

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Bakalářská práce

**Popular Geopolitics – historical development and
evaluation of current situation and trends in America**

Tomáš Hostýnek

Plzeň 2014

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Katedra politologie a mezinárodních vztahů

Studijní program Mezinárodní teritoriální studia

Studijní obor Mezinárodní vztahy – Britská a americká studia

Bakalářská práce

**Popular Geopolitics – historical development and
evaluation of current situation and trends in America**

Tomáš Hostýnek

Vedoucí práce:

PhDr. Ivona Mišterová, Ph.D.

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Fakulta filozofická Západočeské univerzity v Plzni

Bc. Václav Skyland Kobylak

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Fakulta filozofická Západočeské univerzity v Plzni

Plzeň 2014

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval samostatně a použil jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

Plzeň, duben 2014

.....

Allow me to express my sincerest gratitude to the excellent supervisors of this voluminous and daring thesis, who successfully navigated me through the stormy, yet extremely enjoyable seas of academic writing. Namely, Ivona Mišterová deserves much credit for her unyielding cheerfulness and indomitable courage to venture into a rather uncharted territory of geopolitics, while upholding impeccable academic qualities and exhibiting passionate devotion to our cause. Equally essential to bringing this thesis to life has been Václav Skyland Kobylak, whose linguistic prowess and “down-to-earth” approach proved indispensable in embellishing the overall conciseness of our findings. Furthermore, Petr Kalinič provided valuable feedback on several overlapping aspects of both major chapters and in doing so, helped me uncover additional shared as well as contrastive elements between them. Also, I remain deeply appreciative of all the remarks of one of my close friends from Germany, who urged me to make this thesis more accessible and easier to digest. From the depths of my heart, I wish to thank the abovementioned “fantastic four” for making my dream come true.

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	THE ORIGINS OF GEOPOLITICS.....	6
2.1	The development of geopolitics prior to WWI.....	6
2.1.1	Friedrich Ratzel – the pioneer of organic geopolitics in Germany.....	9
2.1.2	Rudolf Kjellén – the founding father of imperial geopolitics.....	10
2.1.3	Alfred Thayer Mahan – naval power at its finest.....	11
2.1.4	Halford J. Mackinder – the struggle for global heartland.....	13
2.2	Interwar period – geopolitics circumscribes the entire world.	14
2.2.1	Interwar Germany – congealing organic theories, reticence and politics.	17
2.2.2	Karl Haushofer – the missing link between geopolitics and Nazism?.....	17
2.2.3	Nicholas J. Spykman – rimland and the limits of frontiers.....	19
2.3	Postwar decline and the emergence of critical geopolitics.....	21
2.3.1	Critical geopolitics – deconstructing everyday perceptions.....	23
2.3.2	The 1990s – a brief unipolar moment?.....	25
2.3.3	Samuel Huntington, bellicose civilizations and the 9/11 vertigo.....	26
2.3.4	Into the 21st century and beyond.....	28
3	POPULAR GEOPOLITICS.....	29
3.1	Captain America – how to crush America's enemies in self-defense.....	32
3.2	Reader's Digest – Condensing the Cold War.....	37
3.3	James Bond and his early Cold War cinematic ventures.....	43
3.4	The Dixie Chicks – a cautionary tale for post-9/11 country music?.....	49
3.5	Call of Duty – America as a ubiquitous guardian of the Rest.....	52
4	CONCLUSION.....	61
5	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	67
5.1	Printed sources.....	67
5.2	Electronic and media sources.....	74
6	RÉSUMÉ.....	79
7	APPENDICES.....	81

1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this thesis is to thoroughly analyze one of the latest subsets of critical geopolitics – popular geopolitics – in an attempt to uncover mutual relations, intertwining complexities between the traditional world of geopolitics (practical and formal – as envisaged by critical geopolitician Gearóid Ó Tuathail and his innovative tripartite scheme) and popular media. Thus, through the scope of magazines, comic books, movies, music, videogames and, to a lesser extent, news networks, we will research and assess the influence of geopolitics on the aforementioned forms of popular media and vice versa. In other words, our thesis will be centered on the reflection of the political world and events surrounding us in these often newly emerging sources of entertainment and information available to masses. Despite popular geopolitics gaining more academic prominence as late as in the 1980s with the emergence of critical geopolitics and its complex understanding involving a plethora of phenomena, discursive analyses and daunting criticism of a one-dimensional perception of our world, one is indeed compelled to point out that media and politics intertwined and exerted influence on each other much sooner.

In the first chapter we will briefly assess the turbulent development of the term geopolitics and its consequent scientific branch that of which origins can be traced back to the very beginning of the 20th century. Based mostly on the teachings of Swedish, German and Anglo-American geopolitical schools we will shortly describe the ideas of the most significant and influential pioneers from these three, sometimes contending and occasionally permeating, schools and their impact on tumultuous years before, between and during the world wars. Geopolitics, in a broader sense, embodies a rather realistic approach to international politics and emphasizes the role of territory and resources in shaping the foreign policies of states and their perceptions of e.g. threats, national interests, etc. Furthermore, when a Swedish professor of political science, Rudolf Kjellén, coined this portmanteau in 1899, there were indeed other contributing factors apart from the novelty of this particular term that propelled its widespread popularity.

However, the very first notions of geopolitics had been conceived of two years before Kjellén's term made manifest. Friedrich Ratzel, a German geographer, merged the then ubiquitous and widely acknowledged ideas of Darwinism with various theories of states. Thus, he produced the soon to be abused organic theory of state through which he advocated the states' need to grow in order to thrive. Also, he is believed to have been the chief mastermind behind the coinage of the infamous and soon widely abused term "Lebensraum". Other notable geopolitical authors whose teachings and impacts on the

course of events in the 20th century will be elucidated include Karl Haushofer, who provided the necessary intellectual basis for Hitler's Germany, American admiral Alfred Mahan and his conviction about the irreplaceable role of sea power and choking points and critical geostrategist Nicholas J. Spykman, who elaborated upon and altered Mahan's theories.

Nevertheless, as WWII unfolded, geopolitics, in the eyes of the West, became increasingly associated and inevitably intermingled with Nazi Germany, which became a decisive precursor to the post-war decline of this term and the loss of trustworthiness due to being indelibly stained by Nazism. Despite geopolitics dropping out of the mainstream discourse of post-war years, Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State, is often credited with the revival of geopolitics in the USA in the 1970s. Kissinger advocated the need to employ a more flexible approach to deeply entrenched loggerheads with the USSR and explore new possibilities of bypassing the traditional black and white perception of the Cold War reality. Therefore, his major contribution to the renewed flourishing of geopolitics will be discussed in the first chapter as well.

Later in the 1980s, as several intellectuals were cautiously revisiting geopolitics once again, various events in international politics during the previous decades paved the way for critical geopolitics and its altered conception of this science. A myriad of authors such as Haraway, Tuathail, Dalby and Agnew, began, belatedly, incorporating intellectual currents already present elsewhere in the social sciences. Thus, a new approach was born that emphasizes discourses, poststructuralism and the inability to fully comprehend complex geopolitical relations without including languages, culture, popular media and *their* reproduction of events. Hence, these authors were the ones who brought popular geopolitics and its relevancy for academic research to the fore. In the 1990s, however, political scientist Samuel P. Huntington postulated an intrepid post-Cold War thesis on a new world order formulated in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World order*, in which he challenged traditional schools and theories of geopolitics and sought to revolutionize our understanding of international relations by introducing the concept of the clash of civilizations. However fallible his thesis soon proved to be and despite almost unanimous criticism by the academic community, it constituted a welcome intellectual framework in America in the wake of 9/11. The final pages of the first chapter will thus be dedicated to a brief evaluation of the shifting state of geopolitics in the 21st century and will attempt to grasp its constantly evolving character that today, to a certain extent, blurs the line between geopolitics, international relations and globalization.

After this introduction to geopolitics and a brief historical summary we will focus on popular geopolitics, its development throughout the 20th century and several relevant case studies to illustrate the firm link between politics and its reflection through the prism of popular media. The author seeks to argue that popular geopolitics did not come into existence once critical geopoliticians experienced a sudden epiphany and embraced elements of the social sciences, but rather that it has accompanied and mirrored the world of politics since the actual inception of geopolitics. Afterwards, this analytical chapter will be divided into several parts ranging from comic books, movies, over magazines and music to videogames in order to cover the most significant and influential sources of popular media. Furthermore, each subchapter will comprise a case study to exemplify our findings and claims. Albeit being confined to American popular culture, we will seek to demonstrate the worldwide appeal, the enticement of various case studies and their indispensable role in conveying messages and shaping the audiences' perceptions of and around our world.

After a short introduction to popular geopolitics, its short-term development, milestones and current methodologies, we will first and foremost explore the intriguing history of *Captain America* comic books, which originated as early as 1941, their struggle to maintain audience in the WWII aftermath and a unique issue called retroactive continuity introduced in order to tap into the shifting heart of American society in the 1960s. It is indeed reasonable to believe that throughout its history spanning across more than six decades, *Captain America* has very closely followed America's own search for identity in the bipolar Cold War reality as well as afterwards and again in the 9/11 aftermath. As such, it constitutes a unique source of popular media worth conducting research and elaborating upon.

Afterwards, a popular magazine called the *Reader's Digest* and its highly skeptical views of the Soviet Union especially before and during the Cold War will be thoroughly analyzed. Joanne Sharp argues that the Reader's Digest helped shape the American perception of the Cold War through its selection and editorial presentation of articles and stories on the USSR. Hence, we can witness almost a steady stream of articles regarding the totalitarian nature of the Soviet Union and its oppressive behavior toward subservient citizens. However narrowed the vision of American political identity was, in the post-Cold War period the Reader's Digest has sought to incorporate a myriad of other foreign as well as domestic threats to America, yet still holding on to the relatively non-democratic nature of the Russian Federation. The former claim appears to reflect the

sudden post-Cold War vacuum, the hollowness of traditional threats, while the latter, in the author's opinion, very aptly depicts the deeply entrenched American perception of the USSR that even more than two decades of subsiding once tensed loggerheads failed to succeed in erasing. The importance of such a popular magazine needs not to be omitted from our analysis and may enable us to better fathom, in terms of cultural elements, the still-persisting rivalries between these two countries while we witness the actual limits of the current methodologies of popular geopolitics.

Then, the celluloid world of cinematography will be introduced to this thesis. The film industry is generally agreed to have greatly contributed to debates over historical accuracy, political agendas and dominant social tendencies. Thus, while providing mass entertainment, film companies have long collaborated with governments to convey various, even politically affected, messages. Building upon some inter-war movies that deftly demonstrate a strong link between the government lending military equipment to producers on the one hand, and the heroic messages celebrating glorious America's victories on the other, the *James Bond* phenomenon will then be properly analyzed and contextualized in the heated period of the 1960s and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Despite originally being a British invention, we will strive to demonstrate its unquestionable influence on America and the shift in main antagonists as well as locations it has correspondingly undergone in the post-Cold War period and in the wake of 9/11. In addition, applying the framework of reception theory so that we may better comprehend the contrastive messages such movies can convey will constitute an essential element which will permeate all case studies presented in this bachelor's thesis. Thus, *James Bond* movies will mark the third case study of this chapter.

Music (mostly the country genre) as a powerful vehicle for the articulation of dissent and resistance, has often served governments to rally support for particular forms of nationalism. Beginning with several oppressed music artists, the author intends to emphasize the relevance of such a kind of music and its underlining, positive as well as negative, influence on relatively recent political events – e.g. the Vietnam War, 9/11 and the War in Iraq. In order to do fulfill that, *the Dixie Chicks* band and their rather unintentional engagement with geopolitical issues surrounding the War on Terror will be properly contextualized against the shifting nature of country music in the post-9/11 era.

Afterwards, we will assess a relatively recent phenomenon – videogames – and its firm, yet strongly overlooked, connection with geopolitics. As one of the most persuasive and expressive forms of entertaining media related to the visual turn in social sciences and

emerging due to the precipitous development of informational technologies, we shall discuss the irreplaceable position of this form of popular entertainment when one seeks to fathom popular geopolitics in its complexity. Although often condemned by academics, subject to criticism and deemed irrelevant and unworthy of exploring, the author will endeavor to justify and demonstrate their relevancy for academic research in the light of daunting prejudice and bias these intriguing representations of popular culture face. Drawing from one of the the best-selling videogame franchises – *Call of Duty* – we will attempt to analyze how much the contemporary American geopolitical perception of our world is projected into this form of entertainment. Also, we should not omit the inclusion of the research of the extent to which traditional American stereotypes regarding the rest of the world have persevered throughout the many decades of the 20th century and how these exact stereotypes construct geopolitical space surrounding us. While uncovering the shifts in the narrative of videogames in the post-9/11 period and applying them to *Call of Duty*, we will seek to establish a possible link between societal transformation and trends in videogames in the 21st century.

The conclusion will summarize the main points of all the chapters and subchapters and will attempt to hint at a somehow congealed development of traditional geopolitics as well as popular geopolitics, the challenges they need to address and the crossroad contemporary geopolitics stands on.

2 THE ORIGINS OF GEOPOLITICS

2.1 The development of geopolitics prior to WWI

The innovative portmanteau “geopolitics” is believed to have been coined by a Swedish professor of political science, Rudolf Kjellén,¹ in 1899. Such an original term gained much prominence and attracted interest of many a scientist simply because it hinted at novelty, at thorough exploration of geographical dimensions of states – e.g. borders, natural resources, environmental conditions – which presuppose these international actors to behave and act in a certain way on the world stage.² However, to better comprehend this somehow elusive and ambiguous term, one is indeed compelled to properly contextualize the inception of the science of geopolitics in the turbulent development of the late 19th century, which constitutes an indispensable cornerstone for the emergence of what would later be dubbed classical geopolitics.

Albeit emitting a rather unstable perception mired in the political reality as the scramble for Africa drew to its close, Dodds brings up three main contributing factors that assisted in establishing geopolitics as a distinct branch of science. In his view, economic nationalism and trade protectionism began intermingling with foreign policies of mostly France and Britain as these two colonial empires grew uncertain and increasingly precarious regarding the unprecedented rise of the United States of America and its potential for altering the already perilous balance of trade. Thus, he surmises that one must bear in mind the aforementioned scramble for Africa and the fervent search for new colonial acquisitions when describing the origins of geopolitics.³ While France and Britain vied for dominance, exhibited mutual antipathies and were immersed in heated encounters in North Africa,⁴ the latter strove to contain Russia in Central Asia and engaged in rearmament in order to counter Germany’s bid for influence in Europe prior to First World War.

¹ Later a Conservative member of the Swedish parliament infamous for his hard-line and jingoistic perception of Swedish nationalism as well as foreign policy designs. Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 25.

² Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), 2, 38.

³ 18 million square kilometers of new territory and thirty new colonies and protectorates very aptly illustrate and attest the tremendous expansiveness of European empires in the late 19th century, which resulted in the control of almost 90% of landmass by Europeans on the verge of the 20th century. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics* (London: Routledge, 1996), 1. For more, see: Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (London: Fontana Press, 1989), 245 – 355.

⁴ Such as the infamous incident at Fashoda. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, 245 – 355.

Furthermore, Dodds believes the emergence of universities allowing assiduous assessments of the newly established field of geography to be of crucial importance worth incorporating into the evaluation of determinants concerning the compelling debates the rise of geopolitics elicited.⁵ In another elucidating book titled *Global Geopolitics* Dodds raises four additional aspects of geopolitics that are generally agreed upon, acquiesced by the vast majority of geopoliticians and well applicable to the abovementioned traditional geopolitical approach. Classical geopolitics has always been concerned with perceiving the world in its entirety, hence the geo- prefix.

(1.) Such a global perception, a big picture of our world, thus enables us to fathom reality through the prism of a detached and unbiased observer who endeavours to position himself as being objective, neutral and simply interpreting the geo-political reality he or she⁶ bears witness to. (2.) In addition, almost all geopolitical strategists placed much importance upon maps⁷ and the overall visual approach to international politics in order to convey their findings and predictions and to attempt to somehow explain⁸ via a single encompassing frame the history of international politics, the shifting present and the possible future of major conflict regions, fault lines and areas of pivotal significance.⁹ (3.) Also, geopolitics is considered to be driven by a desire to advise states, to provide them with meaningful, credible analyses of international politics with which to accommodate to the ever-changing reality and adapt to foreign and security challenges. (4.) The final feature of classical geopolitics as contended by Dodds revolves around the fact that most geopolitical authors imbue their visionary assessments with national partisanship and therefore explore global geopolitics from a very narrow-minded perspective strongly inclining toward and advocating nationalism, sometimes even bordering on imperialism, in the lieu of cross-cultural understandings.¹⁰

⁵ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 26.

⁶ As much as the author does not intend to marginalize anyone, men were usually the ones being drawn to geopolitical theorizing. Nevertheless, as will be analyzed in later chapters, Joanne P. Sharp succeeded in gaining universal acclaim thanks to her illuminating assessment of the baffling role the magazine *Reader's Digest* played in condensing the Cold War.

⁷ Heartland, Land and Sea Power, Crescents and many other terms serve to exhibit the crucial role of maps in transmitting geopolitical and spatial ideas.

⁸ This was especially the case for British geostrategist Halford J. Mackinder who brought forth, as we will build up upon later, the division of history into three phases – pre-Columbian, Columbian and post-Columbian. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 19 – 21, 65 – 70. Halford J. Mackinder, “The Geographical Pivot of History,” *Geographical Journal* 23 (1904): 28 – 50.

⁹ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 2 – 3.

¹⁰ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 2 – 3.

Friedman in his challenging thesis regarding the next one hundred years employs a slightly altered and broader approach toward defining the term geopolitics. He argues¹¹ that one should not omit the inseparable connection between international relations and the world of geopolitical forecasts. Interestingly enough, he assumes the main function of geopolitics to be the unique ability to predict behavior of international actors and, therefore, the future shape of international system. Thus, Friedman postulates that both geopolitics and economics consider players to be rational.¹² He then draws an apt metaphor between international politics and a chess game. While at the first glance it would seem that each player has a wide range of moves with which to execute his strategy, once the player ameliorates his skills, it enables him or her to better (fore)see the suddenly narrowed possibilities, which makes his or her moves more predictable.¹³

By no means should one suppose the already predetermined outcomes of such a power game, yet, as Friedman remarks, even the most brilliant leader of Iceland would not be able to turn this country into a major power, nor would the most feeble-minded emperor of the Roman Empire succeed in completely undermining its far-reaching power.¹⁴ Therefore, elaborating upon this and linking it to geopolitics, it remains apparent that geopolitical forecasting, while taking into account the confinements of geography and all related phenomena, allows us to view international politics as at least partially driven by certain rules deeply entrenched and rooted in geographical factors as well as in constant encounters among states. Such an intricate enmeshment thus offers us a way to predict, in a broad and general sense, possible future directions of states and the underlining characteristics of their behaviors shaped to a great extent by geographical conditions.¹⁵

Before moving on to particular representatives and the most significant authors of geopolitics, the author intends to raise another perspective regarding the origins of geopolitics contrived by Gérard Tuathail who opted for a more critical approach and added a few additional issues the author deems essential. According to Tuathail, it is indeed remarkable that the original set of overwhelmingly male intellectuals from various national backgrounds and cultures reached a widely shared view on international affairs.¹⁶ For this apparent contradiction, one must bear in mind their inevitably imperialistic

¹¹ George Friedman, *The Next 100 Years*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2009), 10 – 12.

¹² This meant that during the Cold War geopolitics practically became a domain, a bastion of realism.

George Friedman, *The Next 100 Years*, 12 – 13.

¹³ George Friedman, *The Next 100 Years*, 13.

¹⁴ George Friedman, *The Next 100 Years*, 13.

¹⁵ George Friedman, *The Next 100 Years*, 12.

¹⁶ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 16 – 20.

inclinations that propelled them to promote an imperialist agenda, which, of course, presumes the inferiority of other non-Western civilizations and favors capitalism over other forms of economic production. Moreover, when one carefully analyses these white supremacist assumptions, a stream of thought commonly known as Social Darwinism immediately comes to mind. Such a scientific “justification” for the supposed superiority of European races very well dovetails with the emphasis on the key role of environment¹⁷ as the main determining factor in the process of evolution. Apart from highlighting the modification of organisms by their environment, Tuathail offers another possible cornerstone for the emergence of geopolitics in the late 19th century – Cartesian rationalism.¹⁸ From a philosophical point of view, this particular perception of our world sought to *witness* and *grasp* the surrounding reality, rather than *interpret* it. In doing so, Cartesian rationalism basically laid the foundation for theorists of realism who also attempted to enframe our world, depict it as unchanging and driven by universal laws.¹⁹

Last but not least, one should not discard various cultural phenomena on the brink of the 20th century. The *fin de siècle* movement, together with Modernists, seeking to venture beyond the fading mainstream geographical discourse and threatening to undermine the credibility of traditional geographical gazes on international politics, blossomed into a serious challenge that especially Great Britain through geostrategist Halford J. Mackinder acknowledged.²⁰ Tuathail deems Mackinder’s all-encompassing thesis on a globalized world of international interactions to be “*a triumphalist blind to its own precariousness.*”²¹ Reinforcing Mackinder’s imperialist perspective was a plethora of invasion novels which gained considerable popularity in the 1870 – 1914 period, such as G. Chesney’s *The Battle of Dorking* (1871), *In the Street and Smith’s “Bound to Win” series* and others²² who threatened to undermine the classical, mostly imperial, geopolitical gaze. Let us now turn attention to the most significant theorists of geopolitics, whose paradigms and perceptions will be elaborated upon and set against the backdrop of the unfolding 20th century.

¹⁷ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 17.

¹⁸ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 17 – 18.

¹⁹ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 18 – 20.

²⁰ He even went as far as to suggest the “end of geography.” Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 21. Parallels with F. Fukuyama are purely coincidental.

²¹ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 26.

²² Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A very Short Introduction*, 26.

2.1.1 Friedrich Ratzel – the pioneer of organic geopolitics in Germany

As argued above, despite the apparent elusiveness and slipperiness of the actual origins of the science of geopolitics, Friedrich Ratzel, a towering individual of geography in Germany and a passionate espouser of Darwinism²³ must not be omitted from our brief overview of significant geopolitical authors from various competing schools. After all, he represents the chief mastermind behind seven general laws of state through which he argued the ubiquitous need of states for ever increasing space and a constant competitive struggle in order for nations²⁴ to sustain themselves, nourish their civilizations and thrive – lebensraum, “living space.” This particular theory, later dubbed Organic theory of the state, was published in his highly influential book titled *Politische Geographie* as early as 1897.²⁵ One is indeed compelled to draw parallels between his “natural” postulation and the survival of the fittest as advocated by Darwin.²⁶

In another book *The Sea as a Source of the Greatness of a People* (1901) he identified both the land and sea as prospective opportunities to seek territorial expansion and engage in a supposedly ceaseless cycle of rise and fall as great powers struggle to secure their lebensraum(s).²⁷ As we shall later witness, others further elaborated upon the latter potential opportunity.²⁸ To catch up with other colonial powers and to further the tumultuous quest for lebensraum, Ratzel fiercely campaigned for extensive colonial acquisitions in Africa under Germany’s supervision.²⁹ Thus, it is reasonable to assume that Ratzel provided the necessary incentive, the initial spark that blossomed into the creation of ferociously right-wing political parties, imbued them with the scent of a scientific justification, which gained historical momentum in interwar Germany.

2.1.2 Rudolf Kjellén – the founding father of imperial geopolitics

As envisioned at the very beginning of this chapter, a Swedish professor of political science who, unexpectedly, happened to be Ratzel’s disciple, constitutes the founding

²³ Who began his academic career in 1868 when he completed his PhD in zoology. Also, Charles Darwin and his teaching embodied in *On the origin of species*, which gained much prominence in united Germany under Wilhelm I. and, more importantly, Otto von Bismarck, helped erode the discourse of many scientific branches. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 28 – 29.

²⁴ States, used interchangeably.

²⁵ Friedrich Ratzel, *Politische Geographie* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1897).

²⁶ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity* (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2010), 3.

²⁷ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 28. For more, see: Ratzel Friedrich, *The Sea as a Source of the Greatness of a People* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1902).

²⁸ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 27 – 29.

²⁹ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 28 – 30.

father of the term “geopolitics,” which was coined in 1899 in an article on boundaries as a blend-word that catered to the turbulent circumstances, the increasingly eroded traditional geopolitical gaze vis-à-vis the shifting balance of power and various cultural phenomena as the 20th century began unfolding.³⁰ One of his chief contributions lies in perceiving the state and society synergistically³¹ – in other words viewed through the lenses of inseparable cooperation and interaction – and hence fusing these to devise an indistinguishable conglomerate of both.

Apart from emphasizing similar organic aspects as Ratzel, Kjellen’s works need to be properly set against the backdrop of a dissolving Swedish-Norwegian union, a regrettable deed which elicited a conservative reaction in the wake of his personal failure to prevent this, rather peaceful, dissolution from occurring.³² Furthermore, he fully endorsed Germany’s bid for dominance on the brink of the 20th century, because, similarly to Ratzel, he also advocated that the future lay with spatial, autarkic (self-sufficient) and continental empires with contiguous territory bound by e.g. railways.³³ On an intriguing note, his interpretation of World War I as a violent clash between the ideas of 1789³⁴ and those of 1914³⁵ – published under the title *Ideas of 1914* (1915)³⁶ – proved immensely popular in interwar Germany and went through as many as twenty-two editions, with Karl Haushofer being the last editor.³⁷

2.1.3 Alfred Mahan – naval power at its finest

Born into a military family, Mahan experienced a rather mediocre career in the American Navy, however, his unquestionable importance and worldwide acclaim came as a consequence of a book titled *The Influence of Seapower, 1660 – 1783* (1890),³⁸ in which he sought to formulate a timeless thesis, same as many authors before³⁹ and after, on the paramount importance of the abovementioned type of power. Popular works of grand

³⁰ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 25. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 3 – 4.

³¹ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 3 – 4.

³² Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 34.

³³ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 33 – 34.

³⁴ Freedom, equality and fraternity championed by France and Britain. Rudolf Kjellén, *Ideas of 1914* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1915).

³⁵ Order, righteousness and national solidarity represented by Germany that would, according to him, emerge victorious and triumph as the post-Columbian era drew to its close. Rudolf Kjellén, *Ideas of 1914*. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 34.

³⁶ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 34

³⁷ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 34.

³⁸ Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Seapower upon History, 1660 – 1783* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1890).

³⁹ Such as Themistocles, Thucydides or Xenophon to name a few.

history that strive to employ an all-encompassing approach in order to envelop one particular phenomenon – naval power in this case – in a lucid and intelligible explanation are always bound to entice the readers and arouse fervent debates⁴⁰ even when the actual credibility of their assumptions rests on flimsy foundations and unconvincing arguments. Apart from influencing Germany’s Kaiser Wilhelm II. and admiral Tirpitz, Mahan’s forte lies in his concise ability to illustrate a few general principles describing the entire history of naval warfare and thus allowing even commoners to fathom the sheer complexity, even though significantly simplified and occasionally misleading, of sea power.⁴¹ As Tuathail insightfully remarks, “Mahan’s [presumptions] became pithy generalizations and epigrammatic statements that lent his writings an aura of sagacity and expertise.”⁴²

Mahan is then best understood as a representative of the Anglo-American strand of (classical) geopolitics who argued that controlling commerce and certain key naval points around the globe equals to achieving the decisive victory over the enemy’s fleet.⁴³ In his fatherland, Mahan’s work was celebrated as a robust defense and a compelling manifesto for the enlargement of America’s Navy just as Theodore Roosevelt and his reformist companions were about to embark upon a more expansive, in terms of commerce and territory, policy.⁴⁴ However, Mahan’s comprehensible teachings and appealing postulations defending the traditional belief in the White Man’s Burden, proliferating the superiority of Anglo-Saxons and warning on the “Yellow Peril” found fertile soil in Japan.⁴⁵ Subjected to intense research viciously elaborated upon, Dittmer reveals that this exact geopolitical philosophy⁴⁶ lay at the heart of Japan’s expansive foreign policy and the ensuing attack on Pearl Harbor.⁴⁷ Also, under the current administration of Barack Obama, Mahan’s significance of sea power and trade routes marked a resounding return in terms of a strategy titled “a pivot to Asia.”⁴⁸

⁴⁰ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 30. Samuel Huntington and Francis Fukuyama, among others, send their cordial greetings.

⁴¹ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 31 – 32.

⁴² Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 31.

⁴³ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 4 – 5..

⁴⁴ This crucial intellectual impetus provided by Mahan proved indeed very convenient when America obliterated the remnants of the once grand Spanish Armada around Cuba in 1898. Robert Kagan, *Nebezpečný národ* (Praha: Lidové noviny, 2008), 411, 431.

⁴⁵ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 32.

⁴⁶ That of the irreplaceable role of commerce and key naval bases.

⁴⁷ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 4 – 5. Keiichi Takeuchi, “Geopolitics and Geography in Japan Reexamined,” *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies* 12, no. 1 (1980): 14 – 24.

⁴⁸ “Rise of China and the Return of Great Power Politics,” *Aegis Americana*, last modified April 14, 2014, <http://aegisamericana.wordpress.com/2014/04/14/rise-of-china-and-the-return-of-great-power-politics/>.

2.1.4 Halford J. Mackinder – the struggle for global heartland

In 1904, on January 25, Mackinder presented a text labeled “The Geographical Pivot of History”⁴⁹ during his momentous address to the Royal Geographical Society. A fervent proponent of the British Empire⁵⁰ who opted to engage in geopolitics amidst heated debates regarding the declining British Empire and its untenable future, it is of vital importance to take into account the period of shifting geopolitical reality to which Britain attempted to adapt and modernize.⁵¹ According to Mackinder, geography had already reached its heyday through a circumferential mission, which marked the end of the Columbian epoch – 400 years of (mostly) European spatial expansionism – and thus was about to enter a brand new era epitomized by the “end of geography.”⁵² Interestingly enough, he remarked that the world of international interactions had been made *global* as early as 1904. He then went on to define the new epoch – Post-Columbian – characterized by the omnipresent struggle for relative efficiency among imperial states rather than by the old scramble for territorial expansion.

To deconstruct his global geopolitical gaze, the economy in the years leading to WWI, was by no means truly global, interconnected or interdependent.⁵³ Yet behind his sincere intentions to safeguard and conserve Britain as the leading world power it is once again possible to uncover several traces of the Cartesian perspective, which impels a keen observer to become detached and removed from the worldwide stage he or she seeks to interpret.⁵⁴ Thus, Mackinder’s spectacle comprised a three-scene conflict⁵⁵ that vividly depicted a clash between major protagonists of east/west, the Roman and the Greek, Europe and Asia or even land power and sea power. Such distinctive cleavages indeed

⁴⁹ Halford J Mackinder, “The Geographical Pivot of History,” *Geographical Journal* 23 (1904): 28 – 50.

⁵⁰ And an experienced climber who scaled the heights of Mount Kenya prior to 1904 so that he could establish his reputation as and credentials of a “manly” geographer. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 24.

⁵¹ Even Paul Kennedy hinted at the lack of innovation in the Empire’s economy, which, while facing the emerging USA, assertive and later belligerent Japan and Bismark’s Germany, began increasingly faltering and struggled to maintain the status quo antes as other major players around the globe ascended the world stage and started eclipsing Britain economically as well as militarily during the process. Also, the Boer War, the most humiliating and the bloodiest clash Britain participated in between 1815 – 1914, is believed to have overstretched Britain’s economic as well as military capacity. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, 245 – 355.

⁵² Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 18 – 20. Halford J Mackinder, “The Geographical Pivot of History,” 28 – 50.

⁵³ Despite the fact that Europeans and their descendants controlled almost 90% of territories, in which Britain alone supervised around ¼ of the land. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, 290.

⁵⁴ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 22 – 24.

⁵⁵ Pre-Columbian, Columbian and post-Columbian. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 18 – 20.

accounted for quite an impressive historical display and added much intellectual credibility to his geopolitical view.⁵⁶

Thus, portraying Mackinder's lecture as theater about theater consisting of overlapping maps entailing a pivot area,⁵⁷ an inner/outer marginal crescent⁵⁸ and outer/insular crescents⁵⁹ constitutes a fitting metaphor.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Dittmer argues that Mackinder, being well aware of the naval power Mahan-influenced America wielded, directed attention toward the abovementioned sea-immune pivot area under the dominance of Russia against which the USA was supposed to ensure its containment. A policy, one might argue, adopted a few decades later in the form of Truman's Cold War doctrine.⁶¹ Also, his insightful postulations about the aspects of an empire and the importance of pivotal areas abounding with natural resources were resurrected in the aftermath of the first Gulf War as well as 9/11.⁶²

2.2 Interwar period – geopolitics circumscribes the entire world

As Woodrow Wilson, Britons and the French (among other nations) were preoccupied with the immediate aftermath of WWI at Versailles and hastily sowing the wind of yet another devastating conflict mere two decades later, Mackinder's geopolitical thinking blossomed into his most famous and celebrated postulation as he attempted to elaborate upon his pre-war thesis: 1. *Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland*,⁶³ 2. *Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island*,⁶⁴ 3. *Who rules the World Island commands the world*.⁶⁵ Despite having little immediate impact in the Anglo-American world, it was subject to more detailed scrutiny in Germany thanks to the leading figure of

⁵⁶ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 24. Halford J Mackinder, "The Geographical Pivot of History," 28 – 50.

⁵⁷ Today's Russia, Caucasus, former Soviet satellites etc.

⁵⁸ Peculiarly enough, these crescents were represented by "marginal" countries and regions such as Britain, Europe, the Middle East, India, China and Japan. Halford J Mackinder, "The Geographical Pivot of History," 28 – 50.

⁵⁹ These crescents encompassed both Americas and the Pacific Rim. Halford J Mackinder, "The Geographical Pivot of History," *Geographical Journal* 23 (1904): 28 – 50.

⁶⁰ For a more visual view of his interpretation of the world he sought to enframe, see the appendices.

⁶¹ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 4 – 5.

⁶² Jennifer Hyndman, "Revisitin Mackinder 1904 – 2004," *The Geographical Journal* 170, no. 4 (2004): 380 – 383.

⁶³ Predominantly.

⁶⁴ Arabia, Southeast Asia, China, most of Africa, etc.

⁶⁵ Halford J Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction*, 135 – 138.

the German strand of geopolitics – Karl Haushofer.⁶⁶ Intriguingly enough, Mackinder also fiercely advocated the creation of new nation-states (e.g. Poland, Czechoslovakia or Hungary) that would form a backbone, however vulnerable one, of a buffer zone between Germany and Russia in their perennial struggle for Heartland.⁶⁷

Assessing retrospectively, the interwar period has become known as, among other labels, a birthplace of a (new) academic discipline called International Relations.⁶⁸ Yet a crucial distinction must be made between the abovementioned discipline and geopolitics. The earliest proponents of international relations, later labeled idealists, employed a slightly different approach toward global tensions than geopoliticians, highlighted the actual causes of mostly political friction and devoted much effort into conflict resolution and mediation in general. Furthermore, “idealists” firmly believed that enframing our world in all-encompassing institutions – the League of Nations first and foremost – would contribute toward a peaceful resolution of conflicts.⁶⁹

On the other hand, as Dodds remarks, early geopoliticians concerned themselves with reciprocal interactions between states, territories and its geographical determinants rather than with bettering the condition of the world.⁷⁰ In spite of sharing certain common aspects sheltered by political realism, these two contesting fields later diverged even more significantly as geopolitics further divided into a modicum of categories because of a blatant absence of a single, far-reaching and universal geopolitical definition. A bold and daring attempt to reconcile geopolitics and international relations was made by Isaiah Bowman, a prominent American interwar geopolitician who published various writings on geopolitical subjects blended with idealism.⁷¹

Yet one must also bear in mind that geopolitics in the interwar period comprised many other phenomena than its most controversial, alleged association with Nazism and a fitting justification to redraw the unstable map of Europe and amend harsh restrictions imposed upon Germany by the Treaty of Versailles. Dodds offers a myriad of illuminating, mostly European, examples that serve to showcase the indispensable

⁶⁶ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues* (Oxford: Praeger, 2011), 17 – 18. Haushofer was believed to approve of a German-Soviet alliance in order to obliterate the United Kingdom and the United States. Nevertheless, Adolf Hitler slightly diverged from Haushofer’s original intentions.

⁶⁷ Charles B. Hagan, “Geopolitics,” *The Journal of Politics* 4, no. 4 (1942): 480 – 481.

⁶⁸ The mythical establishment of international relations as a distinct academic field within the Department of International Politics at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth does not need to be further debated here. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 27.

⁶⁹ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 27 – 28.

⁷⁰ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 27 – 28.

⁷¹ Such as *The New World* (1921), *Geography in Relation to the Social Sciences* (1934). Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 27 – 28. Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 10.

significance of geopolitical ideas – In Portugal, with the emergence of Salazar’s regime, the Portuguese embarked upon a task to appeal to a wider Portuguese-speaking world, Italy saw the rise of a new journal titled *Geopolitica* in order to facilitate Italian ambitions in the Mediterranean and Africa,⁷² a traditional colonial approach employed by general Franco’s Spain as well. Thus, we can clearly observe that other European powers opted for colonial issues over reshaping the increasingly wobbly continental European spectacle.⁷³ Even as early as 1924 Mackinder staunchly proposed a Midland Ocean Alliance between Britain and America in order to counter German military renaissance once the fears over a possible rapprochement between Germany and the Soviet Union made manifest.⁷⁴ Such a proposal of a strategic alliance indeed dovetails quite well with the foundation of NATO in April 1949.⁷⁵

Before moving on to explore and assess geopolitics in interwar Germany, several French geographers, from the eponymous and rather dominant geopolitical school, must be mentioned. Albert Demangeon became known as an early user of the terms *United States of Europe* and *European Community*. He was well aware of France’s declining role and advocated its inevitable modernization should France wish to pose as a counterweight against increasingly assertive Germany in the 1930s. Moreover, he also came to a dim realization of Europe’s decline in the light of Japan’s growing power in the Far East⁷⁶ and due to the rise of America.⁷⁷ ⁷⁸ Yann Morvran Goblet represents another French geographer who, most famously, denounced German geopolitics for misleading ideas of geographical determinism that considered nations metaphysical⁷⁹ beings.⁸⁰

⁷² The invasion of Abyssinia constitutes a pinnacle of these imperial endeavours.

⁷³ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 29 – 30.

⁷⁴ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 29 – 30.

⁷⁵ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 30.

⁷⁶ A specific policy embodied in the concept of *dai-toa* – the Grand Eastern Empire – which was supposed to justify the bloody expansion of Japan in the Far East. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, 266.

⁷⁷ It is generally agreed that America was not yet ready to accept its, supposedly, predestined leading role in international relations and opted for turning inward, becoming isolationist, instead. However, inasmuch as the central topic of this bachelor’s thesis lies elsewhere, we must bear in mind that the interwar period witnessed a wide range of contributing factors somehow eroding this isolationist perception. See: . Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, 414 – 444. Robert Kagan, *The World America Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013).

⁷⁸ These passionate sentiments, together with warnings on the plethora of challenges militant Islam posed for Europe, were articulated in a book titled *The Decline in Europe* (1920). Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 12.

⁷⁹ Interchangeable with organic.

⁸⁰ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 12. He even went as far as to label German geopoliticians “*alchemists who added sober fanaticism to their ideas.*” Yann Morvran Goblet In: Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 13.

2.2.1 Interwar Germany – congealing organic theories, reticence and Nazism

To attempt to uncover the almost infinite swath of contributing factors toward the emergence of German geopolitics would indeed require an extensive analysis reaching far beyond the limits and confinement of this bachelor's thesis, nevertheless, Chapman provides us with at least a basic guide to geopolitics in interwar Germany. He inferred several aspects stemming from Germany's particular position and geographical determinants in central Europe, which, combined with an acute emphasis on the unity of the German *Volk*, organic theories of state as envisaged by Friedrich Ratzel, the strife for additional *lebensraum* and a notion of racial superiority influenced by the writings of Heinrich von Treitschke brought forth a rather combustible tinderbox that in the wake of (mostly) France's and Britain's impasse and interwar quagmire lay the foundation for unavoidably intermingling geopolitics with Nazism and staining it for decades to come.⁸¹

82 83

Together with the belligerent zeal to rectify WWI defeat and redraw its frontiers as well as borders,⁸⁴ amplified by *autarkie*, *Drang nach Osten* (drive to the east) and the blame put on domestic as well as foreign "traitors," Chapman nicknames all these abovementioned aspects Germany's own version of *Manifest Destiny* to help this emerging country ascend the world stage and claim its rightfully preeminent global power.^{85 86}

2.2.2 Karl Haushofer – the missing link between geopolitics and Nazism?

An explicit and, one might argue, inseparable connection between geopolitics and Nazism was provided by Professor Karl Haushofer, a leading, seminal historical figure of (interwar) geopolitics. Born in 1869, he entered the German army in the period of the actual emergence of geopolitics as a distinctive, prominent scientific discipline throughout Europe and across the Atlantic. Having spent some time in Japan as an artillery adviser (1908 – 1910), he bore with much contention the crushing implications of the WWI defeat

⁸¹ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 8.

⁸² Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 30 – 31.

⁸³ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 5 – 8.

⁸⁴ See: Charles B. Hagan, "Geopolitics," *The Journal of Politics* 4, no. 4 (1942): 478 – 490.

⁸⁵ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 8.

⁸⁶ For a more assiduous assessment of interwar geopolitics, its terminology and theoretical framework, the author suggests a concise article written by Charles B. Hagan in 1942, titled simply: *Geopolitics*. Charles B. Hagan, "Geopolitics," *The Journal of Politics* 4, no. 4 (1942): 478 – 490.

for Germany and even left the army in 1919.^{87 88 89} Instead, he chose to pursue an academic career at the age of 50 in Munich, initiated the publication of *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (*The Journal of Geopolitics*) in 1924 and helped establish the German Academy (1925), a towering organization that was supposed to proliferate and reinforce cultural ties with regions abroad and nourish the so-called Germandom. Yet in the five years following Hitler's coup in 1933, this institution was transformed to serve Nazi's ends and was even placed under the auspices and direct supervision of the Propaganda Ministry during WWII.⁹⁰

Several elements of Haushofer's geopolitical thinking need to be addressed. First, he perceived sea power as an increasingly dominant aspect of world politics and thus postulated the division of our world into three pan-regions with three leading powers at its cores: Pan-America (the USA), Eurafrika (Germany) and East Asia (Japan).⁹¹ Furthermore, Ratzel's ideas of *lebensraum* and Kjellén's thoughts on organic characteristics of state found fertile soil in Haushofer's own teachings. He perpetuated this *biologization* of international relations and the methods of evolutionary biology and deemed natural science a crucial cornerstone for the study of geopolitics.^{92 93} Although he, himself, never became a Nazi, a firm link between his theories and Nazism occurred through his close friend, fellow participant in the Beer Hall Putsch and Hitler's close co-perpetrator – Rudolf Hess – who introduced Haushofer to Hitler during his imprisonment in 1922.⁹⁴ Yet even though he conferred Hitler with a copy of Ratzel's *Political Geography* while he was dictating *Mein Kampf* to Hess, it is generally conceded that Haushofer's direct influence on Hitler was wildly exaggerated.⁹⁵

Despite being labeled a proponent of Nazism, he lamented the perversion of German geopolitics after the Nazi coup in 1933, felt in disfavour with Hitler in Munich in 1938⁹⁶ and was generally shocked and infuriated with Operation Barbarossa because

⁸⁷ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 15.

⁸⁸ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 35.

⁸⁹ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 32.

⁹⁰ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 36 – 37. Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 15.

⁹¹ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 16. Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 33.

⁹² Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 36.

⁹³ Also, Haushofer enthusiastically supported the plans to construct a Berlin-Bagdad railway so that Germany could project its influence in the Middle East and beyond. Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 33.

⁹⁴ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 35. Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 32 – 34.

⁹⁵ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 35.

⁹⁶ A meeting to which he posed as an advisor and sought to tone down Hitler's eastward ambitions.

emanating from Mackinder's emphasis on the heartland, Haushofer argued for an immediate construction of an alliance entailing Germany, the Soviet Union and Japan to counterbalance Britain, a notion which, after attacking the Soviet Union, was left in tatters.⁹⁷ Notwithstanding the exoneration at the Nurnberg Military Tribunals, he and his wife committed suicide in 1946. Hence, it sealed his unfortunate testimony to Nazi ideology and a gradually more bellicose behaviour of Germany prior to WWII. Yet he should also be remembered as an influential individual who accelerated the development of Japanese interwar policy and hastened the emergence of geopolitics in Latin America, most notably in Argentina, Brazil and Chile.⁹⁸

2.2.3 Nicholas J. Spykman – rimland and the limits of frontiers

Even amidst heated military encounters during WWII, geopolitics in America, consequently as well as subsequently, was thriving and further elaborated upon previous theories postulated mostly by Mahan and Mackinder. A Dutch immigrant to the USA and Rockefeller's protégé – Nicholas Spykman – sought to conceptualize geopolitics in a manner similar to Mahan, which led him to ambitiously believe in the preeminence of geography in the contested field of international relations.⁹⁹ We can clearly observe that Spykman adamantly advocated the indispensable, paramount role of geographical factors when formulating national policy simply because of their permanent and everlasting characteristics.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, Spykman endeavoured to rework Mackinder's original emphasis on "heartland" and instead highlighted the pivotal significance of "rimland" regions – areas involved in almost every major military operation in history that also embodied a crucial maritime highway – comprising mostly Eurasia, Africa and Australia.

Driven by his bitter opposition to the supposed American isolationism and buttressed by Japan's own geopolitical heyday at Pearl Harbor, he strongly argued for a more interventionist¹⁰¹ American foreign policy to preclude a single power from

⁹⁷ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 37.

⁹⁸ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 37. Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 32. Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 16. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 4.

⁹⁹ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 24.

¹⁰⁰ "Geography does not argue; it just is." "[...]even dictators die, but mountain ranges stand unperturbed" serve to give the reader a basic idea of his messianic belief in geography. Nicholas John Spykman, "Geography and Foreign Policy, I," *American Political Science Review* 1, no. 32 (1938): 28 – 50.

¹⁰¹ A proposal that, one recalls, became basically hegemonic in the Cold War discourse as America struggled for global dominance and was engaged in the European heartland from the late 1940s onwards.

conquering what he coined “The Old World” – Eurasia.^{102 103 104} Intriguingly enough, even if Spykman’s geopolitical gaze rested upon a blatant, and from Tuathail’s critical point of view even an irreconcilable, contradiction which strove to strike a precarious balance between the two variables of a contingent equation: “Geopolitics does not *argue*; it just *is*,”¹⁰⁵ we may however observe that in 1942, at the height of WWII in Europe, Pacific etc., he eagerly bore witness to the deterioration of *frontiers*¹⁰⁶ in European battlefields, lamented the loss of their original purpose in the light of the tremendous impact of aviation soon envisaged by Alexander De Seversky and attempted to foreshadow the future development of international organizations which failed to contain the Axis’ bid for yet another redefinition of global borders and faultlines.¹⁰⁷

By acknowledging¹⁰⁸ Alexander De Seversky’s¹⁰⁹ arguments about the significance of rapidly emerging airpower, Spykman basically paved the way for the latter’s prominence in the pursuit of applying aerospace power alongside its land and naval counterparts. Thus, Seversky, a Russian American aviator, represents a tireless, even if a slightly stalwart, advocate of aviation in a reality keen on learning how to conduct air strikes and project its power beyond the land as well as maritime confinements in an unfolding bipolar world.¹¹⁰

2.3 Postwar decline and the emergence of critical geopolitics

Nicholas John Spykman. “Frontiers, Security, and International Organization.” *Geographical Review* 32, no. 3 (1942): 436 – 447.

¹⁰² To cater to his attentive followers mired in America’s predestined exceptionalism, he labelled the USA and its allies, perhaps unsurprisingly, “The New World”. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 40.

¹⁰³ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 23.

¹⁰⁴ Two publications titled *America’s Strategy in World Politics: The United States and the Balance of Power* (1942) and *The Geography of Peace* (1944) very aptly showcase Spykman’s strenuous search for a power-based foreign policy with realism and Mahan’s naval supremacy at its core. Nicholas John Spykman, *The Geography of Peace* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1944). Nicholas John Spykman, *American Strategy in World Politics, the United States & the Balance of Power* (New York: Shoe String Press, 1970).

¹⁰⁵ For an in-depth analysis and proper contextualization of Spykman’s claim, see Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 40 – 42.

¹⁰⁶ Another essential geopolitical term which refers to borderlands – regions adjacent to actual borders and usually abounding with environmental barriers – rivers, mountains, deserts, etc.

¹⁰⁷ Nicholas John Spykman. “Frontiers, Security, and International Organization.” *Geographical Review* 32, no. 3 (1942): 436 – 447.

¹⁰⁸ Unlike Mahan or even Mackinder who staunchly defended naval power as the only viable possibility until the very end.

¹⁰⁹ In his works Seversky introduced his own version of heartland encompassing airspace above North America, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. For more see: *Air Power: Key to Survival* (1950) or *America: Too Young to Die* (1961). Alexander De Seversky, *Air Power: Key to Survival* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1950). Alexander De Seversky, *America: Too Young to Die* (Michigan: McGraw-Hill, 1961).

¹¹⁰ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 22.

Having been almost inerasably stained by Nazism and Hitler's ambitions, the once indispensable term "geopolitics" was gradually side-lined, its interwar credibility deeply undermined and the actual usage of the term deliberately eschewed. With a few minor exceptions, such as Professor Joseph Roucek, a Czech-born intellectual who continued publishing geopolitical articles on e.g. Antarctica or the spatialization of the USA, and Saul Cohen¹¹¹ who sought to build upon Spykman's fractured world in order to better fathom the ideological as well as territorial essence of the global struggle for dominance between America and the USSR, it remains unquestionably apparent that, in the immediate aftermath of WWII, geopolitics lost its historic momentum and was heavily overshadowed by a new reality.¹¹² In his work, Cohen strived to concentrate upon so-called "shatterbelts" – certain potentially combusive, in terms of resources and territory, regions – that would lie at the heart of future clashes. Such contested territories were epitomized by close proximity to the Soviet Union and later China and, naturally, enveloped first and foremost central Europe, the Middle East, the Pacific Rim, etc.

The Korean War and the looming threat of Vietnam seemed to have further buttressed Cohen's geographical prospects and lent additional credence to his assumptions even if a heated encounter over Cuba in 1962¹¹³ clearly saw the extreme sensitiveness of an off-shore island mere 145 kilometers south of the USA.¹¹⁴ Such ample evidence serves to demonstrate that despite the tremendous erosion of the science of geopolitics in the wake of its demonized association with Nazi Germany, Truman's containment policy framing the post-WWII discourse late into the 1960s must be understood, in the words of Dittmer: "*as anything but applied political geography.*"¹¹⁵

Yet intriguingly enough, as the West endeavoured to project its supposedly original (geo)political gaze upon the Rest while purposefully avoiding employing the actual term in the first place, we can unravel another swath of a complex geopolitical mosaic, which somehow contradicts the mainstream obfuscation of geopolitics: Germany kept publishing *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (1951 – 1968), the U.S. Air Force produced a publication titled *Military Aspects of World Political Geography* (1958) and Mahan's as well as Mackinder's mostly pre-war postulations found fertile soil in Latin America

¹¹¹ His pioneering work titled *Geography and Politics in a Divided World* (1963). Saul Bernard Cohen, *Geography and Politics in a Divided World* (Massachusetts: Methuen, 1963).

¹¹² Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 27 – 28. Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 35 – 36.

¹¹³ For an apt parallel with the US-Spanish War in 1898 framed by the exact same island, see: Robert Kagan, *Nebezpečný národ* (2008).

¹¹⁴ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 37.

¹¹⁵ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 8.

exemplified by Brazilian geopolitician Golbery¹¹⁶ who fiercely advocated exclusive Brazilian leadership in South America, favoured allying his country with the USA to protect Brazil's maritime interests and actively influenced Brazilian foreign policy as America and Europe almost unanimously deemphasized the importance of geopolitics.¹¹⁷ As Kagan aptly remarked in his latest book: “*Even after WWII most Americans never intended to become a global leading power.*”¹¹⁸

Yet ever since America reluctantly accepted its great power status amplified by a grudging concordance with the establishment of the NATO alliance and began laying the foundations and setting the solid cornerstones of the present liberal economic order, we can clearly witness that the foreseeable future of international order became irreversibly intertwined with those who wished to pull back across the ocean even in the late 1940s.¹¹⁹ However, it took more than two turbulent decades abounding with global small-scale clashes within the Cold War framework for the science of geopolitics to become a hesitant subject of serious academic study once again. Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State, is often credited with the geopolitical revival and renewed interest in the USA.¹²⁰ Notwithstanding his somehow vague and distorted usage of the term, Kissinger, a German émigré and an intellectual heavyweight in the Nixon administration, employed geopolitics to highlight the paramount importance of global equilibrium and a balance of power to promote a significantly more flexible as well as attentive approach to new reality characterized by the Sino-Soviet split, which he sought to fully utilize to America's advantage.

Accompanied by Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's Polish-born National Security Adviser, we are able to recognize the very initial strands of America's neoconservative tradition, the pivotal aim of which origins lay in shaping political and military developments through a traditionally imperial geopolitical gaze and protecting America's national interests in the turbulent 1980s.¹²¹ However, such a reincarnation of geopolitics framed by the bipolar context of the Cold War, was strongly denounced by a

¹¹⁶ Golbery do Couto Silva, *Geopolitics of Brazil* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1967).

¹¹⁷ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 8, 13.

¹¹⁸ Robert Kagan, *The World America Made*, 18.

¹¹⁹ Robert Kagan, *The World America Made*, 19 – 20.

¹²⁰ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 39 – 40.

¹²¹ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 39 – 41. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 8 – 9. Historically speaking, this sometimes meant supporting countless military regimes, Saddam Hussein in Iraq and Afghanistan being arguably the shiniest examples, in order to counter and contain Soviets' ambitions. Also, as Tuathail mentions, this period saw a convenient justification of America's particularly aggressive nuclear and war-fighting doctrines by referring to the almost forgotten texts of Spykman and Mackinder. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 56.

radical French geopolitician – Yves Lacoste – who released a challenging study famously titled: *La Géographie, ça sert d'abord, à faire la guerre* (1976), in which he held geographical knowledge responsible for basically any major military disputes, hinted at its supposedly violent characteristics and advocated a more *critical* approach toward stato-centric and great power politics, which, he argued, had shaped foreign as well as domestic policies since time immemorial.¹²²

Thus, this paved the way for a widespread re-conceptualization of geopolitics from the 1980s onwards and together with a belated incorporation of intellectual currents already present elsewhere in social sciences and collectively labeled poststructuralism and further reinforced by a baffling range of economic, military, cultural, ideological and individual factors emanating from the tumultuous era of the 1970s,¹²³ a subdiscipline dubbed critical geopolitics made manifest.

2.3.1 Critical geopolitics – deconstructing everyday perceptions

First and foremost, critical geopoliticians concern themselves with *discourse*, itself a rather elusive term stemming from Derridean post-structuralism, which Rodolphe Gasché defines as a “*structure of predicates clustered around one central predicate, [while] the determining predicate is itself conditioned by the backdrop of the others.*”¹²⁴ Or as Dodds remarked: “*Discourses are seen to influence the rules and conventions by which political behaviour is structured, regulated and judged. [...] Discourses play a prominent role in mobilizing certain simple geographic understandings about the world.*”¹²⁵ Thus, it is reasonable to believe that critical geopolitics must be understood as an unbiased approach toward geography and the global circumscription of our world, which asserts and emphasizes the irreducible textuality of geography as well as geopolitics and seeks to position itself as a mere deconstructed geo-political¹²⁶ eye that analyzes a socially constructed geo-political world.

Moreover, according to Tuathail, Dalby, Agnew and other leading proponents of critical geopolitics, we must abstain from perceiving geopolitical theories as a set of

¹²² Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 9. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 29.

¹²³ Such as the rise of third world nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, the abysmal inflexibility of nuclear weapons when coping with regional issues, economic changes, oil shocks and overall the need to better grasp the new reality of foreign as well as domestic challenges. Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 9.

¹²⁴ Rodolphe Gasché, *Inventions of Difference: On Jacques Derrida* (London: Harvard University Press, 1994), 128 – 129.

¹²⁵ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 31.

¹²⁶ Hyphenatable, courtesy of Tuathail et al.

permanent, monolithic and never-changing assumptions sheltered by an all-explaining grand tale, but rather subject them to intensive critical scrutiny and a major re-examination in the light of poststructuralism, various competing interpretations of the exact same theory, the changing global spectacle and differing implications across countries and decades.¹²⁷ Such complex arguments raised by Tuathail and others who succeeded in further elaborating upon what Derrida termed “the logocentrism of Western thought” and applied his as well as Foucault’s assumptions to geopolitics, were skillfully summarized by Dittmer, who basically postulated that while classical geopolitics rooted its (discursive) analyses in “the way world is”, critical geopolitics comes to terms with a much more interwoven web of a wide range of features and attempts to comprehend what makes us think of the world in a certain way.¹²⁸ The shifting characteristics of the supposed primacy of state in world affairs represent a case in point.

Nevertheless, even critical geopoliticians, as Tuathail and Dalby lamented, have yet to rigorously conceptualize and theorize the very object they often tend to evoke, invoke and deconstruct: geopolitics.¹²⁹ In any case, expanding our attention beyond the state-centric veneer of the geography of politics and incorporating, until recently, heavily downplayed socially constructed and especially cultural, just to name a few, aspects of geography in general, constitutes a first stepping stone on a long and strenuous, albeit historic and unique, geopolitical journey to the 21st century and beyond.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 43 – 50, Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 31 – 32.

¹²⁸ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 10 – 11.

¹²⁹ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 48. Simon Dalby, “*Geopolitics, Grand Strategy and Critique. Twenty Years and counting...*” Paper for presentation to the “Critical Geopolitics 2008,” conference, Durham University, 2008.

¹³⁰ A similar case was argued in the field of international security. For more, see: Buzan Barry Buzan and Wilde de Jaap and Ole Weaver, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Colorado:Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

2.3.2 The 1990s – a brief unipolar moment?

However contingent the supposedly momentous era for the enlargement of liberal democracies¹³¹ soon proved to be and no matter how disputed Krauthammer's daring claim of a unipolar world under America's auspices became¹³² in the light of the precipitous recurrence of tribally based conflicts¹³³ in the Balkans, the Caucasus, Rwanda and elsewhere, the next two decades following the collapse of the Soviet Union have undoubtedly witnessed the increasing importance of geography in world affairs. Further reinforced by natural disasters, instantaneous communication systems, the rise of the Rest and other global phenomena, whose possible developments will be foreshadowed and explored in the passing in the concluding part, ushered in yet another heyday for geography, its renewed prominence, restored importance and rediscovered interest.¹³⁴

Two prominent geopolitical authors stand out in the tumultuous period of the 1990s. Edward Luttwak, a Romanian-born defense intellectual, positioned himself as a geoeconomic strategist who asserted that the methods of commerce, economic interdependence and innovation were gradually replacing archaic military-technical advancement. Thus, he believed that newly emerging fault-lines and conflicts would occur alongside economic competitiveness in a continuously interconnected world.¹³⁵ Driven by the famous Japanese economic miracle in the 1980s,¹³⁶ Luttwak sought to raise consciousness about America's inevitable loss of world, geopolitical as well as geoeconomic, supremacy due to its inefficiency and a redundant neoconservative strategy in a post-Cold War environment marked by sharp and uncomfortable deterritorialization. However questionable his account of the shifting world stage in the late 20th century remains, he must be given credit for brilliantly capturing the grand ambivalence, the pressing uncertainty and the fateful crossroads of ominously prophetic significance America, and the Rest, stood on¹³⁷ as Hobsbawm's "short 20th century"¹³⁸ drew to its sudden close.

¹³¹ As envisaged by Francis Fukuyama in his much debated masterpiece *The End of History and the Last Man*. Nevertheless, one must bear in mind that even Fukuyama warned, to a certain extent, on premature celebrations in terms of the alleged triumph of liberal democracies and the third, final wave of democratization. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin Books, 1992).

¹³² Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 47, no. 1 (1990): 23 – 33.

¹³³ Not to mention the conducive environment for the emergence of transnational terrorist groups.

¹³⁴ Bert Chapman, *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*, 9.

¹³⁵ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 183 – 186.

¹³⁶ A trend already on a strong decline in the early 1990s followed by an even larger, dimmer aftermath.

¹³⁷ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 188 – 189.

¹³⁸ Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes, The short twentieth century 1914 – 1991* (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1995).

2.3.3 Samuel Huntington, bellicose civilizations and the 9/11 vertigo

The Clash of Civilizations represents another heavily influential geopolitical paradigm, condemned and trashed by the academic community since its release,¹³⁹ yet heavily influential in the wake of 9/11. Nevertheless, we need to realize that Huntington is best described as an intellectual of statecraft who wrote on a myriad of topics ranging from the social and political upheavals of the swinging 60s (*The Crisis of Democracy*)¹⁴⁰, over Japan's allegedly unstoppable bid for economic mastery and its emergent threat to America's primacy in world affairs, to broad civilizational patterns and lucid maps of the post-Cold War era.¹⁴¹ Such overarching ambitions, simplifying conciseness and messianic prophecies were bound and almost destined to attract attention across various intellectuals, public as well as media. While boldly enframing human history with civilizational blocs that used to clash along ancient fault-lines and intend to do so again, Huntington's geopolitical spectacle featuring perhaps eight major world civilizations¹⁴² offered a simplistic and intelligible, however empirically implausible, guide to past as well as future conflicts.

Yet precisely because of the deterministic totality of Huntington's concept of civilization vaguely defined as: "*the broadest cultural entity. [...]The highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people.*"¹⁴³ he succeeded in, similarly to Mackinder, projecting a deeply modernist view embedded in traditional geopolitics and a more sober assessment, as Fukuyama's moderately optimistic vision and Bush's "New World Order" were slowly waning off, to analyze an unfolding post-modern world. This allows us to draw very apt parallels between Mackinder's struggle against the loss of credibility of imperial geopolitics as, among other contributing factors, the fin-de-siècle movement and

¹³⁹ First as an article in *Foreign Affairs* in 1993 and three years later as a book-long thesis titled eponymously.

¹⁴⁰ Samuel P. Huntington and Michel Crozier and Joji Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission* (New York: New York University Press, 1975).

¹⁴¹ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 190 – 192. Ervand Abrahamian, "The US media. Huntington and September 11." *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2003): 529 – 530.

¹⁴² Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (Sydney: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 26 – 27. See the appendices.

¹⁴³ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, 39.

modernists threatened to undermine its trustworthiness at the dawn of the 19th century and Huntington's ambitious attempt to address the still rather enigmatic post-Cold War period, the historic absence of a clearly defined threat to America and the emerging strands of critical theories, which subjected traditional geopolitics and other fields to intense scrutiny and reevaluations.¹⁴⁴

Before moving on to popular geopolitics, let us at least briefly explore some of the key assumptions Huntington's ostensibly ground-breaking thesis introduced: 1) ahistoricity, monolithicity and impenetrability of civilizational blocks, 2) transitional territories and civilizational fault lines that would lie at the heart of future conflicts, 3) the supposedly inherent bellicosity of Islamic civilization prompting it on a collision path with the West, 4) the fear of a Sino-Islamic alliance.¹⁴⁵ Despite the almost unanimous denigration by and disapproval of¹⁴⁶ the academic community, Huntington succeeded where others failed – his somehow incoherent and subpar thesis became conventional wisdom and the leading paradigm in the wake of 9/11 mostly due to its comprehensible explanations especially among the public, downright simplified solutions and prophetic characteristics that dovetailed very well with the American media, the public as well as politicians who were looking for an easy scapegoat with which to frame the infamous terrorist attack that exposed America's internal vulnerability and shattered the delusional world Americans had been long intoxicating themselves by.¹⁴⁷

Yet most of all, Huntington achieved the seemingly impossible – his forte lay in the far-reaching ability to *explain* and *predict* international politics without actually *debating* it.¹⁴⁸ When 9/11 brought upon the War on Terrorism, American public as well as the administration of George W. Bush hastily subscribed to it and cringingly embraced the overly superficial Huntingtonian neoconservative paradigm.¹⁴⁹

2.3.4 Into the 21st century and beyond

¹⁴⁴ As much as the author does not endeavour to engage in examining the similarities between the British Empire and present-day America, it would seem that certain shared aspects have indeed made manifest.

¹⁴⁵ Dietrich Senghaas, "Clash of Civilizations, An *Ideé Fixé*?" *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 1 (1998): 127 – 132. Ervand Abrahamian, "The US media. Huntington and September 11," *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2003): 529 – 533. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, 209 – 218.

¹⁴⁶ E.g. Edward Said, "*The Myth of the 'Clash of Civilizations,'*" Lecture at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 2005. Dietrich Senghaas, "Clash of Civilizations, An *Ideé Fixé*?" 127 – 132. Ervand Abrahamian, "The US media. Huntington and September 11," 529 – 544.

¹⁴⁷ Ervand Abrahamian, "The US media. Huntington and September 11," 530 – 531.

¹⁴⁸ Ervand Abrahamian, "The US media. Huntington and September 11," 535.

¹⁴⁹ Ervand Abrahamian, "The US media. Huntington and September 11," 535 – 539.

With critical as well as traditional geopolitics entering a new stage, its critical “branch” gaining more prominence and clashing with the proponents of traditional geopolitics, Donna Haraway comes to mind as a significant feminist scholar, although somewhat criticized as of late, who advocated the crucial importance of the actual *representation* of geopolitics to particular audiences and the messages about global spatialization it conveys.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, global geopolitics, as envisaged by critical geopoliticians, remains strongly entangled with the issues of gender, class, race and needs to adapt to fundamentally different and shockingly contrastive geopolitical experiences of individuals across the globe that cannot be explained nor understood by a single grand geopolitical tale.¹⁵¹

Thus, in order to better comprehend how geopolitics is supposed to work in the 21st century, Tuathail and other scholars proposed a threefold division of the aforementioned field into: a) *formal geopolitics* encompassing think-tanks and academics while paying tribute to the classical geopolitical thinking, b) *practical geopolitics* sheltering the discourse employed by politicians, policy makers¹⁵² and political institutions and c) *popular geopolitics* which involves the study of the media in virtually all its forms, refers to the everyday geopolitical discourse and analyzes how the global geopolitical framework is simplified, sometimes intentionally distorted, and presented to its eager audiences through the various forms of media.¹⁵³ It is now the third branch of geopolitics to which we turn our attention.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 44 – 45. Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions* (London: Routledge), 1989.

¹⁵¹ Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 46.

¹⁵² Such as George W. Bush and his policy-orientated geographical templates of War on Terrorism.

¹⁵³ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 50. Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 45 – 46. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 13 – 15. See the appendices.

¹⁵⁴ For a skillful analysis of the current “clash of geopolitics,” the author cordially recommends a concise article written by Jan Kofroň, “*Geopolitika na pomezí geografie a mezinárodních vztahů mezi prostorem intersubjektivním a objektivním*,” *Mezinárodní vztahy* 47, no. 2 (2012): 57 – 78.

3 POPULAR GEOPOLITICS

Concerned mostly with geopolitical representation, shifting discourses, constructed identities and power relations, the overarching theme of popular geopolitics has been a challenging recognition of geopolitics as an everyday discursive practice that occurs outside of practical as well as formal geopolitics. Thanks to Dalby, Agnew and Tuathail, those critical intellectuals who ventured beyond the superficial veneer of the hegemonic geopolitical gaze of traditional geopolitics in the 1980s, vigorously combated against the perceived reductionism of classical geopolitical theories and in doing so opened up the entire discipline to large-scale re-examinations, we may fathom popular geopolitics as a daring attempt to alter the focus of geopolitics toward audiences and mediated interpretations of various events through culturally as well as politically embedded prisms congealed with national identities.¹⁵⁵ Such a broadly defined concept indeed borders on a plethora of other closely related fields – ranging from cultural studies, over feminist geopolitics, to audience studies – however, as Sharp incisively contended, popular geopolitics seeks to contextualize and empirically interpret *elite* geopolitical texts same as their *popular* counterparts via e.g. news, comic books, magazines, movies, music, videogames etc.¹⁵⁶

While examining only the former, it renders audiences downright apolitical and passive – as mere consumers – unable to engage in the ubiquitous process of constructing geopolitical imaginations, yet should we concentrate solely upon the latter, it would inextricably downplay wider contextualization and oftentimes political enframement and narratives trickling down from influential decision-makers and those powerful enough to bend geopolitical reality to their will through the dissemination of hegemonic ideologies. Thus, such entangled interconnectedness of “elite” and “popular” has been permeating much of the popular geopolitics literature ever since the cautious, yet greatly insightful, coinage of the actual term in the late 1980s.¹⁵⁷ Most definitions of popular culture involve

¹⁵⁵ Jason Dittmer and Nicholas Gray, “Popular Geopolitics 2.0: Towards New Methodologies of the Everyday,” *Geography Compass* 11, no. 4 (2010): 1664 – 1666. Joanne P. Sharp, “Publishing American identity: popular geopolitics, myth and the Reader’s Digest,” *Political Geography* 12, no. 6 (1993): 491 – 493. Joanne P. Sharp, “Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader’s Digest and the construction of danger,” *Political Geography* 15, no. 6/7 (1996): 558 – 559.

¹⁵⁶ Joanne P. Sharp, “Publishing American identity: popular geopolitics, myth and the Reader’s Digest,” 493. Joanne P. Sharp, “Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader’s Digest and the construction of danger,” 559. Jason Dittmer and Nicholas Gray, *Popular Geopolitics 2.0: Towards New Methodologies of the Everyday*, 1666.

¹⁵⁷ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, 50. Jason Dittmer and Nicholas Gray, “Popular Geopolitics 2.0: Towards New Methodologies of the Everyday,” 1664. Simon Dalby, “*Geopolitics, Grand Strategy and Critique. Twenty Years and counting...*” 2008.

mass consumption and availability together with affordability as crucial variables.¹⁵⁸ What originated as an undesirable side effect of the invention of the printing press in the 1400s was soon conceived of as a dire threat to hegemonic, elite religious interpretations. Therefore, *popular* culture is often juxtaposed against *high* culture, the culture associated with elites.¹⁵⁹

Throughout the span of several centuries popular culture has been almost indelibly stained by propaganda, especially in the 20th century, and very simple-minded messages. Yet still, according to Dittmer¹⁶⁰ the steep emergence of contemporary popular culture and its pervasive attempts to cater to young audiences date to the swinging era of the 1960s, when the increase in disposable income¹⁶¹ among youngsters led in turn to a widespread flourishing of mostly Hollywood-based companies dedicated to mass consumerism.^{162 163} Similarly, popular culture has also been characterized through its opposition toward *folk* culture which has traditionally been linked to a particular place, monolithic communities and a search for identity and its significance further strengthened in a daring attempt to preserve local uniqueness and counter globalization(s).¹⁶⁴

However, those overly simplified and blatantly misguided assumptions of lingering equations positing popular culture on one side and social malaises on the other soon enticed the attention of various left-leaning academics and paved the way for the emergence of a key institution – the Marxist-inspired Frankfurt School.¹⁶⁵ In order not to spend too much space navigating through the entangled and complex labyrinth of authors associated with the Frankfurt School mired in the complicated theories of cultural hegemony, Gramscian postulations and ostensible American imperialism, let us conclude that once very sharp and distinctive contours of elite, popular and folk cultures have become almost completely blurred in an exceptional congealment that penetrates all three categories¹⁶⁶ and renders any clear distinction ultimately indefensible.¹⁶⁷

¹⁵⁸ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 23 – 26. Joanne P. Sharp, “Publishing American identity: popular geopolitics, myth and the Reader’s Digest,” 559.

¹⁵⁹ Classical music, sculpturing, painting to name a few. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 23 – 24.

¹⁶⁰ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 24 – 25.

¹⁶¹ Such as numerous TV shows or espionage thrillers.

¹⁶² Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 24.

¹⁶³ Emanating from, generally speaking, post-WWII prosperity in North America and Western Europe.

¹⁶⁴ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 24 – 25.

¹⁶⁵ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 27 – 28.

¹⁶⁶ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 25. Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, 45 – 50. Joanne P. Sharp, “Publishing American identity: popular geopolitics, myth and the Reader’s Digest,” 493 – 494.

¹⁶⁷ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 25.

Throughout the last three decades of this surprisingly recent phenomenon, it is possible to uncover roughly four central impetuses and working assumptions underwriting the emerging literature on popular geopolitics that have been essential for drawing the attention of largely skeptical scholars and academics to more thorough methodological evaluations of the tremendous potential of the abovementioned pillar of critical geopolitics.¹⁶⁸ Remarkably, one of the initial impetuses compelling increasingly bifurcated geopoliticians to broaden even further the scope of (critical) geopolitics came with Ronald Reagan's unequivocal term "evil empire" in a reference to the Soviet Union against the backdrop of the unfolding "Second Cold War" in the 1980s.

As Dodds and Dittmer eloquently remarked, this particular term that conveyed a rather straightforward message was uttered in the aftermath of several *Star Wars* movies in an increasingly globalized world and indeed, multiple commentators made an explicitly vilifying connection between the Soviets and "the dark side" led by Darth Vader.¹⁶⁹ Such a clear binary division drawing from the arguably most popular cinematic phenomena in the early 1980s offered an easy-to-grasp enframement in the turbulent age of increased military spending and Ronald Reagan's own "star wars" project – *Strategic Defense Initiative*.¹⁷⁰

Another crucial contributing factor impelling (popular) geopoliticians to deconstruct hegemonic reconstructions of national identity through popular media was manifested in Joanne Sharp's seminal work on *Reader's Digest* and its condensation of the Cold War.¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, the historic turning point that impacted basically all American-based sources¹⁷² of popular culture coincided, unsurprisingly, with terrorist¹⁷³ attacks of 9/11.¹⁷⁴ Lastly, a recent paper devised by Dittmer and Dodds endeavours to

¹⁶⁸ See: Agnew (2002), Tuathail (1996), Dalby (2008), Sharp (1993, 1996, 2000), Dittmer (2008, 2010) and Dodds (2006, 2008).

¹⁶⁹ Klaus Dodds and Jason Dittmer, "Popular Geopolitics Past and Future: Fandom, Identities and Audiences," *Geopolitics* 13, no. 3 (2008): 440 – 441.

¹⁷⁰ Klaus Dodds and Jason Dittmer, "Popular Geopolitics Past and Future: Fandom, Identities and Audiences," 440 – 441.

¹⁷¹ Her illuminating book *Reader's Digest, Condensing the Cold War* as well as various papers will be analyzed in one of the following case studies. Klaus Dodds and Jason Dittmer, "Popular Geopolitics Past and Future: Fandom, Identities and Audiences," 441.

¹⁷² As well as a wide range of non-Western mass media and their altered geopolitical perceptions in the wake of 9/11.

¹⁷³ For the purposes of this bachelor's thesis we will be using this highly controversial term only when absolutely necessary.

¹⁷⁴ Which, again, will be examined more thoroughly in subsequent chapters. See: Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction* or Timothy Garton Ash, *Free World* (London: Penguin Books, 2004).

evaluate thirty years of popular geopolitics within critical geopolitics, hint at its limitations and challenges and propose a future course.¹⁷⁵

Nevertheless, the author of this thesis is convinced that the importance of the precipitous development of informational technologies from 1970s onwards interconnected with globalization must not be underestimated either and hence constitutes a fifth critical impetus. Before moving on to individual case studies, it is worth bringing up Dodds' four succinct assumptions that will interpenetrate the vast majority of examples across the field of popular geopolitics: a) *agenda setting* – highlighting the importance of certain events at the expense of others,¹⁷⁶ b) *enframement* – contributing to particular narrative structures and allusions to past mischance,¹⁷⁷ c) the commonsense *stereotyping* of others – articulating and reproducing national identities¹⁷⁸ and d) *multiplicity of interpretations* of media material – catering to Foucaultian and Derridean assumptions on every individual viewer inside a country as well as across civilizations being a unique interpretative instrument in the construction of his/her own (geopolitical) imaginations.¹⁷⁹

3.1 Captain America – how to crush America's enemies in self-defense

Born amidst the early military encounters of the war-torn European theatre as the old continent clashed for the second time in mere two decades, the origins of *Captain America*, a jingoistic wartime crusader against Nazi Germany and imperial Japan are inseparably connected with Joe Simon and Jack Kirby. Bringing to life Steve Rodgers,¹⁸⁰ a physically impaired recruit with a just heart who voluntarily undergoes a medical experiment that transforms him into the ultimate soldier and locating him in an America that rives with Nazi espionage and subversion may be viewed as a consequence of the overwhelming preponderance of Jewish-American authors in the comic book industry

¹⁷⁵ Jason Dittmer and Klaus Dodds, "Popular Geopolitics Past and Future: Fandom, Identities and Audiences."

¹⁷⁶ A case in point when it came to the humanitarian crisis in Bosnia in the early 1990s, which received much more mainstream coverage than e.g. humanitarian malaises in Sudan or Kashmir. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 75.

¹⁷⁷ Such as "Vietnam 2.0" in the case of a prolonged invasion of Iraq with somewhat similarly meager results or the emotionally imbued terms – "holocaust" and "quagmire" employed by the British print media when depicting the Yugoslav Crisis in the 1990s. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 75.

¹⁷⁸ Albeit being sometimes contested and more complicated, the Cold War world of cinematography provides myriad demonstrations of American movies reinforcing a one-dimensional image of the Soviet Union as "the Evil Other". Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 75.

¹⁷⁹ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 75.

¹⁸⁰ A blond-haired, blue-eyed character with an extremely generic American name.

who were intent on pushing America beyond its reluctant assistance in WWII.¹⁸¹ Also, it deftly hints at the limits of traditional geopolitical theories, which failed to address and grasp this subtle Nazi “cunning deviousness.”

Moreover, because of the tremendous success of a future rival company *DC Comics* and its *Superman* comic books¹⁸² in 1938, others sought to imitate a similar formula in hopes of becoming at least moderately successful.¹⁸³ Thus, in March 1941, the first issue of *Captain America*, exhibiting this star-spangled hero punching Hitler in the jaw on the cover was released almost ten months (!) prior to America’s official entry to WWII.¹⁸⁴ Such an overt political statement masterfully tapped into the slowly vanishing and subsiding isolationism in the national consciousness. The first issue sold over one million copies and impacted American pre-war sentiment beyond reckoning.¹⁸⁵

When we attempt to deconstruct *the Captain* as both an incredibly powerful symbol of and for America, it remains noteworthy that the creators excelled at combining the expressive power of comic books and capacity to provoke a swath of reactions ranging from laughter and amusement to offense and violence.¹⁸⁶ Unmistakably identified as a territorial symbol by his red, white and blue star-spangled uniform, *Captain America* remains a part of what Renan called the “cult of the flag”¹⁸⁷ – his outfit being oftentimes mocked by foes yet never ridiculed by allies. Additionally, Stan Lee, a comic book legend, argued that the Captain represented “*the best aspects of America: courage and honesty.*”¹⁸⁸

¹⁸¹ Jason Dittmer, “America is safe while its boys and girls believe in its creeds! Captain America and American identity prior to World War 2,” *Environment and Planning Development: Society and Space* 25 (2007): 408 – 409, Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 80 – 81.

¹⁸² Which boasted a monthly circulation of more than 1 million copies.¹⁸² Jason Dittmer, “America is safe while its boys and girls believe in its creeds! Captain America and American identity prior to World War 2,” 410.

¹⁸³ Jason Dittmer, “America is safe while its boys and girls believe in its creeds! Captain America and American identity prior to World War 2,” 406.

¹⁸⁴ Jason Dittmer, “America is safe while its boys and girls believe in its creeds! Captain America and American identity prior to World War 2,” 407, Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 80 – 81. Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): 626 – 643.

¹⁸⁵ Jason Dittmer, “America is safe while its boys and girls believe in its creeds! Captain America and American identity prior to World War 2,” 407.

¹⁸⁶ For more, see: Klaus Dodds, “Popular Geopolitics and Cartoons: Representing Power Relations, Repetition and Resistance,” *Critical African Studies* 4 (2010): 1 – 19.

¹⁸⁷ Ernest Renan, “What is a nation?” In: *Nation and narration*, ed. H. Bhabha, 17 (London: Routledge).

¹⁸⁸ Cited in: Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 629. At this point the author of this thesis would like to add two additional characteristics: innocence and defensive inclinations – much like the US Department of Defense – formerly known as the Department of War. Adapted from: Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 81.

Yet most of all, as Dittmer remarks: “*Captain America contributes to the American geopolitical narrative by being ultimately defensive in nature.*”¹⁸⁹ He is endowed with a unique weapon indicative of his (and America’s) defensiveness: a shield. While he has become quite skilled at throwing his star-spangled shield as an offensive weapon at various enemies, this defensive rather than offensive narrative bears crucial importance for America’s own identity. In comparison to e.g. *Superman* – the ultimate American immigrant who blends in and assimilates relatively easily – *Captain America* is not an entirely fantasy figure – he certainly remains strong enough to win every battle, yet alone cannot turn the war in his favour.¹⁹⁰ Also, teamed up with blatant resemblance between Captain’s world and the one the reader lived in, this apparent symmetry of narratives made his excitingly violent adventures all the more enjoyable.¹⁹¹

Yet when World War II ended, interest in these kinds of jingoistic tales waned substantially. Without Germans or Japanese to perilously fight, such a nationalist figure seemed out of place and somehow purposeless. Several attempts were made to resurrect the *Captain* and maintain his audience – *Captain America’s Weird Tales* inspired by horror stories and crime-related scenes and “Captain America...Commie Smasher!” – with mixed results at best. The latter is of particular importance to us as it aptly showcases an effort to feed on the geopolitical narrative of the unfolding Cold War in a turbulent climate of McCarthyism and a fervent hunt for Communist traitors at home.¹⁹² However, such one-dimensional stories conveying simple messages “*that Communists were evil, overweight and poor dressers*”¹⁹³ sold very poorly and failed to offer any meaningful discussions of Cold War issues to the audience, which gradually lost interest.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁹ Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 630. J. Simon and J. Kirby, *Captain America Comics*, no. 1 (New York: Timely Comics, 1941), 1 – 19.

¹⁹⁰ Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 630. J. Simon and J. Kirby, *Captain America Comics*, no. 2 – 6 (New York: Timely Comics, 1941).

¹⁹¹ Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 630 – 631. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 81- 83. Jason Dittmer, “America is safe while its boys and girls believe in its creeds! Captain America and American identity prior to World War 2,” 408 – 410. As Dittmer humorously mentions: “*If Superman fought the Nazis, it would be a very one-sided affair. The war would be over in a few scant issues of the comic book and then what?*” Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 83.

¹⁹² Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 631- 632. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 83 – 84.

¹⁹³ Bradford W. Wright, *Comic book nation: The transformation of youth culture in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 123.

¹⁹⁴ Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 631, Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 85.

After a decade-long pause, the third and still ongoing major incarnation of *Captain America* returned to newsstands in 1964, thanks to Stan Lee who introduced a baffling shift – a retroactive change in continuity¹⁹⁵ – in order to annul the “Commie Smasher” period and adapt to a new America embroiled in the Vietnam War and immersed in the civil right movement and gender as well as environmental issues.¹⁹⁶ In 1972 this obvious contradiction in narrative and hole in continuity was finally addressed – the true *Captain* was supposed to hit an iceberg in 1945 and the US government assumed he died.

Nevertheless, thanks to a Nazi version of the super soldier serum,¹⁹⁷ the government under much pressure decided to make a new *Captain*, indistinguishable from the real one. An ultimate showdown between the two *Captains* and their contrastive philosophies soon occurred with the real hero emerging, of course, victorious.¹⁹⁸ Ever since the 1970s *Captain America* continued battling against a plethora of issues relevant to the period it was written in – poverty, racism, pollution etc. – which thus rendered him dynamism in the face of America’s own fragmented identity.¹⁹⁹

The events of 9/11 provided a splendid opportunity for the *Captain America* comics to return to their original, clear geopolitical script devoid of complexity and free of the ambiguity introduced in the 1960s.²⁰⁰ As Dalby summarizes: “[...]the polarization dynamic was set in motion hastily; them and us, freedom versus terror reprised the themes of other American Wars, both hot and cold.”²⁰¹ Circumstantially, the condemnable events of 9/11 coincided with the finalizing endeavours to release a new *Captain America* series and thus, it comes as no surprise that several new storylines were hurriedly written to incorporate the aforementioned terrorist attack. Staying consistent with the dominant

¹⁹⁵ A rewriting of what has happened prior.

¹⁹⁶ Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 631. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 85.

¹⁹⁷ Whose stainless version turned Steve Rogers into an ultimate fighter in 1941.

¹⁹⁸ Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 632 – 633. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 86 – 87. Indicative of their abysmal differences is the following dialogue: *Real Captain America*: “You think I’m a traitor? Grow up, fella – times have changed! America’s in danger from within as well as without! There’s organized crime, injustice, and fascism – or wouldn’t you recognize that?” *1950s Captain America*: “Are you calling me – a fascist? You mealy-mouthed rat! You’re scared to face up to the commies in a war, like a real man! I’m a real man! And I’ll kill you to prove it!” That dialogue escalated rather quickly. Adapted from: Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 87.

¹⁹⁹ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 87.

²⁰⁰ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 87.

²⁰¹ Simon Dalby, “Calling 911: Geopolitics, security and America’s new war,” in: *11 September and its aftermath: The geopolitics of terror*, edited by S. Brunn, 61 – 86 (London: Frank Cass, 2004). 66. And as Jean Monnet once famously contended: “If you cannot solve a problem, [simply] enlarge the context!”, which echoes well with the Huntington paradigm the administration of George W. Bush sought to follow. Quoted in: Timothy Garton Ash, *Free World*, 183.

geopolitical narrative of 9/11 the first twenty-four pages of *Captain America* #1 display Steve Rodgers at the ruined location of Ground Zero and looking for any survivors in the rubble.²⁰² For us, it is essential to note that the events were framed as war imposed upon an innocent America long indulged in its exceptionalism and relatively immune to terrorist attacks prior to 9/11.²⁰³

The ensuing story arc in issues 2 – 6 is centered upon Islamic jihadists who airdropped small landmines into a typically Christian, calm and overwhelmingly white city of Centerville²⁰⁴ seven months after 9/11.²⁰⁵ Such an obvious contrast between the Christian, tolerant and open Centerville and the “Other” world embodied by Islamic terrorists mirrors heavily and massively draws on Huntington’s (in)famous thesis on “the clash of civilizations”, which, as we have already mentioned, gained tremendous, however misplaced, prominence in the aftermath of 9/11.²⁰⁶ Furthermore, the debates about Mackinderian empire and the uneasy role of a hegemon pervade the recent storylines as well.

Regardless of supposedly incompatible cultures and allegedly innate belligerent inclinations of Islam, Captain America proved his dynamism and a remarkable ability to raise a critical voice against a hegemonic, mainstream narrative once again. At the end of the abovementioned story arc the *Captain* is left in doubt after a long-winded conversation with a nameless villain who offered a scathing critique of an altered American foreign policy and convinces the *Captain* to acknowledge America’s own

²⁰² Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 637 – 638. J. N. Rieber and J. Cassaday, *Captain America* no. 1 (New York: Marvel Comics, 2002), 1 – 37.

²⁰³ Simon Dalby, “Calling 911: Geopolitics, security and America’s new war,” 67. However, the earlier 1993 bomb in the basement of the World Trade Center or the Oklahoma bombing of 1995 somehow invalidate this assumption about complete immunity.

²⁰⁴ A shining example of what Edensor refers to as a “quotidian landscape”, which also served as an apparent proxy for the then unfolding War on Terrorism. T. Edensor, *National identity, popular culture and everyday life* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 50 – 51.

²⁰⁵ J. N. Rieber and J. Cassaday, *Captain America* no. 1 (New York: Marvel Comics, 2002), 1 – 37.

²⁰⁶ Jason Dittmer, “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 639. For a more assiduous assessment of Huntington’s blunders and deficiencies, see e.g.: Edward Said’s *The Myth of the Clash of Civilizations* or the author’s own article titled *Civilizational Identity and Videogames*. Edward Said, “The Myth of the ‘Clash of Civilizations,’” Lecture at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 2005. Tomáš Hostýnek, “Civilizational Identity and Videogames,” in: *A Search for Identity*, edited by Ivona Mišterová and Eva Skopeczková, 183 – 213 (Plzeň: Západočeská Univerzita, 2013).

sins.²⁰⁷ Yet understandably, those by no means either legitimize or justify the terrorist activities carried out by Captain's foes.²⁰⁸

Still, such a strong, dissident and counterhegemonic narrative that seeks to challenge the validity of the dominant geopolitical perception in the post-9/11 era and ventures beyond any traditional geopolitical theories stands out as a prime illustration of critical as well as popular geopolitics. Furthermore, the latest movies featuring *Captain America* titled: *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011), *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014) and even his appearance in *the Avengers* (2012) blockbuster aptly demonstrate the vast majority of our findings and *Captain's* ability to adapt to new realities as well as challenge them while upholding all the values America proudly stands for.²⁰⁹

3.2 Reader's Digest – Condensing the Cold War

Joanne P. Sharp and her continued comprehensive analyses of the shifting role of the *Reader's Digest* and its tremendous significance in constructing and shaping American identity throughout the 20th century and beyond has been central to a much wider academic recognition of popular geopolitics as a meaningful field of research. Sharp even boldly suggests that the *Reader's Digest* “*might constitute the single most important voice in the creation of popular geopolitics in America in the 20th century*”²¹⁰ thanks to its phenomenal insights into the constantly evolving heart of American society that oftentimes struggled to interpret especially the unclear actions as well as the cloudy intentions of the Soviet Union dwelling on Mackinder's heartland. Thus, in doing so, the *Reader's Digest* became a major contributing factor to the construction of American views of the Cold War through its interpreted selection of convenient articles and stories that unmistakably fit in a much larger and particularly dominant narrative of the Soviet

²⁰⁷ J. N. Rieber and J. Cassaday, *Captain America* no. 3 (New York: Marvel Comics, 2002), 1 – 22.

²⁰⁸ Jason Dittmer, “Captain America's Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics,” 640 – 641.

²⁰⁹ *Captain America: The First Avenger*, directed by Joe Johnston, movie, 2011. *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, directed by Anthony and Joseph Russo, movie, 2014.

For a more down-to-earth, yet humorously satirical, comic books, cartoons or graphic novels that engage in (geo)political events, the author suggests Jonathan Shapiro – a South African cartoonist, Steve Bell or Art Spiegelmann – *Maus* (1991) and Joe Sacco – *Palestine* (1996).

²¹⁰ Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2000), 9.

Union as the totalitarian, vicious and malicious “them” even more so in the post-WWII era.²¹¹

While producing such comprehensible binary geography in a heated cold war world epitomized by simple bipolar logic, the Reader’s Digest, a showcase of “*conservative, small-town Americanness*,”²¹² now enjoys a monthly circulation of more than 30 million copies and is even translated into close to 20 languages.²¹³ What originated in 1922 as a humble attempt to distill articles deserving wider readership from predominantly regional sources, has, thanks to DeWitt Wallace and Lila Bella Acheson – the initial editors-in-chief²¹⁴ – developed into a reputable, trustworthy and well established form of popular media.²¹⁵ In addition, the actual modest origins of the *Reader’s Digest* must be properly set against the flamboyant backdrop of the roaring 1920s, which heralded a spiraling rise of consumerism, mass media and marked a significant transformation in the production of magazines intertwined with the emerging power of the middle class,²¹⁶ which, in turn, brought about a major shift in focus increasingly aimed at and written for middlebrow rather than elite intellectuals.

Even though the previously preponderant form of Victorian culture sought to cater to mass audience, to a certain extent, as well, its expensiveness practically excluded the vast majority of prospective readership and resulted in being unaffordable to them.²¹⁷ However, thanks to mostly technological innovation and myriad smaller improvements in the railroad network at the dawn of the 20th century that made an overall facilitation of a nation-wide reach possible, these newly emerging magazines²¹⁸ also ventured beyond partisan politics²¹⁹ and gradually emphasized “national” instead of “local.” Despite being

²¹¹ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 90. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, 10.

²¹² Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, 14.

²¹³ The Czech language being one of them. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, 14. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 90

²¹⁴ Who, according to Dodds, leaned toward strong scepticism of the Soviet Union and communist politics in general while maintained tremendous influence in the actual condensation of articles. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 90.

²¹⁵ Which was featured in positive light even on the Simpsons TV show. Joanne P. Sharp, “Publishing American identity: popular geopolitics, myth and the Reader’s Digest,” 495. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, 15.

²¹⁶ From this Sharp derives the term “middle brow appeal” in contrast to elitism. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, 22. Joanne P. Sharp, “Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader’s Digest and the construction of danger,” 560 – 563.

²¹⁷ Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, 22 – 23.

²¹⁸ Which were, technically, the only form of medium to reach its audiences on a regular basis at that time.

²¹⁹ A turn further reinforced by *muckrakers* – individuals identified with investigative journalism and exposé literature prior to WWI. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, 23.

heavily criticized²²⁰ for its shameful display to, the supposed contamination and disgrace of the established elite highbrow culture held dear by e.g. Virginia Woolf, our “notorious nemesis” of Halford J. Mackinder, no one could actually deny the dynamic appeal of this enticing conjuncture of passionate self-improvement and visionary eagerness of middlebrow culture.²²¹

It is thus in the hedonistic era of the 1920s that the abovementioned factors made manifest, fully blossomed, reverberated through basically all aspects of everyday life and, importantly for us, coincided with the establishment of the *Reader's Digest* as a future dominant narration which engaged in the process of mostly reproducing, reinforcing and at times even challenging “common sense”, conventional wisdom and national (geo)political culture.²²² Sharp, a British geographer, further highlights two essential attributes of the *Reader's Digest*: a) its emphasis on interpreted articles, arguably written by experts in their respective fields, and already processed, filtered and, most of all, *condensed*²²³ pieces of information so as to present the keen, albeit passive, reader with the ready-made complex knowledge of and insights into the latest development around the world as well as at home, b) the incorporation of articles on international events next to domestic issues of great importance to individual Americans.²²⁴ It is hence precisely this unique linkage of the everyday to the international explained through the prism of American culture²²⁵ that makes the *Reader's Digest* so appealing and its in-depth analysis so enriching.

²²⁰ Find source!

²²¹ That set an indispensable cornerstone for the second wave of mass consumerism and popular culture several decades later as the unchained 1960s were in full swing. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War Reader's Digest and American Identity*, 24 – 29. Forlorn by the proliferation of mass consumption and broader, more popular interpretations of once a strictly elitist privilege, Virginia Woolf famously asked: “How dare the middle-brows teach you how to read – Shakespeare for instance? All you have to do is read him.” Cited in: Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*, 29.

²²² Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*, 24 – 29. Joanne P. Sharp, “Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger,” 559. Additional examples of the interwar populizers of knowledge include: H. G. Wells: *Outline of History*, H. W. Van Loon: *Story of Mankind* or Will Durant: *The Story of Philosophy*. Common to all those literary pieces is to deliver prescient, almost academic information to a general public while maintaining readability and simplicity. Herbert George Wells, *The Outline of History* (Manchester: Newnes, 1920). Hendrik Willem Van Loon, *Story of Mankind* (Massachusetts: H. Liveright, 1921). Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1924).

Contemporary populizers in the field of international relations comprise e.g. Niall Fergusson or the author's favourite Timothy Garton Ash. Going by this logic, even Alfred Mahan or Samuel Huntington could theoretically belong to this category.

²²³ *Digested*.

²²⁴ Joanne P. Sharp, “Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger,” 559.

²²⁵ Joanne P. Sharp, “Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger,” 559. Furthermore, Sharp contends that the rhetorical strategies and titles employed by the

The entire interwar period was characterized by grave uncertainty concerning the future direction of the international system as Britain was slowly losing its global preeminence and America was reluctantly entering the spotlight. Exacerbated by the 1929 economic crisis and the ostensibly functional practice of socialism and communism in the Soviet Union which appeared unscathed in the aftermath of the Black Friday, *Reader's Digest* articles naturally reflected these ambiguities and competing projects as America and the USSR both endeavoured to reassert their own superior economic visions.²²⁶

Even though the *Reader's Digest* seemed to be quite concerned about the surging American materialism, crisis in identity and the unforeseeable prospects of the New Deal Policy in the wake of 1929 and occasionally even sympathetic to the goals of the Soviet Union mirroring America's own "universalist-progressivist"²²⁷ paradigm,²²⁸ from the 1930s onwards we can witness a steady stream of critical articles on the Soviet Union in the light of the shocking exposure of its brutal practices, crushing repressions and strong authoritarian inclinations, which earned Stalin an infamously honourable pedestal next to Hitler and Mussolini.²²⁹ While invoking morality and the messianic rhetoric of Manifest Destiny, we can thus conclude that on the eve of WWII the *Reader's Digest* inscribed the Soviet Union as an external geopolitical threat with condemnable practices and nefarious intentions that through its gluttonous expansiveness strove to crawl *into* the heart of America.²³⁰

Reader's Digest represent a prime example of manipulating and bending the hermeneutics of reception to its will, such as: "What is being planned for you?" or "We must face the facts about Russia." Joanne P. Sharp, "Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger," 559. M. Eastman, "To Collaborate successfully – we must face the facts about Russia," *Reader's Digest* 21, no. 6 (1943): 1 – 14. R. Robey, "What is being planned for you?" *Reader's Digest* 23, no. 2 (1945): 21 – 22.

²²⁶ Joanne P. Sharp, "Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger," 562 – 563. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*, chapter "Ambivalent Geography: Writing World Orders, 1922 – 1945," 76 – 104.

²²⁷ Joanne P. Sharp, "Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger," 565. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*, 76 – 104.

²²⁸ W. Chamberlain, "Russia bows to human nature," *Reader's Digest* 12, no. 11 (1934): 75.

²²⁹ Joanne P. Sharp, "Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger," 565. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 91. Also, in 1938 the Reader's Digest saw the launch of a Spanish version for sale in Latin America, which was a mere decade later accompanied by an Italian version to counter the Popular Front of Communists and Socialists and its scramble for power. This led many to believe that the Reader's Digest was unscrupulous government propaganda connected to the CIA. Yet such fierce accusations are largely exaggerated – despite informally collaborating with the American government on several occasions, the Reader's Digest has throughout its history been often highly critical of government administrations regardless of their elephant or donkey political proclivities. Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*, 41 – 42.

²³⁰ G. Sokolsky, "It *Can* Happen Here," *Reader's Digest* 15 (1937): 30. Joanne P. Sharp, "Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger," 566. Joanne P. Sharp,

Such a despicable perception of the Soviet Union, one might say, prevailed basically until the Vietnam War and the policy of *détente* without the introduction of any radically new representations of the Soviet Union.²³¹ In 1964, however, with US-USSR arms talks and further following the rapprochement between the USA and Soviets and between America and China under a new economically reformist leadership, this deescalating era orchestrated by Richard Nixon and, as we have already postulated, Henry Kissinger, saw a gradual decrease in the once astronomical number of articles on the Soviet Union. Instead, the *Digest* thoroughly explored phantom menaces from within veiled in the concealed form of the anti-Vietnam War movement, urban violence and civil rights movements.²³² In spite of such a radical shift of primary concern the *Digest* still remained highly skeptical about the Soviet goodwill to negotiate and resolve conflicting issues via peaceful methods.

To better demonstrate this apparent disbelief and precarious doubtfulness concerning the true intentions of the Soviets in their land-locked heartland, it is worth noting that even Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, a praised dissident writer, described the policy of *détente* and negotiations as a “*conscious Soviet ploy*” and a “*sly linguistic turn*”²³³ as late as 1975. Also, at that time only a handful of authors were convinced that the Soviet ideology, even with such an ostensible surface change for better, would allow for peaceful coexistence with America’s transcendental and superior morality.²³⁴

The turbulent period often labeled “The Second Cold War” lasting roughly between 1979 – 1990 marked a welcome return to the initial Cold War rhetoric abounding with an intensifying geopolitical clash of two global superpowers which both stood for and championed completely incompatible economic as well as moral paradigms. Furthermore, Soviet inhabitants were, generally speaking, conceived of as subservient to the contingent whimsies of the authoritarian state bureaucracy.²³⁵ Thus, in the heated era

Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity, 76 – 104. Joanne P. Sharp, “Publishing American identity: popular geopolitics, myth and the Reader’s Digest,” 496.

²³¹ Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, chapter “The Beginnings of Cold War,” 104 – 128.

²³² Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, chapter “The Beginnings of Cold War,” 130.

²³³ “[When] Khrushchev came here and shouted “We will bury you!” people didn’t believe that . . . they took it as a joke. Now, of course, the communists in our country have become more clever. They no longer say “We’re going to bury you.” Now they say “*détente*.” But nothing has changed.” Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, “Wake Up! Wake Up!” *Reader’s Digest* 53, no. 12 (1975): 72.

²³⁴ Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader’s Digest and American Identity*, chapter “The Beginnings of Cold War,” 131. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 92.

²³⁵ Even George Orwell was celebrated as a visionary prophet on the pages of the Reader’s Digest who envisioned what the Soviet system would look like amplified ad absurdum.

prior to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the *Reader's Digest* employed a very belligerent rhetoric, denounced Mikhail Gorbachev's reformist government and sought to tap into American identity by, sometimes even artificially, feasting on the existential threat communism posed so as to present Americans ill-equipped with geographical knowledge a wider understanding and contextualization of the said issues.²³⁶

Yet with the largely unexpected demise of the economically increasingly cumbersome, weary and internally dysfunctional Soviet Union, even the *Reader's Digest* had to cope with this sudden loss of its cold war alter ego as America stood on a momentous crossroad with multiple possible directions – unipolarity, “the end of history” and soon-to-be contended “the clash of civilizations.” That the *Reader's Digest* chose to subscribe to the indomitable role of global American leadership does by no means come across as a major paradigmatic turn.²³⁷ However, it remains important to note that due to the constant search for an existential threat imperiling American identity and its praiseworthy values,²³⁸ the *Digest* opted to warn its readers on external as well as internal dangers ranging from the Japanese economic miracle²³⁹ and the consequent decline of America's global competitiveness, over domestic terrorism manifested in the 1995 Oklahoma bombing by far-right fanatics,²⁴⁰ to Islamic fundamentalism in e.g. Iran and Libya.²⁴¹ The 9/11 terrorist attack marked another turning point to heightened emphasis on domestic insecurity,²⁴² which appears to be the prevalent prismatic scope in the unfolding 21st century.²⁴³

3.3 James Bond and his early Cold War cinematic ventures

²³⁶ Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*, 151 – 155, Joanne P. Sharp, “Publishing American identity: popular geopolitics, myth and the Reader's Digest,” 500 – 502. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 92.

²³⁷ Several illuminating articles titled: “Countdown to the Twenty-First Century: Freedom on the March” or “Democracy Is Winning” serve as a suitable demonstration of Reader's Digest geopolitical inclinations in a precarious period characterized by America's own future uncertainty. “Countdown to the 21st Century: Freedom on the March,” *Reader's Digest* 68, no. 1 (1990): 34 – 45. “Democracy is winning,” *Reader's Digest* 68, no. 1 (1990).

²³⁸ Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity* 160 – 161.

²³⁹ Which, by then, was arguably well past beyond its original heyday in the early 1980s.

²⁴⁰ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 92.

²⁴¹ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 92.

²⁴² Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 92.

²⁴³ To acquire a few additional fragments of an explicit literary connection between 9/11 and the Reader's Digest, the author suggests the following articles: “Remembering September 11: How America Has Changed,” *Reader's Digest*, last modified September 11, 2011, <http://www.rd.com/true-stories/inspiring/remembering-september-11-america-changed/6/> and Beth Dreher, “9/11: One Remarkable Story Out of Many,” *Reader's Digest*, accessed March 5, 2014, <http://www.rd.com/recommends/911-one-remarkable-story-out-of-many/>.

Ever since the invention of celluloid paved the way for the emergence of moving pictures, the film industries and the overwhelming popularity of movies around the globe surged tremendously. Yet precisely because of their ability to offer mass entertainment and to appeal to broad audiences, governments and their respective militaries soon recognized this rare opportunity to project into and imbue movies with various social, political, moral and cultural messages in hopes of tapping into eager viewers and imparting them with a particular (geo)political narrative.²⁴⁴

As Davies and Wells aptly concluded: “*The fact remains, though, that the politics of the most powerful nation in the world [the USA] cannot be divorced from the most far-reaching entertainment medium in the world.*”²⁴⁵ Dodds goes even as far as to suggest that in America, wars tend to be fought on two fronts: on the actual battlefield and on celluloid.²⁴⁶ Throughout the 20th century it is indeed possible to uncover countless examples of the American government collaborating with Hollywood studios – ranging from financial subsidies, over impartial advice, to leasing real troops and cutting-edge military equipment. *The Battle Cry of Peace*²⁴⁷ (1915), *Victory through Air Power*²⁴⁸ (1942) or *Air Force*²⁴⁹ (1943) serve as cases in point demonstrating the loci of effort the American government invested into constructing specific, mostly war-related, identities.

Unsurprisingly, even Soviet cinematography flourished under Joseph Stalin, who perceived it as an incredibly powerful propaganda tool worth thoroughly perusing, and, to a certain extent, abusing. To bolster national self-confidence and prove the indomitable spirit of Soviet citizens when facing ostensibly insurmountable obstacles and unfavourable odds, the Soviet government strove to sponsor many cinematic projects, such as *October* (1927), *Court of Honor* (1940) or the two-part historical epic *Ivan the*

²⁴⁴ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 77.

²⁴⁵ P. Davies and P. Wells, *American Films and Politics from Reagan to Bush Jr.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 5.

²⁴⁶ Klaus Dodds *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 77.

²⁴⁷ A touching movie exposing the fragility of America’s armed forces on the onset of WWI, which is believed to have contributed, among a plethora of other factors, to Woodrow Wilson’s decision to lend a hand on bloody European battlefields two years later. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 78.

²⁴⁸ A possible reference to the future significance of aviation as advocated by e.g. A. de Seversky who even made an appearance in this movie. *Victory through Air Power*, directed by Perce Pearce, 1943, Walt Disney Studios, Cinema.

²⁴⁹ A heroic movie reassuring Americans that their country had what it took to fend off and triumph over the Japanese war machine which shattered many an American dream about supposed invulnerability concerning the shocking aftermath of Pearl Harbor. Also, intriguingly enough, the ending showed American air force emerging victorious over Japan *two years* before the bellicose land of the rising sun admitted defeat. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 78.

Terrible (1944 and 1958).²⁵⁰ Akin to the Soviet Union, the unequivocal marriage between Hitler's Germany and propagandist filmmakers yielded similar pictures imbued with propaganda in the late 1930s.²⁵¹

Even the slightly altered silver screen adaptation of Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1954) secretly endorsed by the CIA under the auspices of the Eisenhower administration²⁵² illustrates the reciprocal interconnectedness between the government and the filmmakers. Despite the original book ending on a rather dim note, the embellished movie version displayed animals overthrowing increasingly corrupted Napoleon and his dogs and instilling democracy. Such a drastically changed conclusion is indeed to be contextualized, according to Dodds,²⁵³ as a vigorous attempt to undermine the legitimacy of the Soviet Union and hint at its fated vulnerability to organized rebellions.²⁵⁴

However, in the 1960s the once almost harmonic relationship between Pentagon and Hollywood considerably deteriorated in the light of, most notably, the "Vietnam Syndrome" and the civil rights movement,²⁵⁵ which effectively eroded dominant geopolitical narratives at that time. It is thus in this turbulent period that the exciting cinematic adventures of *James Bond* made manifest for the first time. When *Dr. No* hit the theaters in 1962 amidst an uneasy era retrospectively called "Hollywood's Sixties recession"²⁵⁶ in a country where Fleming's novels met with a general lack of interest and further exacerbated by ambiguous audience response mixing curiosity and skepticism, the consequent phenomenal success and impact of Britain's premier spy came as a welcome stimulus for Hollywood's own stalemate.²⁵⁷ This unexpected boom of the Bond phenomenon encouraged a myriad of other filmmakers to mimic the famous and supposedly foolproof Bond formula – espionage, madmen endeavouring to devour the world, exotic locations, glamorous females and femme fatales, the latest gadgets, car chases and climactic explosions.^{258 259}

²⁵⁰ *October*, Directed by Grigori Aleksandrov and Sergei Eisenstein, 1927, Cinema. *Court of Honor*, Directed by Abram Room, 1940, Cinema. *Ivan the Terrible*, Directed by Sergei Eisenstein, 1944 and 1958, Cinema. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 78.

²⁵¹ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 78.

²⁵² Which saw America embroiled in a domestic hunt for Communist collaborators and preoccupied with identifying subversive elements in Hollywood. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 78.

²⁵³ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 79.

²⁵⁴ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 79.

²⁵⁵ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 79.

²⁵⁶ And also during escalating Cold War encounters over Cuba.

²⁵⁷ Drew Moniot, "James Bond and America in the Sixties: An Investigation of the Formula Film in Popular Culture," *Journal of University Film Association* 28, no. 3 (1976): 25.

²⁵⁸ Drew Moniot, "James Bond and America in the Sixties: An Investigation of the Formula Film in Popular Culture," 25 – 26. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 84. The author's favourite

Nevertheless, even when the Bond imitations cropped up quite rapidly, these usually meager impersonations could never arouse so much popularity. Thus, when we attempt to more assiduously deconstruct what lies behind the extraordinary success of Bond's exciting escapades, Dodds' abovementioned explanation proves insufficient. Luckily, Moniot offers additional ingredients of the Bond formula which its imitators failed to notice or unsuccessfully mimicked: a) a strong lead actor,²⁶⁰ b) technical aspects – musical scoring, editing, panoramic shots, c) mass marketing and an array of Bond-related products,²⁶¹ and most of all, d) a clearly visible element of Americana defining its Cold War zeitgeist, which made the movie version of Bond *differ* significantly from its literary counterpart mostly in terms of the former being wittier, delivering more humorous punch-lines, having, as Moniot remarks, “*more sexy young females to seduce*,”²⁶² and being engaged in more perilous pitfalls amplified by sinister arch-villains with global nefarious intentions.²⁶³

Furthermore, Dodds brings up a few additional interpretations spanning across the 50 years of the geopolitically significant history of this fictional super-spy: a) a metaphor for British imperial decline and its struggle to maintain the role of global intelligence leader against the emergent USA,²⁶⁴ b) a resounding rear-guard case against the rise of feminism that challenged Western patriarchy,²⁶⁵ c) a demonstration of the post-war fragility of masculinity,²⁶⁶ d) a continuation of a longer tradition of Britain's spy thrillers²⁶⁷ and e) a downright retrogressive tale of and nostalgia for Britain's historical

imitation is called *The Second Best Secret Agent in the Whole Wide World*. One must give the filmmakers at least some credit for acknowledging the apparent inferiority of their piece.

²⁵⁹ Klaus Dodds, “Screening Geopolitics: James Bond and the Early Cold War films (1962 – 1967),” *Geopolitics* 10, no.2 (2005): 271 – 272.

²⁶⁰ Sean Connery – a famous Scottish actor excellently suited to the role of 007.

²⁶¹ E.g. the humorous slogan accompanying 007 underwear for women: “Become fit for James Bond!”. Drew Moniot, “James Bond and America in the Sixties: An Investigation of the Formula Film in Popular Culture,” 26.

²⁶² Drew Moniot, “James Bond and America in the Sixties: An Investigation of the Formula Film in Popular Culture,” 27.

²⁶³ Drew Moniot, “James Bond and America in the Sixties: An Investigation of the Formula Film in Popular Culture,” 26 – 27.

²⁶⁴ David Cannadine, *In Churchill's Shadows* (London: Allen Press, 2002), 279 – 311.

²⁶⁵ Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 84. J. Chapman and M. Hilton, “From Sherlock Homes to James Bond: Masculinity and National Identity in British Popular Fiction,” 126 – 147, in: *Relocating Britishness*, edited by Caunce (S. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

²⁶⁶ C. Bold, “Under the Skirts of Britannia: Re-reading Women in the James Bond Novels,” in: Lindner C (ed.), *The James Bond Phenomenon* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

²⁶⁷ M. Denning, *Cover Stories: Narrative and Ideology in the British Spy Thriller* (London: Routledge, 1987), especially the chapter titled “*Licensed to Look*”.

colonial heyday and Pax Britannia.²⁶⁸ Also, on a purely personal level, John F. Kennedy represented an affectionate proponent of Fleming's²⁶⁹ original thrillers as well as their consequent movies and thus helped further stimulate Fleming's originally meager popularity and the broad appeal of movie adaptations.²⁷⁰

One might indeed deem the early James Bond movies²⁷¹ as a mere reproduction of binary Cold War geopolitics, however, such a blatant disregard for a much more diverse account would inevitably lead to a grave simplification. Although the global struggle against communism lies at the heart of James Bond novels, thanks to Richard Maibaum, the chief contributor who transformed Fleming's thrillers into movie scripts, James Bond movies must be thus viewed as simply taking place on the Cold War chessboard and while abiding its rules and confinements, the main antagonists are oftentimes backed by transnational criminal networks and rogue organizations rather than explicitly connected to a particular country from the competing block.²⁷² Despite taking place mostly inside Spykman's rimland, the story arcs of the early *James Bond* movies often venture into more exotic locations – e.g. Hong Kong, Cuba.

In addition, basically every James Bond movie in the 1960s revolved around contemporary geopolitical topics – ranging from lunatic Dr. No and his attempts to seize control over rockets launched from Cape Canaveral prior to America's first manned space flight, over fierce arms and space clashes that dovetailed with the plot of *From Russia with Love* to an impressive swath of critically perceived geopolitical, domestic, ecological as well as gender issues in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969).²⁷³ The last few

²⁶⁸ C. Baron, "Doctor No: Bonding Britishness to Racial Sovereignty," *Spectator: USC Journal of Film and Television Criticism* 14 (1994): 68 – 81.

Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 58 – 59. Klaus Dodds, "Screening Geopolitics: James Bond and the Early Cold War films (1962 – 1967)," 271 – 272.

²⁶⁹ Who passed away in 1964 and hence was able to witness only the first two James Bond cinematographic installments.

²⁷⁰ To top it all, Fleming was even invited to advise Kennedy on how to topple Fidel Castro. While doing so, he devised a range of peculiar proposals – poisoned cigars, exploding seashells or leaflets claiming Castro's impotence. Not all of them were put into practice. Klaus Dodds, "Screening Geopolitics: James Bond and the Early Cold War films (1962 – 1967)," 271. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 84.

²⁷¹ *Dr. No* (1962), *From Russia with Love* (1963), *Thunderball* (1965), *Goldfinger* (1964), *You Only Live Twice* (1967).

²⁷² For sure, such sinister networks usually turn out to be subsidized by the Russians and later by the Chinese, yet it takes Bond and Britain a great deal of time to establish a firm link between them. Klaus Dodds, "Screening Geopolitics: James Bond and the Early Cold War films (1962 – 1967)," 277 – 281. For a more detailed analysis of the politics of James Bond, see the eponymous article written by Jeremy Black in 2004. Jeremy Black, *The Geopolitics of James Bond* (New York: Praeger 2001).

²⁷³ Drew Moniot, "James Bond and America in the Sixties: An Investigation of the Formula Film in Popular Culture," 28 – 29.

remarks allow us to stretch the current theoretical framework of popular geopolitics to its limits.

Nevertheless, before moving on to the next case study, the sometimes abysmal dichotomy between the intentions of politicians and directors on the one hand and the actual audience reception on the other needs to be mentioned at least in the passing. Time and again has proven that interpretations of movies²⁷⁴ in the 1960s as well as in 2014 must be treated with caution as an automatic or causal link between the film and audience reaction remains *non-existent*. Even when a hegemonic, prevalent interpretation occurs, it cannot safeguard long-term dominance without being acknowledged by its audience as such.²⁷⁵

Therefore, in a true Foucaultian and Derridean sense, everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion and *interprets* the same issues and events in a different, sometimes similar, often contrastive, manner. A pioneering work in this field that seeks to enlarge the corpus of the methodologies of critical geopolitics and further shift them to everyday consumers, their constructions of geopolitical events and audience research as well as reception studies, which have so far been drastically downplayed and turned a blind eye upon by (critical) geopoliticians,²⁷⁶ was formulated by Dodds who pro-actively engaged in exploring the Internet Movie Database, the phenomenon of fandom and audience reactions to *Die Another Day* (2002).²⁷⁷ In gauging the audience responses to the said Bond movie and uncovering particular types of fans, he made a strong case for popular geopolitics to adapt to the new virtual-based reality and broaden its surprisingly narrow and elitist scope so as to incorporate on-line communities, which offer almost limitless possibilities for communication, mutual interaction and sharing opinions among like-minded fans.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁴ As well as videogames, which will be elucidated in a following subchapter.

²⁷⁵ For more, see: Agnew (2002), Dodds (2005), Dalby (2008), Tuathail (1996) and Dittmer (2010).

²⁷⁶ Unlike academic disciplines centered upon media studies, anthropology and human geography.

²⁷⁷ Klaus Dodds, "Popular Geopolitics and Audience Dispositions: James Bond and the Internet Movie Database (IMDb)," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 31, no. 2 (2006): 116 – 119.

²⁷⁸ Klaus Dodds, "Popular Geopolitics and Audience Dispositions: James Bond and the Internet Movie Database (IMDb)," 120 – 122. For a comprehensive analysis of American movies prior to 9/11 and their search for identity, see: Joanne P. Sharp, "Patriotism, masculinity and geopolitics in post-Cold War American movies," in: *Rethinking Geopolitics*, edited by Tuathail and Dalby, 152 – 169 (London: Routledge, 1998). Also, the author would like to point out that even the most popular video-sharing website *Youtube* shelters a plethora of so-called *youtubers* who explore movies, review them and hint at their explicit as well as more subtle shortcomings. With several channels on movies boasting more than 1 million subscribers, e.g. *CinemaSins* or *Screen Junkies*, this fascinating phenomenon adds a completely new layer of complexity in terms of audiences and their reception, consumption and construction of geopolitical events.

However, even when one seeks to venture into the uncharted territory of virtual endeavours that have experienced an unprecedented growth since the 1990s thanks to the precipitous development of informational technologies, real geographical constraints somehow limit further research of on-line fandom communities – the “digital divide” separating the main beneficiaries of access to digital technologies – North America, Europe and East Asia²⁷⁹ – from e.g. Sub-Saharan Africa, and also constraints any meaningful research based solely upon online interactions and cyberspace without an offline and real-world contextualization.²⁸⁰

All things considered, the modern *James Bond* (movie) phenomenon exhibits no signs of subsiding even after five decades of abiding dominant geopolitical narratives while flexibly keeping abreast of the latest international development.²⁸¹ Together with the advantages of World Wide Web, the James Bond franchise offers fascinating contributions to the generation and reproduction of geographical imaginations and traditions that can sustain or disrupt specific national narratives. In doing so, it propels popular geopoliticians to rethink through what significance audience research bears, what role new media cultures and fandom embodies so that a more nuanced understanding of popular geopolitics enriched by a pro-active engagement with audiences may be devised²⁸² to bridge real world geopolitical events, popular interpretations and everyday consumption of (not only) movies.

3.4 The Dixie Chicks – a cautionary tale for post-9/11 country music?

Not only does music represent a tremendously powerful vehicle for the articulation of dissent, civil disobedience and fierce resistance,²⁸³ this form of human expression has also been used as a propagandist tool by various regimes and governments which strove

²⁷⁹ The famous triadization, an alternative theory of globalization, mirrors and echoes with such divide as well. Debated e.g. in: Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-America World and the Rise of the Rest: Release 2.0* (London: Penguin Books, 2011).

²⁸⁰ Klaus Dodds, “Popular Geopolitics and Audience Dispositions: James Bond and the Internet Movie Database (IMDb),” 121 – 122.

²⁸¹ Klaus Dodds, “Popular Geopolitics and Audience Dispositions: James Bond and the Internet Movie Database (IMDb),” 126 – 127. For further reading, see Dittmer’s upcoming article on the latest Bond movie *Skyfall*: Jason Dittmer, “*James Bond: An Ageing Agent in Skyfall*,” last modified December 16, 2013, <http://rhulgeopolitics.wordpress.com/2013/12/16/james-bond-an-ageing-agent-in-skyfall-2012/>.

²⁸² As argued by Jason Dittmer and Klaus Dodds, “Popular Geopolitics Past and Future: Fandom, Identities and Audiences,” *Geopolitics* 13, no. 3 (2008): 455 – 457.

²⁸³ Songs such as: Free Nelson Mandela or Sunday Bloody Sunday and even a dissident band called Plastic People of the Universe in Czechoslovakia and folk singer Victor Jara in Pinochet’s Chile that both struggled against repressive regimes with sometimes mortal consequences. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 96 – 99. Because of its appeal to the young generation, popular music has often been targeted as a subversive element.

largely to instill nationalist messages.²⁸⁴ America has enjoyed a long tradition of firm interconnectedness between music and politics ranging from the dramatic tunes of the Revolutionary War, over the north-south struggles during the American Civil War to the protest songs concerned with the War in Vietnam²⁸⁵ and, of course, 9/11 and the War on Terror.²⁸⁶

When one seeks to explore American country music and its origins, it is essential to bring up Walter Russell Mead and his innovative, albeit inevitably simplifying, occasionally misleading and from time to time too narrow, division of American foreign policy into four competing streams. Mead considers country music a product of Jacksonian culture and associates it with predominantly southern states – Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas. According to him, this folk feeling emanating from country music constitutes a “*basic [quintessential] element in American consciousness.*”²⁸⁷ However, such a mere statement hinting at a nation-wide appeal of country music remains methodologically useless if we cannot apply it to a particular geopolitical backdrop. Thus, in order to better comprehend the linkage, the interrelationship between country music artists and the post-9/11 geopolitical discourse, an incisive study by Boulton needs to be highlighted.²⁸⁸

In analyzing the lyrics of country songs and the methods the actual musicians employed to mediate the dominant geopolitical narrative of the War on Terror, he argued that, broadly speaking, country music concurred with the civilizational framings – “us and them” of the Bush administration²⁸⁹ yet it (has) nevertheless revolved mostly around America’s search for its role, values and identity in an unpredictable and contingent post-9/11 era. Therefore, contemporary country musicians have usually opted for emphasizing the glory of American soldiers, America’s unity and shared experience rather than openly

²⁸⁴ E.g. Nazi Germany and the captivating music of Richard Wagner. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 96 – 99.

²⁸⁵ Bob Dylan represents a popular musician who stood at the forefront of anti-Vietnam protests in the 1960s. Klaus Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, 96 – 99.

²⁸⁶ Classical music offers a wide range of examples as well. To demonstrate: Ludwig van Beethoven is believed to have dedicated his Symphony no. 3 in E-flat major to Napoleon Bonaparte whom he sincerely admired, however, in 1804, when former First Consul crowned himself Emperor, Beethoven, disgusted by the new course of Napoleon’s sequel to French revolution, tore the title page apart and labelled his piece a “*heroic symphony, composed to celebrate the memory of a great man.*” Christopher T. George, “The Eroica Riddle: Did Napoleon Remain Beethoven’s ‘Hero?’” *The Journal of the Napoleonic Society* 1, no. 2 (1998): 50 – 65.

²⁸⁷ Walter Russell Mead, “The Jacksonian Tradition and American Foreign Policy,” *The National Interest* 58 (1999): 7.

²⁸⁸ Andrew Boulton, “The Popular Geopolitical Wor(l)ds of Post-9/11 Country Music,” *Popular Music and Society* 31, no. 3 (2008): 373 – 387.

²⁸⁹ And the overwhelming majority of American media.

branding, demarcating, and making a clear racialized distinction between the chief rogue states.²⁹⁰ Nor have they been explicitly invoking, unlike the “official and mainstream” audience, the Huntingtonian paradigm.²⁹¹ This emblematic significance of values that Americans hold on to so dearly and almost messianically, suffered a crushing blow when mildly critical words uttered by lead singer Natalie Maines from *the Dixie Chicks* on the eve of the War in Iraq in 2003 elicited intense and vitriolic reactions among public as well as media.²⁹²

In 2003, at the very beginning of *the Dixie Chicks* world tour and less than a fortnight before the War in Iraq commenced, Natalie Maines expressed the following words in front of a crowd at Shepherd’s Bush²⁹³ Empire Theatre in England: “*Just so you know, we’re on the good side with y’all. We do not want this war, this violence, and we’re ashamed that the President of the United States is from Texas.*”²⁹⁴ Followed by mass applause, this cultivated criticism sparked off a public and media backlash of unprecedented proportions. As Tuathail pointed out, this particular incident signifies the importance of meanings that are made both inside as well as outside the actual text – lyrics alone cannot account for the sole explanatory factor in this case. Instead, such void vacuum needs to be expanded by e.g. expectations, the band’s history and context.²⁹⁵ Furthermore, what may strike us as downright surprising is the intriguing fact that Maines espoused a much more moderate approach toward criticizing the Commander in Chief than other, arguably better-known, celebrities such as Jennifer Aniston who denounced his actions more scathingly²⁹⁶ while receiving only marginal coverage.

In the wake of this incident, opposition and boycotts mounted against *the Dixie Chicks* reached unparalleled heights spanning across running over their CDs by a bulldozer, publicly burning their memorabilia, receiving hundreds of death threats, accusing their listeners of Communism or having a million dollar endorsement to the Red

²⁹⁰ Andrew Boulton, “The Popular Geopolitical Wor(l)ds of Post-9/11 Country Music,” 373 – 375.

²⁹¹ Andrew Boulton, “The Popular Geopolitical Wor(l)ds of Post-9/11 Country Music,” 373 – 378.

Examples of popular country songs include: “It ain’t no Rag it’s a Flag”, “American Soldier” or “Have you Forgotten?” Andrew Boulton, “The Popular Geopolitical Wor(l)ds of Post-9/11 Country Music,” 373 – 378.

²⁹² Andrew Boulton, “The Popular Geopolitical Wor(l)ds of Post-9/11 Country Music,” 375.

²⁹³ What a fateful irony.

²⁹⁴ “Destroying The Dixie Chicks – Ten Years After,” *Saving Country Music.com*, last modified March 10, 2013, <http://www.savingcountrymusic.com/destroying-the-dixie-chicks-ten-years-after>.

²⁹⁵ Gearóid Ó Tuathail, “Condensing Critical Geopolitics: Reflections on Joanne Sharp’s Condensing the Cold War,” *Geopolitics* 8, no. 2 (2003): 159 – 165.

²⁹⁶ Branded him a “f***ing idiot.” Andrew Boulton, “The Popular Geopolitical Wor(l)ds of Post-9/11 Country Music,” 375.

Cross rejected.²⁹⁷ Also, while dwindling back into obscurity and damnation, the rapid demise of the *Dixie Chicks* between 2003 – 2006 propelled the formidable rise of Oklahoma’s Toby Keith “*who later ended up becoming the best-selling artist in the 2000’s decade.*”²⁹⁸ To fathom why such a sincere exercise of the rights to freedom of speech backfired, one needs to look into the statistics and the sky-high approval the War in Iraq boasted on the onset of the invasion before the alleged claims of the weapons of mass destruction in the possession of Saddam Hussein proved to be nothing more than a crafty stratagem, a deceptive maneuver and a false assumption to combat against the possibly weakest rogue state.²⁹⁹

Apart from inconvenient timing of Maines’ critical remark, several additional aspects concerning this public firestorm of negative reactions stand out: a) *The Dixie Chicks* were traditionally associated with the southern, Jacksonian, stream of country music and its geopolitical hallmark of the “shoot first, ask later” paradigm.³⁰⁰ Notwithstanding their origins and predispositions, the talented trio dared to openly oppose the Iraq war,³⁰¹ b) Britain as a crux, a bastion of massive anti-war protests that swept all of Europe prior to the invasion and as the country where Maines raised her critical voice, made Americans feel betrayed and deceived by their favourite band³⁰² and c) pro-war activists gathered on a website called *freerepublic.com* fed on and further incited the ensuing backlash to the point where radio stations across the country pulled Dixie Chicks songs off the air and Maines acquired a letter threatening her with death at the next concert in Dallas.³⁰³

Despite gaining at least partial recognition in the world of music in 2006 as they released a new album in an era of waning popularity for the Iraq War and an enlightened

²⁹⁷ “Destroying The Dixie Chicks – Ten Years After,” *Saving Country Music.com*, last modified March 10, 2013, <http://www.savingcountrymusic.com/destroying-the-dixie-chicks-ten-years-after>. *Shut Up and Sing*, Directed by Barbara Kopple and Cecilia Peck, 2006, Cabin Creek Films, 2006, DVD.

²⁹⁸ *Shut Up and Sing*, Cabin Creek Films, 2006, DVD. Additionally, Toby Keith who stood at the opposite political as well as sonic spektrum, is believed to have symbolized the antithesis of the Dixie Chicks.

²⁹⁹ LZ Granderson, “10 years later, Dixie Chicks right all along.” *CNN.com*, last modified March 6, 2013, <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/03/05/opinion/granderson-dixie-chicks/>.

Discussed e.g. in: Robert Kagan, *The World America Made*. George Friedman, *The Next 100 Years*, 38 – 42. *Shut Up and Sing*, Cabin Creek Films, 2006, DVD.

³⁰⁰ Walter Russell Mead, “The Jacksonian Tradition and American Foreign Policy,” 8.

³⁰¹ *Shut Up and Sing*, Cabin Creek Films, 2006, DVD.

³⁰² *Shut Up and Sing*, Cabin Creek Films, 2006, DVD. Not least due to Tony Blair’s unequivocal endorsement of Bush’s invasion was this incident deemed serious back-stabbing. For more, see: Timothy Garton Ash, *Free World*.

³⁰³ *Shut Up and Sing*, Cabin Creek Films, 2006, DVD. Another great irony.

realization of America's misguided blunders concerning Iraq,³⁰⁴ more than a decade since this entire incident occurred, country music is left lingering in a peculiar malaise as a politically-intolerant genre that fails to respect its artists regardless of their beliefs³⁰⁵ and thus makes a strong case for popular geopolitics to broaden its scope again and conduct further research into geopolitical events, their mediation, construction as well as contextualization through (country) music, and audience reception.

3.5 Call of Duty – America as a ubiquitous guardian of the Rest

Video games represent the most recent object of study in the field of social sciences. Amplified by their rapid development and three-dimensional sophistication especially throughout the past few decades, they have gained substantial academic prominence as a consequence of the visual turn in social sciences³⁰⁶ and, more broadly, “visuality,” both of which occurred in the later half of the 20th century and coincided with the unparalleled boom of informational technologies. Those particular terms coping with perception denote vision as a culturally mediated phenomenon and mark an important shift toward the emerging significance of the visual, including contrastive ways of theorizing what can be seen.³⁰⁷

Furthermore, video games, unlike any other medium we have analyzed thus far, greatly contribute to the study of popular culture by effectively adding another layer of complexity in the form of an *affective dimension*,³⁰⁸ which allows the players to form an active, endlessly immersive and deeply emotional relationship with the game environment, its memorable characters and particularly resounding geopolitical narratives.³⁰⁹ Albeit facing massive prejudice and resolute condemnation by many respectable academics, would-be analysts exploiting the clash of generations or those seeking to tarnish (military) video games as an extremely dangerous playground for future

³⁰⁴ “Destroying The Dixie Chicks – Ten Years After,” *Saving Country Music.com*, last modified March 10, 2013, <http://www.savingcountrymusic.com/destroying-the-dixie-chicks-ten-years-after>.

³⁰⁵ “Destroying The Dixie Chicks – Ten Years After,” *Saving Country Music.com*, last modified March 10, 2013, <http://www.savingcountrymusic.com/destroying-the-dixie-chicks-ten-years-after>.

³⁰⁶ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 105.

³⁰⁷ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 105. Norah Campbell and Jonathan E. Schroeder, “Visual Culture,” in: *Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*, edited by Dale Southerton, 1 – 16 (California: Sage, 2011).

³⁰⁸ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 105.

³⁰⁹ Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 105. Tomáš Hostýnek, “Civilizational Identity and Videogames,” in: *A Search for Identity*, edited by Ivona Mišterová and Eva Skopečková, 187 – 190 (Plzeň: Západočeská Univerzita, 2013).

belligerents,³¹⁰ this particular field in popular geopolitics offers us fascinating possibilities of demonstrating that digital games stand for more than a “lowbrow irrelevant child’s play”³¹¹ and of venturing beyond once unimaginable in a momentous attempt to build bridges and cross the slowly closing gap among Game Studies, American Studies, International Relations and Critical Geopolitics.

When we cast aside our strongly entrenched skepticism for such “kid’s games”³¹² and open up to e.g. the fact that from an economic point of view, the revenue of the videogame industry has already surpassed its cinematographic counterpart and continues to thrive even despite the 2008 economic crisis³¹³ or that putting blame on them for every violent shooting and social malaise (not only) America has experienced since roughly the 1980s simply proves unjustifiable, only then do we truly begin to comprehend the magnitude of videogames in their multifaceted and gripping entirety.³¹⁴

Building up upon the aforementioned assumptions, our open-minded understanding of this participatory medium must be properly contextualized in the post-9/11 era, which has witnessed several subtle changes in narratives and game environment similarly as in the case of their lead protagonists.³¹⁵ Even though the immediate effects were mostly confined to toning down any explicit references to the deceased Twin Towers, e.g. the ending sequence to *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty*, Rockstar’s decision to make the Dodo plane in their hit game *Grand Theft Auto III*, set in Manhattan, unpilottable or the climactic fight in *Spider-Man 2* which no longer took place atop the World Trade Center.³¹⁶ However, besides these understandable “hotfixes,” videogame

³¹⁰ Jonathan Kirby, “Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: A Cautionary Tale for Post-9/11 America,” *PopMatters*, last modified June 30, 2011, <http://www.popmatters.com/feature/143987-call-of-duty-modern-warfare-a-cautionary-tale-for-post-911-america/>.

³¹¹ Helga Wawil Souri, “The Political Battlefield of Pro-Arab Video Games on Palestinian Screens,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and Middle East* 27, no. 3 (2007): 537.

³¹² Helga Wawil Souri, “The Political Battlefield of Pro-Arab Video Games on Palestinian Screens,” 537.

³¹³ Todd Bishop, “Microsoft: Global video-game market hits \$65 billion, and consoles still lead the way,” *GeekWire*, last modified May 17, 2013, <http://www.geekwire.com/2013/microsoft-global-videogame-market-hits-65-billion-consoles-lead/>. See the appendices.

³¹⁴ Frédéric Gagnon, “Invading Your Hearts and Minds”: Call of Duty® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, *European Journal of American Studies* 5, no. 3 (2010): 1 – 4.

³¹⁵ Jonathan Kirby, “Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: A Cautionary Tale for Post-9/11 America,” *PopMatters*, last modified June 30, 2011, <http://www.popmatters.com/feature/143987-call-of-duty-modern-warfare-a-cautionary-tale-for-post-911-america/>. “The Effects of Culture on Video Gaming Media,” last accessed April 26, 2014, <http://hubpages.com/hub/The-Effect-of-911-on-Video-Gaming-Media>.

³¹⁶ Rick Lane: 2011, “How 9/11 Affected Games,” *BitGamer*, last modified September 12, 2011, <http://www.bit-tech.net/gaming/pc/2011/09/12/how-9-11-affected-games/1>.

Donald Meaux, “How 9/11 Changed Video Games (Briefly),” *Examiner.com*, last modified September 4, 2011, <http://www.examiner.com/article/how-9-11-changed-video-games-briefly>.

industry has seen more incremental alterations that would influence developers and steer the wheel of their products for years to come.

Unlike post-9/11 movies, which have, generally speaking, introduced ambiguous and subversive antagonists and main protagonists who operate on an increasingly grey-shaded morality in order to tap into the widespread eerie feeling of vulnerability,³¹⁷ it is possible to uncover (at least) three significant trends that discern and set videogames apart from pre-9/11 installments. 1) Prior to 9/11, the depiction of alien invasions or heated military encounters in videogames was, in most cases, limited to distant galaxies, third world countries and unforeseeable futures, nevertheless, post-9/11 videogames, across all genres and platforms, feature more realistic alien invasions threatening the well-being of every inhabitant of a suddenly vulnerable Earth and focus on the imminent, rather than inconspicuous, destruction and impending terror of human cities³¹⁸ – the *Halo* franchise, *Gears of War* and to a lesser extent even *Mass Effect* constitute the prime illustrations of the said geopolitical trend and thus masterfully dovetail with and mirror the shattered reality of the once almost invincible faith in the American dream.³¹⁹ 2) Another trend that has left its mark lies in the surging popularity of high as well as low quality military first-person shooters,³²⁰ and of zombies as a method to depict contemporary global issues and societal fears, such as *World War Z* or the *Walking Dead* series.³²¹ Yet most of all (3), 9/11 propelled videogames to drop the once prevalent narrative about the lone wolf hero fighting against an unknown enemy and instead, concentrate upon teamwork, commonality and the evocation of at least partial reliance on allies to overcome all

³¹⁷ Chris Totten, “Has 9/11 Changed Gaming?” *VideoGameWriters*, last modified September 13, 2011, <http://videogamewriters.com/has-911-changed-gaming-23385>.

It is estimated that mere 327 apocalyptic scenarios were used as a plot device between 2001 – 2011. Chris Totten, “Has 9/11 Changed Gaming?” <http://videogamewriters.com/has-911-changed-gaming-23385>. Or, in the case of sensational movies touching upon the War on Terror – *Syriana* (2005), *The Kingdom* (2007) and even *Iron Man* (2008) – that explicitly address America’s varied military involvement around the globe, underwrite it as a necessary price to safeguard freedom and those dearest to heroes at home. Klaus Dodds, “Hollywood and the Popular Geopolitics of the War on Terror,” *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 8 (2008): 1621 – 1637. *Syriana*, directed by Stephen Gaghan, 2005, Cinema. *Iron Man*, Directed by Jon Favreau, 2008, Cinema. *The Kingdom*, Directed by Peter Berg, 2007, Cinema.

³¹⁸ Chris Totten, “Has 9/11 Changed Gaming?” <http://videogamewriters.com/has-911-changed-gaming-23385>.

³¹⁹ Chris Totten, “Has 9/11 Changed Gaming?” <http://videogamewriters.com/has-911-changed-gaming-23385>. “The Effects of Culture on Video Gaming Media,” last accessed April 26, 2014, <http://hubpages.com/hub/The-Effect-of-911-on-Video-Gaming-Media>.

³²⁰ At this point, a videogame project subsidized by the government titled unscrupulously *America’s Army* needs to be mentioned.

³²¹ Chris Totten, “Has 9/11 Changed Gaming?” <http://videogamewriters.com/has-911-changed-gaming-23385>.

suddenly crystallized odds.³²² It is hence in this period that *Call of Duty*, the best-selling first-person shooter (FPS), made manifest and successfully continues to heavily draw on our abovementioned remarks.

What originated in 2003 as a daring attempt to counter *Electronic Arts* and its brand new videogame *Medal of Honor* has over the past decade developed into one of the most successful and profitable videogame franchises of all time that entices the players across the globe on an annual basis. Yet while both franchises portrayed distantly resembling conflicts framed by WWII, *Medal of Honor* opted for emphasizing the indomitable bravery and heroics of a single U.S. soldier amidst a war-torn Europe, whereas *Call of Duty* sought to capture the staggering magnitude of a global struggle for dominance.³²³

Sheltered by Activision and intermittently developed by Infinity Ward and Treyarch in order to ensure the release of at least one new installment per year (usually sometime in autumn), the *Call of Duty* franchise, does not bring anything radically new to the virtual FPS table. However, it masterfully amplified the acclaimed pinnacles of other videogame titles released that year:³²⁴ conveying believable reality through the prism of a cinematic filter, incredibly high production values and the crucially important sense of immersiveness, which indeed pays tribute to Dittmer's assumption about the affective dimension and extraordinary persuasiveness of videogames.³²⁵

Additionally, it has become common sense that *Call of Duty* videogames rarely excel at historically accurate accounts of America's past military involvements, nor do they eclipse and outrival its competition by giving the players a swath of meaningful choices to make.³²⁶ Furthermore, the fact that the target demographic (between the age of

³²² Chris Totten, "Has 9/11 Changed Gaming?" <http://videogamewriters.com/has-911-changed-gaming-23385>. "The Effects of Culture on Video Gaming Media," last accessed April 26, 2014, <http://hubpages.com/hub/The-Effect-of-911-on-Video-Gaming-Media>. For further reading, see: Nicolas J. LaLone, *Videogame Design in Pre and Post 9/11 America* (Texas: Texas State University, 2012) and Ian Bogost, *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames* (The MIT Press: Cambridge, 2007).

³²³ Travis Fahs, "IGN Presents: The History of Call of Duty," *IGN.com*, last modified November 6, 2009, <http://www.ign.com/articles/2009/11/06/ign-presents-the-history-of-call-of-duty>. "Call of Duty: The history of the world's biggest video game – in pictures," *The Telegraph*, accessed September 5, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/video-games/10425156/Call-of-Duty-the-history-of-the-worlds-biggest-video-game-in-pictures.html>. Frédéric Gagnon, "Invading Your Hearts and Minds": Call of Duty® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, 2 – 3.

³²⁴ *Medal of Honor, Hidden & Dangerous* and *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* just to name a few.

³²⁵ Travis Fahs, "IGN Presents: The History of Call of Duty," <http://www.ign.com/articles/2009/11/06/ign-presents-the-history-of-call-of-duty>. Frédéric Gagnon, "Invading Your Hearts and Minds": Call of Duty® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, 2 – 3. Jason Dittmer, *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*, 106 – 109.

³²⁶ Some critics have gone even so far as to suggest that *Call of Duty* is a typical example of an extremely linear, interactive action movie that takes place in a narrow corridor. Dave Thier, "Call of Duty: Black Ops

18 and 30) of those explosive games has a distinct overlap with recruits and active-duty military personnel, and thus contributes to the overall interconnectedness between the “virtual” and the “real”, deserves attention as well. Raby even believes that similar military games can teach stressed soldiers how to better cope with their vivid nightmares and help them mitigate the fear of carrying out army operations in hostile environment.³²⁷

As Thier summarizes: “*Call of Duty is linear gameplay done to perfection. It yields enough control to make us feel like we drive it, but takes enough away that it still dictates the narrative.[...] Call of Duty hides its scripting well, and paces its cutscenes with the story*”³²⁸ all in hopes of keeping the player engaged, which, in most of the cases, it impressively does. Despite the occasional snort of derision and snobbery that bedevils each installment and its increasingly repetitive formula, *Call of Duty* offers insights unique for and relevant to a discussion of digital games, identity, geopolitics and militarism in the post-9/11 era.

Four major installments (*Call of Duty* 1 – 3 and 5) and several expansions concerned with WWII embraced an overwhelmingly positive view of America’s military pastime alongside “*patriotic willingness to support [U.S.] foreign ventures*”³²⁹ and to portray World War II as a “*good war*.”³³⁰ Nevertheless, the *Modern Warfare* incarnations (as well as *Black Ops I, II* with its multi-dimensional narrative spanning across several timelines and the latest installment titled *Call of Duty: Ghosts*) bear much more contemporary significance because of their highly influential focus upon the discursive construction of images concerning the geopolitical *future* of international relations,

2 Is One of the Best Told Stories in Videogames,” *Forbes*, last modified November 16, 2012, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/davidthier/2012/11/16/haters-aside-call-of-duty-black-ops-2-is-one-of-the-best-told-stories-in-videogames/>.

Jonathan Kirby, “Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: A Cautionary Tale for Post-9/11 America,” <http://www.popmatters.com/feature/143987-call-of-duty-modern-warfare-a-cautionary-tale-for-post-911-america/>.

³²⁷ Mark Raby, “War simulation games help real soldiers sleep,” *Games Radar*, last modified June 23, 2012, <http://www.gamesradar.com/war-simulation-games-help-real-soldiers-sleep/>. Jonathan Kirby, “Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: A Cautionary Tale for Post-9/11 America,” <http://www.popmatters.com/feature/143987-call-of-duty-modern-warfare-a-cautionary-tale-for-post-911-america/p1>. An article published by the *BBC* exemplifies a comparable issue: “Afghanistan battles ‘not like *Call of Duty*’, says soldier,” *BBC*, last modified April 13, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-13068037>.

³²⁸ Dave Thier, “Call of Duty: Black Ops 2 Is One of the Best Told Stories in Videogames,” <http://www.forbes.com/sites/davidthier/2012/11/16/haters-aside-call-of-duty-black-ops-2-is-one-of-the-best-told-stories-in-videogames/>.

³²⁹ Frédéric Gagnon, “Invading Your Hearts and Minds”: *Call of Duty*® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, 2 – 3.

³³⁰ Carl Boggs and Tom Pollard, *The Hollywood War Machine: U.S. Militarism and Popular Culture*. (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), 53. Frédéric Gagnon, “Invading Your Hearts and Minds”: *Call of Duty*® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, 2 – 3.

imminent foreign and domestic threats to America and the key role of Washington in harnessing or containing them.³³¹

After having played and methodologically analyzed 7 out of 11 *Call of Duty* “sequels,” the author wholeheartedly concurs with Gagnon’s findings: “*these games (1) resonate with and reinforce a tabloid imaginary of post-9/11 geopolitics; (2) glorify military power and elicit consent for the idea that state violence and wars are inevitable [and sometimes the only possible solution to global crises]; and (3) encourage our myopia by depicting a sanitized vision of war and by downplaying the negative consequences of state violence.*”³³² Moreover, *Call of Duty: Black Ops II* employed a surprisingly down-to-earth approach deeply anchored in reality to depict future warfare when Daniel Suarez, the producer of *Black Ops II*, hired P. W. Singer³³³ – an acclaimed expert on future warfare – and Oliver North³³⁴ who ensured that the game’s visionary portrayal of cyberwarfare and drones around 2025 maintains a distinct flavour of contemporariness.³³⁵ Understandably, it is generally believed that solving issues through the barrel of a gun in a digital environment that rarely punishes the players for conducting such otherwise illicit activities inspires excitement and enjoys much popularity far exceeding that of e.g. a tranquil simulator of gardening.³³⁶

³³¹ Frédéric Gagnon, “Invading Your Hearts and Minds”: Call of Duty® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, 3. Kevin Ohannessian, “How Call of Duty: Black Ops 2 Predicts and Portrays the Near Future of War,” *Fast Company*, last modified October 22, 2012, <http://www.fastcocreate.com/1681776/how-call-of-duty-black-ops-2-predicts-and-portrays-the-near-future-of-war>. Mike Snider, “Call of Duty: Black Ops II melds gaming, geopolitics,” *USA Today*, last modified May 2, 2012, <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/lifestyle/story/2012-05-02/call-of-duty-black-ops-2/54667692/1>.

³³² Frédéric Gagnon, “Invading Your Hearts and Minds”: Call of Duty® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, 3. Akin to Gagnon’s conclusions, Kirby argued in a similar manner. Jonathan Kirby, “Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: A Cautionary Tale for Post-9/11 America,” <http://www.popmatters.com/feature/143987-call-of-duty-modern-warfare-a-cautionary-tale-for-post-911-america/>.

³³³ The Senior Fellow at and Director of the 21st Century Defense Initiative at the Brookings Institution, a military think tank. Kevin Ohannessian, “How Call of Duty: Black Ops 2 Predicts and Portrays the Near Future of War,” <http://www.fastcocreate.com/1681776/how-call-of-duty-black-ops-2-predicts-and-portrays-the-near-future-of-war>.

³³⁴ Retired Marine Lieutenant Colonel. Mike Snider, “Call of Duty: Black Ops II melds gaming, geopolitics,” <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/lifestyle/story/2012-05-02/call-of-duty-black-ops-2/54667692/1>.

³³⁵ Mike Snider, “Call of Duty: Black Ops II melds gaming, geopolitics,” <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/lifestyle/story/2012-05-02/call-of-duty-black-ops-2/54667692/1>. Unsurprisingly, Singer subjected George Friedman’s praised book *The Next Hundred Years* to intense criticism precisely because of its audacious and far-reaching attempt to forecast the seemingly unpredictable. Mike Snider, “Call of Duty: Black Ops II melds gaming, geopolitics,” <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/lifestyle/story/2012-05-02/call-of-duty-black-ops-2/54667692/1>.

³³⁶ For further reading, see: Ian Bogost, *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*. *Minecraft* and *Farmville* represent honourable derogations from regulation.

Although the creative intentions of videogame developers often find themselves being filtered through dominant geopolitical discourses so as to ensure profit and cater to a particular target audience, the reflection of post-9/11 era, a showcase of omnipresent dire threats, Huntingtonian superstition and inner fragility, has found fertile soil within the narrative framework of *Call of Duty*. Therefore, every *Call of Duty* videogame that features modern-day scenarios constructs America as a ubiquitous guardian of the free world (the West) whose lone military operations sometimes allied with, yet never overshadowed by, local freedom fighters, insurgents or friendly European powers, take him predominantly abroad to incredibly diverse locations – Latin America, fictitious Middle East countries, real Middle East countries, Russia, America’s own turf, France and even the Czech Republic³³⁷ – which all remain remarkably familiar for ordinary Americans to connect to real geopolitical events mostly thanks to the Huntingtonian Paradigm, Mackinderian empire and Spykman’s importance of rimland.³³⁸ Neither Mahan’s naval postulations nor the present geopolitical strategy titled “pivot to Asia”³³⁹ exhibit any strong signs in the *Call of Duty* franchise, probably because of their lack of any believable military threats.³⁴⁰

While conceiving of war as the chief instrument of foreign policy and thus echoing a similar “hawk” mindset that has swiftly pervaded national security debates since the said terrorist attack,³⁴¹ the main antagonists of *Call of Duty* have exhibited a correspondingly impressive variety as well – Russian authoritarian individuals,³⁴² bellicose Islamic supreme leaders,³⁴³ rogue American generals³⁴⁴ and Latin American shadowy dictators³⁴⁵ just to point out the resonating proximity between vital geopolitical

³³⁷ Prague, to be more specific, was featured in *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3*. Despite portraying the historical centre quite inaccurately, it elicited overwhelmingly positive response among Czech players.

³³⁸ With the Czech Republic being a notable exception. Frédérick Gagnon, “Invading Your Hearts and Minds”: *Call of Duty*® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, 5. *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3*, developed by Infinity Ward, 2011, videogame. *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare*, developed by Infinity Ward, 2007, videogame. *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2*, developed by Infinity Ward, 2009, videogame.

³³⁹ “Rise of China and the Return of Great Power Politics,” *American Aegis*, last modified April 14, 2014, <http://aegisamericana.wordpress.com/2014/04/14/rise-of-china-and-the-return-of-great-power-politics/>.

³⁴⁰ Even North Korea remains conspicuously absent from the *Call of Duty* narrative.

³⁴¹ See a transcription of president Bush’s Address to the Nation: “Text of President Bush’s Address to the Nation,” *Washington Post*, last modified September 11, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/09/11/AR2006091100775.html>.

³⁴² *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare*, developed by Infinity Ward, 2007, videogame. *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2*, developed by Infinity Ward, 2009, videogame.

³⁴³ *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3*, developed by Infinity Ward, 2011, videogame.

³⁴⁴ *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2*, developed by Infinity Ward, 2009, videogame.

³⁴⁵ *Call of Duty: Black Ops*, developed by Treyarch, 2010, videogame. *Call of Duty: Black Ops II*, developed by Treyarch, 2012, videogame.

interests of America³⁴⁶ and their virtual reflections in an acclaimed videogame franchise. Akin to *Reader's Digest*, which according to Debrix serves as a showcase of “tabloid geopolitics,”³⁴⁷ *Call of Duty* makes world politics look spectacularly violent and sensational at all costs,³⁴⁸ a fact that ushered in more than 10 million copies sold every year, universal stardom and several Guinness world records.^{349 350}

On a concluding note, the *Call of Duty* phenomenon, much like the *James Bond* movies, exhibits no acute signs of slowing down, constitutes an ultimate case for the renewed interest in popular geopolitics in the post-9/11 America and embodies an unequivocal guide toward the fragmented American identity³⁵¹ in the 21st century that entails a brilliantly welded coalescence of almost *every* relevant domestic as well as foreign aspect of America's shifting self-perception. All this lends videogames, in general, much credibility for further academic research and raises consciousness about their exceptional potential for scholastic analyses in the face of oftentimes unjustly undermined trustworthiness.^{352 353 354}

³⁴⁶ See: Robert Kagan, *The World America Made*.

³⁴⁷ “Often recognizable because of the language and imagery of fear, danger, and destruction that they typically mobilize, geopolitical “issues and problems” introduced by tabloid geopolitical agents (media networks or intellectuals and academics or statecraft) are depicted in such a fashion that it now appears to the public that these so-called geopolitical problems can only be solved by means of military violence.” François Debrix, *Tabloid Terror: War, Culture, and Geopolitics* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 14 – 15.

³⁴⁸ Even to the point of highly controversial segments of gameplay that push the envelope one level further – such as (voluntary) shooting of civilians at an airport in Moscow, witnessing an explosion from point-blank that vaporizes an innocent child and her mother in London and beholding nuclear carnage through the weary eyes of a mortally wounded soldier. Natalie Shoemaker, “The most controversial moments in Call of Duty history,” *Geek*, last modified May 11, 2012, <http://www.geek.com/games/the-most-controversial-moments-in-call-of-duty-history-1488919/>.

³⁴⁹ Frédéric Gagnon, “Invading Your Hearts and Minds”: *Call of Duty*® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture, 6.

³⁵⁰ That is, until *Grand Theft Auto V* exceeded them. “GTA V smashes 7 Guinness World Records set by *Call of Duty*, *The Avengers*, *Avatar*,” *IBN Live*, last modified October 9, 2013, <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/gta-v-smashes-7-guinness-world-records-set-by-call-of-duty-the-avengers-avatar/427446-11.html>.

³⁵¹ Together with *Captain America* and country music.

³⁵² For an apt comparison of videogames and their respective civilizations, see: Tomáš Hostýnek, “Civilizational Identity and videogames”, 183 – 213, in: *A Search for Identity*, edited by Ivona Mišterová and Eva Skopečková (Plzeň: Západočeská univerzita, 2013), who applied the Huntingtonian paradigm and its fallible assumption about the monolithic characteristics of civilizations to prove that especially videogame developers draw inspiration from around the globe regardless of civilizational confinements.

³⁵³ Another emergent field of academic research concerning videogames revolves around massively multiplayer online titles, which offer splendid opportunities for the construction of identities, exchanges of (geopolitical) opinions and in-depth analyses of audience reception. See: Catherin Goodfellow, “Videogames.ru: constructing new Russian identities in virtual worlds,” *Academia.edu*, accessed September 2, 2013,

https://www.academia.edu/5216353/Videogames.ru_Constructing_New_Russian_Identities_in_Virtual_Worlds, Hilde G. and Jill Walker Rettberg, *Digital Culture, Play, and Identity: A World of Warcraft® Reader* (Massachusetts: the MIT Press, 2008).

or Petr Kalinič, “Militant PvE and PvP identities in the World of Warcraft: The Mage and various post/modern Forms of Consciousness,” in: *A Search for Identity*, edited by Ivona Mišterová and Eva Skkopečková, 169 – 183 (Plzeň: Západočeská Univerzita, 2013).

³⁵⁴ Also, a phenomenon called the *CNN effect*, which hints at the influence media networks wield upon foreign policy, has been almost completely omitted from this bachelor’s thesis mostly because popular geopoliticians have so far considered such implications inconclusive. For a comprehensive analysis of the changing role of American media, see: Richard Davis and Diana Owen, *New Media and American Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

4 CONCLUSION

After more than a century of various competing theories and contrastive visions of the imperial and lately socially deconstructed circumscription of global space, traditional, critical as well popular geopolitics stand on a momentous crossroad unique in history that of which successful resolution will define the science of geopolitics for years to come. Born amidst the West's heated struggle against Modernists at the dusk of the imperial age epitomized by the widespread popularity of Charles Darwin and territorial expansion, traditional geopolitics made manifest as a daring response that explores the multi-faceted relations between geographical determinants and resources in an overarching attempt to derive comprehensible predictions about the future behaviour of states and move the global spectacle to the next imperial stage. It is precisely this seeming ability to predict that is supposed to distinguish geopolitics from another academic field – international relations.

While drawing from German, Swedish, American and British strands of geopolitical thought, we uncovered striking resemblances among the said schools which all, in one way or another, sought to justify, reassert same as foretell the division of power in the international system on the eve of the 19th century. Furthermore, the significance of certain pivotal areas – heartlands, rimlands or panregions – as well as naval or air power permeates the vast majority of those works. Despite being almost inerasably, albeit somehow unfairly, stained by an explicit connection with Nazi Germany, the interwar period as well as the WWII aftermath experienced a gradual shift toward a higher significance of geopolitics in other non-Western “civilizations” – most notably Latin America and the Soviet Union.

The dim tide of academic negligence and cautionary approaches toward this deeply stigmatized geopolitical imagination began slowly turning when Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State in the Nixon administration, propelled renewed interest in classical geopolitics enhanced by economic aspects in the light of a timid and adverting rapprochement of the USA, China and the Soviet Union amplified by a myriad of other global phenomena that increasingly eroded and undermined the once dominant bipolar logic of the Cold War. When the administration of Ronald Reagan finally brought the Soviets to their economic as well as military knees, this abrupt and, arguably, unexpected demise of the Soviet Union opened up brand new courses and critical directions for geopolitics to embark upon.

It is thus predominantly in this contingent era of unheeded faith in liberal democracy that critical geopolitics gained academic prominence and strove to deconstruct imperial truths postulated by its antecedent geopolitical theories. Owing to Yves Lacoste, a radical French geopolitician, and his challenging study published in the 1970s in which he held geography responsible for many major military disputes, his denunciatory eye ushered in a widespread re-conceptualization of geopolitics that soon became inextricably intertwined with the emergent literature on poststructuralism and, more generally, social constructivism. Hence, critical geopolitics, a bold attempt to counteract the perceived reductionism of classical geopolitical theories and to impel a more nuanced understanding of the socially constructed geopolitical gaze embedded in discursive contextualization and flawed, simplified imperial assumptions unable to grasp the multi-level complexity of world stage, materialized in Tuathail's pioneering work titled *Critical Geopolitics* released in 1996.

As Edwark Luttwak feared the supposedly inevitable economic backwardness of uncompetitive America, Charles Krauthammer advocated the undisputable arrival of unipolarity with America at its heart, Eric Hobsbawm believed a new age was upon us and Samuel P. Huntington employed a Mackinderian approach to impart his civilizational vision which hinted at novelty, yet remained strongly rooted in the Cold War logic, critical geopolitics thrived and at last instigated a thorough re-evaluation of centennial endeavours to come up with a grand, all-explaining geopolitical tale.

The analytical part of this bachelor's thesis was centered upon the third branch of a threefold division of geopolitics into formal, practical and popular as envisioned by Tuathail, Dittmer, Dodds and other critical authors. Popular geopolitics represents an excellent starting point central to a wider recognition of (critical) geopolitics as an everyday practice that occurs even outside policymaking and academic discourse. Building up on the Derridean and Foucauldian assumptions about a plethora of concurrent interpretations of the exact same phenomenon, five case studies each addressing the changing American identity throughout different eras of the 20th century and beyond – *Captain America* comic books, the *Reader's Digest* magazine, the *James Bond* movies, the *Dixie Chicks* country band and a military first-person shooter titled *Call of Duty* – were in-depthly assessed and examined in hopes of comprehending how elite and everyday interpretations of geopolitical events are reinforced through popular media and passively as well as actively consumed by its target audiences.

While following the patriotic ups and Communist downs of *Captain America* comic book series, we found out that the Jewish origins of the vast majority of comic book creators in interwar America impelled them to raise consciousness about the European war theatre and therefore displaying *Captain* punching Hitler in an epic and climactic showdown on the cover of the first issue 10 months before Pearl Harbor that made America fully commit to WWII, represents an exceptional example of a solid interconnectedness between real-world geopolitics and a colourful form of entertainment for masses. Furthermore, we succeeded in demonstrating the nation-wide enticingness of all the traditionally American values *Captain* proudly stands for and taps into – patriotism, ultimate defensiveness – a factor brilliantly exploited by *Captain*'s only weapon, a shield – and a resolute response when others are imperiled. In fact, *Captain America* ventured much further beyond any traditional geopolitical paradigms because of his ongoing struggle against subversive Nazi elements even at home, an intriguing issue neither Spykman nor any other geopoliticians effectively addressed. However, once the precarious era of McCarthyism dawned upon America, *Captain*'s somehow downplayed jingoism grew exponentially and later resulted in the comic production being put on halt. It was only thanks to Stan Lee and the retroactive change in continuity he rolled out to annul the excessively anti-Communist storyline – the one that the movie version clung to – that *Captain America*'s initial prominence has been gradually restored since the 1960s as this “new” *Captain* strove to fathom American (geopolitical) identity in its intrinsic complexness, a meritable aspect that has been heightened in the wake of 9/11. Even the latest Marvel movie installment subtitled *The Winter Soldier* largely proves our findings that *Captain* “2.0”, the “soldier out of time”, exhibits strong ambivalence toward the mainstream Huntingtonian perception of the continuing War on Terrorism and in doing so questions how far America is willing to go to protect itself and at what stunning cost freedom is imposed.

Joanne Sharp's diligent analysis of the *Reader's Digest* magazine serves as a foundational, seminal work of popular geopolitics and hence could not have been absent from our case studies. Sharp's insightful journey through the entire Cold War and its condensed reflection in *Reader's Digest* was heavily affected by the editorial staff and its “digested” selection of intentionally denigrating articles on the Soviet Union, which once again paid homage to Mackinder's Pivot paper, so that an unequivocal message about its malevolent intentions incompatible with America could be more easily imparted ever since Stalin's horrendous actions had been exposed in the 1930s. Despite a brief

intermezzo in the form of détente in the 1960s, *Reader's Digest* urged America not to be led awry by the Soviet's superficial veneer of supposed cooperation and held on to the dominant bipolar geopolitical narrative. The sudden loss of a simple geopolitical scapegoat on the verge of the 1990s shifted the once one-sided attention of *Reader's Digest* to domestic security issues, which in the 9/11 aftermath bears much significance and helps the said magazine remain an immensely popular source of geopolitical information available and comprehensible to masses. However, as much as Sharp deserves credit for laying the foundations of popular geopolitics, her concise work is completely devoid of audience research and the actual ways consumers make sense of distilled elite representations of geopolitical occurrences. Further research into a proactive role of audiences in reading mediated scripts is thus highly advised.

James Bond and his early cinematic ventures in the 1960s offered an illuminating example of a profitable transformation of moderately popular Fleming's novels into one of the most popular movie franchises of all time. For us, it is important to note that Bond's exciting adventures around the globe took place within a larger bipolar confinement, yet deemed it a mere geopolitical backdrop against which to fully juxtapose the Bond formula. Although Cold War logic held sway during much of the initial period of *James Bond* movies, we clearly witnessed an array of possible geopolitical interpretations ranging from a metaphor of the decline of the British Empire, over a resounding case against the rise of feminism, to the post-WWII fragility of masculinity. Even nowadays the *James Bond* franchise enjoys considerable popularity with millions of fans eagerly anticipating each new installment, which all remain geopolitically relevant especially to discussions about America's and Britain's special relationship through the intelligence services and the post-9/11 reality. Additionally, Dodds' important remarks about the need to more actively engage with the audience, mostly in the form of forum debates and Internet movie databases so as to obtain and better comprehend the many-sided perceptions of active consumers (not only) in the case of *James Bond* films, constitutes another limit of the current methodologies of popular geopolitics that craves attention.

In the tumultuous era of apt parallels between Mackinder's imperial protectionism and the Bush's administration pre-emptive war in Iraq underwritten by the concern with US access to oil reserves in this pivot region, the *Dixie Chicks* and their abrupt downfall because of a mildly critical statement about the, then upcoming, Iraq War demonstrates the overwhelming power of audience that rallied behind a united effort to send the

unpatriotic *Dixie Chicks* to the ash heap of country music history. What may strike us as downright surprising is the duality of the actual interpretation of the freedom of speech hinted at by president Bush who clearly stated that the *Dixie Chicks* had every right to condemn his actions, yet he also rendered the opposition that was mounted against them perfectly justifiable and abiding the exact same right. Stemming from the Jacksonian geopolitical tradition, we explored how the post-9/11 development was reflected in country music and uncovered a generally supportive trend complicit with the necessity of the ongoing war that engenders compassion with soldiers stationed abroad to protect the fatherland. The Dixie Chicks unintentionally challenged this narrative and since that, country music has been deeply stigmatized and pushed on the freethinking defensive.

The last case study coped with the largely uncharted territory of videogames, i. e. *Call of Duty*, a first-person military shooter. In analyzing the general trends of the altered narratives of videogames in the post-9/11 era, the author strove to raise consciousness about the academic relevance and unparalleled significance of the most recent field of popular geopolitics – videogames – and unearthed how *Call of Duty* masterfully tapped into the shifted geopolitical reality of post-9/11 America as well as dovetailed with the abysmal uncertainty and appalling fragility of a suddenly exposed and vulnerable American identity. Thus, basically all the aspects of a different America in the 21st century that in some way permeated the previous case studies – the Huntingtonian paradigm, the Mackinderian empire, domestic as well as foreign threats, indomitable determination, shattered delusional dreams and the will to prevail – are clearly visible in the geopolitical setting and plotlines of *Call of Duty*, the ultimate case for the enlargement of the methodological and analytical framework of popular geopolitics in America.

It is apparent that more than one hundred years since its inception a sharp cleavage exists between neoclassical geopolitics advocated by the scholars of international relations and critical geopolitics mostly postulated by geographers who aim to discredit the former and already became a hegemonic force in geographical journals. Yet while deconstructing imperial truths and spatiality, critical geopoliticians, in perfecting their corpus, risk bordering on social science methods rather than meaningful engagements with politics. The second point of divergence lies *within* popular geopolitics, itself an essential subset of critical geopolitics, which desperately needs to broaden its scope and incorporate e.g. feminist geopolitics, non-representational theories, audience studies and, of course, better grasp online possibilities of everyday geopolitical engagement in order to gain more academic validity and a wider recognition. The presented bachelor's thesis

endeavoured to at least partially reconcile this “clash of geopolitics” as the author remains firmly convinced that traditional/neoclassical geopolitics will maintain relevance, yet alone cannot either address or analyze the flowering of media and popular culture artifacts in an everyday discursive geopolitical environment America has so fiercely spearheaded.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

5.1 Printed sources

- Abrahamian, Ervand. "The US media. Huntington and September 11." *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2003): 529 – 544.
- Agnew, John. *Geopolitics*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Ash, Timothy Garton. *Free World*. London: Penguin Books, 2004.
- Baron, C. "Doctor No: Bonding Britishness to Racial Sovereignty." *Spectator: USC Journal of Film and Television Criticism* 14 (1994): 68 – 81.
- Black, Jeremy. *The Geopolitics of James Bond*. New York: Praeger 2001.
- Bogost, Ian. *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*. The MIT Press: Cambridge, 2007.
- Boggs Carl and Pollard Tom. *The Hollywood War Machine: U.S. Militarism and Popular Culture*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007.
- Bold, C. "Under the Skirts of Britannia: Re-reading Women in the James Bond Novels." In: Lindner C (ed.). *The James Bond Phenomenon*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
- Boulton, Andrew. "The Popular Geopolitical Wor(l)ds of Post-9/11 Country Music." *Popular Music and Society* 31, no. 3 (2008): 373 – 387.
- Bowman, Isaiah. *The New World, Problems in Political Geography*. New York: World Book Company, 1921.
- Bowman, Isaiah. *Geography in Relation to the Social Sciences*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934.
- Buzan Barry and Wilde de Jaap and Ole Weaver. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998.
- Campbell Norah and Schroeder Jonathan E. "Visual Culture." In: *Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*, edited by Dale Southerton, 1 – 16. California: Sage, 2011.
- Cannadine, David. *In Churchill's Shadows*. London: Allen Press, 2002.
- Chamberlain, W. "Russia bows to human nature." *Reader's Digest* 12, no. 11 (1934): 73 – 75.
- Chapman, J. and Hilton, M. "From Sherlock Homes to James Bond: Masculinity and National Identity in British Popular Fiction." 126 – 147. In: *Relocating Britishness*, edited by Counce, S. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.

- Chapman, Bert. *Geopolitics: a guide to the issues*. Oxford: Praeger, 2011.
- Cohen, Saul Bernard. *Geography and Politics in a Divided World*. Massachusetts: Methuen, 1963.
- Corneliussen, Hilde G. and Rettberg Jill Walker. *Digital Culture, Play, and Identity: A World of Warcraft® Reader*. Massachusetts: the MIT Press, 2008.
- “Countdown to the 21st Century: Freedom on the March.” *Reader’s Digest* 68, no. 1 (1990): 34 – 45.
- Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of Species*. London: John Murray, 1859.
- Dalby, Simon. “Calling 911: Geopolitics, security and America's new war.” In: *11 September and its aftermath: The geopolitics of terror*, edited by S. Brunn, 61 – 86. London: Frank Cass, 2004.
- Dalby, Simon. “*Geopolitics, Grand Strategy and Critique. Twenty Years and counting...*” Paper for presentation to the "Critical Geopolitics 2008" conference, Durham University, 2008.
- Davies, P. and Wells P. *American Films and Politics from Reagan to Bush Jnr*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002.
- Davis Richard and Owen Diana. *New Media and American Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Debrix, François. *Tabloid Terror: War, Culture, and Geopolitics*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- “Democracy is winning.” *Reader’s Digest* 68, no. 1 (1990).
- Denning, M. *Cover Stories: Narrative and Ideology in the British Spy Thriller*. London: Routledge, 1987.
- Dittmer, Jason. “America is safe while its boys and girls believe in its creeds! Captain America and American identity prior to World War 2.” *Environment and Planning Development: Societ and Space* 25 (2007): 401 – 423.
- Dittmer Jason and Dodds Klaus. “Popular Geopolitics Past and Future: Fandom, Identities and Audiences.” *Geopolitics* 13, no. 3 (2008): 437 – 457.
- Dittmer Jason and Grey Nicholas. “Popular Geopolitics 2.0: Towards New Methodologies of the Everyday.” *Geography Compass* 11, no. 4 (2010): 1664 – 1677.

- Dittmer, Jason. "Captain America's Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): 626 – 643.
- Dittmer, Jason. *Popular Culture, Geopolitics and Identity*. Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2010.
- Dodds, Klaus. *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2005.
- Dodds, Klaus. "Screening Geopolitics: James Bond and the Early Cold War films (1962 – 1967)." *Geopolitics* 10, no.2 (2005): 266 – 289.
- Dodds, Klaus. "Popular Geopolitics and Audience Dispositions: James Bond and the Internet Movie Database (IMDb)." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 31, no. 2 (2006): 116 – 130.
- Dodds, Klaus. *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Dodds, Klaus. "Hollywood and the Popular Geopolitics of the War on Terror." *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 8 (2008): 1621 – 1637.
- Dodds, Klaus. "Popular Geopolitics and Cartoons: Representing Power Relations, Repetition and Resistance." *Critical African Studies* 4 (2010): 1 – 19.
- Durant, Will. *The Story of Philosophy*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1924.
- Eastman, M. "To Collaborate successfully – we must face the facts about Russia." *Reader's Digest* 21, no. 6 (1943): 1 – 14.
- Friedman, George. *The Next 100 Years*. New York: Anchor Books, 2009.
- Fukuyama, Francis. *The End of History and the Last Man*. London: Penguin Books, 1992.
- Gagnon, Frédéric. "Invading Your Hearts and Minds": Call of Duty® and the (Re)Writing of Militarism in U.S. Digital Games and Popular Culture. *European Journal of American Studies* 5, no. 3 (2010): 1 – 17.
- Gasché, Rodolphe. *Inventions of Difference: On Jacques Derrida*. London: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- George, Christopher T. "The Eroica Riddle: Did Napoleon Remain Beethoven's 'Hero?'" *The Journal of the Napoleonic Society* 1, no. 2 (1998): 50 – 65.
- Hagan, Charles B. "Geopolitics." *The Journal of Politics* 4, no. 4 (1942): 478 – 490.
- Haraway, Donna. *Primate Visions*. London: Routledge, 1989.

- Hobsbawm, Eric. *Age of Extremes, The short twentieth century 1914 – 1991*. London: Little, Brown and Company, 1995.
- Hostýnek, Tomáš. “Civilizational Identity and Videogames.” In *A Search for Identity*, edited by Ivona Mišterová and Eva Skopečková, 183 – 213. Plzeň: Západočeská Univerzita, 2013.
- Huntington, Samuel P. and Crozier Michel and Watanuki Joji. *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*. New York: New York University Press, 1975.
- Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Sydney: Simon & Schuster, 1997.
- Hyndman, Jennifer. “Revisitin Mackinder 1904 – 2004.” *The Geographical Journal* 170, no. 4 (2004): 380 – 383.
- Kagan, Robert. *Nebezpečný národ*. Praha: Lidové noviny, 2008.
- Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*. New York: Vintage Books, 2013.
- Kennedy, Paul. *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*. London: Fontana Press, 1989.
- Kalinič, Petr. “Militant PvE and PvP identities in the World of Warcraft: The Mage and various post/modern Forms of Consciousness.” In *A Search for Identity*, edited by Ivona Mišterová and Eva Skopečková, 169 – 183. Plzeň: Západočeská Univerzita, 2013.
- Kjellén, Rudolf. *Ideas of 1914*. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1915.
- Kofroň, Jan. “Geopolitika na pomezí geografie a mezinárodních vztahů mezi prostorem intersubjektivním a objektivním.” *Mezinárodní vztahy* 47, no. 2 (2012): 57 – 78.
- Krauthammer, Charles. “The Unipolar Moment.” *Foreign Affairs* 47, no. 1 (1990): 23 – 33.
- Lacoste, Yves. *La Géographie ça sert d'abord à faire la guerre*. Paris: La Découverte, 1976.
- LaLone, Nicolas J. *Videogame Design in Pre and Post 9/11 America*. Texas: Texas State University, 2012.
- Mackinder, Halford J. “The Geographical Pivot of History.” *Geographical Journal* 23 (1904): 28 – 50.

- Mackinder, Halford J. *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction*. Edinburgh: Constable & Company, 1919.
- Mahan, Alfred Thayer. *The Influence of Seapower upon History, 1660 – 1783*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1890.
- Mead, Walter Russell. “The Jacksonian Tradition and American Foreign Policy.” *The National Interest* 58 (1999): 5 – 30.
- Moniot, Drew. “James Bond and America in the Sixties: An Investigation of the Formula Film in Popular Culture.” *Journal of University Film Association* 28, no. 3 (1976): 25 – 33.
- Ratzel, Friedrich. *Politische Geographie*. Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1897.
- Ratzel, Friedrich. *The Sea as a Source of the Greatness of a People*. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1902.
- Rieber N. J. and Cassaday J. *Captain America* no. 1. New York: Marvel Comics, 2002.
- Rieber N. J. and Cassaday J. *Captain America* no. 3. New York: Marvel Comics, 2002.
- Renan, Ernest. 1990. “What is a nation?” In: *Nation and narration*, ed. H. Bhabha, 8 – 22. London: Routledge.
- Robey, R. “What is being planned for you?” *Reader’s Digest* 23, no. 2 (1945): 21 – 22.
- Said, Edward. “*The Myth of the ‘Clash of Civilizations.*” Lecture at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 2005.
- Senghaas, Dietrich. “Clash of Civilizations, An Ideé Fixé?” *Journal of Peace Reseach* 35, no. 1 (1998): 127 – 132.
- Seversky, Alexander De. *Air Power: Key to Survival*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1950.
- Seversky, Alexander De. *America: Too Young to Die*. Michigan: McGraw-Hill, 1961.
- Sharp, Joanne P. “Patriotism, masculinity and geopolitics in post-Cold War American movies.” In: *Rethinking Geopolitics*, edited by Tuathail and Dalby. 152 – 169. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Sharp, Joanne P. “Publishing American identity: popular geopolitics, myth and the Reader’s Digest.” *Political Geography* 12, no. 6 (1993): 491 – 503.

- Sharp, Joanne P. "Hegemony, popular culture and geopolitics: the Reader's Digest and the construction of danger." *Political Geography* 15, no. 6/7 (1996): 557 – 570.
- Sharp, Joanne P. *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2000.
- Silva, Golbery do Couto. *Geopolitics of Brazil*. Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1967.
- Simon J. and Kirby J. *Captain America Comics*, no. 1 – 8. New York: Timely Comics, 1941.
- Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. "Wake Up! Wake Up!" *Reader's Digest* 53, no. 12 (1975): 72.
- Souri, Helga Wawil. "The Political Battlefield of Pro-Arab Video Games on Palestinian Screens." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and Middle East* 27, no. 3 (2007): 536 – 551.
- Spykman, Nicholas John. "Geography and Foreign Policy, I." *American Political Science Review* 1, no. 32 (1938): 28 – 50.
- Spykman, Nicholas John. "Frontiers, Security, and International Organization." *Geographical Review* 32, no. 3 (1942): 436 – 447.
- Spykman, Nicholas John. *The Geography of Peace*. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1944.
- Spykman, Nicholas John. *American Strategy in World Politics, the United States & the Balance of Power*. New York: Shoe String Press, 1970.
- Takeuchi, Keiichi. "Geopolitics and Geography in Japan Reexamined." *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies* 12, no. 1 (1980): 14 – 24.
- Tuathail Ó, Gearóid. *Critical Geopolitics*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- Tuathail Ó Gearóid and Dalby Simon. *Rethinking Geopolitics*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Tuathail Ó Gearóid. "Condensing Critical Geopolitics: Reflections on Joanne Sharp's Condensing the Cold War." *Geopolitics* 8, no. 2 (2003): 159 – 165.
- Van Loon, Hendrik Willem. *Story of Mankind*. Massachusetts: H. Liveright, 1921.
- Wells, Herbert George. *The Outline of History*. Manchester: Newnes, 1920.

Wright, Bradford W. *Comic book nation: The transformation of youth culture in America*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Zakaria, Fareed. *The Post-American World and the Rise of the Rest: Release 2.0* London: Penguin Books, 2011.

5.2 Electronic and media sources

“A Century of (Western) Geopolitics.” *Defining Geopolitics & Strategy in Central Asia*. Last modified November 5, 2012.
<http://geopoliticsdefined.wordpress.com/tag/spykman/>.

“Afghanistan battles ‘not like Call of Duty’ says soldier.” *BBC*. Last modified April 13, 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-13068037>.

Air Force. Directed by Howard Hawks. 1943. Warner Bros. Cinema.

Animal Farm. Directed by John Halas and John Batchelor. 1954. Cinema.

Bishop, Todd. “Microsoft: Global video-game market hits \$65 billion, and consoles still lead the way.” *GeekWire*. Last modified May 17, 2013.
<http://www.geekwire.com/2013/microsoft-global-videogame-market-hits-65-billion-consoles-gaming/>.

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare. Developed by Infinity Ward. 2007. Videogame.

“*Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare*.” Last accessed April 27, 2014.
<http://dyom.gtagames.nl/show/20957>.

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2. Developed by Infinity Ward. 2009. Videogame.

Call of Duty: Black Ops. Developed by Treyarch. 2010. Videogame.

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3. Developed by Infinity Ward. 2011. Videogame.

Call of Duty: Black Ops II. Developed by Treyarch. 2012. Videogame.

“Call of Duty Black Ops 2 Background.” *NicePixy*. Last modified August 27, 2013.
<http://nicepixy.net/2506/call-of-duty-black-ops-2-background.html>.

“Call of Duty: The history of the world’s biggest video game – in pictures.” *The Telegraph*. Accessed September 5, 2013.
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/video-games/10425156/Call-of-Duty-the-history-of-the-worlds-biggest-video-game-in-pictures.html?frame=2047638>

“Captain America Winter Soldier HC (2005-2006 Marvel) 1st Edition comic books.” *Mycomicshop.com*. Last accessed April 27, 2014.
<http://www.mycomicshop.com/search?TID=680431>.

Captain America: The First Avenger. Directed by Joe Johnston. 2011. Movie.

Captain America: The Winter Soldier. Directed by Anthony and Joseph Russo. 2014. Movie.

Cinema Sins. Youtube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYUQQgogVeQY8cMQamhHJcg>.

Court of Honor. Directed by Abram Room. 1940. Cinema

Fahs, Travis. "IGN Presents: The History of Call of Duty." *IGN.com*. Last modified November 6, 2009. <http://www.ign.com/articles/2009/11/06/ign-presents-the-history-of-call-of-duty>.

D'Amgelo, William. "Top 10 in Sales – First Person Shooters." *VGChartz*. Last modified April 23, 2012. <http://www.vgchartz.com/article/250080/top-10-in-sales-first-person-shooters/>.

D'Amgelo, William. "Call of Duty: A Sales History." *VGChartz*. Last modified May 30, 2012. <http://www.vgchartz.com/article/250163/call-of-duty-a-sales-history/>.

"Destroying The Dixie Chicks – Ten Years After." *Saving Country Music.com*. Last modified March 10, 2013. <http://www.savingcountrymusic.com/destroying-the-dixie-chicks-ten-years-after>.

Die Another Day. Directed by Lee Tamahori. 2002. Cinema.

"*Die Another Day* Poster #9." Last accessed April 27, 2014.

http://www.impawards.com/2002/die_another_day_ver9.html.

Dittmer, Jason. "*James Bond: An Ageing Agent in Skyfall*." Last modified December 16, 2013. <http://rhulgeopolitics.wordpress.com/2013/12/16/james-bond-an-ageing-agent-in-skyfall-2012/>.

Dreher, Beth. "9/11: One Remarkable Story Out of Many." *Reader's Digest*. Accessed March 5, 2014. <http://www.rd.com/recommends/911-one-remarkable-story-out-of-many/>.

"*Every Saga has a Beginning...Dr. No (1962)*." Last modified December 12, 2013. <http://cordaro9418.wordpress.com/2013/12/08/every-saga-has-a-beginning-dr-no-1962/>.

Goodfellow, Catherine. "Videogames.ru: constructing new Russian identities in virtual worlds." *Academia.edu*. Accessed September 2, 2013. https://www.academia.edu/5216353/Videogames.ru_Constructing_New-Russian_Identities_in_Virtual_Worlds.

Grandeson, LZ. "10 years later, Dixie Chicks right all along." *CNN.com*. Last modified March 6, 2013. <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/03/05/opinion/granderson-dixie-chicks/>.

"GTA V smashes 7 Guinness World Records set by Call of Duty, The Avengers, Avatar." *IBN Live*. Last modified October 9, 2013. <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/gta->

v-smashes-7-guinness-world-records-set-by-call-of-duty-the-avengers-avatar/427446-11.html.

Herrero, Fernando Gómez. "I think the nasty world of you; on Robert D. Kaplan's *The Revenge of Geography*." *Culture Bites*. Last modified December 28, 2012. <http://www.fernandogomezherrero.com/blog/?p=1748>.

Ivan the Terrible. Directed by Sergei Eisenstein. 1944 and 1958. Cinema.

Iron Man. Directed by Jon Favreau. 2008. Cinema.

Kirby, Jonathan. "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare: A Cautionary Tale for Post-9/11 America." *PopMatters*. Last modified June 30, 2011. <http://www.popmatters.com/feature/143987-call-of-duty-modern-warfare-a-cautionary-tale-for-post-911-america/>.

Lane, Rick. "How 9/11 Affected Games." *BitGamer*. Last modified September 12, 2011. <http://www.bit-tech.net/gaming/pc/2011/09/12/how-9-11-affected-games/1>.

Meaux, Donald. "How 9/11 Changed Video Games (Briefly)." *Examiner.com*. Last modified September 4, 2011. <http://www.examiner.com/article/how-9-11-changed-video-games-briefly>.

Medved, M. "Captain America – traitor? The comic book hero goes anti- American." *The National Review*. Last modified April 4, 2003. <http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/206451/captain-america-traitor/michael-medved>

Newman, Melinda. "The Dixie Chicks controversy 10 years later: Natalie Maines rehashes it." *Hitfix*. Last modified March 11, 2013. <http://www.hitfix.com/news/the-dixie-chicks-controversy-10-years-later-natalie-maines-rehashes-it#llluwHoueblk20Id.99>.

Newman, Robert. "9/11 Covers, Part 3: 2011." *SPD*. Last modified September 6, 2011. <http://www.spd.org/2011/09/9-covers-part-3.php>

October. Directed by Grigori Aleksandrov and Sergei Eisenstein. 1927. Cinema.

Ohannessian, Kevin. "How Call of Duty: Black Ops 2 Predicts and Portrays the Near Future of War." *Fast Company*. Last modified October 22, 2012. <http://www.fastcocreate.com/1681776/how-call-of-duty-black-ops-2-predicts-and-portrays-the-near-future-of-war>.

"ProGamist Game Awards 2011 Results." *Progamist*. Last Modified January 20, 2012. <http://progamist.blogspot.cz/2012/01/progamist-game-awards-2011-results.html>.

- “Protesting the Dixie Chicks.” *Free Republic*. Last modified December 10, 2006. <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-chat/1751185/posts>.
- “Public Attitudes Toward the War in Iraq: 2003 – 2008.” *Pew Research Center*. Last modified March 19, 2008. <http://www.pewresearch.org/2008/03/19/public-attitudes-toward-the-war-in-iraq-20032008/>.
- Raby, Mark. “War simulation games help real soldiers sleep.” *Games Radar*. Last modified June 23, 2012. <http://www.gamesradar.com/war-simulation-games-help-real-soldiers-sleep/>.
- “Radical Chicks.” *Time*. Last modified May 29, 2006. <http://content.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,20060529,00.html>.
- “Remembering September 11: How America Has Changed.” *Reader’s Digest*. Last modified September 11, 2011. <http://www.rd.com/true-stories/inspiring/remembering-september-11-america-changed/6/>.
- “Rise of China and the Return of Great Power Politics.” *American Aegis*. Last modified April 14, 2014. <http://aegisamericana.wordpress.com/2014/04/14/rise-of-china-and-the-return-of-great-power-politics/>.
- Rix, Edouard. “Geopolitics of Leviathan.” *Euro-Synergies*. Last modified August 14, 2011. <http://euro-synergies.hautetfort.com/archive/2011/08/14/geopolitics-of-leviathan.html>.
- Screen Junkies*. <https://www.youtube.com/user/screenjunkies>. Youtube channel.
- Shoemaker, Natalie. “The most controversial moments in Call of Duty history.” *Geek*. Last modified May 11, 2012. <http://www.geek.com/games/the-most-controversial-moments-in-call-of-duty-history-1488919/>.
- Shut Up and Sing*. Directed by Barbara Kopple and Cecilia Peck. 2006. Cabin Creek Films, 2006. DVD.
- “*Skyfall* movie Poster #9.” Last accessed April 27, 2014. <http://www.apnatimepass.com/skyfall-movie-poster-9.php>
- Snider, Mike. “Call of Duty: Black Ops II melds gaming, geopolitics.” *USA Today*. Last modified May 2, 2012. <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/lifestyle/story/2012-05-02/call-of-duty-black-ops-2/54667692/1>.
- Syriana*. Directed by Stephen Gaghan. 2005. Cinema.
- “Ten years ago this week the Dixie Chicks controversy erupted: I’m still not ready to back down.” *Scholars & Rogues*. Last modified March 13, 2013. <http://scholarsandrogues.com/2013/03/13/ten-years-ago-this->

week-the-dixie-chicks-controversy-erupted-im-still-not-ready-to-back-down/.

“Text of President Bush's Address to the Nation.” *Washington Post*. Last modified September 11, 2006. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/09/11/AR2006091100775.html>.

The Battle Cry of Peace. Directed by Wilfred North and J. Stuart Blackton. 1915. Vitagraph Company of America. Cinema.

“*The Effects of Culture on Video Gaming Media*.” Last accessed April 26, 2014. <http://hubpages.com/hub/The-Effect-of-911-on-Video-Gaming-Media>.

“The First Issue of Reader’s Digest.” Last accessed April 27, 2014. http://3.bp.blogspot.com/kJrM36e_FG0/TzjUf6uAtMI/AAAAAAAAAXQ/VHUZsftfz-0/s1600/First+issue+of+Reader%27s+Digest,+February+1922.PNG.

The Kingdom. Directed by Peter Berg. 2007. Cinema.

“The View from Mount Olympus.” *The Policy Tensor*. Last modified May 31, 2013. <http://policytensor.com/2013/05/>.

Thier, Dave. “Call of Duty: Black Ops 2 Is One of the Best Told Stories in Videogames.” *Forbes*. Last modified November 16, 2012. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/davidthier/2012/11/16/haters-aside-call-of-duty-black-ops-2-is-one-of-the-best-told-stories-in-videogames/>.

Totten, Chris. “Has 9/11 Changed Gaming?” *VideoGameWriters*. Last modified September 13, 2011. <http://videogamewriters.com/has-911-changed-gaming-23385>.

Tripathi, Mayank. “Call of Duty, Modern Warfare play.” *Picasso International*. Last modified January 14, 2013. <http://lucknowpicasso.com/blog/?p=654>.

Victory through Air Power. Directed by Perce Pearce. 1943. Walt Disney Studios. Cinema.

“Will spillover of the Ukrainian conflict happen?” *Defense Statecraft*. Last modified March 30, 2014. http://defensestatecraft.blogspot.cz/2014_03_01_archive.html.

6 RÉSUMÉ

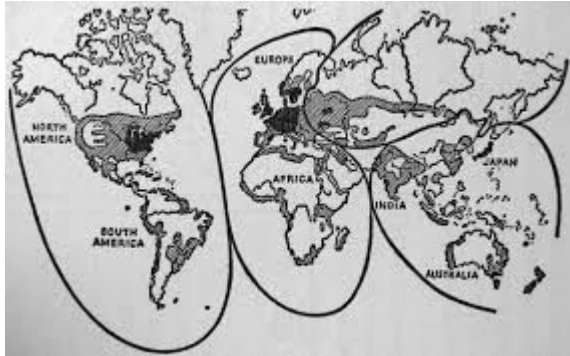
Ce memoire de licence compréhensible a decouvert les différences entre deux versions contrastives de la science humaine qui s'appelle géopolitique. Le premier type de la géopolitique qui est aussi connu comme la géopolitique traditionnelle ou impériale explique et décrit les relations fermes entre des locations géographiques et des ressources naturelles qui influencent le comportement des pays et nous permettent de faire les predictions précises. Le deuxième type de la géopolitique qui a gagné beaucoup du terrain récemment dans la recherche scientifique s'appelle la géopolitique critique. Cette branche essaye de déconstruire les prévisions incorrectes de la géopolitique traditionnelle et sa supposition primaire reste dans une école moderne née en sociologie dans les années 1960 – le constructivisme social. Cette théorie suppose que la réalité dans le discours géopolitique est trop compliquée pour faire les prévisions valables, et puis, nous devons concentrer à analyser comment les gens dans le monde entier construisent leur réalités individuelles. Ensuite, si nous pouvons comprendre la construction sociale individuelle, il faut que nous nous engagions et nous nous occupions premièrement du role les mass media jouent et les perceptions géopolitiques que media propagent. C'est pourquoi nous avons choisi cinq types de la culture populaire – la bande dessinée *Captain America*, le magazine *Reader's Digest*, les films avec *James Bond* dans la sixième decade du 20^{ème} siècle, la musique country d'un group populaire *Dixie Chicks* et, enfin, un jeu video *Call of Duty* – analysé leur developpements agités pendant le 20^{ème} siècle aux États-Unis et exploré la réflexion des menaces et des dangeurs globales pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale, la guerre froide et aussi après les terrorists islamiques avaient lancé une attaque à le World Trade Center en 2001.

La première partie descriptive de ce memoire est concernée du développement de la géopolitique traditionnelle. Nous avons décrit l'émergence de ce phenomène qui était accompagné par la realité impériale du fin du 19^{ème} siècle. À consequent, beaucoup de types des théories d'origine anglaise, americaine, allemande et suédoise étaient créées. Malheureusement, la relation direct avec le régime d'Adolf Hitler en Allemagne a minimisé l'intérêt de la science humaine et pour ça, la géopolitique traditionnelle était critiquée pendant les decades suivantes. Mais approximativement à 1970 l'importance de la géopolitique était renouvelée grâce à Henry Kissinger qui a réussi à décrire le changement politique dans cette decade. Plutôt, cet intérêt renouvelé a incité un autre groupe de faire une clé révision de la géopolitique entière et donc la géopolitique critique a commencé à accompagner et critiquer sa branche impériale précédente. Cette division

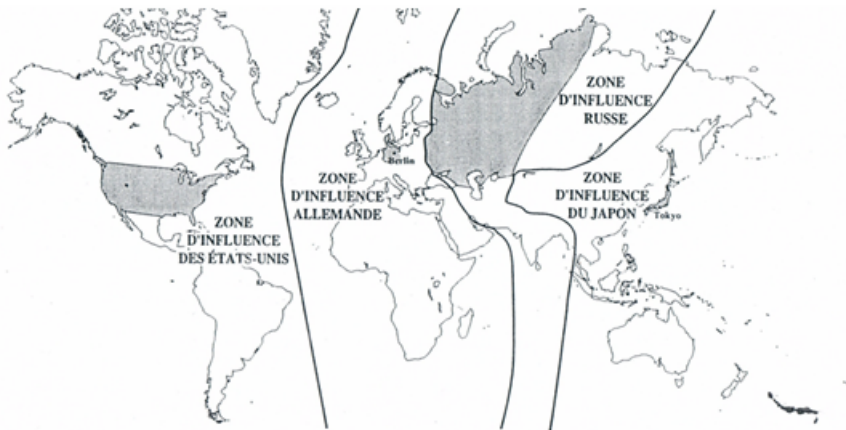
s'est devenue plus profonde après l'attaque terroriste en 2001 et maintenant représente une grande discussion parmi les érudits universitaires.

La deuxième partie de ce mémoire a employé un point de vue différent pour analyser comment la géopolitique populaire, une branche moderne de la géopolitique critique, construit et condense la réalité du système international aux États-Unis. Pour ça, nous avons utilisé cinq exemples de la culture populaire qui étaient déjà introduits. Notre recherche prouve que cette nouvelle discipline a besoin d'attention scientifique pour exprimer comment les gens comprennent la reproduction et la condensation géopolitique dans les médias. Nous n'avons pas réussi à trouver une solution simple qui pourrait expliquer la réalité complexe, mais nous sommes convaincus que les options fascinantes futures que nous avons introduites – la recherche de l'audience, les théories « non-representationnelles », la géopolitique féministe et la recherche dans les communautés virtuelles – offrent les possibilités exceptionnelles pour établir la géopolitique populaire comme une branche bien connue et acceptée. Pour faire une conclusion, après avoir exploré le développement de la géopolitique pendant le 20^{ème} siècle et au début du 21^{ème} siècle, c'est clair que la géopolitique traditionnelle maintient beaucoup d'importance, mais ne peut pas seulement expliquer les relations intéressantes complexes parmi les gens, les médias et l'imagination géopolitique d'élites.

7 APPENDICES



World according to Karl Haushofer. Retrieved from: <http://euro-synergies.hautetfort.com/archive/2011/08/14/geopolitics-of-leviathan.html>.



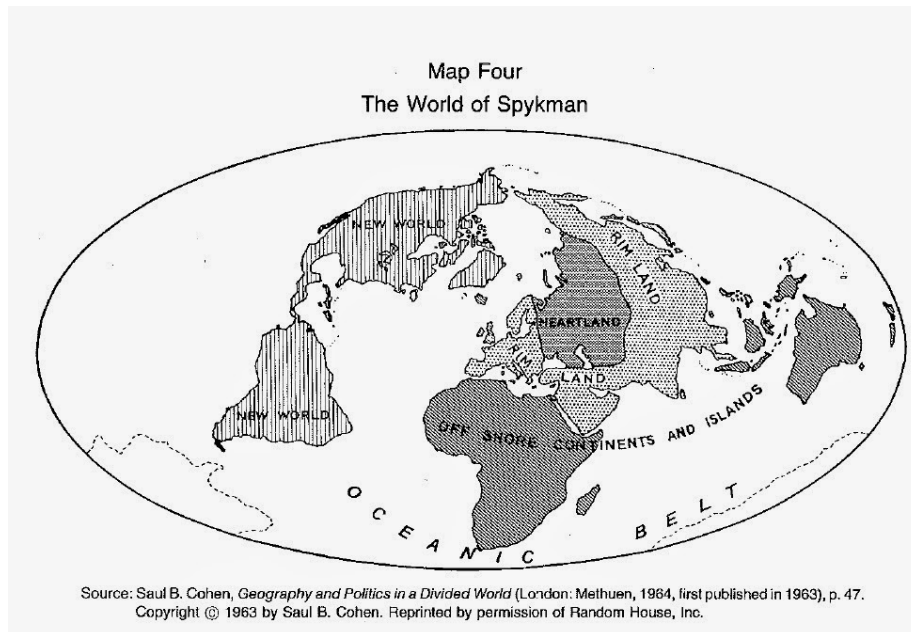
Another projection of the division of our world based on Haushofer. Retrieved from: <http://policytensor.com/2013/05/>.



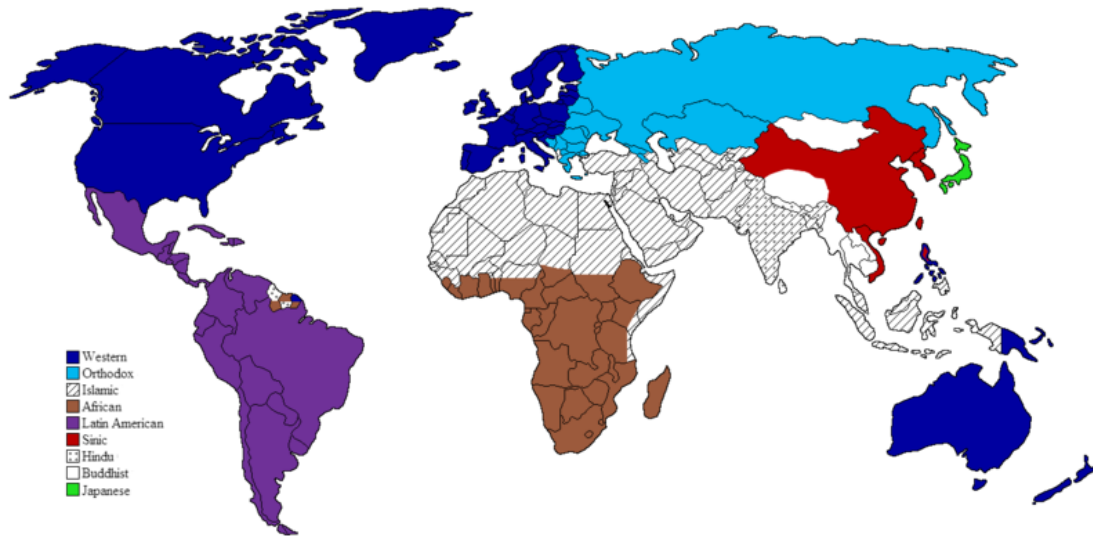
A part of Mackinder's momentous geopolitical vision. Retrieved from: <http://www.fernandogomezherrero.com/blog/?p=1748>.



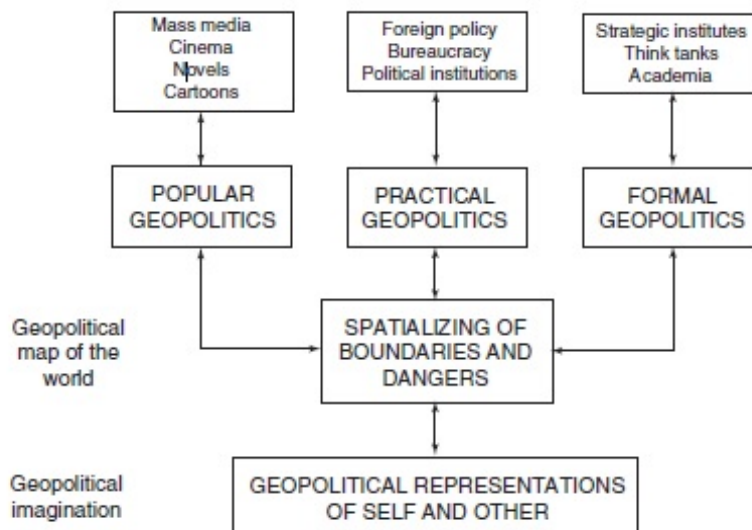
A famous map that constituted an essential part of an article submitted by Mackinder in 1904 – *The Geographical Pivot of History*. Adapted from: Mackinder, Halford J. “The Geographical Pivot of History.” *Geographical Journal* 23 (1904): 28 – 50.



Spykman, who advocated the importance of the rimland, sought to alter Mackinder’s original emphasis upon the heartland. Retrieved from: http://defensestatecraft.blogspot.cz/2014_03_01_archive.html.



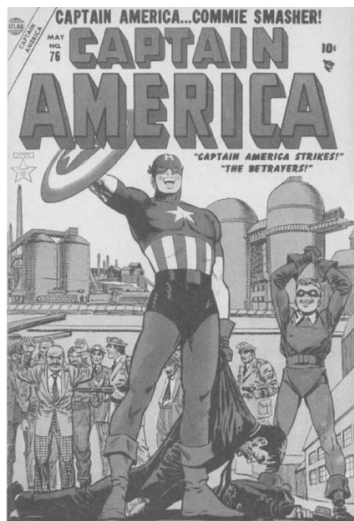
An (in)famous division of our world into roughly 9 major civilizations which formed the backbone of the Huntingtonian Paradigm. Retrieved from: <http://geopoliticsdefined.wordpress.com/tag/spykman/>.



A tripartite scheme of contemporary geopolitics devised by Gearóid Ó Tuathail. Adapted from: Tuathail Ó, Gearóid. *Critical Geopolitics*. London: Routledge, 1996.



The excitingly straightforward cover of the very first issue of the *Captain America* comic books. Adapted from: Dittmer, Jason. “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): 626 – 643.



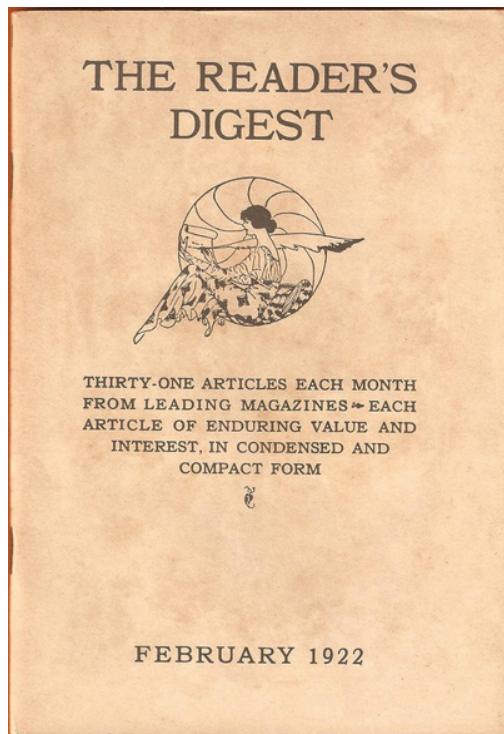
The jingoistic narrative of Captain America in the turbulent era of McCarthyism. Adapted from: Dittmer, Jason. “Captain America’s Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics.” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): 626 – 643.



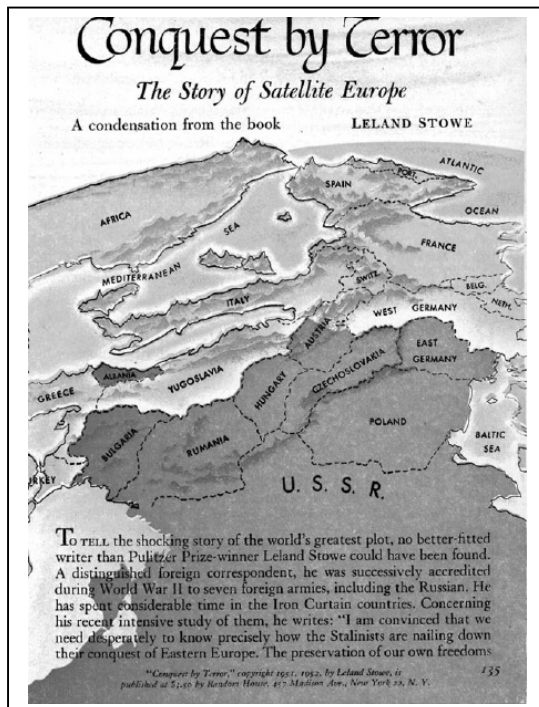
Steve Rodgers' reaction to the destruction at Ground Zero. Adapted from: Dittmer, Jason. "Captain America's Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): 626 – 643.



A Cold War storyline upon which a modern-day cinematic installment is loosely based. Retrieved from: <http://www.mycomicshop.com/search?TID=680431>.

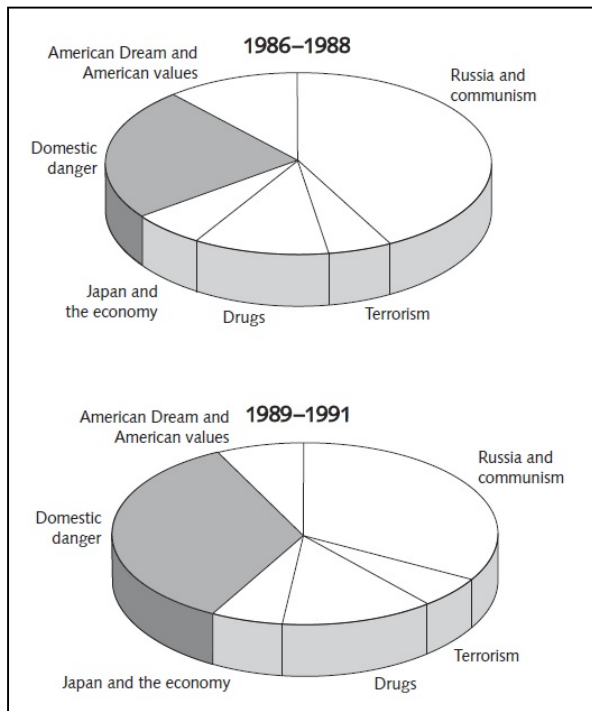


The original frontpage of the very first issue of *Reader's Digest*. Retrieved from: http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-kJrM36e_FG0/TzjUf6uAtMI/AAAAAAAAAXQ/VHUZsftz-0/s1600/First+issue+of+Reader%27s+Digest,+February+1922.PNG.

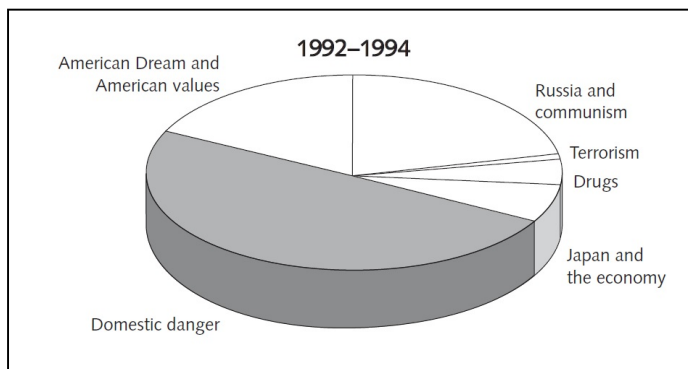


A geopolitically significant illustration of the expansiveness of the USSR which imposed on the reader the Soviet perspective. Adapted from: Sharp, Joanne P. *Condensing the*

Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2000.



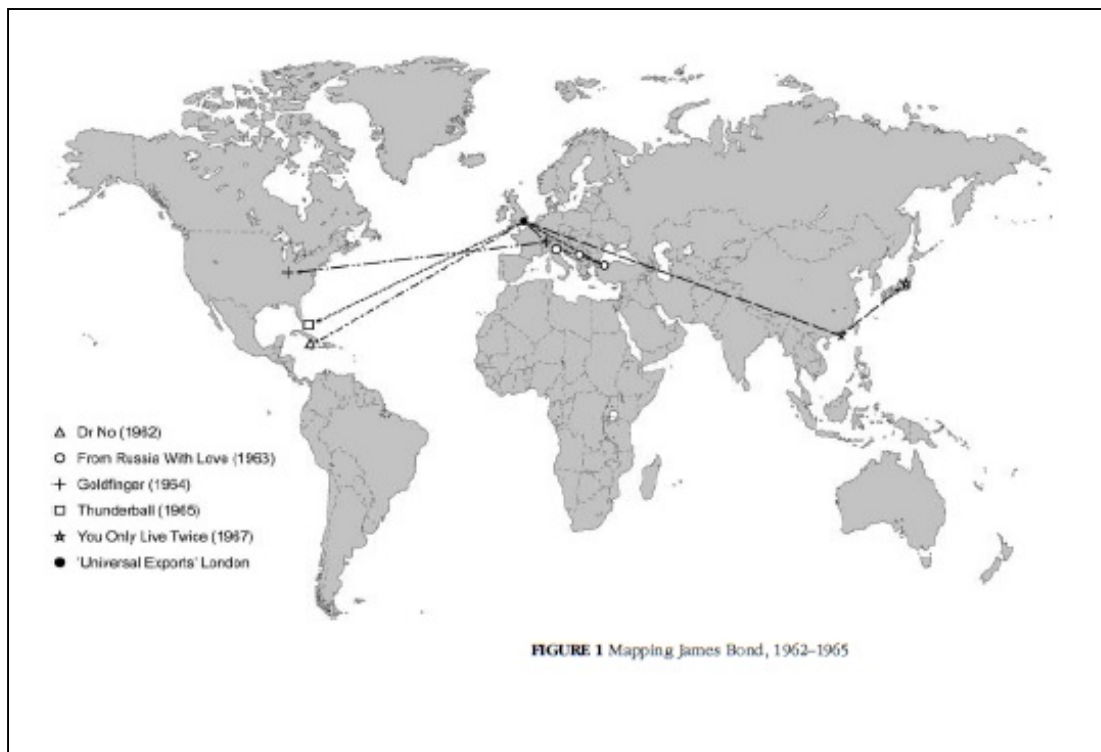
The division of condensed articles on particular topics in Reader's Digest. Adapted from: Sharp, Joanne P. *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2000.



A similar pie chart which excellently demonstrates the shifting focus of Reader's Digest throughout the precarious 1990s. Adapted from: Sharp, Joanne P. *Condensing the Cold War, Reader's Digest and American Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2000.



To commemorate the explosive events of 9/11, Reader's Digest released this nostalgic cover ten years after the terrorist attack had occurred. Retrieved from: <http://www.spd.org/2011/09/9-covers-part-3.php>.



James Bond and his captivating early cinematic voyages within the confinements of the Cold War. Adapted from: Dodds, Klaus. "Screening Geopolitics: James Bond and the Early Cold War films (1962 – 1967)." *Geopolitics* 10, no.2 (2005): 266 – 289.



The colourful poster depicting Sean Connery and several relatively attractive females before the first movie version of Fleming's espionage thrillers hit the theaters in 1962. Retrieved from: <http://cordaro9418.wordpress.com/2013/12/08/every-saga-has-a-beginning-dr-no-1962/>.

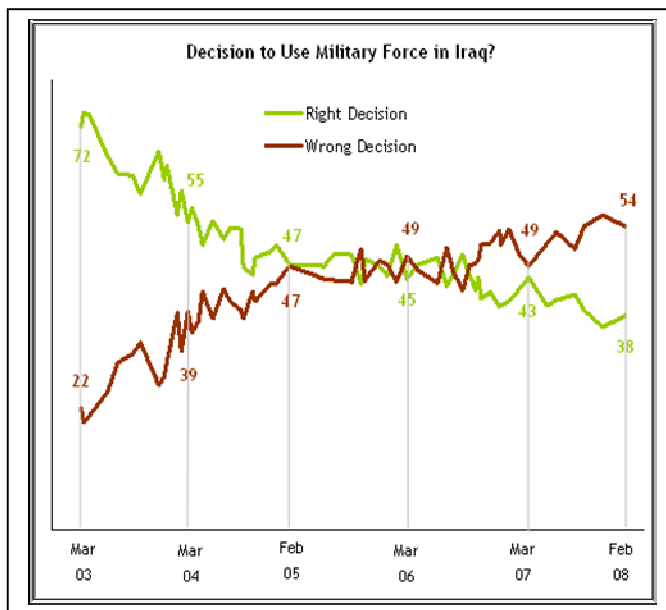
Film	User rating	Votes cast
<i>Dr. No</i> (1962)	7.2/10	11 610
<i>From Russia with Love</i> (1963)	7.3/10	10 093
<i>Goldfinger</i> (1964)	7.8/10	19 404
<i>Thunderball</i> (1965)	6.8/10	8 063
<i>You Only Live Twice</i> (1967)	6.8/10	8 086
<i>On Her Majesty's Secret Service</i> (1969)	6.7/10	7 061
<i>Diamonds are Forever</i> (1971)	6.6/10	8 563
<i>Live and Let Die</i> (1973)	6.6/10	7 864
<i>The Man with the Golden Gun</i> (1974)	6.4/10	7 246
<i>The Spy Who Loved Me</i> (1977)	6.9/10	7 950
<i>Moonraker</i> (1979)	5.9/10	9 127
<i>For Your Eyes Only</i> (1981)	6.7/10	7 906
<i>Octopussy</i> (1983)	6.4/10	9 136
<i>A View to a Kill</i> (1985)	5.9/10	8 269
<i>The Living Daylights</i> (1987)	6.4/10	7 321
<i>Licence to Kill</i> (1989)	6.2/10	8 311
<i>Goldeneye</i> (1995)	6.8/10	22 555
<i>Tomorrow Never Dies</i> (1997)	6.4/10	19 041
<i>The World is not Enough</i> (1999)	6.3/10	23 740
<i>Die Another Day</i> (2002)	6.4/10	21 601

Source: <http://www.imdb.com> (accessed 4 April 2005)

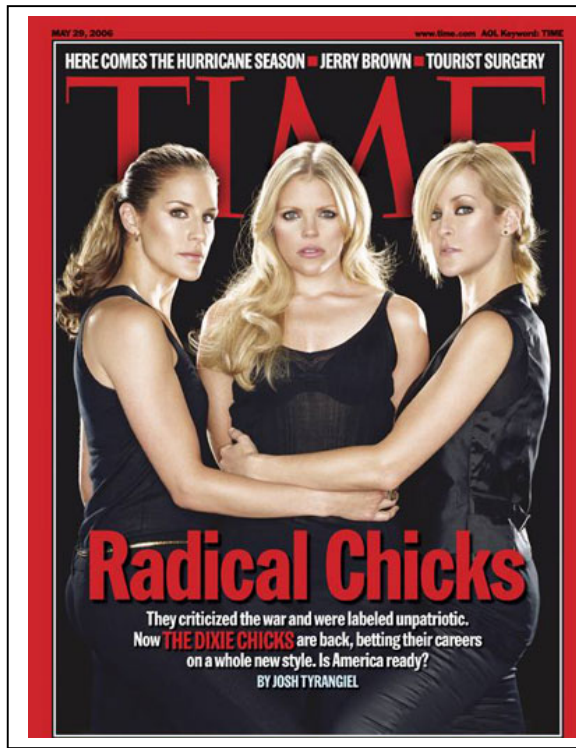
Dodds' decisive attempt to engage with virtual online communities via the Internet Movie Database. Adapted from: Dodds, Klaus. "Popular Geopolitics and Audience Dispositions: James Bond and the Internet Movie Database (IMDb)." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 31, no. 2 (2006): 116 – 130.



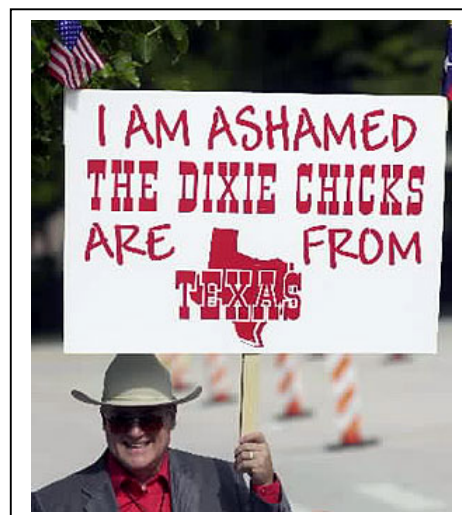
These two posters showcase the latest lead protagonists of James Bond movies – Pierce Brosnan and David Craig. Retrieved from:
http://www.impawards.com/2002/die_another_day_ver9.html and
<http://www.apnatimepass.com/skyfall-movie-poster-9.php>.



An illustrative chart exhibiting the declining support for the War in Iraq. Retrieved from: <http://www.pewresearch.org/2008/03/19/public-attitudes-toward-the-war-in-iraq-20032008/>.



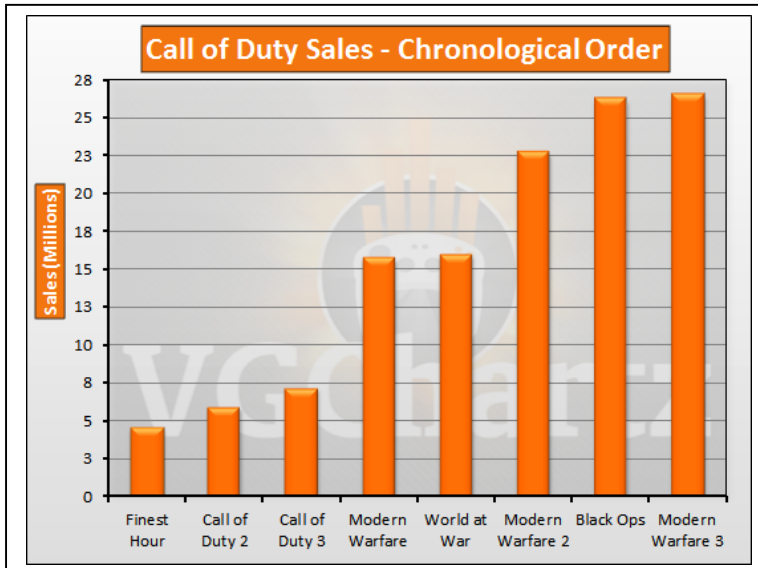
Self-explanatory. Retrieved from: <http://content.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,20060529,00.html>.



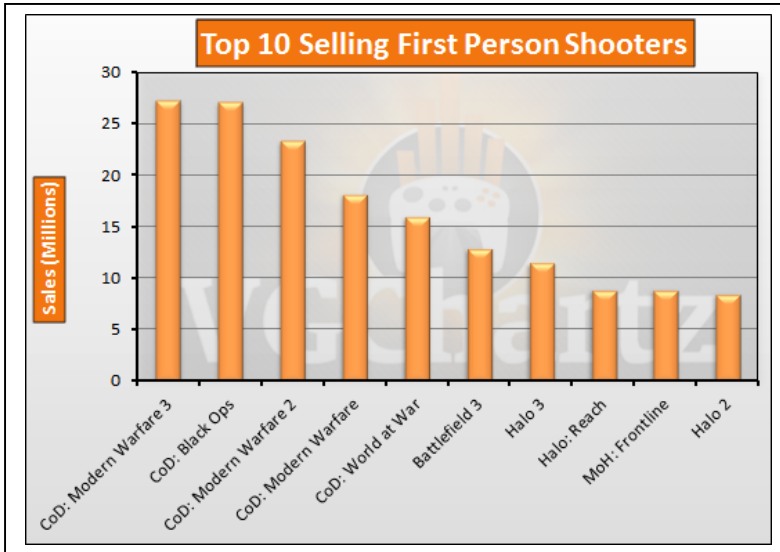
A rather humorous photograph exhibiting the massive backlash the opposition of the Dixie Chicks toward the War in Iraq instigated. Retrieved from: <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-chat/1751185/posts>.



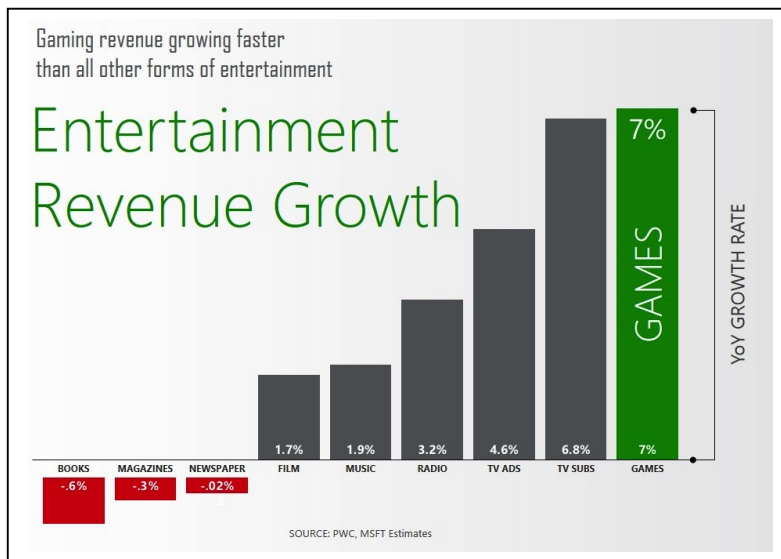
Another example the public opposition that mounted in the wake of the incriminating statement. Retrieved from: <http://scholarsandrogues.com/2013/03/13/ten-years-ago-this-week-the-dixie-chicks-controversy-erupted-im-still-not-ready-to-back-down/>.



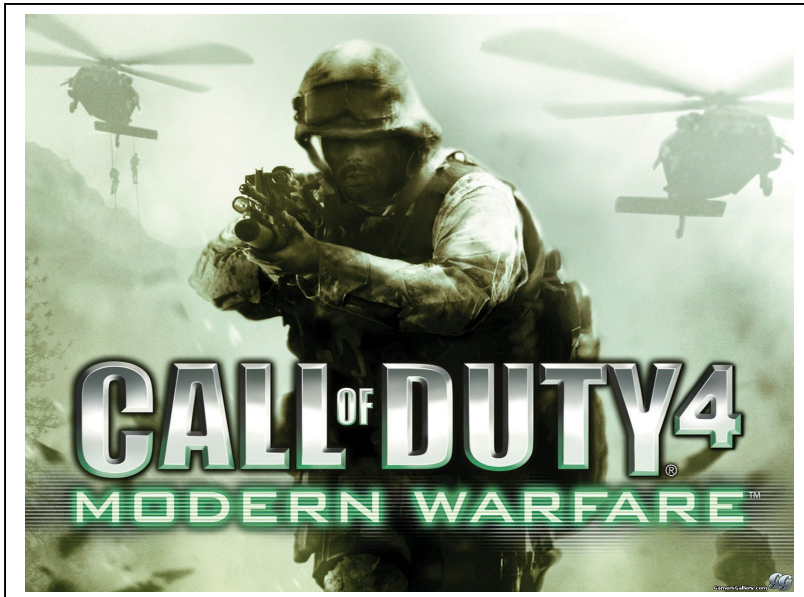
A bar chart that portrays the surging popularity of Call of Duty videogames. Retrieved from: <http://www.vgchartz.com/article/250163/call-of-duty-a-sales-history/>.



A similar bar chart which displays top 10 first person shooters based on the amount of copies sold. Notice that various *Call of Duty* installments claimed the first five spots. Retrieved from: <http://www.vgchartz.com/article/250080/top-10-in-sales-first-person-shooters/>.



As mentioned in the thesis, videogames have been enjoying basically the highest annual growth from all other sources of popular entertainment. Retrieved from: <http://www.geekwire.com/2013/microsoft-global-videogame-market-hits-65-billion-consoles-lead/>.



The best-known cover for the acclaimed installment exploring future warfare, which marked a pivotal turning point in the development of first person shooters. Retrieved from: <http://dyom.gtagames.nl/show/20957>.



A rivetting wallpaper that accompanied the release of arguably the most successful and praised *Call of Duty* videogame to date – *Black Ops II*. Retrieved from: <http://nicepixy.net/2506/call-of-duty-black-ops-2-background.html>.



The main antagonists of *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3* – Vladimir Makarov – who remains very easy for Americans to identify with. Retrieved from: <http://progamist.blogspot.cz/2012/01/progamist-game-awards-2011-results.html>.



A point-blank screenshot with another geopolitically somehow “stereotypical” adversary. Retrieved from: <http://lucknowpicasso.com/blog/?p=654>.

Important schools of geography and international relations and their perceptions of space

Theory	Character of space	Variables	Significance of space	Determining factors	Leading proponents
(Neo)classical geopolitics	Material entity	Dependent and independent	Crucial	Military power and space	Mahan, Mackinder, Scott
Neorealism	Material entity	independent	Varies, secondary as well as crucial	Military and partially economic power, rarely space	Gilpin, Van Evera, Walt, Mearsheimer, Glaser
Strategic studies	Material entity	Independent	Crucial	Technology, such as military power, space and organization	Mearsheimer, Biddle
Theory of world systems (IR)	Material entity	Dependent (regarding the actual implications)	Secondary (not the main focus point)	Position in the economic system (and its character)	Wallerstein
Theory of world systems (G)	Material entity	Dependent	Essential (the object of study)	Position in the economic system (and its character)	Taylor
Non-geopolitics (permeation of critical and traditional elements)	Material entity as well as socially constructed	Depending on the context	Background, localization Stage for observing phenomena	Various – from material to abstract	O’Loughlin – Anselin, currently influential in <i>Eurasian Geography and Economics</i>
Social constructivism	Socially constructed	Independent as well as reliant on the context	Secondary, as part of the wider context	Ideas and norms	Wendt, Ruggi
Critical geopolitics (and constructivists in G)	Socially constructed	Dependent (implicitly) and reliant on the context	At the heart of interest, yet as a product of social construction	Ideas, representation through media, etc.	Ó’Tuathail, Kearns, Murphy, Dodds, Dalby, Agnew, Dittmer

Adapted from: Kofroň, Jan. “*Geopolitika na pomezí geografie a mezinárodních vztahů mezi prostorem intersubjektivním a objektivním.*” *Mezinárodní vztahy* 47, no. 2 (2012): 68.