The "Energy Status Goal" and the cases of Greece and Cyprus: "Encompassing Realism" revealed

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Abstract

Energy seems to be playing a continuously growing role in world politics. The US President Donald Trump's declared pursuit of an "energy dominance" status can be seen as an answer to the Russian President Vladimir Putin's vision of his country becoming an "energy superpower". Emerging states such as China, India, Brazil also seek to ameliorate their energy potential in a way that goes beyond the behavior of an energy consumer or producer. Other states such as Turkey, Egypt, Greece, Cyprus also seek to play a more active and decisive role in energy production and distribution via exploration, resources exploitation, agreements for relevant infrastructure. Energy (mainly gas & oil) bubbles up as a factor of a broader power play where states antagonize to gain a relatively better position in an unknown ranking board. We present the explanatory framework of "Encompassing Realism" and the «Energy Status Goal" calibration scheme to address theoretic and empirical research challenges at the domestic, the regional and the international level.

Introduction

The mid-2010s brought about a considerable realignment to the global energy landscape. The shale revolution has enabled the US to pursue a net-exporter status, resulting in a continuous oil exports growth into Europe and Asia(The Economist, 2014). US President Donald Trump have gone even further to call for energy supremacy(Brew, 2017). In May 2016, before the presidential elections, he said in a speech: "America's incredible energy potential remains untapped. It's a wound that is totally self-inflected"(Dickert, 2016). In June 2017, as an elected President, he staked a claim to "American Energy Dominance"(Daly and Boak, 2017).

In parallel, President Vladimir Putin's "energy superpower" vision has sealed Russia's behavior in the international affairs(Baev, 2007). It has been the main driver behind Russia's ambition to return to the "old glory" and regain a role as a great power(Rutland, 2015: 66–89). US' natural resources fracking exploitation and the lift of the 40-year-old ban on crude oil exports forced Russia to cooperate with OPEC in order to react both to the meteoric fall of oil prices in 2015-2016 and to market share losses(Cohen, 2018). As US' LNG exports arose as another threat for its budgetary revenues, Russia reached a price compromise with China and signed a 30-year gas supply agreement(Yilmaz and Daksueva, 2019). It also concluded the highly contested agreement with Germany for the Nord Stream 2 pipeline(Wojcieszak, 2017).

Emerging countries are also trying to strengthen their role in the energy landscape. China has started seeking for an upgraded role in the international arena via a grid of bilateral and regional energy strategies including, among other strategic moves, its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)(Gong, 2018). Brazil and India have also been pushed to engage in the energy play. The former is turning into a major oil exporter thanks to important new oil field discoveries(Paraskova, 2018). The latter became one of the world's biggest energy investors in 2017 while reinforcing its naval forces(Dasgupta, 2018).

In the period 2006-2009, Greece tried to enhance its energy status by several relevant agreements, mainly with Russia, in order to strengthen its economy, avoid its dependence on Turkey's pipelines and change its regional power status(UPI, 2009). Cyprus' recent energy resources discoveries put the country at the epicenter of a regional tug-of-war that involves many other actors such as the US, the EU, Egypt, Turkey and others(Shay, 2018).

The aforementioned developments show that the role of energy, mainly oil and gas, is getting more and more important in the international arena. Energy is going far beyond the already studied politicization of energy resources that came to the attention of the scholar analysis in the early 2000s(Kratochvíl and Tichý, 2013: 391).

The main argument of this paper is that energy emerges as an autonomous states' power factor able to reshape domestic and foreign landscape and improve a state's international status. From this point of view, energy affairs fall under the traditional realist approach. Thus, we propose a multidimensional research lens, which

integrating several aspects of realist theories constructs a schematic ranking approach by which states' behavior can be interpreted.

The theoretical challenge

The energy sector, as a complicated and multilevel entity, evolves from several elements domestically and internationally(Lobell et al., 2009: 24–26). Resources, exploration and exploitation technologies, economic capabilities, national borders, distribution networks, markets, consumption, growth, security, national policies are only few of the aspects that have to be taken under consideration when we try to study energy as a combined total of continuous interactions(Kostagiannis, 2018: 112). The primary actor in international politics, the state, should be investigated both ways, internally and externally as it interacts with other states in the international arena(Booth, 2011: 111–113).

Furthermore, as states are constantly trying to ameliorate their relevant position in the international system, a theoretic approach should be able to pluralistically focus on specific events at any given time(Lobell et al., 2009: 210). Also, it should be able to make explicit the implicit and integrate it into a broader explanatory framework(Stoddard, 2013: 438–439). This framework should be able to encapsulate theoretical aspects of International Relations without ignoring the field of International Political Economy as the energy sector contains pivotal intrastate and interstate economic interactions(Guzzini, 2013: 8).

On one hand, an adequate explanatory framework should be versatile enough to open and investigate the so-called "black box" of a state, while taking into account international interactions(Fakiolas, 2012: 14). On the other, it should be flexible enough to explore and explain changes, adjustments and adaptations in the behavior of a state in its effort to address a complex and anarchical international environment(Diez et al., 2011: 1–2). For example, a state's action may be in the same time defensive and offensive, or could start as a defensive one and could be seen as offensive in the future. A state's move could be made to counterbalance another state's move and finally become a salient advantage that could lead to supremacy.

These thoughts bring us to the works of two important scholars, that is, Stefano Guzzini's "The Enduring Dilemmas of Realism in International Relations", and Joseph Grieco's "The Schools of Thought Problem in International Relations".

The first one discusses the Realists "identity dilemma" as a continuous struggle to determine what flavor of Realism should they choose trying to understand and explain states' behavior, strategy, policy and power dimensions(Guzzini, 2004). This struggle leads to an explanatory deficit as the coherence of the theoretical shell becomes more important than the explanation itself(Guzzini, 2004: 554).

Grieco's work is broader. It generally refers to International Relations theories. Grieco believes that the clash between schools of thought confines the ability of scholars to examine and understand, both, states' and international system's operation in its wholeness(Grieco, 2018a). Schools of thought may provide a predetermined pattern of study, but at the same time they limit and restrict useful and important aspects of analysis. Grieco proposes a collaborative theoretical approach that could intellectually combine different IR schools and advance research beyond intratheoretical boundaries.

The energy sector seems ideal for the implementation of these two springboard positions. In particular, the explanatory framework I propose derives from these positions. I name it "Encompassing Realism". Encompassing Realism uses the flavors of Realism in International Relations studies and the already implemented versions of Realism in the International Political Economy field as a repository of theoretical tools and interpretations (Table 1).

Table 1 - Realism Repository

Realism Repository	
IR	**IPE**
Quaker Realism	Augmented Realism
Critical Realism	Elaborated Realism
Rise and fall Realism	
Classical Realism	
Neorealism	
Structural Realism	
Offensive Realism	
Defensive Realism	
Neoclassical Realism	
Realist Constructivism	

As this framework is adjusted to illustrate the role of the energy sector in enhancing a state's international position, I portray these tools through the prism of the power factor. Drawn on this, I formulate a hierarchical scheme, the "Energy Status Goal" that depicts several levels of energy power that a state might achieve in a global context (Fig.1). As energy becomes a factor that could change a state's position in this model and the "Energy Status Goal" could operate as a state's power aspect, then energy seems to hold an autonomous place in the conceptual state's power construction(Guzzini, 2013: 6). A further and more sophisticated scheme based upon the notion of the "Energy Status Goal" is depicted at Figure 2. The enhanced version includes some more detailed attributes of each level, for example the "Energy

Transit" categorization(Casey and Sussex, 2012: 27) and the "Net Exporter – Petrostate" variety.

Figure 1 - Energy Status Goal (Simple Version)

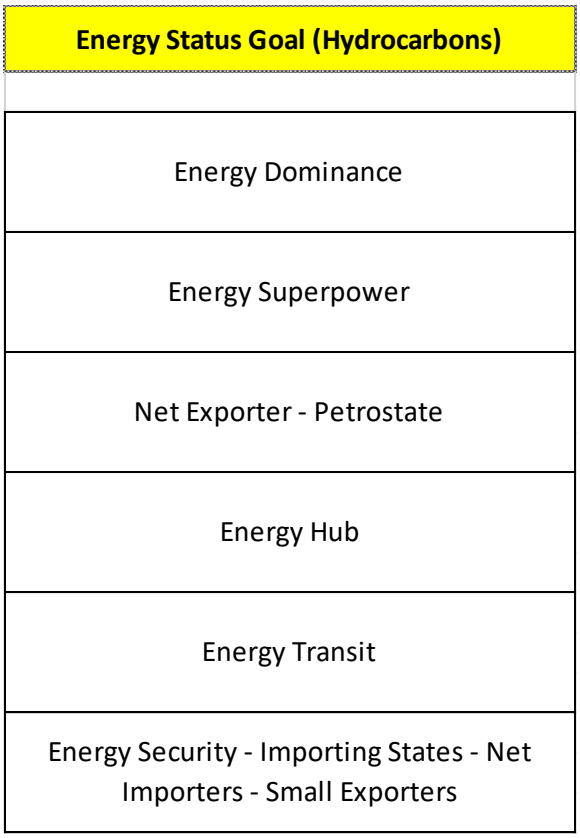
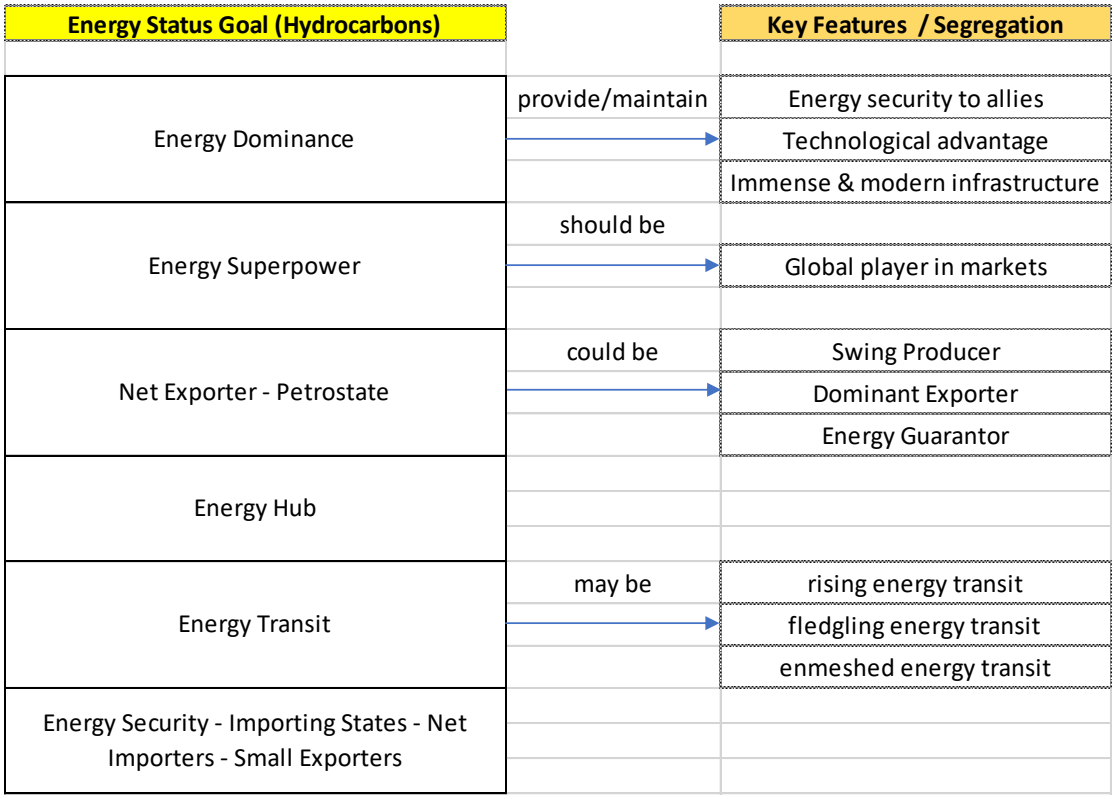


Figure 2 - Energy Status Goal (Enhanced Version)



The intermediate part of the explanatory framework is the most important. It is the link between the world order, as it is perceived by states, the structural factors that they use for projecting power and the mechanism that turns each factor into a power factor in any given time. This mechanism shows that power factors can be dynamically chosen either to promote a state's position, or to represent a state's response to the priorities posed by the international system(Ripsman et al., 2016: 19).

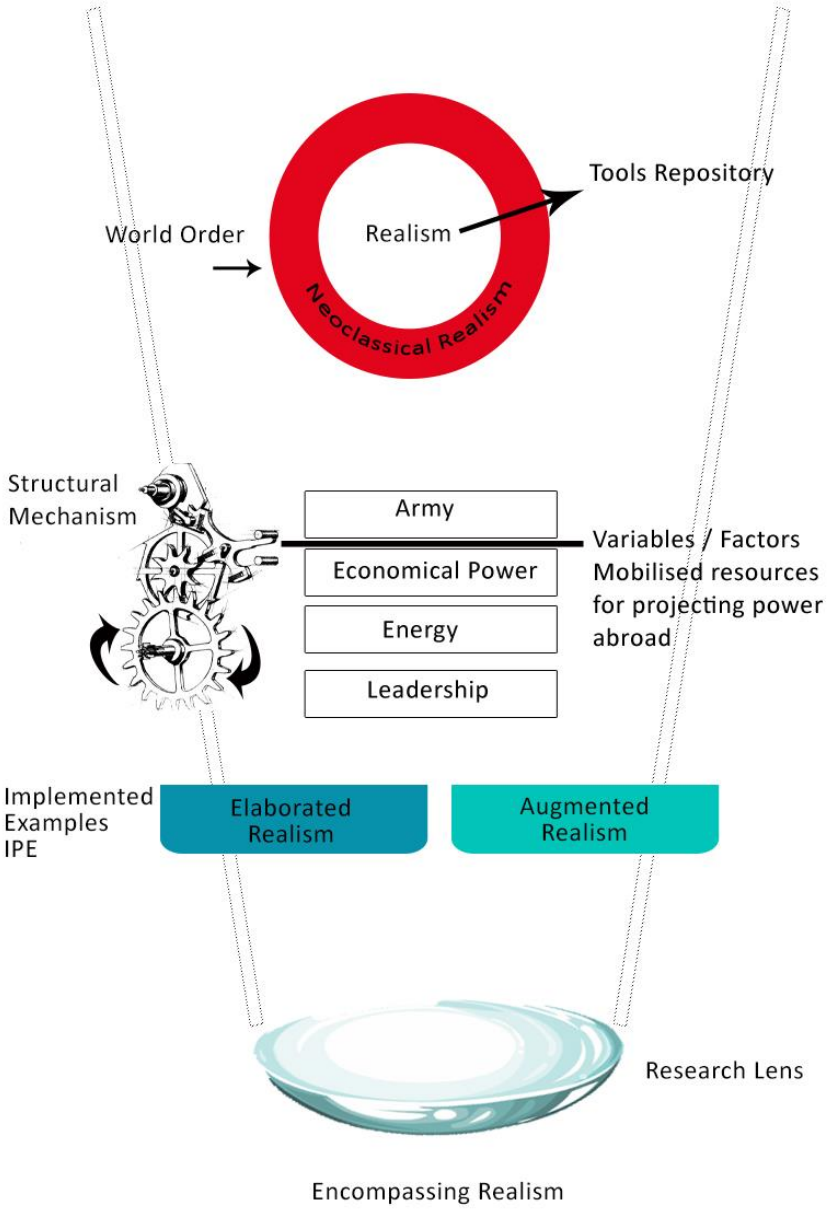
Neoclassical Realism lies at the core of Encompassing Realism and the framework's construction because it has two pivotal characteristics. First, it is ideal as «*neoclassical realists go on to factor in specific features of a given situation to generate more complete explanations of foreign policy*»(Wohlforth, 2008: 39) and they believe that «*theories are complementary rather than competitive*»(Wohlforth, 2008: 51). This aspect makes essential the use of the "Realism Repository". The Realism Repository offers an optional theoretic toolbox by holding Realism's basic theoretic assumptions. We don't propose an intra-schools of thought collaboration as Grieco does, but an "intra-Realism" one, allowing a broader conceptual explanatory and exploratory field. By this way we try to overcome the dilemmas Guzzini traces out in his work.

Second, for NCR «*systemic incentives shape but do not dictate state behavior*»(Foulon, 2015: 636). From this point of view, the state is not a passive entity towards the system. There is a two-way interaction between the domestic and the international level. The state is affected by the international conditions but at the same time it is able to influence its external environment(Quinn, 2013: 172). The first statement allows us to open the "black box" of the state and to study power factors such as the army, the economy, the leadership capabilities, the natural resources etc(Foulon, 2015: 646). The second one

goes beyond some realist theories' boundaries that create a wall between domestic and international, or ring-fence the systemic level of analysis(Kitchen, 2010: 131). We don't reject these theoretic approaches but we use them as useful explanatory tools to study possible contingencies.

The proposed explanatory framework is depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Encompassing Realism's Framework Scheme



Encompassing Realism is actually the research lens of the explanatory framework. It doesn't only include the constituent parts, but it carries the implementation logic as well. The implemented examples from the IPE(Kallioras, 1998; Sklias, 2011) show

the applied blending of Realism at the IPE level where the field of economy is used as the primarily studied power factor of the state.

Under this lens we can study any state as a case, by elevating energy at the mechanism of the preferred power factor that we want to examine.

There is no denying that energy is much more than a simple commodity. It is closely intertwined with national interest, power antagonism, international conflicts and the position of a state in the global political order(Goldthau and Sitter, 2015: 943). As an overall factor of national power, it might be maximized and protected in many conventional and hybrid ways to serve a state's security purposes. The term "energy status goal" in our framework aspires to encapsulate the complex of these multifarious and intricate dimensions that energy could take domestically and internationally.

States do not perceive these dimensions homogenously. As each state poses different priorities, the energy sector serves different aims and intentions domestically and internationally. States may use the energy sector in order to get a better position on the chessboard regionally and by this way to ameliorate their global position too. We can observe a broader field of energy policy implementation that traverses the domestic, regional and international level and seeks to align different levels of political action and behavior. These interactions cannot be examined individually as they are mutually influenced multi-directionally. This is why Grieco's proposition is adequate for such cases. The incarceration in restricted theoretic boundaries inevitably restricts the research.

Greece and Cyprus as case studies

Greece and Cyprus are two interesting case studies for the proposed framework. They both appertain to a complex entirety of political interactions domestically, regionally and internationally. Also, for both cases the energy strategies and policies ascended to the top of the national agenda during the last 15 years. For Greece, it was the period 2006-2009 that was dominated by energy issues and specially by the agreements with Russia for oil and gas pipelines(Balafas, 2015). Cyprus just recently became the epicenter of international companies' natural gas exploration because of the new found rich undersea resources(Kostianoy and Carpenter, 2018).

For Greece, the deals with Russia for the construction of the Burgas–Alexandropoulis oil pipeline and the South Stream gas pipeline in 2006-2009 could be significant assets for handling its financial and economic problems(Jirušek et al., 2017: 349). They were also compatible with its aspiration to become a regional energy hub with pipelines bypassing Turkey, a traditional problematic neighbor(UPI, 2009). This intension was promoted as a major national political target during 2006-2009. After the signing of the agreement for the South Stream, both President Putin and Prime Minister Karamanlis talked about a strategic partnership. The agreement was mutually beneficial for both countries' aims. Greece would strengthen its position in the region and in the EU as an energy hub for both commodities, oil and gas. It would also get detached from the dependence on Turkey as these pipelines would be the first ones bypassing Turkish territories(Marketos, 2008). Furthermore, the creation of closer economic and political

ties with an “energy superpower” would bring Greece in an advantageous position against Turkey, the established regional power and an intertemporal threat for its national interests. As it was a turbulent period for Greece’s relations with the US, heading to the Bucharest events, with the earlier recognition of FYROM by the name “Macedonia” from the US side and their intention to join NATO with this name, Greece saw these agreements with Russia as a political leverage coveting Russia’s political support(Christou, 2011). For Greece, the ascent to the “Energy Status Goal” rank from a net importing state with grave security issues because of its dependence on Turkey’s traversal pipelines, to the “Energy Hub” level was clearly connected to Realist theory’s national power, security and interest aspects(Antoniou, 2007). It was an issue altering domestic, regional and international balance dimensions for Greece, with serious implications to the US-Russian tug-of-war in the region. These agreements were also seen from the EU side as increasing European dependence on Russian energy resources(Apokis, 2007). This variety of multilevel interactions cannot be examined under a sole Realist theory. What was considered as a defensive move for Greece, may had been considered as an offensive one from Turkey, while in the same time a neorealist approach could ignore important domestic and regional implications.

For Cyprus, the recent discoveries of rich natural resources, mainly undersea natural gas, brought a total realignment of its relative position in the region. The involvement of international companies for exploration and exploitation purposes created an ameliorated balance of power for Cyprus. In this case too, Turkey is the main threat with the political and territorial status of the island being under dispute since 1974. When Turkey started harassing international companies’ operations, it was the U.S. Navy that arrived in the region to monitor and prevent the outbreak of skirmishes at sea(MarEx, 2018). That was a clear sign that the US, as a major power, would stand on Cyprus’ side for exploring its natural resources, at least at the region where ExxonMobil is drilling(in.gr, 2018). Since the early days of the announcements about the gas discoveries, the role of the US in the region was at the epicenter of the discussion. US leadership for the eastern Mediterranean resources would pass through a more active role against Turkey’s aggression(Cropsey, 2013). The findings also helped Cyprus to built closer ties with countries such as Israel and Egypt. Noble Dina(naftemporiki.gr, 2019) and Medusa(Shay, 2018) joint naval military exercises with Cyprus’ participation, prove Cyprus’ position improvement in the region. Last March, the leaders of Greece, Israel and Cyprus and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo gave to this cooperation a strategic status, declaring that they will together “*defend against 'malign influences' in region*”(ekathimerini.com, 2019). For Cyprus, the ascent to the “Energy Status Goal” to a net exporter level signifies much more than a boost for its economy or resources capabilities. The growing interest from other countries operates as a transformative leverage for the state’s position in the regional and international field. This could be a decisive alteration for the resolution of domestic issues concerning the EU too as the “Cyprus problem”. In Realist terms, for Cyprus energy resources operate as a power generator which realign the domestic and foreign environment. The proposed framework is adequate to explore this realignment as it takes under examination broader power balance issues, involving major powers and their quest for natural resources.

Conclusion

Joseph Grieco argues that "*collaborative challenges represent one possible element of a reform program that might help us attain more fruitful engagements of the various schools of thought in our field. […] collaborative challenges across the IR schools of thought might help us learn more about the world in which we live*"(Grieco, 2018b: 19). Stefano Guzzini points to Realists' trammel for a common conceptual grid about power, security, system, world structure, national interest, states' aims, levels of analysis(Guzzini, 2004: 552–554).

We propose an explanatory framework combining Realist theories as a repository of theoretical tools that could shed light on a variety of states' behavior. The broader concept is that a state interacts bidirectionally with its foreign environment. It is influenced and it influences at the same time.

We consider energy resources (mainly oil & gas) as a state's power capability in material terms, but at the same time we consider it as a wider power form that constructs its own ranking calibration, the "Energy Status Goal". Security is encapsulated as a ranked energy power condition that gets maximized to the superpower or the dominance level as the cases of Russia and US demonstrate respectively.

From that initial point of thought, we see states as cases of implementation for our explanatory framework, seeking for interactions in domestic, regional and international level. The cases of Greece and Cyprus show compatible aspects with our framework as well. Further work is needed to improve the proposed framework and enhance it as a complete theoretic tool that we call it "Encompassing Realism".

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Human Security and Climate Change: The case of Greece

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Abstract

This paper attempts a brief overview of the human security concept, focusing on the environmental aspect of security, which has received much of the public attention due to the severe consequences of climate change. Main consideration is given to the broad and narrow approach. It then analyses obvious climate change-related issues in a country, such as Greece, with evident vulnerability on rising temperature, floods and conflagrations. The paper indicates the inability of the Greek state to perceive climate change events as a threat to human security, since the state-centric approach to security is the dominant one.

Keywords: human security, climate change, Greece, environment

Introduction

The concept of human security was firstly introduced by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and specifically, by the research team of Mahbub UI-Haq–a former Pakistani finance minister- that prepared the 1994 Human Development Report. Human security was defined *as "safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression and protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in the patterns of daily life whether in homes, in jobs or in communities"* (UNDP 1994: 23). While there is no consensus as to the exact definition of the term, there is no doubt that the introduction of human security challenged the state-centric notion of security by focusing on the individuals as the main referent object of security and bringing new kinds of threats. Human security is considered in seven main categories: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security.

One of the critical and contemporary dimensions of human security is the environmental security that is threatened by climate change. Climate variations have throughout time affected people's living conditions. Droughts, storms and flooding have posed a threat to the well-being or even survival of many people. However, viewing climate change as a security threat is not something all countries have historically been comfortable with, or were even aware of. Greece is among these countries, as the state-centric approach to security is the dominant one.

The last ten years, the Greek state is mainly focused on the economic crisis, without showing any intention to securitize the environment from the threat of climate change (Gerosideris 2016). Even if, Greece is constantly experiencing wildfires and flooding across the country, with the last and deadly examples of Mandra's flooding (2017), is still resisting in conceiving climate stresses as a threat to human life. Thus, this paper first provides a conceptual framework of human/environmental security and then critically examines the nonexistence of national climate change-policy and the Greek failure to address any (environmental) threat out of the traditional conception of security.

The concept of "Human Security"

The beginning of the 21st has seen environmental issues receiving an unprecedented significance on the international agenda. More and more policy-makers now take environmental hazards into serious consideration framing them as a threat to individuals, communities, states and to humanity in general. As a result, human security has taken a prominent place in the field of security studies. The concept of Human Security (HS) has been initially introduced by the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report. Human security was defined as "safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression and protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in the patterns of daily life whether in homes, in jobs or in communities" (UNDP 1994: 23).

That report underlined seven sub-categories of HS: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security. From these, the environmental one received much of the public attention due to the severe consequences of climate change. Indeed, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projects a temperature increase of 1.1 ℃ to 6.4 ℃ by 2100 (IPCC

2007). Many scientists forecast that by the end of this century the sea will rise one meter, which means that around 100 million people living no more than one meter above sea level, will be forced to move (Newland 2011: 4).

The introduction of human security in the academic and public discourse, challenged the state-centric notion of security by focusing on the individuals as the main referent object of security. Traditionally, security meant protection of the state's sovereignty and territorial integrity from external military threats. The concept, thus, put forward an innovative multidimensional framework that integrates UNDP's seven distinct categories: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security. The term is also characterized by its universalism since it reflects a concern with the security of every individual, irrespective of country or place of residence (Huliaras and Tzifakis 2007). Since UNDP's definition, there has been a proliferation of definitions that most of them represent broader or narrower revisions of the UNDP original concept (Roberts 2006; Uvin 2004; Werthes and Bosold 2006). Thus, human security remains a contested concept. Advocates of human security have supported two different approaches of the concept, the broad and the narrow (Roberts 2006). The broad formulation has been proposed by a number of authors, including UNDP, the European Council and the Barcelona Group, the Commission on Human Security, Government of Japan, as well as academics such as Beebe and Kaldor (2008), King and Murray (2001), Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy (2007), Thomas (2000) and several others. While, the narrow approach has been used by the Human Security Network at the UN, the annual Human Security Reports, and academics such as MacFarlane and Khong (2006), Mack (2004) and Taylor (2004). Many academics and policy makers remain skeptical of its practical usefulness and political relevance (Jägerskog 2004; Krause 2004; Mack: 2004). Mack (2004) argues that human security definitions are so ambiguous and broad that finds little analytical or practical utility.

On the other hand, proponents of human security in its broad notion point out that human security is not a policy tool but a 'foundational concept' (UNDP 1994), a paradigm (Haq 1995), that brings values and ethical norms to security debates (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007). However, both critics and proponents of human security recognize its theoretical utility (Tzifakis 2011). The reason for that relies on its interdisciplinary character, since it provides point of views and findings from different research fields (development studies, peace studies, environmental studies and critical security studies) (Burgess and Owen 2004: 345).

Is Climate Change a Security Issue?

In the 1970s, environmental problems started to gain ground in political discourse, mainly focused on their potential implications on security (Falk 1971; Brown 1977). However, a more structured dialogue regarding the environmental security was developed in the 1980s, when global environmental problems such as the depletion of stratospheric ozone, global warming, water pollution came more intensively into discussion. The publication entitled "Our Common Future" published in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) was actually the first document that tried to make a link between the environment and the security. In this sense, Pirages (1978) claimed that "ecopolitics" will be the new agenda for international

relations. While, Soroos (1994) criticized that at that point of time the debate over the "environmental security" was still quite analytical and normative.

Realists consider environmental problems as belonging to the spectrum of 'low' politics rather than an issue of 'high' politics, such as security. Therefore, realists tend to put threats on hierarchical order, separating threats that can be legitimately included in the security agenda and those that cannot (Lacy 2005). Contrary to realism, environmental security has gained the last two decades great attention in the context of national policy debates. In 2004, for instance, the British government's chief scientist, Sir David King, underlined that "climate change is a far greater threat to the world's stability than international terrorism" (BBC News Online 2004). A group of eleven high-ranking, American admirals published a report in April 2007 arguing that climate change will act as a 'threat multiplier' to existing insecurities, posing a significant threat to American national security interests (Trombetta 2008).

In the European context, the report on climate security issued by the Commission of the European Council (2008), led by Javier Solano, urged European policy makers to take actions, mitigating climate change effects by developing a preventative security policy. Whereas, the UN Security Council debated the security implications of climate change for the first time in April 2007. When Houghton highlightened in 2003 that climate change would be greater threat on world peace than terrorism, a wide debate was provoked (Neil 2010). The explanation of climate change in terms of security become widely accepted in foreign and defense ministries, academics, researchers, policy makers, and other stakeholders around the world with the proliferation of reports, scientific studies, policy and academic papers, articles etc.

Climate change is, for governments, a threat to security because it is a threat to nation-states in terms of their interests, their economies and their borders. In short, climate change becomes important when consisting an obstacle for states to rule their territory, and protect their borders. This trend is described as the 'securitization' of climate change by Barnett (2009), while Hartmann (2009) argues further that national security interests actively involve the 'militarization of climate change'.

The impacts of global climate change are already detectable and are being experienced in diverse ways around the world. According to the latest IPCC report (2019) on the impacts of a 1.5 ℃ global warming, it is underlined that despite the Paris Agreement's target of keeping temperature below 2 ℃, projections for 2100 are depicting at least 3 ℃, deteriorating retreat of sea ice in the Arctic; retreat of virtually all of the world's glaciers; changes in ranges and abundance of individual species; and the frequency and intensification of rainfall etc. As a result, climate change events impact human well-being, posing a threat to human health (Patz 'et al' 2005) and local people's lives as it affects sectors such as water resources and energy (Henderson and Muller 1997; Korner et al. 2005; Giannakopoulos et al. 2009).

Climate Change and Security in Greece

Greece, as a part of the Mediterranean region, is susceptible to climate change particularly due to its vulnerability to drought and rising temperatures (Gao and Giorgi 2008). During the last decade, Mediterranean countries are experiencing extreme

climate events more frequently (Kostopoulou and Jones 2005; Alpert et al. 2008). These changes may adversely affect their economies (e.x. agriculture, tourism), and the well-being of local communities.

It has been proven that since the end of 1990s the temperature of Greece has been increasing, especially during the summer months (Giannakopoulos 2011). During these months, Greece is constantly facing extreme wildfires across the country. For instance, in August 2007, the country experienced the worst conflagration in its history with a loss of 63 human lives (Xanthopoulos 2008). In August 2009, devastating wildfires occurred across the country, forcing 10,000 people to abandon their homes; destroying forests and farmland; and increasing air pollution. Rainfalls have increased as well, with the most recent example the town of Mandra, found west of the capital Athens, which experienced torrential rains and extreme flooding in November 2017, during which 24 people lost their lives.

Thus, Greece unambiguously the last two decades is facing stable and permanent climate change issues. The projections on Greece's climate are simultaneously not optimistic. According to the IPCC report (2014), it is expected that the temperature will rise 2.5 degrees Celsius on average; heat wave days will increase by 15-20 annually by 2050; sea levels will rise by 20 to 59 centimeters; and extreme weather events will be much more frequent (IPCC 2014). All these adverse projections will threaten not only the environment but the human existence as well.

In this context, the Greek state is showing no intention to protect and securitize the environment from the ongoing and unexpected threat of climate change (Gerosideris 2016). Climate change has not been in any way defined as a threat and has not been linked to the security agenda of Greece. Greek politicians, as well as academics and researchers have never made any connection between climate change and security. Even if at international (UN) and European (EU) level, in which Greece is a member, it is widely accepted that climate change debate should be viewed through the lens of security, the Greek state is resisting in making this connection.

However, almost all of the previously mentioned climate change events (floods and wildfires) occurred in Greece have a reasonable connection with the security concept, since resulted not only in the destruction of the ecology and environment but also in the loss of human life. Climate change is a security issue in Greece with many consequences and policy makers should also include this nexus into their agenda.

C**onclusions**

This paper attempted a brief overview of the human/environmental security concept, attempting to analyze the connection between climate change and security. It became evident that the explanation of climate change in terms of security is widely accepted between academics, researchers, policy makers, and other stakeholders around the world. However, viewing climate change as a security threat is not something all countries have been comfortable with, or were even aware of. Greece, as it became obvious, is among these countries. Yet, due to the intensification of climate change events and the negative environmental projections for Greece, it seems necessary for the Greek state to take actions and preventative measures, protecting the ecosystem and the well-being of the local communities.

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