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# CONCEPT OF REGIONAL SECURITY IN PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES

## Abstract

The paper focuses on regional security, which has become a significant issue in situations where there has been a growth in the level of regional identity and the desire for relative autonomy in the general process of security system development. The approaches to security in the history of philosophy are analyzed in order to highlight the evolution of the concept of "regional security". Comparative, systematic and hermeneutic methods are employed to reveal the aspects of regional security in terms of the problems of state, national and public security. The novelty of the research is associated with the development of the evolution of ideas concerning regional security from abstract representations to the various aspects of regional practice. The conclusion is that modern regional security concepts are based on the synthesis of the methodology of systemic and constructivist approaches. This methodology is used to substantiate the claim that any state has to deal with the security problems of its regions and pay attention to any threats and regional interests, which may be constructible in nature, and pose a real danger associated with challenges from political, economic, military, environmental, and social spheres.

*Keywords:* regional security, philosophical approach, state security, national security, public security.

## Introduction

At the turn of the 20th century, the world faced a number of problems associated with the trend of globalization. Although this created new opportunities for development, there were also new challenges, which threatened the existence of many regional communities. The resolution of these problems often depends on how the security system of each territorial community is organized (Progunova, Trokhova, & Milonova, 2019, p. 26; Sugiantiningsih, Weni, Hariyanto, Tutuko, & Sedyowati, 2019, p. 1).

The importance of the regional factor of security increases as the level of regional self-consciousness and relative autonomy in the general process of development of the security system increases (Tien, Van Tien, Jose, Duc, & Ngoc, 2020, p. 1; van Hiep & Tram, 2021, p. 26). This is radically different from the bipolar structure of a similar system during the Cold War. Thus, the modern security problems are historically characterised and closely connected to the regional forms of social systems, which is why the concept of "regional security" is highly relevant. This puts on the agenda the question of the need for research on the special category of regional security, which has previously been developed exclusively within the framework of the interpretation of universal principles of state, national and social security.

## Study Background

Studies of individual aspects of regional security were carried out by T. Hobbes (1991) and G. Hegel (1979), reflecting on the state concept of security. N. Lazarevsky (1906), B. Chicherin (1894), V. Lenin (1967), and M. D. Zagryatskov (1917) all considered regional security as an el-

ement of general state government. G. Kunts and S. O'Donnell (1981) proposed the concept of the system approach to security, whereas J. Habermas (2000) developed the concept of the welfare state. R.W. Jones (1999), M. Foucault (2011), G. Agamben (2005), B. Buzan and O. Wæwer (2002) advocated constructivist ideas within the framework of the problem of regional security. M. Ayoob (2002), D. A. Lake (2011), R. Jervis (1978), J. Newman (2016), E. T. Aniche (2020), M. Beeson and T. Lee-Brown (2016), A. Acharya (2018), B. N. Coe (2019), A. K. Cusack (2019), and L. Fawcett (2016) comprehensively studied contemporary regional security problems.

The purpose of this study is to analyze emerging regional issues in the philosophical discourse of security. To achieve this, the methodology of comparative, systematic and hermeneutic analysis is employed. The comparative analysis aimed to identify similarities and differences in the content of security concepts as they have developed historically. The purpose of the systemic analysis was to identify aspects of regional security in the context of state and national security. Hermeneutic analysis was used to analyze the semantic content of security concepts that contain ideas justifying the need to ensure the security of regions.

The novelty is provided by the conceptualization aimed at highlighting the ideas of regional security in the concept of general national security and the formation of a holistic view of the evolution of philosophical ideas of regional security.

The results enabled the conclusion to be drawn that until the beginning of the 20th century, the majority of socio-philosophical approaches to a security sought to justify the need to find their universal principles revealed in the works by Hobbes (1991) and Hegel (1979), who argued that the ideal state provides citizens with a sufficient level of security.

Views on government, including the issue of regional security, have changed significantly due to the systemic approach adopted by G. Kunts and S. O'Donnell (1981). The Frankfurt School, of which J. Habermas is one of the representatives, developed the concept of the welfare state, which seeks to ensure the safety and freedom of its citizens, who subordinate their needs to the requirements of the state (Habermas, 2000). These ideas have been reinterpreted by Welsh School, postcolonialism, poststructuralism, and securitization theory in light of the environmental, terrorist, military, migration, and epidemiological threats that are tangible in every region. The concept of regional security evolved at the end of the 20th century within the framework of the theory of B. Buzan and O. Wæwer (2002), who used constructivist ideas as the basis for their securitization theory.

Unfortunately, the article does not disclose the very content of the categories of security and protection. However, this should have been done at the very beginning of the article. Security in its most general form is understood as a stable state of social systems that, despite external influences, preserve the basis of traditional culture and achieve sustainable development (Ter, 2018, p. 926). Security is understood as maintaining stability in the consequences of potential harm emanating from other participants in the social process (Gerasimov & Loza, 1991, p. 20). However, this concept has been criticized by regional security researchers such as D. A. Lake (2011), R. Jervis (1978), J. Newman (2016), E. T. Aniche (2020), M. Beeson and T. Lee-Brown (2016) due to its lack of empirical verifiability, relativist and speculative quality and pronounced Eurocentrism. The modern understanding of regional security, as outlined by A. Acharya (2018), B. N. Coe (2019), A. K. Cusack (2019), and L. Fawcett (2016), is based on the perception that the stability of the regional security is provided by the internationally accepted rules established by the most influential states.

Results and Discussion

Despite the fact that the terminology of regional security has not been used for a long time in the discussion of discourses on state security, certain aspects of it were discussed in the process of comprehending the problems of interaction between the individual, society and the state. For example, in ancient classical philosophy, the idea of security was understood within the framework of the opposition of two views, which expressed the need for self-preservation of the individual and the state (Reale & Antiseri, 1994, p. 9). During the prevalence of medieval Christian conceptions in Western Europe, the dichotomy of security gave way to the notion that only the soul's salvation guaranteed a person his/her secure existence (Augustin, 2012, p. 462).

In modern times, the secularization of society made science, rather than religion, the means of protection against threats. During this period, philosophical thought, in particular, Thomas Hobbes (1991), again turned to the idea that the leading role in ensuring the security of society should be played by the state, which provides the external and internal security of society and individuals. However, this idea contradicted the ideals of liberalism and democracy, which guided public thought that included John Locke, Charles Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Alexis de Tocqueville, Jacques-Guillaume Thouret, and Eduard Meyer, who argued for the possibility of organizing the independent government of local communities, as a guarantee of personal security. The point of view asserting the priority of personal security over state security was reinterpreted in German philosophy by Kant, Fichte and Hegel, who concurred in the opinion that the authority of the state in the security issues is undeniable (Hegel, 1979, p. 55).

However, the practice has shown that an excessive preoccupation with universal categories within the state theory of government framework does not allow its application in conditions characterized by locality and specificity. Therefore,

the state theory of government had many critics, such as V. I. Lenin (1967), who believed that there were different types of security, satisfying different personal needs.

The ideas of Marxists, as applied to the realities of the Soviet state, were developed by the municipal socialism of M. D. Zagryatskov (1917). It evaluated the level of government efficiency by the criterion of the interconnectedness of different parts of society into a single whole that combined the country's leadership with regional requirements and interests. These ideas were echoed by the authors of the theory of municipal dualism, N. I. Lazarevsky (1906, p. 151) and B. N. Chicherin (1894, p. 79). They believed in the necessity of organizing equal society-state partnership to solve the problems of aspects of the local, territorial government. However, as N. I. Lazarevsky (1906) points out, in the theories of municipal socialism and municipal dualism, there remained unresolved problematic issues of interaction between the state and local influence on the life support of local communities, the reason for which was the lack of a developed mechanism to protect the interests of regional communities.

W. Wilson (1902, p. 267) and M. Weber (1990, p. 658), who offered a solution to this problem to preserve and protect natural human rights, developed a bureaucratic theory of government. They formulated a concept according to which the development of a government strategy relying on direct, administrative methods is able to give management efficiency and, therefore, a safe existence to society. The systemic vision of society government was suggested by the concept presented in the works by G. Kunts (1981). The main requirement here is to preserve fundamental values and attitudes of a particular community, which in the development of social harmony, changing gradually while maintaining its basic parameters.

The shift from general philosophical assumptions used in Hegelianism, Marxism and partly Freudianism to the discussion of actual social

and regional problems, including the problem of security, was carried out by the philosophers of the Frankfurt School. J. Habermas (2000) developed the concept of a welfare state that sought to ensure its citizens' safe and free existence, who, in the name of security, subject their needs to state requirements and social norms.

In the second half of the 20th century, studies began to focus on the "security of states," as reflected in the concept of the "security dilemma," which examines the process of arms buildup of the opposing parties (Jones, 1999, pp. 74-79). This concept was criticized by the proponents of the liberal concept of security, which stressed the development of mechanisms to ensure security through the implementation of international cooperation programs. Subsequently, with the end of the Cold War and the entry of the world community into the counter-terrorism phase, these concepts were reinterpreted by the Welsh School, postcolonialism, poststructuralism and securitization theory, which defined the parameters of regional security concepts in light of the environmental, terrorist, military, migration and epidemiological threats that became palpable in every region.

In particular, the Welsh School (Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones (1999)) criticized the provisions of the Frankfurt School theory and pointed out that the influence of the state on the regional life of citizens cannot always be assessed only as positive. This, in their view, is indicated by the increasing number of local wars waged by states on their populations that favour regional values. They put the problem of security not at the state but at the individual level, saying that only people's lives matter in real life, where they seek to arrange life outside the threats of war, oppression, epidemics, disease, environmental threats, illiteracy, and poverty. However, these ideas are not supported in hardly any of the existing states of the world, which seek the rights to security of every citizen and every territory and self-survival conflicting with the ideal that the Welsh School draws. The most substantial

criticism of this approach came from Third World countries, which have their own image of the ideal state. Postcolonialist thinkers (M. Ayoob (2002)) point out that security problems in the third world differ significantly from those in the West. Weaker third-world states are intensely affected not only by external threats but also by internal threats that can lead to destruction. Therefore, they refer to conditional security strategies as violence, which is used when it is necessary to preserve states, but on the part of the West, any attempt to assert their rights on their part is deemed illegal.

The statement pointing to the discourse nature of several political notions of regional security unites postcolonialism and poststructuralist studies of this issue. M. Foucault (2011) is a representative of that. He pointed out that the generally accepted provisions on security often turn out to be imposed by such a subject of government as state power. In the works by G. Agamben (2005), regional security acts as a historical construct, which is spread by the power structures that seek to describe the internal space of the country as unified and safe, and the space outside its borders as hostile.

It was the constructivist ideas that became the basis on which the concept of regional security within the framework of the securitization theory of B. Buzan and O. Wæwer, which was focused on the development of provisions on the patterns of development of regional security complexes, defined as a group of states whose security relations are so close that their national security cannot be considered separately from each other (Buzan & Wæwer, 2002, p. 270). According to this theory, the security of each subject of the regional space is dependent on the influence of other subjects, which in turn depend on the organizing role of institutions representing different spheres of life, primarily the institutions of public service. An important place in the formation of the system of regional security, according to these analysts, takes the category of "securitization", by which they understand the

"discourse process" of perception and redefining of information (Buzan & Wæwer, 2002, p. 71). Threats to regional security do not exist by themselves but are constructed by the subjects of securitization, which are states and regional communities in relation to the subjects of securitization, such as human rights, spiritual and religious values, national and state.

However, the approach, defined as poststructuralism, has come under considerable criticism as international relations have become more complex following the end of the Cold War. Poststructuralists have been accused of being unscientific, relativistic, nihilistic and Eurocentric. Contemporary Western liberal values are not considered a universal way of maintaining peace. Researchers such as Lake (2011), Jervis (1978), Newman (2016), Aniche (2020), Beeson and Lee-Brown (2016) see them as the epitome of aggression on the part of the world leaders.

Regional security complexes, in this case, are understood as a system of interaction between multiple actors with different goals and seeking to both "securitize" and "desecuritize" the regions, depending on the situation and their goals. At the same time, it is recognized that the state of regional security can be constructed and has objective parameters of its structure and real problems and trends of development. For example, A. Acharya points out that the regional security complex has actual territorial boundaries that protect them from external threats. In addition, they are characterized by an unstable internal structure consisting of various units in a state of "friendship-hostility," distributing power within the complex (Acharya, 2018, p. 16).

Thus, the modern methodology of describing the problems of regional security shifts away from the constructivist perspective and acquires the features of structural realism, in which the dialogue between constructivist descriptions and studies that reflected the most urgent problems of our time and threats to the survival of regional communities was carried out. In this case, as modern researchers of regional security, such as

B. Coe (2019), A. Cusack (2019), and L. Fawcett (2016) argue, each of these entities builds its security strategy in relation to the claims of those or states to hegemony, supported by various means of legitimation. One such means is the use of "standards of civilization," which differentiates various regional entities, including alliances of states, states, and their territories. The joint recognition of these standards by all participants in the international political process guarantees their security because it creates a security system on which the world order can be based. At the same time, each regional entity retains the right to protect its interests while recognizing that the primary undertaking of all participants in the world process is maintaining international security.

Thus, they have created a multidimensional regional security model based on the rules adopted internationally by the states supporting sustainable global security. Diverse intraregional engagements simultaneously influence this situation. Therefore, states are forced to examine their respective regional security challenges and pay attention to the threats and regional interests existing therein, which can be constructive in nature and represent real threats associated with challenges from the political, economic, military, environmental, and social spheres. Objective socio-political and historical-cultural processes and the conditions of interaction between states and regions influence this process.

Conclusion

1. The analysis of the peculiarities of the regional issues in the philosophical discourse on security showed that, until the beginning of the 20th century, most of the socio-philosophical approaches to a security sought to justify the need to find universal principles affirming the role of the state in preserving security. They were opposed to the concept of asserting the rights of the individual to self-government and security, which contained certain aspects

of regional security government.

2. Since the middle of the 20th century, a vision of the governmental process was formed, which opened the door for perspectives pointing to the need to synthesize general government strategy with the operational solutions to issues relating to regions' daily existence. These perspectives aligned with the philosophy of the Frankfurt School, which advocated for an understanding of government as a process that is dependent on the extent to which states consider the influence of all security-related factors.

3. Expanding on these analyses, Buzan and Wæwer developed the concept of regional security complexes, spanning state, national, and social interests within territorial formations. It includes the organization of the system of regions' life activities at the international and domestic levels. However, modern studies have re-evaluated this concept, pointing to the inadequacy of the constructivist foundations of regional security, which includes constructed and real problems of modernity, threatening regions' security.

The results presented in the paper prove the need to continue developing integrated modelling of real regional security problems, taking into account the generalization of the results of available research and reaching the level of practical solutions to real regional security challenges.

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