will bring about such changes in lifestyle which, taken together, can be interpreted as a new, complex risk source.¹² The role of environmental factors (drinking water, agriculture, energy utilisation) will increase and, as a result of climate change, the sustainment of the natural environment will become a security issue in itself.¹³ “By 2035, access to natural resources will become a constant source of conflict, with consequences such as famine, lack of arable land and drinking water, armed conflicts because of access to natural resources or the mass migration of the so-called “climate refugees”. In general, developing countries will suffer most from these changes. The situation of Sub-Saharan countries will be highly risky, while the Middle-East will suffer from a severe lack of water. Certain small developing island countries will continue to have to face climate change and the increase in sea level as processes that threaten their existence.” (Szóke, 2018)

MULTIPOLARITY AND/OR GEOFUSION?

The problems foreseen by contemporary forecasts and research clearly include the trend that existential threats – as a central element of security – can be interpreted increasingly indirectly. As the international security situation is undergoing radical changes, new problems require a fundamentally novel approach. The identification and understanding of risks requires new maps. (Csizmadia, 2017:106) New aspects – all in all, a new perspective is required for security policy to define adequate and, to a significant extent, preventive measures, taking into account the large variety of challenges, as a synthesis of civil solutions, using a complex set of tools.

Instead of the traditional, narrow-focused military perspective, we must realise that there is a new geopolitical reality in the 21st century. Asia is emerging as a new power centre, and the world’s economic focus is gradually shifting to the developing world. Though the economic context of future scenarios outlines rather optimistic trends, a large amount of concern is expressed in their political aspects. Opinions differ on whether economic interdependence will deepen or

¹² We cannot ignore the contradictory nature of the impact mechanism of technological development. Besides the positive impacts occurring in medicine, education – in general: in the increase in the standard of living – scientific breakthroughs are becoming an ever more threatening source of danger, while the utilisation of technological development feats is uneven between different regions of the world, even between the inhabitants of one single country. The technological explosion increasingly surfaces the paradox of technological development that as access increases, so does exclusion. (Czirják, 2018) This context is becoming more and more important from the point of view of security policy.

¹³ “One of the key aspects of technological progress is connected to the global energy industry. The patterns of the combined macroeconomic energy need are expected to follow the trends in global economic prospects. The demand for primary energy is likely to increase at the highest rate in China, India and South-East Asia (due to their dynamic economic growth) and in Sub-Saharan Africa (due to its population explosion). However, the global energy map will continue to change. The so-called “oil era” is expected to end slowly, in a die-hard manner, rather than with a sudden and loud bang.” (Szóke, 2018)

protectionism and commercial barriers will become even stronger in the next decades. (Szóke, 2018)

The majority of publications forecast a further upheaval of China, which may bring about radical changes in many respects. (Major & Cudan, 2018) There is also general agreement that the United States will retain its superpower position, though with some relative loss of its power, while the global role of Europe will weaken. According to the forecast of Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Germany will be the only European country which will be among the world's top ten economic powers by 2050, and the importance of the European Union in world economy, compared to Asia and the United States, will continue to decrease (PwC, 2017).

“There are many disputes in professional literature about the future role of Russia. Most forecasts foresee Russia as a regional player in Eurasia. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that, in the medium term, the most important global bilateral partnership will be the relationship between the USA and China. South and East Asia can expect significant political and economic success. Meanwhile, the Middle-East and Sub-Saharan Africa are likely to continue to suffer from conflicts, in parallel with demographic growth and an increasing environmental pressure. It is reasonably assumed that Latin America will continue to suffer from depending on the fluctuations in the world market prices of raw materials.” (Szóke, 2018)

Forecasts warn us of the lessons to be learnt from the legitimacy crisis of global institutions following WWII, and an increasing number of researchers prognosticate the end of multilateralism.¹⁴ Eventually, this will lead to the weakening of international institutions – in general, of former multilateral practices¹⁵ – and to

14 However, there are works which try to interpret security policy risks in the light of an expected strengthening of the world's multipolar nature. For us to see clearly, we must understand the concept of multipolarity. In the circumstances prevailing in the nineties, the term meant that, in the long run, several (5-6) key powers will come to existence with roughly equal economic and military power. The relationships between these powers will decide international political relations, alliances and conflicts alike. (Bíró, 2003) With a system theory approach, the multipolarity of the international system can also be seen as a sign of increasing entropy, i.e. as a loss of energy, which, as regards political relations, will lead to a gradual collapse of order and an increase in security risks (Sur, 1995:290). “System approach, which has decreasing importance in the study of international relations, enables the compilation of a model in which the political and legal aspects of multipolarity can be separated. In a legal sense, multipolarity also includes the concept of sovereign equality of states, i.e. the opportunity for states to participate in international affairs as entities with an autonomous identity and with equal legal capacities. By contrast, in the context of politics, multipolarity makes the uniform management of affairs in the international arena extremely complicated.” (Bíró, 2003) However, this situation also has a positive aspect: a clearer line between regional affairs and international political relations than before (Sur, 1995:291) – and this is exactly where the contemporary expression of multipolarity differs from the world of international politics as seen in 18th and 19th centuries. Thus multipolarity strengthens and pushes the world towards not a balance of power but disorder, and the events of the first half of the nineties confirm this concept. In an environment like the one that took shape in international political relations in the nineties, this tendency will take effect, pointing towards an increasing diffusion of power. (Bíró, 2003)

15 The role of the United Nations is expected to shift towards “softer” issues (e.g. humanitarian aid in conflict zones, sustainable development) and, at the same time, the composition of

a new world: instead of the appearance of a new global hegemony, competition may form between regional powers, and conflicts between states may intensify. (Garai & Szalai & Szőke, 2017)

IDEOLOGICAL VACUUM AND/OR A RACE BETWEEN RELIGIONS?

Analyses pay increasing attention to the security policy context of ideologies since the number of attacks and terrorist acts for religious reasons has risen in recent years. As faith plays an increasing role in politics and international relations, the fight between civilisations actually means a fight between religions. (Toft & Philpott & Shah 2011)¹⁶ It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the investigation of the trend of religions becoming a world politics factor is a research topic of increasing importance.¹⁷

Peter Ludwig Berger's book *The De-secularisation of the World*, published in 1999, can be interpreted as a paradigm shift in the sociology of religion.¹⁸ In this book, Berger clearly proves that modernity and the consumer society have undermined people's former (religious) certainties, though the human psyche cannot tolerate uncertainty in the long term¹⁹. It is for this reason that masses of people

the UN Security Council is expected to be redefined (above all, in that Japan, Germany, Brazil and India should also be given the right of veto).

16 In their book *God is Back*, British authors Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2009) state, writing about the cultural war between America and Europe, that America succeeded in what Europe did not: making peace between religion and modern freedom, equality and rationality. In Europe, churches have become too comfortable, their innovative power has diminished. By contrast, a competition between religions has formed in the USA, which serves as an incentive for religious communities.

The free practice of faith is tightly connected to the history of the United States. Free practice of religion has always been a fundamental principle as it was a leading social expectation in the colonies. The first article of the Bill of Rights, the amendments to the American Constitution, also ratifies it, besides the freedom of religion, press and assembly. (Janda & Berry & Goldman 2011, pp. 488–489)

In our days, though there are different opinions about the role of religion in foreign policy, one must realise that the idea of exceptionality often appears in the relationship of the USA with the outer world – the roots of this idea partly having a religious nature. (Csizmadia, 2018) Consequently, it is a generally accepted view that America is a country that has been chosen by some superior power and has a mission to change the world – and the difficulties faced in carrying out this mission are the manifestations of the fight between the good and the bad. (Judis 2005, 1–3 p.)

17 E.g. the monitoring activities of Boston University or the Berger Centre for Religion and Modernity of Munster University.

18 American sociologist of religion P.L. Berger earlier wrote that religions would die out and secularisation will once and for all close humankind's religious era. His work published in 1999, however, is a total opposite of this former concept. The question is whether this is a change of mind of a researcher or we must identify far deeper changes taking place in reality.

19 In this context, we must make mention of Jeggle's *publication on global culture, in which he warns of the dangers of borderlessness, the breaking down of borders, which may evoke new feelings and aspects of vulnerability* and the loss of the sense of security, since they generate emotional vulnerability and liability. (Jeggle, 1994)

will return to religions that have stood the test of time for millennia. According to Berger, the 21st century will be a unique era of a neo-renaissance of religions, which will see an unprecedented prosperity. (Békefy 2015; Békefy & Birkás 2015,)

“All this actually also entails a serious danger: if religious fundamentalism strengthens in a world religion that cannot accept the diversity and coexistence of different religious and belief systems, that fundamentalism will sooner or later claim the exclusiveness of its religion. And that may lead to severe conflicts.” (Békefy, 2018)

The problem is deepened by the fact that the idea of capitalism lost face in general after the 2008 world financial crisis. The era of the main ideological trends of the post-cold-war world order is nearing its end, and these ideologies are expected to be replaced by a leading ideological alternative in the near future. “As a consequence of this, a transformation in the internal politics of developed western countries can also be expected: politics will eventually leave behind the traditional left-right ideological conflict. One new potential ideological conflict is that between pro-globalisation and anti-globalisation parties: as a result of the Internet and globalisation, a cosmopolitan identity will be born, while others argue that – paradoxically – personal (religious, ethnic or national) identity may appreciate.” (Garai & Szalai & Szőke, 2017)

CONCLUSIONS

“It is far from obvious that the legacy left to us by the currently ongoing mergers will be a future that offers a higher level of peacefulness, prosperity or cultural unity.” (R. D. Kaplan, 2018:18)

The concept of the traditional nation state is being overwritten by the opportunities arising as a result of digitalisation and widespread Internet access. The emergence of new forms of expression of opinion and the strengthening of the civil society carry the opportunity for multi-level governance – and these trends make the changing and redefinition of the concept of security inevitable.²⁰ (Szőke, 2018)

The study examines the new types of threats. Looking at the most significant geopolitical dynamics, in the context of the “crisis of internationalism”²¹, we surveyed the risks of the redistribution of burdens²² - but it was in the same context that the risks which can be reasonably prognosticated as a result of populist politics and which are primarily connected to the technological revolution and the

²⁰ See the National Intelligence Council’s prognosis until 2025 (2008)

²¹ “Communism is dead, but is the other great postwar ideology, liberal internationalism, also dying?” (Hoffmann, 1995:159)

²² With reference to the work of Hal Brands (2019), we considered it important to take into account the assumption that, by ensuring more advantageous bargains and agreements for the United States through the redistribution of burdens, Washington can further reinforce the position of America in the status quo, together with its partners and allies.

fears generated by the changes in cultural identity and the natural environment, were discussed.

The study also highlights the “black swan” phenomenon – events that are unpredictable, unforeseen, often have extraordinary consequences and whose occurrence renders prognoses invalid – thus also restricting the security context of forecasts. (Taleb, 2011)

In this regard, the study’s aim is to inspire new thoughts and their presentation and encourages a new type of security assurance, defined along unconventional views. In other words, a security narrative which interprets the new system of conditions of global security based on the broadest possible interpretation of cause and effect interrelations, the understanding of interrelated root causes and drivers and, ideally, the redefined operation of economics and society.²³

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