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**Beyond the Societal:  
the Actoral Multiplicity and Explaining World Politics**

**Abstract:** This article demonstrates that implications of Multiplicity, used to make the case for the societal condition of the international (Rosenberg, 2016), explain the heterogeneous condition of world politics as well. The article argues that the logics of Multiplicity (difference, interaction, combination, co-existence, and dialectical change) drive world politics beyond the sovereign order. This is enabled not only by the emergence of non-state actors as entities different than the states, but also by their interactions with each other and with nation-states, the combinations they stimulate, their co-existence, and the dialectical changes in which they partake. Consequently, the article makes the case for actoral multiplicity that explains the relations among state and non-state actors, and the ways in which they co-create world politics. The article shows how the logics of Multiplicity shape world politics, and what are the implications of this process for the study of International Relations, including the Multiplicity programme.

**Keywords:** societal multiplicity, non-state actors, heterogeneity, world politics, world order, the international, IR theory

## Introduction. Multiplicity and Researching Heterogeneity

Heterogeneity of agency is one of the crucial issues in the attempts to theorise the contemporary world politics,<sup>1</sup> and the role of non-state actors (NSA) within it.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, this concerns the debates over the competition and/or co-existence between the sovereign order of states and the developing heterogeneity of NSA in world politics<sup>3</sup>. This uncertainty is mirrored in attempts to question methodological nationalism and state-centrism in IR theory.<sup>4</sup> In this article, I explore and theorise the actoral multiplicity in world politics and the implications of such for IR theory.

The concept of actoral multiplicity draws from the idea of societal multiplicity, proposed by Justin Rosenberg.<sup>5</sup> It is an analytical framework for which central is how the relations between and among multiple societies create their unique qualities like identity, history, social development or patterns of interaction with 'others'. This framework is based on the ontological premise which is that societal multiplicity is the condition of human life.<sup>6</sup> This premise is implied by five logics constitutive for the human collective coexistence. These logics are: difference, interaction, combination, co-existence, and dialectical change.<sup>7</sup> Taken together, they drive 'the inter-societal' as a central feature of human collective coexistence and hence a condition of the international which is considered fundamentally inter-societal.

Consequently, societal Multiplicity casts a new light on the central IR concept. Moreover, it provides an alternative to the strictly political understanding of the international as the inter-state, and hence paves a way to overcome methodological nationalism.<sup>8</sup> For Rosenberg, exploring the societal condition of human coexistence reveals the true potential of

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<sup>1</sup> *Heterarchy in World Politics*, edited by Philip G. Cerny, New York-London: Routledge, 2023. Cf. *Handbook on Global Governance and Regionalism*, edited by Rüdiger W. Jürgens and Astrid Carrapatoso, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> *Mapping Non-State Actors in International Relations*, edited by Marianna Charountaki and Daniela Irrera, Cham: Springer, 2022. Cf. Braun, Benjamin, Sebastian Schindler, and Tobias Wille, 'Rethinking Agency in International Relations: Performativity, Performances, and Actor-Networks.' *Journal of International Relations and Development*, Vol. 22(4), 2019, pp. 787–807. DOI: 10.1057/s41268-018-0147-z.

<sup>3</sup> Aleksandra Spalińska, 'New medievalism (Re)Appraised: Framing Heterarchy in World Politics.' In *Heterarchy in World Politics*, edited by Philip G. Cerny, Routledge: New York, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Philip G. Cerny, 'Heterarchy: Toward Paradigm Shift in World Politics.' In *Heterarchy in World Politics*, edited by Philip G. Cerny, Oxon-New York: Routledge, 2023, pp. 3-15.

<sup>5</sup> Justin Rosenberg, 'International Relations in the Prison of Political Science', *International Relations*, Vol 30(2), 2016, pp. 127-153 (p.140). DOI: 10.1177/0047117816644662.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 135-141. It needs to be noted that the relational dynamics of the inter-societal comes from the research on Uneven and Combined Development (which inspired Multiplicity), not from *a priori* relational ontological position. The recognition for the importance of relationality comes thus from empirics, not from a philosophical standpoint. More on this in the discussion section on p. 18.

<sup>8</sup> Benjamin Tallis and Justin Rosenberg, 'Introduction: the international of everything,' *Cooperation & Conflict*, Vol. 57(3), 2022, pp. 250-267. DOI: 10.1177/00108367221098490.

the international which embraces the broader scope of human activities such as art, literature, architecture, social action, and others.<sup>9</sup> Politics and power relations are only one of them.

This article shows that the implications of Multiplicity used to make the case for the societal condition of the international, explain the heterogeneous condition of world politics as well. Consequently, they drive the actoral multiplicity, manifested in the heterogeneity of agency among state and non-state actors. The article argues thus that the logics of Multiplicity (difference, interaction, combination, co-existence, and dialectical change) drive world politics beyond the sovereign order. This development is enabled not only by the emergence of NSA as entities different than the state, but also by their interactions with each other and with states, the combinations they stimulate, their co-existence, and from dialectical changes which they are subjected to and which they contribute to.<sup>10</sup> Heterogeneity of agency is here understood broadly as a diversity of state and non-state actors, capable to exercise authority and exert political influence. It is considered in reference to politics, governance, and power relations. Multiplicity's explanatory power applies thus not only to the societal condition of human collective coexistence but also to the heterogeneous condition of world politics. Consequently, this article makes the case for actoral multiplicity.

Fulfilling the task set for this article requires several enterprises, organised here as follows. First, I review the existing literature and highlight the contribution of this article. Second, basing on conducted research, I elaborate on the logics of Multiplicity in world politics beyond sovereign order. Third, I discuss the implications of actoral Multiplicity for the study of International Relations. That embraces theorising world politics, the Multiplicity programme itself, conceptualising the international, and the IR's relationship with political science. Finally, I conclude by summarising the findings and suggesting further questions for the Multiplicity programme.

## **1. The Puzzle of State-centrism in Multiplicity Literature**

The Multiplicity research programme aims at revealing the true potential of the international, regardless of the political organisation of the world. Consequently, Multiplicity is supposed to re-ground IR as a discipline and to re-define its subject matter,<sup>11</sup> releasing it

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> To specify the analysis, this paper focuses on non-state actors and their activities as the hallmarks of heterogeneity in world politics.

<sup>11</sup> Rosenberg, 'International Relations,' pp. 129-134.

from its relationship with political science.<sup>12</sup> This is considered necessary because of the domination of state-based political relations in the IR agenda which which contributes to identity struggles in IR, and its dependent position towards other social sciences (as ideas, fruitful for the progress of IR, are often ‘borrowed’ from other fields).<sup>13</sup> In the debate on Multiplicity, however, it was pointed out that despite the progress in theorising the international, Multiplicity accidentally reproduces the focus on ‘fixed’ units like states or national societies typical for IR in general.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, the ‘shadow of the statist wall,’<sup>15</sup> follows Multiplicity just like other research agendas in IR.

This critique provokes the question: how the Multiplicity programme relates to the problematic of world politics? World politics is a subject matter crucial for IR as a discipline. Multiplicity certainly needs to address this question if the purpose of providing the common ground is supposed to be actualised. In this context, particularly interesting is the contemporary world politics due to the diverse and abundant activities of non-state actors. Is Multiplicity capable of explaining the contemporary world politics? This article argues and shows that indeed, it is. To address this question and, simultaneously, the critique of Multiplicity, this article shows how the logics of Multiplicity drive world politics despite and beyond sovereign order. Consequently, this article shows that the Multiplicity framework embraces different types of heterogeneity — not only societal but also political.

The necessity to embrace the heterogeneity of agency was implicitly pointed out in the literature. For example, Julian Go and George Lawson support re-grounding IR with the use of ‘interactive Multiplicity’<sup>16</sup> solely without emphasizing ‘societal.’ On the other hand, Viacheslav Morozov argues for embracing different kinds of polities as well as ‘other types of collectives’ in general, considering that there is ‘no discussion of what constitutes a „society,” or the basic entity capable of entering a relationship with other entities.’<sup>17</sup> However, the problem of state-centrism remains unanswered. Milja Kurki, for whom societal Multiplicity is too limited, implicitly points to this issue, stating that ‘we need to recognize the wide range of

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Hannes Peltonen, ‘A prison break into the past? A comment on Justin Rosenberg’s “International Relations in the prison of Political Science”’, *International Relations*, Vol. 32(2), 2018, pp. 245–246. DOI: 10.1177/0047117818774723; Alena Drieschová, ‘The Multiplicity straightjacket’, *New Perspectives*, Vol. 27(3), 2019, pp. 155–159. DOI: 10.1177/2336825X1902700317.

<sup>15</sup> Brieg Powel, ‘Deepening “Multiplicity”: a response to Rosenberg’, *International Relations*, Vol. 32(2), 2018, pp. 248–250. DOI: 10.1177/0047117818774725.

<sup>16</sup> Julian Go and George Lawson, ‘Part 1. States, War, and Revolution,’ In *Global Historical Sociology*, edited by Julian Go and George Lawson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 1–34 (pp. 20–24).

<sup>17</sup> Viacheslav Morozov, ‘Uneven worlds of hegemony: towards a discursive ontology of societal Multiplicity’, *International Relations*, Vol. 36(1), 2022, pp. 83–103. DOI: 10.1177/00471178211010321.

– and the contested nature of – perspectives on multiplicity in the field.’<sup>18</sup> and suggests embracing all kinds of multiplicities ‘that matter for the study of political dynamics’.<sup>19</sup>

However, the problem of ‘different multiplicities’ remains unexplored. This article contributes to the debate on Multiplicity precisely by tackling this issue and proposing the idea of actoral Multiplicity as a result. Societal Multiplicity reveals the true potential of ‘the international,’ regardless of the political organisation of the world. This article shows that the organisation of the world can indeed be explained by the logics of Multiplicity. Specifically, I show how these logics drive the heterogeneity in world politics so the development of NSA and their contribution to world affairs. Consequently, this article develops Rosenberg’s framework beyond the ‘territorial trap.’<sup>20</sup> The article thus contributes to Multiplicity literature by accommodating and theorising the problem of heterogeneity in world politics, drawing from Rosenberg’s idea. The contribution includes, first, indicating the sixth logic of Multiplicity which is the connection. It emerges as a consequence of the actoral multiplicity and is crucial for the development of world politics. Second, the contribution embraces elaborating on the implications of actoral multiplicity for approaching ‘the international’ and for re-grounding IR which is Multiplicity’s main purpose.

Furthermore, the article contributes to theorising world politics as it shows how the logics of Multiplicity shape it. Specifically, the article helps to understand the relations between and among state and NSA, and the ways in which they co-create world politics.<sup>21</sup> Elaborating on the logics of Multiplicity helps to show this process in detail. Unlike other approaches that may seem similar to actoral multiplicity (like global international society or world society), Multiplicity is focused on relations and their consequences (like practices or particular orders), not just units or structures.<sup>22</sup> Agency and capacity develop and manifest in relations between and among different units across the ‘levels of analysis’ and despite them. Consequently, world politics is not just a state of affairs or the conduct of states in power competition. It is a dynamic and uneven process driven by the logics of Multiplicity with

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<sup>18</sup> Milja Kurki, ‘Multiplicity Expanded: IR Theories, Multiplicity, and the Potential of Transdisciplinary Dialogue’, *Globalizations*, Vol. 17(3), 2020, pp. 560–575. DOI:10.1080/14747731.2019.1670532.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. Cf. Anine Hagemann, ‘Understanding intervention through multiplicity: protection politics in South Sudan,’ *Globalizations*, Vol. 17(3), 2020, pp. 498–515. DOI: 10.1080/14747731.2020.1727178.

<sup>20</sup> John Agnew, *Globalization and Sovereignty. Beyond the Territorial Trap*, Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Matthias Hofferberth, ‘Get your actor(s) together! Theorising Agency in Global Governance,’ *International Studies Review*, Vol. 21(1), 2019, pp. 127–145. DOI: 10.1093/isr/viy018. Cf. Deborah D. Avant, Martha Finnemore, and Susan K. Sell, ‘Who Governs the Globe?’ In: *Who Governs the Globe?*, edited by Deborah D. Avant, Martha Finnemore and Susan K. Sell, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 1–31.

<sup>22</sup> For example, Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society?*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; Barry Buzan and Laust Schouenborg, *Global International Society. A New Framework for Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

heterogeneous actors involved. Multiplicity provides less complex, dynamic, relations-centred, and process-centred model that embraces the development of heterogeneity beyond sovereign order. This model has a variety of implications for IR as both the subject of study. The article shows that through making the case for actoral multiplicity.

## **2. Logics of Multiplicity as the Drivers of Heterogeneity in World Politics**

Societal multiplicity is constituted by five logics: difference, interaction, combination, co-existence, and dialectical change.<sup>23</sup> Below I analyse and show how these logics drive the actoral multiplicity in world politics.

### **2.1. Difference**

The most fundamental is the difference. As Justin Rosenberg claims, ‘the quantitative Multiplicity of societies is also a qualitative one’.<sup>24</sup> In this context, the ‘difference’ relates to the heterogeneity of actors. Differentiation of agency, including the limits of the nation-states and the increasing capacity of NSA, is a key manifestation of unevenness in world politics. That is precisely the issue as the difference concerns also the heterogeneity of entities that develop beyond the sovereign order and that have the capacity to exert political influence or even exercise public authority. There are various categorisations of non-state actors. Crucially, the difference in agency starts precisely with the given actor’s relationship with the public authority which is exercised by state actors. There are NSA who participate in exercising public authority and those who actively oppose it.

Intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) and regulatory bodies perform public authority, operating between and among the states. They constitute the ‘global governors,’ so ‘authorities who exercise power across borders for purposes affecting policy. Governors create issues, set agendas, establish and implement rules or programs, and evaluate and/or adjudicate outcomes.’<sup>25</sup> Due to their actions, the structure of global politics becomes a complex web of connected and diverse authorities.<sup>26</sup> That includes UN agencies that specialise in particular

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<sup>23</sup> Rosenberg, ‘International Relations’, pp. 135-41.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 137.

<sup>25</sup> Avant et al., ‘Who Governs the Globe?’, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 1 and p. 4.

area issues and impact relevant national policies.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, performing authority in the public capacity develops on all levels of governance. There are supranational (the EU) and sub-national territorial actors which perform public authority on the local level like cities or regions. Some of them constitute a ‘diagonal’ category that operates at the intersection of spatial and functional dimensions, namely the megacity<sup>28</sup>.

Business actors contribute to global governing when they impact policy-making.<sup>29</sup> Basing on the power of their native governments, they cast a ‘shadow of hierarchy’<sup>30</sup> and thus impact authorities in the countries where they operate. Business actors actually transgress the difference between the public and private authority, performing both.<sup>31</sup> They combine private (their profits and interests) and public roles (performing regulatory functions in the public and the provision of services and goods).<sup>32</sup> Their capacity to impact the regulations and the effectiveness in doing so contributed to the development of global governance.

On the other hand, the ‘alt-state’ or ‘anti-state’ actors<sup>33</sup> emerge whose actions target governments and societies. This embraces terrorist groups, warlords, and transnational criminal organisations.<sup>34</sup> The power of violent non-state actors (VNSA) comes, however, not only from violent measures those actors employ but also from their capacity to constitute the viable alternative to the state. Consequently, they become the ‘potential seedbeds of new social orders.’<sup>35</sup> Private authority develops in which power dynamics is based on private dependence that resides beyond the state authority or against it.<sup>36</sup> That affects the position of the individual, especially in the face of informal networks like criminal groups.<sup>37</sup> The position of

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<sup>27</sup> *Handbook of Transnational Governance. Institutions & Innovations*, edited by Thomas Hale and David Held, Cambridge- Maiden: Polity Press, 2011.

<sup>28</sup> Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001.

<sup>29</sup> For the impact of NSA on global regulations see Nico Kirsh, ‘Jurisdiction Unbound: (Extra)territorial Regulation as Global Governance,’ *European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 33(2), 2022, pp. 481–514. DOI: 10.1093/ejil/chac028.

<sup>30</sup> Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, ‘Governance without a state: Can it work?,’ *Regulation & Governance*, Vol. 4, 2010, pp. 113-134, DOI: 10.1111/j.1748-5991.2010.01076.x.

<sup>31</sup> Janne Mende, ‘Business authority in global governance: beyond public and private,’ *WZB Discussion Paper*, 2022, No. SP IV 2020-103r, Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB), Berlin.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Hall Gardner, *IR Theory, Historical Analogy, and Major Political War*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, p. 145.

<sup>34</sup> Max G. Manwaring, *A Contemporary Challenge to State Sovereignty: Gangs and Other Illicit Transnational Criminal Organization in Central America, El Salvador, Mexico, Jamaica, and Brazil*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007. Cf. John P. Sullivan and Robert J. Bunker, ‘Drug Cartels, Street Gangs, and Warlords,’ *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol.13(2), 2002, pp. 40-53. DOI: 10.1080/09592310 208559180.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Philip G. Cerny, ‘Neomedievalism, civil war, and the new security dilemma: Globalisation as durable disorder,’ *Civil Wars*, Vol. 1(1), 1998, pp. 36-64. DOI: 10.1080/13698249808402366.

<sup>37</sup> Phil Williams, *From The New Middle Ages to a New Dark Age: The Decline of The State And U.S. Strategy*, Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2008, pp. 23-27. Cf. Line Haidar, ‘The Emergence of the Mafia in Post-War

the individual, however, is not always lost; the best example is the agency and impact of foreign fighters.<sup>38</sup>

Political agency is therefore not only quantitative but also qualitative – meaning that it is not only multiple but also heterogeneous.<sup>39</sup> It contributes to the multi-nodal and multi-layered character of contemporary world politics.<sup>40</sup> Heterogeneity in both agency and capacity drives the actoral multiplicity and is a crucial factor contributing to the complexities of globalisation and the post-Cold War world order.

## 2.2. Interaction

The uneven and complex differences translate into a variety of interactions in which both state and NSA are involved. An increasing number of NSA and their encounters led Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye to distinguish the category of ‘transnational interactions’ from the already known inter-state relations.<sup>41</sup> These transnational interactions can have various forms. Below I analyse interacting through intervention, transaction, and coercion.

First, regulatory and supervisory bodies act through interventions. That embraces IGOs that operate between states, performing regulatory and supervisory tasks. This includes the UN agencies that specialise in particular area issues and impact relevant national policies.<sup>42</sup> For example, the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision or Financial Action Task Force have a strong position in combating the transnational crime. Their competences include, among others, financial regulation, counteracting money laundering and terrorist financing, or combating tax evasion<sup>43</sup>. Interacting through interventions is especially the case for the European Union (EU) which, as the both public and supranational authority,<sup>44</sup> aims at holding national and transnational bodies (both public and private) accountable. Beyond that,

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Syria: The Terror-Crime Continuum,’ *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 45(5-6), 2022, pp. 429-444. DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2019.1678869.

<sup>38</sup> Nicola Mathieson, ‘Foreign fighter experience and impact,’ *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 33(6), 2022, pp. 927-953, DOI:10. 1080/09592318.2022.2109888.

<sup>39</sup> Spalińska, ‘New medievalism (Re)Appraised’.

<sup>40</sup> Cerny, ‘Heterarchy: Toward Paradigm Shift in World Politics.’

<sup>41</sup> Robert Jackson and Georg Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 120.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Nathan Hale and David Held, *Handbook of Transnational Governance. Institutions & Innovations*, Cambridge-Maiden: Polity Press, 2011.

<sup>43</sup> Ian Roberge, *Financial Action Task Force*, In *Handbook of Transnational Governance*, pp. 45-50; Kevin Young, *The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision*, In *Handbook of Transnational Governance*, pp. 39-45.

<sup>44</sup> Stefan Renckens, ‘Disaggregating public-private governance interactions: European Union interventions in transnational private sustainability governance,’ *Regulation & Governance*, Vol. 15, 2021, pp. 1230-1247. DOI: 10.1111/rego.12332.



non-governmental organisations, multinational corporations, or industry associations also provide standards to follow.<sup>45</sup>

However, as Rosenberg notes ‘Multiplicity is a source both of dangers and opportunities.’<sup>46</sup> Both develop at the edge of sovereign order, putting constraints and creating opportunities for states and NSA. These interactions are nested in the web of special interests and develop through transactions as well as coercion among governments and NSA. In particular, transactions connect VNSA like in the case of transnational crime and terrorist networks.<sup>47</sup> Their transactions stimulate profits and cooperation.<sup>48</sup> The same applies to the public and private actors interacting through transactions like mercenaries, contracted for outsourcing security and to provide offensive force.<sup>49</sup> The market of private intelligence and internal security agencies is growing as well.<sup>50</sup> That facilitates diversification of capacity in terms of outsourcing security capabilities to private actors. Moreover, It facilitates the hybridisation of authority in the military and security realms, and contribute to the gaps in the state monopoly on the means of violence.<sup>51</sup> As a result, the NSA participate in the ‘co-production of global sovereign power.’<sup>52</sup> As Swati Srivastava points out, ‘public/private hybridity makes sovereign power possible in the first place.’<sup>53</sup>

Lastly, there are interactions that occur basing on coercion and the use of (illegitimate) force against populations and other actors. In the context of actoral multiplicity, it concerns undermining the state monopoly of violence and ways in which states reassure themselves against that. VNSA constitute irregular threats which, even if weaker than any threat posed by

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<sup>45</sup> Shaun Breslin and Helen E. S. Nesadurai, ‘Who Governs and How? Non-State Actors and Transnational Governance in Southeast Asia,’ *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 48(2), 2018, pp. 187-203. DOI: 10.1080/00472336.20171416423. Cf. *Non-State Actors as Standard Setters*, edited by Anne Peters, Lucy Koechlin, Till Forster and Greta F. Zinkernagel, Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

<sup>46</sup> Rosenberg, ‘International Relations’, p. 137.

<sup>47</sup> James J. F. Forest, ‘Crime-Terror Interactions in Sub-Saharan Africa’, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 45(5-6), 2022, pp. 368-388, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2019.1678881; John Jupp and Matthew Garrod, ‘Legacies of the Troubles: The Links between Organized Crime and Terrorism in Northern Ireland,’ *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 45(5-6), 2022, pp. 389-428, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2019.1678878.

<sup>48</sup> Arie Perliger and Michael Palmieri, ‘Mapping Connections and Cooperation between Terrorist and Criminal Entities,’ *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 45(5-6), 2022, pp. 335-347, DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2019.1678874.

<sup>49</sup> Eugenio Cusumano, ‘Military Privatization and the Evolution of State Power.’ In *Mobilization Constraints and Military Privatization. The Political Cost-Effectiveness of Outsourcing Security*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023. Cf. Kimberly Marten, ‘Russia’s use of semi-state security forces: the case of the Wagner Group,’ *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 35(3), 2019, pp.181-204. DOI: 10.1080/1060586X.2019.1591142.

<sup>50</sup> Ulrich Peterson, ‘Onset of new business? Private military and security companies and conflict onset in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia from 1990 to 2011,’ *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 2021. DOI: 10.1080/09592318.2020.1866404.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Aileen Acheson, *Socially Responsible Security Providers? Analysing Norm Internalisation among Private Security Providers*. In *The Routledge Research Companion to Security Outsourcing*, edited by Joakim Berndtsson and Christopher Kinsey, London-New York: Routledge, 2016. DOI: 10.4324/9781315613376.

<sup>52</sup> Swati Srivastava, *Hybrid Sovereignty in World Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, p. 41.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

the state, are still deadly and scary due to their obscure actions and dispersed violence.<sup>54</sup> They attempt to establish their authority on territories they control like it was for Hamas,<sup>55</sup> or the Islamic State.<sup>56</sup> The severe persecution against them, performed by the governments like in the case of al Qaeda, is not always sufficient.<sup>57</sup> Unrecognised states and VNSA equip themselves with the means of power sufficient for successful attempts to enforce control.

### 2.3. Combination

State and non-state interactions create a multitude of political and organisational combinations understood as ‘local patterns of development with external influences and pressures of all kinds’.<sup>58</sup> However, they differ in reach and scale (global, regional, local) as well as in consequences. Crucially, the dangers and opportunities that these combinations create, are distributed unevenly. Below I analyse the examples of transnational, regional, and global combinations.

First, hybrid security constitutes a transnational combination that develops, based on the transactions among VNSA and between them and governments.<sup>59</sup> It concerns the consequences of enforcing power by violent informal groups for ‘political control of ungoverned territory and/or areas governed by corrupt politicians and functionaries’.<sup>60</sup> It appears in the context of civil war or state disintegration where the means of control are hijacked by rebel and armed groups. Hybrid security emerges also in the wake of hybrid warfare which is used by state actors in armed conflicts.<sup>61</sup> However, it can develop in every local context where it embraces the consequences of organised crime and acts of terror. Consequently, ‘various types of security are fused more than ever’.<sup>62</sup> Especially it concerns the metropolitan areas where private authority is enforced by gangs. This makes the urban conditions for living

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<sup>54</sup> Josef Schroefl and Stuart J. Kaufman, ‘Hybrid Actors, Tactical Variety: Rethinking Asymmetric and Hybrid War,’ *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 37(10), 2014, pp. 862-880. DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2014.941435.

<sup>55</sup> Benedetta Berti, ‘Non-State Actors as Providers of Governance: The Hamas Government in Gaza between Effective Sovereignty, Centralized Authority, and Resistance,’ *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 69(1), 2015, pp. 9-31.

<sup>56</sup> Matthew Bamber-Zryd, ‘Cyclical jihadist governance: the Islamic State governance cycle in Iraq and Syria,’ *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 33(8), 2022, pp. 1314-1344, DOI: 10.1080/09592318.2022.2116182.

<sup>57</sup> E. Aydinli, *Violent Non-State Actors: From Anarchists to Jihadists*, New York-London: Routledge, 2016, p. 21.

<sup>58</sup> Rosenberg, ‘International Relations’, p. 138.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Moritz Schuberth, ‘Hybrid security governance, post-election violence and the legitimacy of community-based armed groups in urban Kenya,’ *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol. 12(2), 2018, pp. 386-404. DOI: 10.1080/17531055.2018.1457277.

<sup>60</sup> Manwaring, *A Contemporary Challenge*, p. 4.

<sup>61</sup> Examples of hybrid warfare embrace unconventional non-state war or inter-state war in which non-state actors participate. Manwaring, *A Contemporary Challenge*, p. 7.

<sup>62</sup> Jan Zielonka, *Counter-Revolution. Liberal Europe in Retreat*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 71.

(especially in ‘megacities’) increasingly securitised.<sup>63</sup> Hence, for example, self-defence groups are established.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, privatization of warfare embraces domestic realm through paramilitaries and militias.<sup>65</sup>

Furthermore, there are regional patterns of development that impact the global context. The best example is the EU which itself constitutes a particular pattern of political development in Europe as a developing polity on a supranational level.<sup>66</sup> It constitutes both public and supranational authority and provides not only governance but also a space for national actors to interact and coexist. That embraces norms creation (as the EU acts through interventions), and transactions that are basic for the EU's organisational framework. Moreover, the EU with its members co-creates local combinations within its reach: it actively interacts with its neighbourhood which results in solutions such as neighbourhood policy, politics of conditionality for the candidate states, or free trade areas. Particularly interesting were the agreements and practices of local border traffic with neighbouring countries that are not the EU's members (Ukraine, Russia)<sup>67</sup>, developed to boost the local economy on both sides of the border.

Lastly, there is a global pattern that comes from Western domination. Powerful non-violent NSA mostly come from Western countries. They contribute to the dominating position of the West in worldwide transnational interactions, reproducing the ‘global apartheid’<sup>68</sup> which constitutes a crucial combination in the contemporary world. It means that the processes of global governance are dominated globally by a powerful group and closed to others. Such a group are the richest Western governments and the NSA established in the West (multi-national corporations, big tech industry, global NGOs like Oxfam), including international financial institutions.<sup>69</sup> Consequently, global connections of influence, money, and ideas are prevalently born out of interactions among Western actors. ‘Global apartheid’

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<sup>63</sup> Theresa Enright and Ugo Rossi, *The Urban Political. Ambivalent Spaces of Late Neoliberalism*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

<sup>64</sup> Alexander Curry and Leonie Ansems De Vries, ‘Violent governance, identity and the production of legitimacy: autodefensas in Latin America’, *Journal Of International Relations And Development*, Vol. 23(2), 2020, pp. 262-284.

<sup>65</sup> Paul R. Kan *The Global Challenge of Militias and Paramilitary Violence*, Cham: Springer International Publishing; Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

<sup>66</sup> Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire. The Nature of the Enlarged European Union*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 55. Cf. Marianna Lovato and Heidi Maurer, ‘Process and position power: a social relational research agenda about state power in negotiations,’ *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2022. DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2022.2135755.

<sup>67</sup> Local border traffic between Poland and Russia has been suspended.

<sup>68</sup> Titus Alexander, *Unravelling Global Apartheid. An Overview of World Politics*, Cambridge-Oxford: Polity Press-Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1996.

<sup>69</sup> Andrew Robinson, ‘Symptoms of a new politics: networks, minoritarianism and the social symptom in Žižek, Deleuze and Guattari’, *Deleuze Studies*, Vol. 4(2), 2010, pp. 206–233.

manifests in persisting inequalities between Western and non-Western actors regardless of the source of their agency (public or private).<sup>70</sup>

The inequalities manifest in the character of agency, though. Non-violent NSA co-create the picture of politics mainly in the West (including its reach in other regions of the world), whereas those violent, which develop in the face of weakness or disintegration of state institutions, populate the Global South, especially the countries torn by wars, organised crime and violence. Crucially, Western NSA actively contribute to this state of affairs like in the case of Blackwater mercenaries who participated in the American invasion of Iraq.<sup>71</sup> The actoral multiplicity persists in the shadow of great powers, and is strongly impacted by the economic and racial hierarchies. It is not neutral as the dynamics of world politics is subjected to the global apartheid.

## **2.4.Co-existence**

Political combinations that develop based on the difference in organisation and uneven interactions impact the conditions of co-existence. As Justin Rosenberg notes, ‘at its highest level of organization, the human world does not culminate in a single authority; but nor does it simply tail off into empty space; instead, it opens out into a lateral field of co-existing societies.’<sup>72</sup> The lack of a single superior authority enables the heterogeneity of actors as well. It facilitates the field of co-existing actors that pursue their interests and that attempt to make the case for themselves in world politics. That results in particular forms of co-existence, especially in cooperation and competition.

The best example of cooperation is a public-private partnership.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, the non-state stakeholders are getting involved in public governance.<sup>74</sup> This kind of cooperation enables multiple hybrid schemes which combine public governance with private. NSA thus fill the role of governance providers as public policy is outsourced to private actors or shifted

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Sean Mcfate, *Mercenaries and War: Understanding Private Armies Today*, Washington: National Defense University Press, 2019.

<sup>72</sup> Rosenberg, ‘International Relations’, p. 136.

<sup>73</sup> Benjamin Cashore, Jette S. Knudsen, Jeremy Moon, J. and Hamish van der Ven, ‘Private authority and public policy interactions in the global context: Governance spheres for problem solving,’ *Regulation & Governance*, Vol. 15, 2021, pp.1166-1182. <https://DOI.org/10.1111/rego.12395>

<sup>74</sup> Sarah Arras and Caelesta Braun, ‘Stakeholders wanted! Why and how European Union agencies involve non-state stakeholders,’ *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 25(9), 2018, pp.1257-1275. DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2017.1307438.

to supranational bodies<sup>75</sup>. Consequently, asymmetrical governance emerges in the public sphere.<sup>76</sup> That creates alternatives for public governance which can rely on private actors in provision of various services. A relevant example is the business-peace nexus as a mode of involving corporations in peace-building and development. It resulted from the interactions between the UN and the private sector.<sup>77</sup> For the same purpose, private sector, economic and social partners (like trade unions), and civil society actors were included as contributors and performers of the development aims in the Cotonou Agreement between the EU and ACP Countries.<sup>78</sup>

On the other hand, anti-state actors compete with both states and other NSA. Some of them fight with the state like organised crime<sup>79</sup> or attempt to establish their own like the Islamic State.<sup>80</sup> In the absence or weakness of recognized state institutions, they hijack the resources to build their regime.<sup>81</sup> The actions undertaken by VNSA contribute to the disintegration or at least dysfunction of states and create overlapping or hybrid authorities on the contested territories. In the course of disintegration of public authority and fragmentation of social structures, the individual loyalties to the native or naturalised polity are shifting as well.<sup>82</sup> That gives the VNSA the support they need. The states, however, reassure themselves in face of competition — terrorist networks were subjected to the ‘global war on terror’. The declaration of this war, however, proved the significance of VNSA as it actually meant recognition of VNSA as combatants, not just criminals.<sup>83</sup>

The state, on the one hand, renounces some of its competences to the private sector, and on the other, allows for the increasing autonomy on lower levels of public governance

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<sup>75</sup> Stefano Bartolini, *Restructuring Europe: Centre Formation, System Building, and Political Structuring between the Nation-State and the European Union*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. Avant et al., ‘Part 1. Authority dynamics and new governors.’ In *Who Governs the Globe?*, edited by Avant et al., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 33-180.

<sup>76</sup> Peer Schouten and Jason Miklian, ‘The business–peace nexus: “business for peace” and the reconfiguration of the public/private divide in global governance’, *Journal of International Relations and Development*, Vol. 23(2), 2020, pp. 414–35.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Stephan Dearden, and Clara Mira, ‘The new EU ACP partnership agreement,’ *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 14(6), 2002, pp. 899-910. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.935>.

<sup>79</sup> William M. LeoGrande and Megan Kurten, ‘Fight or Hide: Why Organized Criminal Groups Go to War with the State,’ *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2022. DOI: 10.1080/1057610X.2022.2122109.

<sup>80</sup> Thomas Maurer, ‘ISIS's Warfare Functions: A Systematized Review of a Proto-state's Conventional Conduct of Combat Operations,’ *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 29(2), 2018, pp. 229-244. DOI: 10.1080/09592318.2018.1435238.

<sup>81</sup> Nelson Kasfir, Georg Frerks, and Niels Terpstra, ‘Introduction: Armed Groups and Multi-layered Governance,’ *Civil Wars*, Vol. 19(3), 2017, pp. 257-278. DOI: 10.1080/13698249.2017.1419611.

<sup>82</sup> Bartolini *Restructuring Europe*.

<sup>83</sup> Mary E. O'Connell, ‘Enhancing the Status of Non-State Actors Through a Global War on Terror?,’ Vol. 43 Colum., *Journal of Transnational Law*, 2002, 435.

like in local regions and cities.<sup>84</sup> Stephen Kobrin indicates that the contemporary world system consists of overlapping ‘subnational, national, regional, international, and supranational authorities.’<sup>85</sup> Ways of their co-existence create affect heterogeneity of agency which can bloom or be suppressed, depending on political pressures. The agency differs across the levels of governance which translates to the functional differentiation that (re)produces connections between authorities of different sectors (political, legal, economic, military, etc.), and levels (local, regional, etc.).

The dynamics of co-existence, both in terms of cooperation and competition, are mirrored in borders as hallmarks of state sovereignty. Due to globalization processes, borders became complex and fuzzy.<sup>86</sup> Physically and legally the architecture of borders affects social and political heterogeneity.<sup>87</sup> In the EU, borders create a complex and multi-layered architecture,<sup>88</sup> comprised of the internal borders between the member states, and the external borders whose character depends on the EU’s relationship with the given neighbour<sup>89</sup> as well as the national agenda of the member state which borders this neighbour.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, the territorial reach of the national authorities does not fully overlap with legal or economic jurisdiction.<sup>91</sup> These factors create the conditions for more free interaction and fosters co-existence between Europeans as well as between the NSA that act there. As James Anderson points out, ‘the overall result of the selectivity or partiality of unbundling is that within Europe there is now a complex mixture of old, new, and hybrid forms — „territorial,” „trans-territorial,” and „functional” forms of association and authority coexisting and interacting.’<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Mădălina V. Antonescu, ‘Metropolitan Diplomacy. Global Metropolitan Law and Global Cities Seen from the Heterarchy Perspective’. In *Heterarchy in World Politics*, edited by P. G. Cerny, Routledge 2023, pp. 131-142.

<sup>85</sup> Stephen J. Kobrin, ‘The Architecture of Globalization: State Sovereignty in a Networked Global Economy.’ In *Governments, Globalization, and International Business*, edited by John H. Dunning. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 146-172 (p. 162).

<sup>86</sup> Zielonka, *Europe as Empire*. Cf. Jan Zielonka, ‘The remaking of the EU’s borders and the images of European architecture,’ *Journal of European Integration*, 39:5, 2017, pp. 641-656, DOI: 10.1080/07036337.2017.1332059.

<sup>87</sup> Kerry Goettlich, ‘The colonial origins of modern territoriality: property surveying in the thirteen colonies’, *American Political Science Review*, Vol.116(3), 2022, pp.911-926. DOI:10.1017/S0003055421001295.

<sup>88</sup> Zielonka, *Europe as Empire*.

<sup>89</sup> Norway and Switzerland participate in the Schengen System, and the final shape of the relationship with the UK is an open question.

<sup>90</sup> Like in the Polish case of the differences in treatment between refugees coming from Ukraine and Belarus (refugees who got to Europe through Belarus were coming from the Middle East and Africa).

<sup>91</sup> The best example are the regulation in the Eurozone. Cf. Zielonka, *Europe as Empire*.

<sup>92</sup> James Anderson, ‘The Shifting Stage of Politics: New Medieval and Postmodern Territorialities?’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 14(2), 1996, pp. 133–153 (p. 149).

## 2.5. Dialectical (relational) change

The tensions in co-existence create the setting for complex dependencies and contradictions. That stems from the fact that the process of world development is dialectical: ‘one in which exchanges among social formations unlock new possibilities and departures through mechanisms that are intrinsic to the phenomenon of interaction itself.’<sup>93</sup> This concerns also the world politics. Namely, dialectical change applies also to the ways in which different orders inter-penetrate and impact each other. That concerns orders interacting both horizontally (domestic/foreign),<sup>94</sup> and vertically (global/ regional/local).<sup>95</sup> Moreover, the relational change is the case also in the interplay between private authority and public sphere which ‘are not simply two distinct and independent spheres but, rather, their interactions are mutually shaping and constitutive of each other’.<sup>96</sup> The public and the private as well as the domestic and the foreign co-constitute each other.<sup>97</sup> That makes the space for NSA who impact the ways of organizing and exercising the authority (including that to which they are subjected) as ‘institutions and social actors are co-constitutive,’ and ‘co-constructed in communication.’<sup>98</sup> Mutual impact is crucial.

The process of dialectical (relational) change manifests in functional exchange and imitation, stimulated by cooperation and competition. As mentioned, NSA happen fill the function of ‘global governors.’ Even if they had their authority delegated by states — as it happens within the global governance — they perform the tasks required in governing and hence make an impact on states.<sup>99</sup> They can develop their agendas and advocate for them. Within the global governance schemes, the principals are the IGOs and specialised agencies, not just the states.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, supranational bodies happen to supervise the governments. In

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<sup>93</sup> Rosenberg, ‘International Relations’, p. 139.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Thomas Berger, ‘Worldmaking from the margins: interactions between domestic and international ordering in mid-20th-century India,’ *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 28(4), 2022, pp. 834–858. DOI: 10.1177/13540661221115957; Nargiza T. Bektemirova, ‘Interaction of Foreign and Domestic Factors in the International Political Process: The Case of Russia,’ *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 39(5), 2015, pp. 541–547. DOI: 10.1080/09700161.2015.1069980.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Taşan-Kok, Tuna and Jan Van Weesep, ‘Global-Local Interaction and Its Impact on Cities,’ *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, Vol. 22(1), 2007, pp. 1–11; Harrison, Graham, ‘From the Global to the Local? Governance and Development at the Local Level: Reflections from Tanzania’, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 46(2), 2008, pp. 169–189. DOI: 10.1017/S0022278X08003182.

<sup>96</sup> Benjamin Cashore, Jette Steen Knudsen, Jeremy Moon and Hamish van der Ven, ‘Private Authority and Public Policy Interactions in Global Context,’ Special Issue, *Regulation & Governance*, Vol. 15, 2021.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Patrick T. Jackson and Daniel H. Nexon, ‘Relations Before States: Substance, Process and the Study of World Politics,’ *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 5(3), 1999, pp. 291–332.

<sup>98</sup> Renate E. Meyer and Eero Vaara, ‘Institutions and Actorhood as Co-Constitutive and Co-Constructed: The Argument and Areas for Future Research,’ *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 57(4), 2020, pp. 898–910. DOI: 10.1111/joms.12561.

<sup>99</sup> Avant et al. ‘Who Governs the Globe?’, p. 2 and p. 26.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

the wake of the Eurozone crisis, Greece and Cyprus became ‘semi-protectorates run by a consortium of creditor states represented by the IMF and the Eurogroup’.<sup>101</sup> Also business actors provide alternatives to public institutions by delivering public services. Simultaneously, they benefit from transnational trade law which is established by national governments.<sup>102</sup> In the extreme, NSA attempt to create their own state or government (as in the case of VNSA).

The best example of imitation is the para-diplomacy in which local and regional actors engage, imitating the diplomatic activities of the states.<sup>103</sup> Simultaneously, along with the private sector, they doing their best to influence national policies and to actualise their interests. On the other hand, the domestic realm impacts international private governance.<sup>104</sup> National governments, however, not only attempt to limit or use corporate power for their advantage. They also adopt corporate solutions to improve efficiency and control over populations.<sup>105</sup> As a result, we face the corporatisation of the state, which advances with the adoption of neoliberal governance in public administration<sup>106</sup>. As Charlotte Epstein notes, ‘interactions between the social actors and the polity [...] are mutually constitutive all the way through, right down to the actors’ core selves.’<sup>107</sup> The same concerns violence and coercion. The means of violence typical for VNSA like ISIS happen to be used by states like Russia.<sup>108</sup>

Furthermore, the dialectical change applies to state and non-state logics of ordering the world. Analysing the transformation of the modern order, Jörg Friedrichs points to the system of overlapping authorities sustained by the dialectical competition of rival forces, each of

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<sup>101</sup> Zielonka, *Counter-Revolution*, p. 59.

<sup>102</sup> For more, see Claire Cutler, *Private Power, and Global Authority: Transnational Merchant Law in the Global Political Economy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 108–140.

<sup>103</sup> Alexander S. Kuznetsov, *Theory and Practice of Paradiplomacy. Subnational governments in international affairs*, New York: Routledge, 2014; Christian M. Brüttsch, ‘From Sovereign Prerogatives to Metropolitan Rule? The Anarchical Society in the Urban Age,’ *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 14(3), 2013, pp. 307-324.

<sup>104</sup> Erin Leitheiser, ‘How domestic contexts shape international private governance: The case of the European Accord and American Alliance in Bangladesh,’ *Regulation & Governance*, Vol. 15, 2021, pp. 1286-1303. DOI: 10.1111/regg.12390.

<sup>105</sup> A good example can be surveillance and the development of the neoliberal security state in which non-state actors are used. Cf. Magnus Hörnqvist, ‘Neoliberal security provision: Between state practices and individual experience,’ *Punishment & Society*, Vol. 22(2), 2020. DOI: 10.1177/1462474519875474.

<sup>106</sup> Bart Voorn, Sandra van Thiel, and Marieke van Genugten, ‘Debate: Corporatization as more than a recent crisis-driven development,’ *Public Money & Management*, Vol. 38(7), 2018, pp. 481-482. DOI: 10.1080/09540962.2018.1527533.

<sup>107</sup> Charlotte Epstein, ‘Theorizing Agency in Hobbes’s Wake: The Rational Actor, the Self, or the Speaking Subject?’, *International Organization*, Vol.67(2), 2013, pp. 287–316 (p. 289).

<sup>108</sup> ‘From the tsars through the Bolsheviks, they have been accustomed to a style of warfare that embraces much more eagerly the irregular and the criminal, the spook and the provocateur, the activist and the fellow-traveller.’ Mark Galeotti, ‘Hybrid, ambiguous, and non-linear? How new is Russia’s ‘new way of war’?’, *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 27(2), 2016, pp. 282-301, DOI: 10.1080/09592318.2015.1129170. Cf. Omar Ashour, ‘How Putin’s army fights like Islamic State in Ukraine,’ *Middle East Eye*, 9.05.2022, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/how-putins-army-fights-islamic-state-group-ukraine>. Access 13.04.2023.



which claims to be universal and demands superiority.<sup>109</sup> According to Friedrichs these competing yet inter-penetrating powers are the global economy and the nation-state,<sup>110</sup> or, otherwise, transnational business and international politics.<sup>111</sup> The same concerns the dynamics of globalisation and fragmentation which results in the aggregation of power at the transnational and global levels.<sup>112</sup> Fragmentation is not just a reaction to globalisation – both are developing simultaneously,<sup>113</sup> and inter-penetrate and impact each other. For Barry Buzan, the interacting and coexisting logics that run the contemporary world politics are the ‘pluralist’ logic, based in the states system, and the ‘solidarist’ logic, nested in the agency of NSA, global markets, and cosmopolitan networks which advocate for universalistic values.<sup>114</sup>

The emerging heterogeneous order in world politics is thus a product of a dialectical interplay just like the sovereign order. However, for the actoral multiplicity crucial are the vertical pressures of globalization, not the horizontal (domestic/foreign) pressures of national state-building and its maintenance, including the reproduction of collective identities.<sup>115</sup> Actoral multiplicity blooms in settings created by exchanges between opposing organisational schemes: the domestic interacts with the foreign, the local with the global, and the public with the private. Those interactions are enhanced by globalization and neoliberalisation that are cutting across the states.<sup>116</sup> Simultaneously they empower NSA.

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<sup>109</sup> Jörg Friedrichs, ‘The Meaning of New Medievalism,’ *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 7(4), 2001, pp. 475–502 (p. 486).

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Jörg Friedrichs, ‘The Neomedieval Renaissance: Global Governance and International Law in the New Middle Ages.’ In *Governance and International Legal Theory*, edited by Ige F. Dekker and Wouter G. Werner, Dordrecht: Springer, 2004, pp. 3–36.

<sup>112</sup> A perfect example can be the decline of the colonial empires.

<sup>113</sup> Friedrichs, ‘The neomedieval renaissance’, pp. 3–36. James Rosenau proposed a similar framing for world politics, crafting a concept of ‘framegration’ which denotes a simultaneous occurrence of integration and fragmentation at different levels (Rosenau referred to the simultaneous impact of globalization and decentralization). James Rosenau, *The Study of World Politics. Theoretical and Methodological Challenges*, London, 2006, pp. 37–8.

<sup>114</sup> Barry Buzan, ‘Reimagining the English School’s Triad.’ In *From International to World Society?: English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalisation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 90–138; Barry Buzan, ‘Reconstructing the Pluralist–Solidarist Debate.’ In *From International to World Society?*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 139–160.

<sup>115</sup> Michel Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 2000, pp. 145–146; 186–189.

<sup>116</sup> Philip G. Cerny, and Alexander Prichard, ‘The new anarchy: globalisation and fragmentation in 21st century world politics’, *Journal of International Political Theory*, Vol. 13(3), 2017, pp. 378–394. DOI: 10.1177/1755088217713765.

### 3. Implications of Actoral Multiplicity for the Study of International Relations

#### 2.1. Theorising World Politics and the Sixth Consequence of Multiplicity

As demonstrated, logics of Multiplicity drive the heterogeneity of agency and its contribution to world politics. Advancing heterogeneity stems from the differences in agency which translate into the variety of interactions. The interactions produce combinations, the combinations — when consolidated — create conditions and practices of co-existence. The patterns of co-existence translate into the dialectical interplays between particular actors on different levels, creating the configurations of power and influence. The conditions of coexistence and dialectical change affect in turn the difference and hence the development of heterogeneity. The difference in agency is pulled into the workings of world politics, stimulating interactions, boosting combinations, impacting coexistence, and creating a basis for relational changes. Consequently, the logics of Multiplicity enable the polity shift which refers to shifting the power from governments to the NSA: ‘from the predominance of the state [...] to the rising importance and centrality of NSA and transnational relations,’<sup>117</sup> enhanced by their proliferation and involvement in world politics.<sup>118</sup> In geographical terms, power shift concerns the power competition among states, whereas in functional terms, crucial is the polity shift which affects the state itself.

As a result, the logics of Multiplicity, used to make the case for the societal condition of the international, explain the heterogeneous condition of world politics as well. Multiplicity as a framework can be thus used to frame and examine both human collective coexistence, and the complexities in world politics. Consequently, it is clear that the logics of Multiplicity work not only in the context of societal coexistence but also in world politics where they stimulate heterogeneity of agency. That is not surprising, since Multiplicity, whether societal or political, comes from the research on Uneven and Combined Development (UCD)<sup>119</sup> which explains the capitalist world development in general.<sup>120</sup> This article shows that the development of world politics is uneven and combined as well. To paraphrase Rosenberg, the world politics ‘arises around’ the fact of actoral multiplicity in human enterprises.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Aydinli, *Violent Non-State Actors: From Anarchists to Jihadists*, p. 1.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> For the origins of societal Multiplicity and its basis in UCD, see Justin Rosenberg et al. ‘Debating Uneven and Combined Development/Debating International Relations: A Forum,’ *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 50(2), 2022, pp 291– 327. DOI: 10.1177/03058298211064346.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p. 295.

<sup>121</sup> Rosenberg, ‘International Relations,’ p. 135.

Consequently, Rosenberg's Multiplicity has much greater explanatory power than expected as it explains not only the human collective coexistence but also world politics. Moreover, it provides a dynamic, relations-centred, and process-centred model that embraces the development of heterogeneity beyond sovereign order. We can see how the logics of Multiplicity shape world politics. Through difference, interaction, combination, coexistence, and dialectical (relational) change, relations between and among different actors create the world politics, including power hierarchies, resistance against them, and normative/legal arrangements that regulate actors' actions. Furthermore, relations between particular actors create their agendas, capacity, identities, visions of their place in the world, or trajectories of their development in general. Due to uneven capacity and diverse specialisation, actors form connections that help them to keep their position and to remain relevant. Consequently, new uneven and diverse order(s) emerge,<sup>122</sup> driven by the logics of Multiplicity. The world politics is not just a state of affairs but a dynamic process driven by the logics of Multiplicity with heterogeneous actors involved.

However, there is one element that seems to be missing in Rosenberg's framework but is essential to theorise world politics. Considering the above considerations, one more logic of Multiplicity emerges: the connection. In the context of agency, connections are crucial — both in terms of world politics (alliances, influence) and the global economy (trade, investment). First, no actor is isolated — only connections are more or less intense or more distant. They are formed on the basis of interactions and are necessary to form particular combinations in practice. Furthermore, they impact the conditions of coexistence, especially in the long-term, as they are building blocks for cooperation and competition, and hence for survival. Moreover, connections contribute to interdependence and hence to the functional exchange and imitation between involved actors. As a result, they have a direct effect on world order and world development in general — no development and no lasting structure is possible without connections. That embraces not only physical ties (like trade connectivity), and their results (like economic profit) but also the status and significance of the given actor for which developing and maintaining connections is necessary. Consequently, connections have a crucial impact on the position of involved actors in world politics and contribute to the inequalities between them.

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<sup>122</sup> Philip G. Cerny, *The Changing Architecture of Politics: Structure, Agency, and the Future of the State*. London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1990. On different international and world orders in history, see Ayşem Zarakol, *Before the West*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Sole interaction is not sufficient to produce combinations or enable coexistence. Continuing interactions create connections that, in the long-term, develop combinations and settings for coexistence. Moreover, significance and hence position in world order require lasting connections<sup>123</sup> and long-term co-existence.<sup>124</sup> No individual actor can pursue their interests without others. Connections and co-existence are especially significant as ‘focus on the „inter” cannot be limited to only a spatial and presentist perspective of „interaction,” or perhaps even of communication.’<sup>125</sup> Focus on connections, instead, implies the temporal dimension as creating connections and developing co-existence require time and engagement. Political structures are ‘essentially contingent phenomena, resulting partially from historically specific combinations and configurations’.<sup>126</sup> The necessity of connections reminds us of the temporality in political development as connections need time to evolve.

Crucially, dialectical (relational) change is not possible without lasting connections. Thanks to them, dialectical changes intensify; it is difficult to imagine functional exchange and successful imitation without close and stable connections.<sup>127</sup> Even more, it is crucial for mutual understanding and hence for successful interactions in general, both collective and individual. Consequently, it impacts long-term coexistence and enables dialectical (relational) change between involved societies or actors.

## **2.2. Re-framing ‘the International’: Connections and Inequalities**

Furthermore, the actoral multiplicity has implications for how we understand and frame ‘the international’ in the context of world politics. The emphasis put on connections between and among actors is necessary to fully grasp the picture which already exists in the legally based political relations: the picture of both formal and informal relations between state and those NSA which are recognized by others as sovereign entities (like the Sovereign Order of Malta), which have their actorness formally recognized (as it is in the case of international organizations), or which maintain institutional representation abroad (like Scotland or Catalonia to the EU).

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<sup>123</sup> Cf. The mapping of worldwide state and non-state connectivity in Parag Khanna, *Connecography. Mapping the Future of Global Civilization*, New York: Random House, 2016.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Rosenberg, ‘International Relations,’ p. 136.

<sup>125</sup> Friedrich Kratochwil, ‘Re-thinking the “inter” in International Politics,’ *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol.35(3), 2007, pp. 495-511 (p. 500). DOI: 10.1177/03058298070350030801.

<sup>126</sup> Cerny, *The Changing Architecture of Politics*, p. 27.

<sup>127</sup> The significance of connections manifests in the context of state and non-state ties in the global economy but can be applied to societies as well. In societal terms, it is necessary for the coexistence and relational change between and among multiple societies.

Crucially, NSA are not just threats. As mentioned, they can also improve the ordering and governance as in the business-peace nexus, created as a mode of involving corporations for peace-building and development by the UN.<sup>128</sup> For IR theory, such solutions constitute ‘a significant step in the reconfiguration of the public/private divide in global governance.’<sup>129</sup> Simultaneously, they contribute to ‘fundamental IR controversies over the kind of agency that private actors should have in the international system today,’<sup>130</sup> and how cooperation between state and NSA can be maintained in practice, provided that the NSA will be more than tools in states’ hands. This affects the perception of their role both in theory and practice, from the negative discourse on corporations benefiting from deregulation to their involvement as peacemakers.<sup>131</sup>

As a result, the international becomes a sphere of interacting, connecting, and co-existing state, non-state, and quasi-state actors, embracing regimes, structures, and orders co-created by those actors’ relations. World politics is a process that creates the international; this process, as elaborated, is driven by the logics of Multiplicity. Agency and capacity develop and manifest in relations between and among different units across the ‘levels of analysis’ and despite them. As I indicated elsewhere,<sup>132</sup> such framing responds to the drawbacks of ‘the post-international’ scholarship that is limited to analysing the contemporary world in terms of growing complexity, fuzziness, and disorder.<sup>133</sup> That actually enhances the domination of statism because of the lack of a sufficient paradigmatic proposal that would replace it.<sup>134</sup> As Gunter Hellmann and Morten Valbjørn point out, IR is a “*inter*-type discipline”, in the sense that it is devoted to studying the interactions of different kinds of international actors’,<sup>135</sup> not necessarily territorial, and in both acting and performing sense. That can help in theorising not only heterogeneity of actors but also world politics itself. As Matthias Hofferberth notes:

‘Taken together, agency emerges from relations and is always “performed” within loose and ever-changing configurations in which temporarily stabilized entities recognize or challenge each other’s ability to influence outcomes’.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Peer Schouten and Jason Miklian, ‘The business–peace nexus.’

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p. 417.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 423.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Braun, Schindler and Wille, ‘Rethinking agency in International Relations.’

<sup>132</sup> Spalińska, ‘New medievalism (Re)Appraised’.

<sup>133</sup> Olaf Corry, ‘What is a (global) polity?’, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 36, 2010, pp. 157–180.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., pp. 161–162.

<sup>135</sup> Gunter Hellmann and Morten Valbjørn, ‘Problematising global challenges: recalibrating the “inter” in IR theory’, *International Studies Review*, Vol. 19(2), 2017, pp. 279–309.

<sup>136</sup> Hofferberth, ‘Get your actor(s) together!’.

These configurations are co-created by analysed factors: difference, interaction, connection, combination, co-existence, and dialectical change. Their dynamics create shape-shifting and contingent structures. Non-state capacity is therefore ‘essentially contingent phenomena, resulting partially from historically specific combinations and configurations’.<sup>137</sup> Multiplicity in this context as an ontological premise indicates transhistorical logics of development, whereas particular orders are historical.

The temporal nature of non-state agency comes not only from contingency in the development of political structures. It comes also from the significance which actors need to maintain to remain relevant for their partners and competitors, whether state or non-state. Mutual impact is crucial. Non-state and state interactions show the significance of NSA. Interacting with others, creating combinations for development, stimulating practices of coexistence in particular areas, and being involved in dialectical (relational) change endorse one's significance and relevance. The situation in which states mirror NSA confirms that even more. NSA have always been there but they are not always significant. Significance comes from the impact on other actors made through interactions.

That points also to the inequalities and their consequences for understanding the international. Considering the inequalities in interactions, the ‘inter-’ is a product of direct interaction which is accessible only to global elites (cf. the mentioned conditions and consequences of ‘global apartheid’) or even restricted on legal grounds (as in was the case for the ‘standard of civilisation’). The uneven access and position towards the international understood as a ‘product’ determines whether the given entity becomes an actor or a subject, meaning whether it can gain and exercise its agency or is it subjected to the logics of rule produced by more powerful actors. This condition situates the relations between actors in the context of global inequalities, consequences of colonialism, and power politics. The real yet hidden face of ‘the international’ within world politics contains ‘patterns of difference, dominance, and disruption’<sup>138</sup> that cast a shadow over knowledge production in IR and ‘believe the field’s claim to universality’.<sup>139</sup> The international is a sphere of interactions but, simultaneously, is reproduced by them and, hence, impacted by the patterns of dominance and coercion.

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<sup>137</sup> Cerny, *The Changing Architecture of Politics*, p. 27.

<sup>138</sup> Anthea Roberts, *Is International Law International?*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, p. 4.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

### 2.3. Re-Grounding IR: De-Centring World Politics and Different Multiplicities

The problem of ‘the inter-’ is reflected in the discussions dedicated to the IR’s subject matter and relationship with political science. The actoral multiplicity also has there something to say as it de-centres the state system. For Philip Cerny, a relevant name for IR would simply be ‘world politics’.<sup>140</sup> As Jaakko Heiskanen observes, this already happens — ‘world politics’ is used precisely because of de-centring the nation-state for analytical purposes.<sup>141</sup> Consequently, the heterogeneity of actors and interactions between them becomes the actual subject matter of what we know as IR:

‘The decentring of the nation-state is reflected, for example, in the tentative displacement of the term ‘international relations’ by broader notions such as ‘world politics’ and ‘global politics’ that also encompass a multiplicity of NSA alongside nation-states’.<sup>142</sup>

Thus, the heterogeneous interactions are the main subject matter of the discipline and there is no need to identify them only with inter-state relations. All types of interactions that contribute to world politics need to be considered. That can be a way to respond to the claims that Multiplicity ‘falls back’ to state-centrism as it reportedly reproduces the focus on ‘fixed’ units like states or national societies.<sup>143</sup> As demonstrated, the framework of Multiplicity can be useful for examining the heterogeneity in world politics which is crucial for the discipline.

This article shows that the logics of Multiplicity explain different types of heterogeneity — not only societal but also political. That corresponds with observations about heterogeneity in both societal and political relations in contemporary times. In the postmodern era, ‘Multiplicity and difference have begun to flood the field, threatening to displace settled binaries of governed/ungoverned or state/international relations,’<sup>144</sup> so to unleash the societal and political difference, suppressed by the modern socio-political world system. Crucially, the

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<sup>140</sup> Philip G. Cerny, ‘Multi-Nodal Politics: Globalisation Is What Actors Make of It,’ *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 35(2), 2009, pp. 421–449, (pp. 434, 438). Doi: 10.1017/S0260210509008584.

<sup>141</sup> Jaakko Heiskanen, ‘Nations and nationalism in IR.’ In *Routledge Handbook of Historical International Relations*, edited by Benjamin de Carvalho, Julia Costa Lopez, and Halvard Leira, London-New York: Routledge, 2021, pp. 244–252.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., pp. 249–250.

<sup>143</sup> Peltonen, ‘A prison break into the past?’, pp. 245–246; Alena Drieschová, ‘The Multiplicity straightjacket,’ pp. 155–159.

<sup>144</sup> David L. Blaney and Arlene B. Tickner, ‘International Relations in the prison of colonial modernity’, *International Relations*, Vol. 31(1), 2017, pp. 73–74.

Multiplicity framework de-centre and decipher the plurality of social life.<sup>145</sup> We can thus distinguish different multiplicities within the IR scope of interests.

As demonstrated, the logics of Multiplicity drive the actoral multiplicity and heterogeneity beyond homogenising force of the state system. That confirms the explanatory potential of Multiplicity to embrace the broader scope of international problems beyond the traditionally framed power politics. As a result, it is confirmed that Multiplicity ‘involves a substantial *expansion* and potential *diversification* of the subject matter of IR, and one that opens it up further to continuous interaction with other disciplines’.<sup>146</sup> That underscores Multiplicity as a framework of analysis and, simultaneously, a bridge-builder for the fragmented IR with the re-defined subject matter. As Brieg Powel notes, the international is a part of ‘an interconnected, multi-scalar social world that is shaped by multiplicity across all scales; multiplicity and relations permeate social scales.’<sup>147</sup> This article indicates that logics of Multiplicity explain the constitution of the international in terms of not only societal coexistence but also the inter-connected and multi-layered world politics.

## Conclusions and Questions for Further Research

This article explored how implications of Multiplicity (difference, interaction, combination, co-existence, and dialectical change) explain the development of world politics beyond the sovereign order. As stated, world politics is heterogeneous not only because of the emergence of NSA as entities different than the state, but also due to their interactions, the combinations they stimulate, their co-existence with each other, and with nation-states and dialectical changes to which they are subjected, and to which they contribute. These interplays are complemented by state and non-state connections which enable the development of world politics along with other logics of Multiplicity.

The article contributed to improving the understanding of the logics of Multiplicity beyond the inter-societal. The difference, interaction, combination, co-existence, and dialectical change drive world politics on different levels with different actors involved. Moreover,

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<sup>145</sup> Kamran Matin, ‘Deciphering the modern Janus: societal Multiplicity and nation-formation,’ *Globalizations*, Vol. 17(3), 2020, pp. 436–451. DOI: 10.1080/14747731.2019.1673615.

<sup>146</sup> Tallis and Rosenberg, ‘Introduction: the international of everything’. Cf. Olaf Corry, ‘What has disciplinarity ever done for IR? International Relations, academic disciplines and Multiplicity in knowledge production’, *Cooperation & Conflict*, Vol. 57(3), 2022. DOI: 10.1177/00108367221098492.

<sup>147</sup> Brieg Powel, ‘Whither IR? Multiplicity, relations, and the paradox of International Relations,’ *Globalizations*, Vol. 17(3), 2020, pp. 546–559. DOI: 10.1080/14747731.2019.1673103.



connections which actors create stimulate world politics as well. Simultaneously, order(s) and structures that emerge as a result affect the actors in turn.<sup>148</sup> World politics is not just a state of affairs but a dynamic process driven by the logics of Multiplicity with heterogeneous actors involved. Consequently, the implications of Multiplicity, used to make the case for the societal condition of the international, explain the heterogeneous condition of world politics as well. That refers to the heterogeneity of agency among both state and NSA. Multiplicity's explanatory power is thus greater than expected.

Considering the problematic of world politics and its development, there appears a question of how the Multiplicity program can contribute to the research on state formation and, particularly, to explaining it from the cross-cutting societal and political perspectives. Dialectical change concerns not only societies but also states: every state (as an institution) has incorporated solutions and elements taken from political traditions developed by other states. Simultaneously, we deal with the plurality of orders (legal, political, social) which are uneven and combined on different levels of societal co-existence. Consequently, Multiplicity could be a basis for investigating the most often experienced formations of societal co-existence such as, for example, borderlands which not only mirror societal divides but, primarily, create settings of intense social and cultural interaction, both mental and physical, amicable and hostile.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Cerny, *The Changing Architecture of Politics*.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Benjamin Tallis, *A Moveable East: Identities, Borders and Orders in the Enlarged EU and its Eastern Neighbourhood*, Cham: Springer, 2023.