

The 'Presence of the Past': Theorizing the Interplay of Past and Present Geopolitics in Contemporary Foreign Policy

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The Topic and its Relevance

As Denmark had joined the US and the coalition forces attacking Iraq in March 2003, prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen argued that active Danish participation was essential for Denmark to make up for the 'cowardly shortcomings' in the past and be in the front row in the fight for democratic freedom and against tyranny, wherever relevant.¹ In essence, the foreign policy of the present was to make up for Denmark's allegedly 'passive and humble adaptation' in the shadow of German power from 1864 to 1945 and its marked non-provocation posture vis-à-vis the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

This is an example of past geopolitics affecting contemporary foreign policy. We argue that today the preconditions for an increasing role to past geopolitics are present. States enjoying a large external action space tend to be more affected by geopolitical lessons of the past ('past geopolitics') than other states. This is the case in most of Europe today because of the favorable security environment: the absence of a clear and present danger allows most European states to pursue foreign policy goals that are not prescribed by the external security environment.

Thus, we should not be surprised that politicians such as Victor Orban of Hungary or the Polish Kachinsky twins, in particular, have emphasized past geopolitics almost to the brink of neglecting contemporary concerns. These examples illustrate that there is a significant conflict potential inherent in the use of past geopolitics. It may frequently give rise to clashes between states and thus turn a favorable situation into a less favorable one. The two mentioned instances have, more or less, threatened NATO and EU cooperation and enlargements. In the Hungarian case, contemporary geopolitics in the form of NATO and EU stability projection managed to gain the upper hand and prevail against the challenge of the past. In the Polish case, the outcome is more

¹ 'Hvad kan det nytte?', interview with Anders Fogh Rasmussen, *Berlingske Tidende*, 26 March 2003, 2nd section.

uncertain, since Poland is already an EU and NATO-member and thereby relatively invulnerable to external pressure.²

The relevance of *The Presence of the Past* is threefold:

- 1) first and foremost the development and testing of a specific foreign policy theory. We have momentum from a newly published Routledge paperback, but what we present in this project proposal is new and original research,
- 2) the delivery of policy recommendations based on this theory, and
- 3) expanding much needed cooperation between the equivalent of a 'sector research institute' and a university institute (and, in addition, with an international 'Advisory Board').

Regarding the first and primary aspect, the project aims at building a theory for the interaction of past and present geopolitics in producing specific foreign policy (re)orientations. In particular, we consider it essential to improve the European 'state of the art' regarding foreign policy theory. Whereas past geopolitics, often labeled 'lessons of the past', has been theorized about in political psychology, notably, and present geopolitics, under labels like 'realism' or simply 'geopolitics' is part of mainstream International Relations (IR), the *link* between the two is theoretically underresearched. Of course, there are empirical studies, where the explanatory virtues of the equivalents of both past and present geopolitics have been recognized. Avoiding eclecticism, however, we wish to build a *theoretical* link between the two. We believe, we have found the trick how to do this. In essence, we seek to answer two fundamental questions about foreign policy: *How* are states' foreign policy affected by the interplay between past and present geopolitics? *Why* are some states (in some periods) more affected by past geopolitics than others? In the light of the designed empirical tests, the theory formulated in this proposal will be retained, refined, or falsified. The theory is not an end in itself, and we have no 'religious' attachment to it. In any case, we see it as a necessary instrument of research, structuring our empirical efforts.

The secondary relevance aspect pertains to the policy use of such a theory and the empirical knowledge attained in its construction. When further developed as planned in the project, we believe that our theory will be a useful real world instrument. It will provide guidance for reducing the conflict potential inherent in past geopolitics and thereby be instrumental towards stability projection. Empirically, this is likely to be particularly useful in and around the European arena. Apart from theoretical reasons (cf.

² The Estonian-Russian 'statue crisis' of spring 2007 is a further example of past geopolitics taking the upper hand in influencing contemporary bilateral relations.

below), we include the study of Danish foreign policy as an important ingredient of our empirical focus in order to be policy relevant in our national context and to contribute to public debate.

Theory

Foreign policy theory has a long history within the discipline of international relations (IR), but with modest success. Within the last decade, however, efforts towards foreign policy theory have been more promising, notably within the loose paradigm of 'neo-classical realism'³, to which we count ourselves.

Neoclassical realists argue that the scope and ambition of a country's foreign policy is driven first and foremost by its place in the international system and specifically by its relative material power capabilities. This is why they are realist. They argue further, however, that the impact of such power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level. This is why they are neoclassical (Rose 1998: 146). We agree with this. However, we make two specific amendments. First, building on our recent book, *The Geopolitics of Euro-Atlantic Integration* (Mouritzen & Wivel 2005/2007), we re-introduce the notion of geopolitics, i.e. 'the influence of geography on the political character of states, their history, institutions, and especially relations with other states' (Hay 2003).⁴ This is an important amendment to the overwhelmingly US-influenced perspective, which often tends to ignore the effects of distance and spatiality on foreign policy (Mouritzen 1998). Second, our empirical focus on smaller as well as larger states deviates from the exclusive focus on great powers in most neoclassical realist analyses.⁵

In essence, 'past versus present geopolitics' as conceived in the proposed project is a sub category of the debate on 'domestic versus external factors' in the

³ This should not be mistaken for the school of neorealism, which aims to explain systemic outcomes (like patterns of alliance formation or war) rather than foreign policy (Waltz (1979) and most of his followers). It should also be kept apart from the 'comparative foreign policy' school that was inductively oriented for the most part (cf. further below). See, for instance, the volume edited by Hermann, Kegley & Rosenau (1987).

⁴ A paperback edition of the book was published in 2007. For reviews, see *International Affairs* 2006 vol. 82:2, 397-8 and *International Studies Review*, 2006, vol. 8, 312-14. In the post-Cold War era, there has been a growing interest in geopolitics, spanning from Mearsheimer, 2001, to 'critical' geopolitics (cf. Tuathail, Dalby & Routledge, 1998).

⁵ Important exceptions include Schweller (2006).

explanation of foreign policy.⁶ Past geopolitics is believed to be the most significant subset of 'domestic factors', whereas present geopolitics is assumed to be the most crucial subset of 'external factors'.⁷ Thus, domestic versus external factors is boiled down to a manageable juxtaposition of past versus present geopolitics.

As mentioned, the project builds on our previous work on the importance of present geopolitics. However, the theory and analysis of the proposed project differ in important respect from this previous work. Past geopolitics and its interaction with present geopolitics was briefly mentioned in Mouritzen and Wivel (2005/2007), but it was not theorized or applied systematically.

Specific Assumptions and Expectations

Our object of explanation (explanandum) is a state's foreign policy (re)orientation. 'Foreign policy' here means general relations to other states ('diplomacy'), rather than trans-national policy (policy in specific issue-areas). 'Orientation'/ 'reorientation' refers to the state's basic positioning in this regard (or change therein).⁸ Situations of reorientation (change) are the ones that most conveniently display the driving forces at work.

The theory-based explanation (explanans) is past and present geopolitics, with the latter expected to have primacy.⁹ This priority is what makes us IR realists. However, we open the door ajar to past geopolitics, to its theoretically guided and 'disciplined' inclusion, while still aiming at theoretical parsimony. The theory (the 'luxury theory' for the interplay of present and past geopolitics) asserts that the role of past geopolitics will vary with the state's external action space. A state's external action space, an aspect of its present geopolitics, is defined as its ability to remain unaffected by other states' power and influence.

⁶ This classic debate in IR has been revived in the context of neo-classical realism (Sterling-Folker 1997, Schweller 2004).

⁷ Domestic politics unrelated to past geopolitics is normally unimportant to foreign policy (re)orientation. On foreign policy and domestic policy in general, cf. Goldmann et al. 1986, for instance.

⁸ Synonyms could be 'grand strategy', 'foreign policy predisposition', or 'high politics'. Alliance policy, including the choice of a non-aligned status, is a crucial ingredient in foreign policy orientation.

⁹ To be more precise, present geopolitics may, under relaxed conditions, allow the working of past geopolitics, but it is in ultimate control. It is the permissive cause. Within the space thus allowed, there is room for past geopolitics or any remaining factors to play their role as efficient cause of foreign policy.

(1a) A decreasing external action space, due to the emergence of external danger, reduces the role of past geopolitics in foreign policy, and vice versa:

(1b) A more favourable external action space increases the role of past geopolitics in foreign policy. Still, present geopolitics remains in ultimate control.

The theoretical reasoning is twofold (cf. fig. 1). Firstly, with low action space there are simply fewer foreign policy options. With fewer ‘buttons’ to push, the more conventional state behaviour can be expected, and the fewer peculiarities inherited from past geopolitics are allowed to play a role. Secondly, external danger increases national cohesion and centralization (foreign policy elitism).¹⁰ This means that the role of domestic politics in foreign policy-making is reduced. More voices – including those arguing from past geopolitics – will be cut off from the decision-making process.¹¹ According to both sets of reasoning, past geopolitics is a luxury that cannot be afforded.

¹⁰ This is based on Lewis Coser’s classic sociological theory on ‘external danger/ internal cohesion’, applying to groups at all levels of aggregation (Coser 1956). Cf., for instance, its elaboration and application by Mouritzen (1997).

¹¹ Relating to Hanrieder’s twin concepts of ‘compatibility and consensus’, the first reasoning is about compatibility of state goals and external requirements, the second is about the domestic consensus behind foreign policy (Hanrieder 1971).

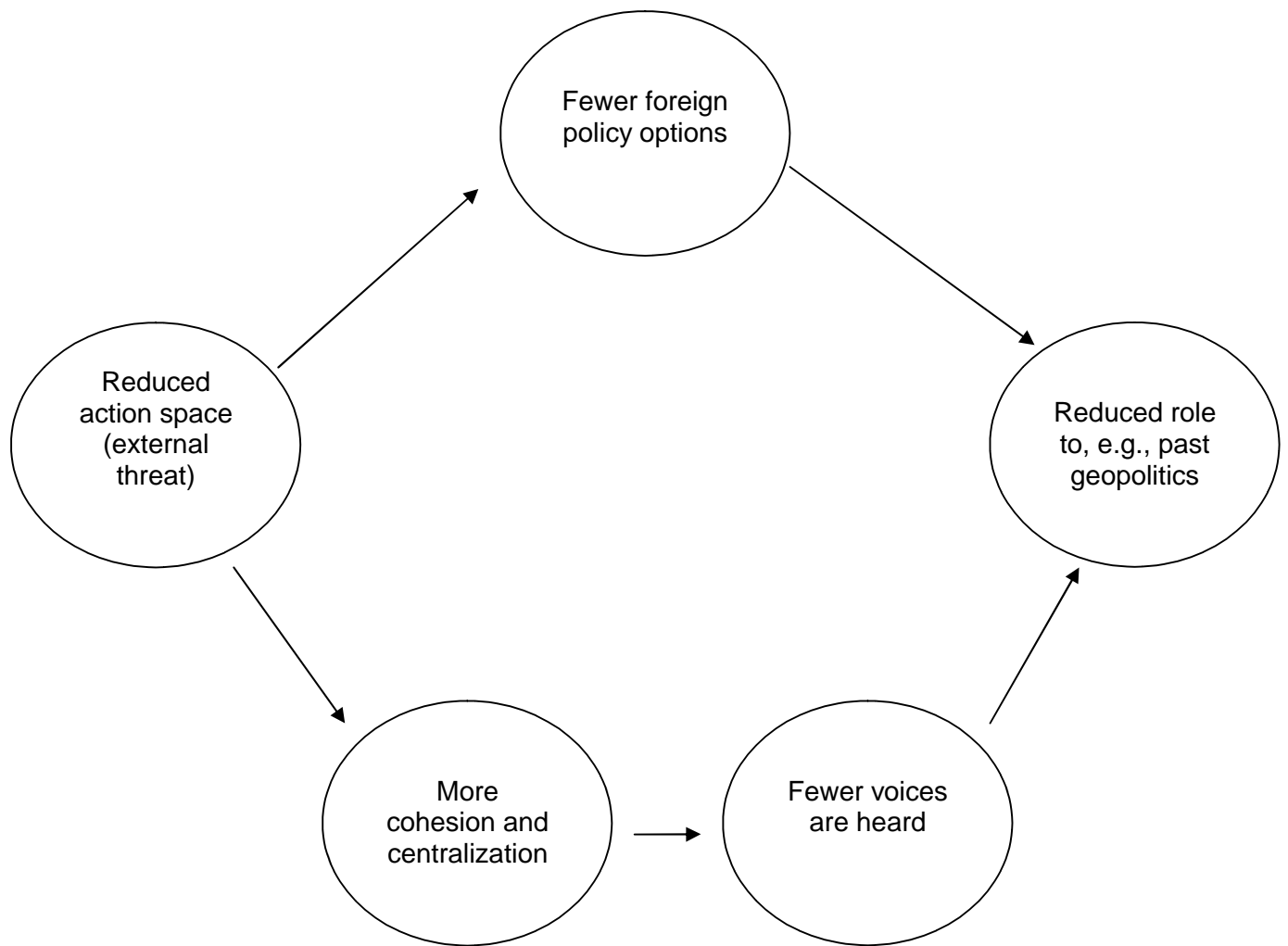


Fig. 1 The twofold reasoning of the luxury theory for the interplay of present and past geopolitics.

States' capability have implications for their action space. In the case of secondary powers, the constraints of present geopolitics normally – but far from always – leave a more restricted role for the modifying influences of past geopolitics than in the case of great powers.¹² Thus, the post-war foreign policy of the US superpower can to some extent be seen as pendulum swings in the light of lessons of the past (e.g. May 1973, Larson 1991, Macdonald 1991, Khong 1992).

The main ingredient of past geopolitics is that of foreign policy lessons, positive as well as negative. The positive ones recommend the application of a historically

¹² In particular for great powers, action space will be considerable even in so-called 'crisis situations', meaning that there will be room for the effect of past geopolitics. In government rhetoric, though, action space will often be downplayed in order to pre-empt criticism (the decision was 'dictated by necessity', for instance).

'successful' foreign policy strategy to a later situation. The negative ones, by contrast, point to a foreign policy 'failure' in the past and advocate its diametrically opposite strategy. Typically, lessons are learnt from decision-makers' dramatic first-hand experiences like the last major war that the state was involved in. Nonetheless, decision-makers may overlook that evidence supporting their lesson/theory may also be consistent with other theories or sheer coincidence. Also, applying a lesson requires historical analogy: a current situation is said to be somehow 'similar' to a historical situation. A particular risk facing successful states is that 'nothing fails like success' (Jervis 1976: 278-79): one is tempted to use an old, successful remedy the next time, one faces a seemingly 'similar' situation. Its peculiarities are overlooked.

Lessons sediment both in the foreign policy elite or, broader, in the national political culture. Decades later, they may pop up and affect major foreign policy decisions, if the foreign policy action space so permits. In fig. 2 the action space is low, and a barrier prevents the sedimentations from affecting major foreign policy. In fig. 3 the action space is high, and major foreign policy decisions are co-directed by present and past geopolitics. It should be obvious, though, that the elite sedimentations are more high politics relevant than those in the broader political culture (the dotted arrow). The latter may affect transnational issue-areas, but seldom major foreign policy decisions.¹³

A foreign policy lesson may either be internalized by top decision-makers or used instrumentally by them (Khong 1992, ch. 1). In the former situation, they themselves believe in the

¹³ Sediments in the political culture may be long-lasting, but foreign policy is traditionally the *least* democratic among different policy-areas and therefore the least susceptible to influence from broader layers of the population (e.g. Goldmann et al. 1986).

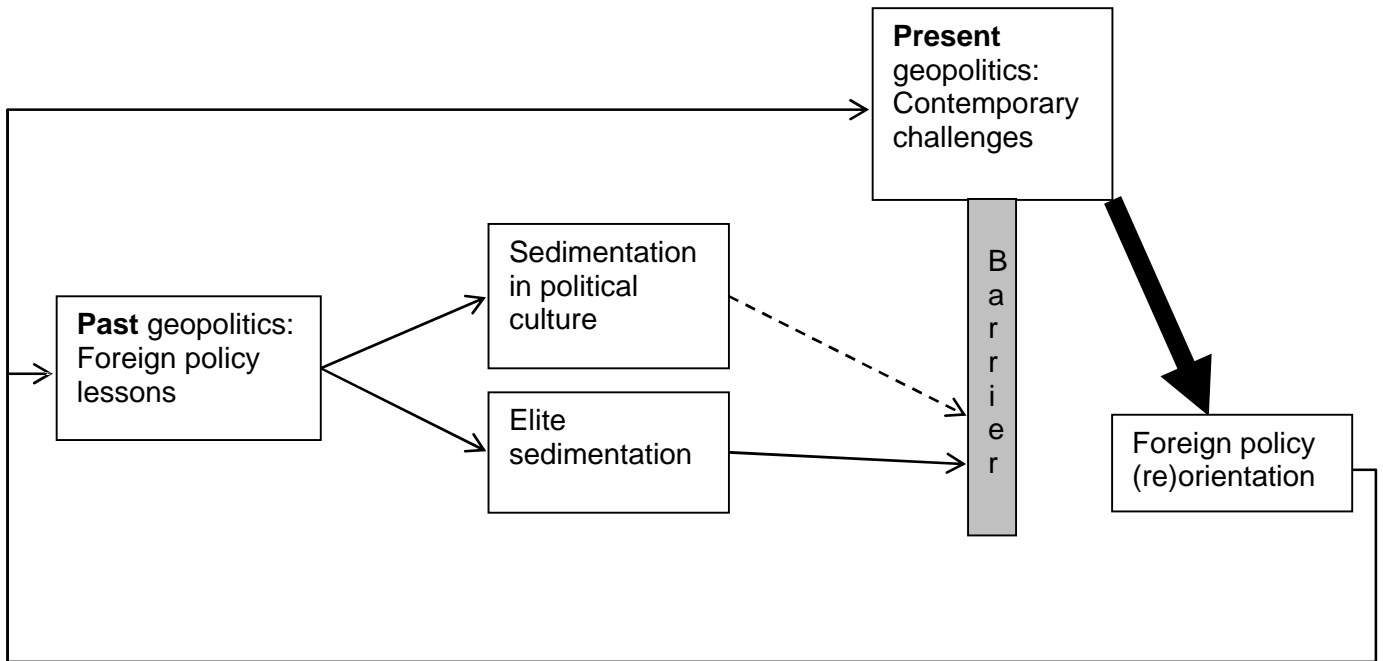


Fig. 2. Situation of low action space: foreign policy (re)orientation is directed by present geopolitics, only.

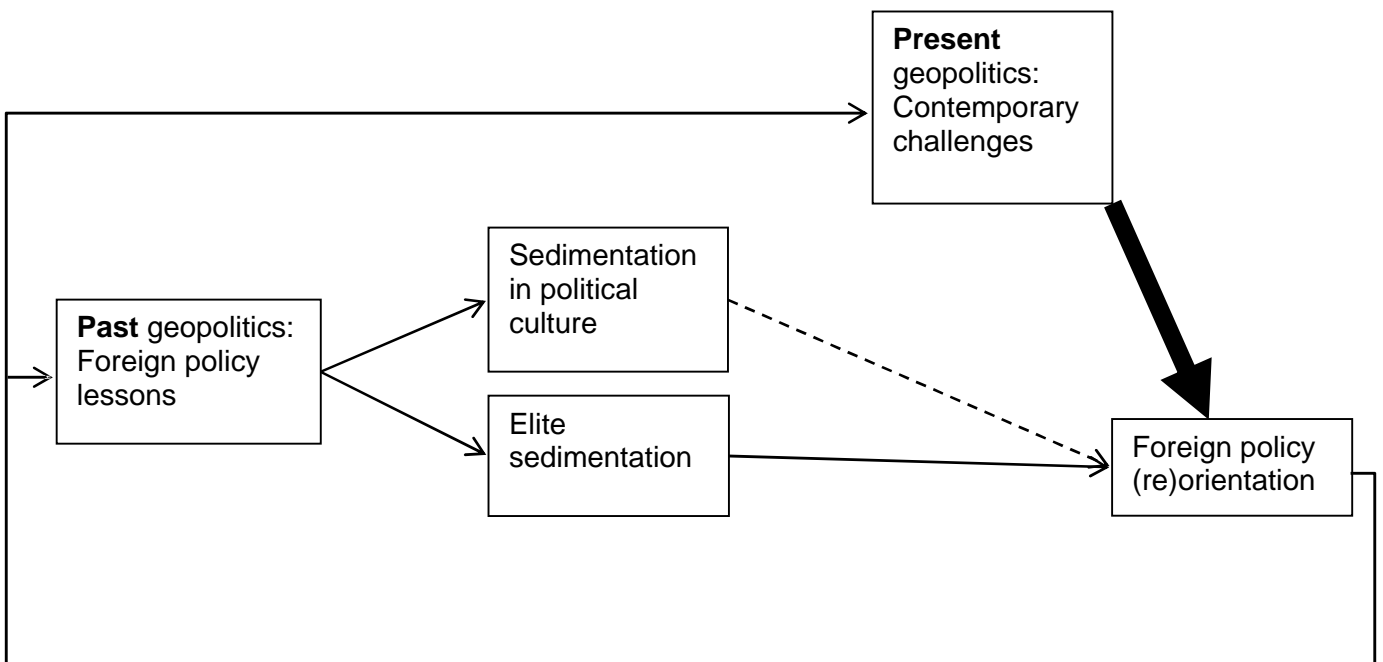


Fig. 3. Situation of high action space: foreign policy (re)orientation is co-directed by present and past geopolitics

lesson; in the latter, they advocate it, because others believe in it (the electorate or members of the elite).¹⁴ However, if decision-makers' real incentive is external, only, we count it as present geopolitics (the role of the past may be that of a modest facilitator or legitimizer).

We distinguish between four idealtypes of interplay between past and present geopolitics (fig. 4), based on two dimensions: firstly, is there a dramatic challenge from present geopolitics (limiting action space), or is there not? Secondly, has an unequivocal historical lesson been sedimented in the elite, or is such a lesson absent? Regarding the situation, where both conditions are fulfilled and there is a pressure on decision-makers from both past and present geopolitics, we should distinguish between two subtypes: diverging versus converging pressures on policy-makers. The

¹⁴ The distinction between the two alternatives may be difficult to draw in empirical terms – though not impossible as convincingly demonstrated by Khong (1992, ch. 1 and 3). In the present context, however, the distinction is not 'life or death', since both alternatives represent the influence of past geopolitics on current foreign policy (albeit in different ways and to different degrees).

<p><i>The role of past geopolitics</i></p> <p><i>The role of present geopolitics</i></p>	<p><i>No singular and unequivocal historical lesson prevails</i></p>	<p><i>One unequivocal historical lesson prevails</i></p>	
<p><i>Dramatic challenge from present geopolitics</i></p>	<p>I The present wins an overwhelming 'victory'</p>	<p>Pressure from both the present and the past (subsidiary)</p>	<p>II The past restrains the present</p> <p>III The past reinforces the present</p>
<p><i>No dramatic challenge from present geopolitics</i></p>	<p>No determinacy</p>	<p>IV The past is allowed an independent role</p>	

Fig. 4. Four idealtypes of interplay between present and past geopolitics.

past may *restrain* the present as inertia (category II),¹⁵ or it may *reinforce* it (category III). In category I, we typically deal with a sudden shift in the external balance of power that leads to fundamental policy reorientation. The state in question has very little action space. The external pressure is forceful enough to wipe out any heritages of past geopolitics. Category IV typically applies to the only superpower or regional great powers with considerable action space. Still, also minor powers under favourable geopolitical circumstances may qualify. The essence is that the absence of external pressures allows an independent role to domestic politics, including in particular lessons of the past. If there happens to be one clear and unequivocal lesson, there are good prospects that it will exert

¹⁵ Apart from this cognitive inertia, there are also procedural forms of inertia like precedence thinking at the bureaucratic level, when 'similar' situations arise ('standard operating procedures', cf. Allison 1971). The underlying reason is not only continuity in personnel, but also bureaucratic socialization that transmits patterns of beliefs and responses from one generation of civil servants to the next.

an independent influence on policy. These idealtypes will be used as a guideline for the selection of cases (cf. below).

As should already be apparent, 'learning a lesson' as here understood does not necessarily improve foreign policy (only coincidentally, in fact); we simply assess that decision-makers have been affected in one or the other direction by a certain past experience (Levy 1994: 291-94). It is actually concluded by May (1973: xi) that 'policy-makers ordinarily use history badly'. There is a striking consensus in the academic literature that the use of historical lessons often leads to foreign policy failure (cf. also Jervis 1976: 228; Janis & Mann (1977): 277; Vertzberger (1990): 323-39; Khong (1992): 12-14, 227, 255; Zakaria (1992): 195, Reiter (1994): 493-4, 523, and Levy (2003). Of course, there is nothing wrong with historical experience; indeed, it constitutes a parameter for all contemporary human experience. However, one crucial source of failure is the obsession with one *specific*, often vivid firsthand experience from decision-makers' early adult life – normally the state's last war. Consider a man in a rowing boat: in order to keep his course, he rows backwards, consistently focusing at a chosen sign post on land; thereby, however, he risks overlooking the boat traffic, he encounters. Past geopolitics is correspondingly out of tune with the state's environment. Its involvement may provoke countermeasures from one or more other states and even nurture past geopolitics on their side, based on contrasting versions of the same historic events. Past geopolitics, thus, may have a significant conflict potential between states. We prescribe how stability projection can reduce conflict risks – meaning metaphorically that present geopolitics (in practice the Euro-Atlantic power pole) can change the incentive structure and prevail over past geopolitics.

Epistemology, Method, and Case Selection

Cognitive phenomena like lessons of the past belong to the home-ground of constructivism, not least, and are far from that of realism. Since, however, such lessons have been shown – unlike other domestic factors – occasionally to play significant roles in the 'big' decisions of foreign policy orientation, realism needs to come to grip with them. This should be accomplished without compromising too much theoretical parsimony, being the comparative advantage of realism. The essence of the project is to show that this is indeed possible.

Our methodological basis is modified critical rationalism.¹⁶ The study of present versus past geopolitics is based, like neoclassical realism, on

- *a realist epistemology*:¹⁷ reality is difficult to grasp for both actors and analysts, but it is 'out there'! There are objective differences between states and between situations; they are not just what decision-makers 'make of them'.¹⁸

- *Anti-positivism/anti-inductivism*: one thing is that reality exists independently from our theoretical constructs; another is that this reality can only be grasped through our conceptual/theoretical lenses. Much of the 'comparative foreign policy' tradition has been misguided in this way¹⁹, whereas neo-classical realism represents an improvement.

- *Theoretical parsimony*: theories should preferably be parsimonious; they should be able to explain much by little – by one or a few unifying explanatory mechanisms (like the luxury theory). We should aim toward *interesting* truth rather than simply truth.

To sum up on epistemology, we avoid the Scylla of positivism and the Charybdis of constructivism/idealism (cf. also Tellis 1996: 5). Positivism overemphasizes the 'facts' that allegedly speak for themselves, and theories are believed to be contained in phenomena, solely. Constructivism, by contrast, overemphasizes language and believes that all of reality can be found therein. Critical rationalism operates with theory and reality existing independently from each other, thereby making it meaningful to compare them.

Our modification of critical rationalism regards falsificationism, which has met criticism regarding its application to the social sciences in particular (Lakatos 1970; Eckstein 1975; Waltz 2003).²⁰ We advocate a more lenient course vis-à-vis theories by following a methodology of *decreasing abstraction* (Eckstein 1975; Mouritzen 1998: 149-50). We find that the best way to explain a complex reality is to begin with a parsimonious ideal type, but modify the ideal type in order to expand its explanatory power by adding variables, thereby striking a compromise between the ideal of parsimony and the wish to

¹⁶ Critical rationalism is based on Karl Popper's philosophy and epistemology (e.g. Popper 1972).

¹⁷ Not to be misunderstood as the IR school of realism, although the two are often related.

¹⁸ To counter-paraphrase one of the leading IR constructivist Alexander Wendt (1992), 'Anarchy is what states make of it'.

¹⁹ For a general criticism, cf. Mouritzen 1998: 22-4. As an illustration concerning the study of foreign policy reorientation, cf. Sundelius (1994) applying the conceptual scheme of Charles Hermann (1990) to Sweden's change of course in the post-Cold War era. As admitted by Sundelius, the scheme does not have 'explanatory value as it lacks any theoretical underpinning' (p. 197); the 'limited aspirations of this...analytical scheme can be deplored as defeatist...' (ibid.) Still, the author ascribes it an important ordering function.

²⁰ For a discussion of falsification in the social sciences, see King, Keohane & Verba (1994: 100-105). For discussions of contemporary realism and critical rationalism, see Mouritzen (1997) and Wivel (2000: Ch. 1).

explain a complex reality. In our case, this means beginning with the proposition that foreign policy is explained by present geopolitics solely and then move to the more complex model by including present as well as past geopolitics and the dynamics linking the two. We are not blind to the fact that other factors than the ones prioritized here may affect foreign policy orientation, but we believe that present (primarily) and past geopolitics provide the most fruitful skeleton for theory-building.

We choose qualitative case studies, i.e. theoretically informed narratives (Rose 1998), as our research strategy.²¹ The case study strategy has a specific advantage over other potential research strategies, when ‘a “how” or “why” question is being asked’ (Yin 1994: 4).²²

We use three methods of case selection: the ideal type method, the synchronic method, and the diachronic method. These conveniently divide the project into three logically connected subprojects.

The ideal type method: a study of each of the four ideal types delineated above is done with one illustrative case for each:

-*The present wins an overwhelming ‘victory’:* Danish ‘Bridge Building’ Between East and West 1945-48;

-*The past restrains the present:* Sweden Barely Joins the EU (1995), but Remains outside NATO;

-*The past reinforces the present:* The Baltic Countries Join NATO (2004);

-*The past is allowed an independent role:* Poland’s Kaczynski Rule and the Case of the German-Russian Gas Pipeline (2006-07).

As should be apparent, the cases, carefully selected, have been chosen freely across time and space. Their purpose is to illustrate, in the best way possible, the mechanisms for each of the four types of interplay between past and present geopolitics. Our endeavors in this part of the project are primarily theoretical, i.e. the refining of our theoretical apparatus in the light of conceptual analysis and empirical illustration. By contrast, in using the

²¹ For general discussions of the nature and use of case studies in Political Science, see Eckstein (1975), George (1979), George and McKeown (1985), King, Keohane & Verba (1994:43-46), McKeown (1999) and Van Evera (1997: Chapter 2).

²² Examples of neoclassical realist books using qualitative case studies as part of their research strategy include, e.g., Schweller (1998; 2006), Snyder (1991) and Zakaria (1998).

²² On the ‘congruence method’, cf. George & Benett (2004 ch. 9) and Van Evera 1997: 58-63.

synchronic and diachronic methods of case selection below, we expose our theory to empirical tests.

The synchronic method: comparing the roles of past and present geopolitics for states facing the *same* challenge, some with high and some with low action space:

- a) East/West: the positioning of European states vis-à-vis a reinvigorated Russia
- b) West/West: the positioning of European states in relation to Euro-Atlantic disagreement in the post-Cold War era

The cases selected under a) and b) should test the overall theory by use of 'least-likely' or 'most-likely' cases (Eckstein 1975), preferably. In both a) and b), we identify which ideal type(s) of interplay are at stake and how they match the theory-derived expectations (on the two subprojects, cf. separate sections below).

The diachronic method: comparing the roles of past and present geopolitics for *one* state in epochs/situations of high and low action space. We will compare the following cases:

- Denmark during the Cold War
- Denmark in the post-Cold War era (1989 - 2005), and
- Denmark post-Mohammad (2005 -).²³

The theoretical virtue of these cases is the variation, they provide regarding the 'independent variable' of action space: curtailed during the Cold War, unprecedented in the post-Cold War era, and presumably reduced post-Mohammad (*vis à vis* major allies and *vis à vis* the Muslim world)?²⁴. As indicated by the initial Fogh Rasmussen illustration, past geopolitics played an important role during the favourable post-Cold War circumstances for Danish foreign policy. It should be theoretically expected that the considerable leeway for past geopolitics since the Cold War should again diminish in the

²³ 'Mohammad' refers to the so-called 'cartoons crisis' 2005-06.

²⁴ Petersen (2006) has argued this to be the case after the 'cartoons crisis'.

wake of the cartoons crisis. It remains to test this empirically. The availability of newly published major historical analyses will facilitate the use of Denmark as a test case.²⁵

What should be done in each case?

In each of the cases, be they part of a synchronic or diachronic perspective, we initially portray the state's external security environment and identify the situations of foreign policy change (reorientation). These are well-suited to shed light on the state's ability to remain unaffected by other states' power and influence (its action space).²⁶ By aggregating these observations for whole time-periods, we get a picture, in comparative and rough outline, of the level of action space and any fluctuations therein.

We then proceed to map, which of the four types of interplay (if any) between past and present geopolitics is at stake in the situations. This is done, as a *first cut*, by an 'intelligent reading/interpretation' of official documents (i.e. an interpretation in their proper spatio-temporal context). Which, if any, lessons of past geopolitics are appealed to? Does the lesson pertain to (a) present circumstances, e.g. the nature of one or more great powers in the state's salient environment; (b) the usefulness of a specific foreign policy strategy; or (c) decision-makers' foreign policy goal hierarchy (all three may be relevant in connection with one lesson)? In the *second cut*, we ask if the lesson is supplemented by corresponding historical 'sediments' in public debate (through newspaper search at the internet)? This is followed by a *third cut*, where we seek to single out direct from indirect past geopolitics (as operationalized by Khong 1992, ch. 3). This is aided by the tracing of press debates, possible leaks, and the carrying out of a few depth interviews with elite persons. Whereas we can benefit in the diachronic study from a gold mine of materials that were non-public in the contemporary world, we must be content in the synchronic studies with the interpretations that can be made from semi-public statements (apart, of course, from some 'lucky punches').

Expectations for each individual case are then deduced from the theory. Finally, possible deviations between expectations and observations are reflected upon; have plausible ad-hoc explanations from outside the present theory 'disturbed' the picture, or is there a built-in error in the theory itself? Should amendment or falsification be

²⁵ A Danish foreign policy history in six volumes (edited by Due-Nielsen, Feldbæk & Petersen and published between 2001 and 2005) as well as the DIIS report in four volumes on Denmark during the Cold War (DIIS, 2005). On a specific foreign policy lesson, cf. Branner (1990).

²⁶ In Mouritzen (2006c), Danish action space has been operationalized and its fluctuations have been 'measured' over the last hundred years.

considered? In the latter case, do any competing theories, e.g. based in political psychology, present themselves? Possibly, could a more parsimonious theory account for the same occurrences?

The best way to display the theory's *falsifiability* is to indicate, which occurrences would falsify it. If, for instance, prime ministerial personal preferences or domestic politics, unrelated to past geopolitics, decided states' alignments time after time, the theory would be falsified for all practical purposes. Or if states generally neglected their present geopolitical challenges on the altar of ghosts or 'successes' of the past, this would likewise falsify it. For instance, if the Kachinsky twins had entered power and implemented their nationalist foreign policy program prior to December 2002 (when Polish EU membership was de facto safeguarded), this would have amounted to falsification. As an EU would-be member, Poland's limited action space did not allow for an independent role to past geopolitics.

Subproject (a): A study of European positionings vis á vis an invigorated Russia

This subproject will test the project's overall theory vis à vis similarities and differences between several European states' Russia policies.

Russia challenges

The selected European states have been challenged by Russia on several issues and increasingly so. President Putin's second term (March 2004 – March 2008) has been selected, because it represents a period of renewed Russian self-assertion.

In chronological order, the selected challenges are as follows:²⁷

- Centralisation and curtailments of democracy in Russia
- The aftermath of the Chechnya Wars
- The Kaliningrad 'passport issue'
- The Baltic Sea gas pipeline ("energy security")

²⁷ States directly affected by a certain issue, like Estonia in the case of the statue crisis, are of course exempted from the comparative exercise. The research question asks, how the selected states relate to the crisis, i.e. how 'solidaric' they were in relation to Estonia.

- The planned US missile shield in Europe and Russia's response thereto
- President Putin's pathbreaking Munich speech of February 2007
- The Russian ban on Polish meat
- The Estonian-Russian statue crisis (April 2007)
- The March 2008 Presidential elections in Russia

The selection of test cases

The states selected as qualitative test cases should:

(1) be located close to Russia. This safeguards that the Russian great power is a crucial element in their foreign policies (since 'power [and incentives] wane with distance', Boulding 1962).

(2) be states with a considerable history of independent statehood and thereby a reservoir of past geopolitics. This follows from the nature of the theory that we wish to test. In other words, 'new' states like Belarus, Ukraine, or the Kaukasian republics are excluded from our concern.

Applying these criteria, the following states are crystallized: Norway (bordering Russia in the High North and the Barents Sea), Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland (the two latter bordering Kaliningrad). The three Baltic countries, having been restored in 1991, possess their interwar experiences as sources of past geopolitics.

What should be done in the cases

The Russia policies of the states thus selected are characterized from their positionings in relation to the nine Russia challenges mentioned above. On the basis of these individual positionings, an aggregate measure is made characterizing the profile of each individual state.

It is then investigated, which factors contribute to this profile. In particular, what is the nature of the interplay (if any) between present and past geopolitics (cf. fig. 4)? This question is answered by going through the stages in the method described above (p. 15), the 'first, second, and third cuts'.

Expectations for each individual case are then deduced from the theory.

Among the selected states, five have a – more or less – constrained action space vis à vis Russia:

- Norway: membership of NATO, but the relevance of this vis à vis bilateral Russian-Norwegian issues (oil, fish, nuclear waste, etc.) is questionable
- Finland: long ‘poverty border’ with Russia, to which EU membership is well-suited; does not want to provoke Russia with NATO membership
- Three Baltic countries: geopolitically exposed, but NATO as life insurance

By contrast, Poland has a high action space vis à vis Russia. It is bigger in terms of capabilities than any of the others, it has a Belarusian and Ukrainian buffer vis à vis Russia, and it is a member of both NATO and the EU.

Based on the theory, we should expect a greater role to past geopolitics in the Polish case than in the five others. As provisionally judged, the types of past/present interplay should be the following: Norway: ‘the present wins an overwhelming victory’; Finland: ‘the past restrains the present’; Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania: ‘the past reinforces the present’, and Poland: ‘the past is allowed an independent role’. It is tested, whether and how these expectations match the observations/interpretations of the selected states’ Russia policies. Finally, possible deviations are reflected upon; are plausible ad-hoc explanations relevant or should theory amendment/ falsification be considered? If so, which competing theories present themselves?

Subproject (b): A study of European positionings in the transatlantic relationship

This subproject will test the project’s overall theory vis-à-vis similarities and differences between European states in regard to Euro-Atlantic disagreements.

The Euro-Atlantic challenge

The United States and the European states are each other’s most important partners in security affairs. Since the formation of NATO in 1949, the United States and most of the states in Western Europe have shared a commitment to defence of each others territories in case of attack. Because of the overwhelming strength of the United States and the

vulnerable location of Western Europe, the relationship has been highly asymmetrical with the United States acting as Western Europe's security provider. The end of the Cold War strengthened the transatlantic relationship in two ways: It expanded the transatlantic alliance with a number of new members from Central and Eastern Europe, and it left the alliance without an enemy of comparable strength. However, the same two developments also weakened the relationship. Without a common enemy, disagreements between the United States and certain European states escalated more easily. Moreover, increased membership made the alliance more diverse in terms of both the geopolitical challenges of the present and the baggage from the past.

This subproject will describe and explain the different positions of selected European states in the transatlantic relationship. On the one hand, Europeans have worked closely with the Americans to reform and enlarge NATO. The European Security and Defence Policy is a supplement rather than an alternative to NATO. Some European states have cooperated with the United States on military action in former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. On the other hand, the position of other European states on such issues as the war in Iraq, the International Criminal Court, the Kyoto Protocol and UN reform have challenged the United States.

The PhD project should analyse the positions of selected European states vis-à-vis the United States on the following dimensions:

- (1) Security issues geographically inside the Euro-Atlantic area vs. security issues outside the area
- (2) 'Conflict issues' between the United States and Europe vs. 'agreement issues'.
- (3) Hard security issues (linked to the military sector) vs. soft security issues (economic, environmental, cultural etc.)
- (4) Traditional security issues (territorial defence) vs. non-traditional security issues (terrorism, homeland security)

Analytical procedure and case selection

The analytical procedure involves, firstly, a comparative analysis of the four dimensions and, secondly, comparative case studies of six selected states.

In transatlantic relations, European states are often divided into Atlanticist and Continentalist powers, denoting their preference for either Atlantic or 'European' solutions to foreign and security challenges (reflecting to some extent their lessons of the past). We select three Atlanticist (the United Kingdom, Poland, and Denmark) and three

Continentalist powers (France, Belgium, and Finland) as our cases. Thus, in each category, we have one great power and two non-great powers with different geopolitical locations allowing us to compare within and between the two categories.

The comparative case study of selected states will compare each state's position on the four dimensions. In each case the author investigates, which factors contribute to its position. In particular, what is the nature of the interplay (if any) between present and past geopolitics? This question is answered by going through the stages in the method described above (p. 15), the 'first, second, and third cuts'. Expectations for each individual case are then deduced from the theory.

Based on the theory, we should expect a greater role to past geopolitics regarding security issues outside the Euro-Atlantic area (as opposed to inside the area), regarding soft security issues (as opposed to hard security issues), regarding Atlantic 'conflict issues' (as opposed to 'agreement issues'), and regarding traditional security issues (as opposed to non-traditional issues).

Finally, possible deviations are reflected upon. The author should discuss whether plausible ad-hoc explanations are relevant and whether competing theories offer more plausible explanations.

Expected Outcome

We expect the following outcome from the project:

-*The ideal type perspective*: a volume published by Routledge, London, edited by Hans Mouritzen (*Realism and the Past*, prov. title).²⁸ Two peer reviewed articles by Hans Mouritzen; one article is expected to be published in 2009 by John Hopkins University Press in an edited volume on 'Realism Today: A Paradigmatic Inventory' (eds. Annette Freyberg-Inan, Ewan Harrison, and Patrick James); another ('Action Space as the Key to Foreign Policy Theory') will be submitted in due course to 'International Security'. In addition, the research will be disseminated to a wider Danish public through one article in 'Udenrigs', a Danish policy journal, and one Danish newspaper feature article. *Staff: Hans*

²⁸ The editor has been contacted by Routledge (Andrew Humphrys) in May 2007 and asked to submit such a book proposal for their 'Geopolitical Theory' series. This will be possible only in the case of funding, of course.

Mouritzen takes lead, and Anders Wivel together with members of the International Advisory Board participate with chapters in the edited volume. The two PhD students are included to the extent allowed by their dissertation work.

-The synchronic perspective: two PhD dissertations, each encompassing theory-guided synchronic comparisons. They will, in due course, be evaluated by Copenhagen University. Dissemination: as above. Staff: Two PhD students, both supervised by Hans Mouritzen and Anders Wivel. They will be selected on a competitive basis. The scholarships will be advertised to a Danish and international audience aimed at attracting the best candidates.

*-The diachronic perspective: one monograph, *Small State in a World of Power: Danish Security Policy since 1900*, by Anders Wivel, published by Routledge or Palgrave, and two peer reviewed articles by Wivel in international scholarly journals. The first article 'Small Power Politics: The Diplomacy of Small States' will be submitted to *European Journal of International Relations*. The second article 'Power, preferences and political discourse: Exploring the transformation of Danish foreign policy' will be submitted to either *Cooperation and Conflict* or *Foreign Policy Analysis*. Dissemination: as above. Staff: Anders Wivel takes lead, with the participation of Hans Mouritzen and the two PhD students to the extent allowed by their primary task.*

-In addition to the publications, we plan an international conference on foreign policy theory in general and one authors' workshop facilitating work on the volume from the ideal type perspective. The primary aim of the conference is to strengthen the international research networks of Danish researchers in the foreign policy field. The conference will be followed up by a volume with contributions by leading international and Danish foreign policy scholars. The book, *Making Sense of Foreign Policy Analysis*, edited by Anders Wivel will systematically explore the potential of competing theories of foreign policy. Approximately 25% of Wivel's sabbatical ('frikøb'), financed by the research council, will be used for organizing the conference and to follow-up on it. Approximately 75% of Wivel's sabbatical financed by the research council will be used for a stay at the Centre of International Studies, University of Cambridge, in order to work on the theoretical part of the project. Christopher Hill, a member of our International Advisory Board, is the director of the centre.

Practicalities

The project period is planned from January 1, 2008, through December 31, 2010. The project is based on institutional cooperation between DIIS, the Danish Institute for International Studies, and the Department of Political Science at the University of Copenhagen. The project responsible, Hans Mouritzen, is Head of foreign policy research at DIIS. This topic is crucial to both research and education (masters and doctoral) at the Department of Political Science, where Anders Wivel is involved in both. It is essential that the best university candidates can be recruited and supported in their research from DIIS, whereupon they can get their PhD from the University. Cooperation and synergy between the two institutes, in no way self-evident, should be further developed.

Hans Mouritzen and Anders Wivel both possess considerable routine and experience in carrying out this type of theory-guided comparative research (e.g. Hansen, Toft & Wivel (forthcoming), Mouritzen (1997; 1998; 2006a; 2006b); Mouritzen, Wæver & Wiberg (1996); Mouritzen & Wivel (2005/2007); Wivel (2000; 2005)). Also, they have worked closely together in the past, both as co-editors and co-authors.

We expect both PhD students to be enrolled in the PhD programme at the Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen. In addition, the research project will involve an *Advisory Board* of leading international and Danish foreign policy researchers. The following have agreed to participate: Tom Bryder, Copenhagen; Annette Freyberg-Inan, Amsterdam; Birthe Hansen, Copenhagen; Christoffer Hill, Cambridge, UK; Keir A. Lieber, Notre Dame, USA; and Steen Rynning, Odense. Moreover, we expect to benefit from our day-to-day research cooperation with colleagues at the Department of Political Science and at DIIS (the 'Foreign Policy' research group, including Svend Aage Christensen, Stefano Guzzini, Pertti Joenniemi, and possibly Hans Branner). Regarding the translation and interpretation of Russian and Polish documents, in particular, we have been promised assistance from Svend Aage Christensen, who is already working on a related project dealing, e.g., with Polish and Russian past geopolitics.

Both DIIS and Copenhagen University have promised to finance necessary travellings/conferences abroad. Moreover, project work at both institutes is in need of

student assistance, as indicated in the budget. As a final point, we are not aware of ethical issues in relation to the proposed project.

Work Schedule

Year	Period	Activities
2008	January-June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refine project description in the light of Board and other feedbacks - Adaptation of subprojects a) and b) in the light of the preferences of the hired PhD students - Contacting potential authors for 'ideal type' volume (vol. I) - Individual articles prepared
	July-December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation and discussion of research design at external seminars - Individual country studies, including data collection, begins - Writing of draft introduction to vol. I - Authors' workshop for vol. I
2009	January-June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing of draft theoretical chapter for diachronic book (vol. II) - Presentation of this chapter at external seminar - Editing of chapters for vol. I
	July-December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Half way' seminar with PhD drafts - Writing of draft case study chapters for vol. II - Presentation of preliminary results at external seminars - Final editing and submission of vol. I
2010	January-June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wivel at Cambridge - Writing of concluding chapter for vol. II - Conference on competing foreign policy theories (also preparing volume III)
	July-December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual articles submitted - Final editing and submission of vol. II - Final editing and submission of the two PhD dissertations - Editing of chapters for vol. III

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