NUCLEAR POWER IN TIMES OF INTERNATIONAL INSECURITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

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This study substantiates the claim that nurturing state sovereignty, pursuing national interests and relying less on other states is the coveted compass that could guide humanity out of the ecological quagmire. My starting point is Hegel's notion of state sovereignty, which implies that relations between states are irradicably strained. This starting point causes me to see state sovereignty as part of the solution, rather than as an obstacle, to dealing with the environmental crisis. I build my argument on a parallel between the instability of the natural and international environment. Awareness of the unnecessary risks associated with over-dependence on other countries and on the natural environment is, in my view, leading to a renaissance of nuclear energy, which could enable us to ensure adequate energy self-sufficiency without serious damage to the environment.

> "Anyone who has visions should see a doctor."
> Helmut Schmidt

Introduction: The Realist's Assumption

Amidst the environmental crisis that endangers humanity's survival, it is unlikely that the long-standing political, international, economic, and social norms of human existence on Earth will change proactively. Although the crisis extends beyond national borders, it would be unwise or naive to assume that states will relinquish their differences to resolve a shared issue. The contrary result is anticipated. This common challenge is probable to intensify tensions among nations. This realistic conviction and skepticism regarding the feasibility of significant modifications in human behavior persuade me to

contend that the principle of state sovereignty should be honored, rather than altered or dismissed,[1] to steer humanity out of our predicament.

By realism, I refer to an attitude that does not pit human reason against unreasonable reality. Instead, realism trusts the world, even when it appears irrational, and seeks to see rationality in it. Correspondingly, it does not set humanity against the tide of history and "brush history against the grain."[2] Instead, it seeks to march with the times. It recognizes the past events that failed to resolve the "tragedy of international politics" (Mearsheimer 2001) and caused the collapse of the anti-capitalist economy, resulting in the end of ideological competition (Fukuyama 1992).

In response to Russia's war in Ukraine, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz proclaimed a "turn of the times" (*Zeitenwende*). The unipolar moment has passed and multipolarity is on the rise. The era of imitating the West seems to be coming to an end (Holmes, Krastev 2019). "The world is changing dramatically and it's not waiting for us to change it" (Zupančič 2021). The forgotten downside of international relations is becoming visible. Globalization, previously considered a contributor to world peace, is now exhibiting contradictory trends. Growing animosity between nations has the potential to lead to outright warfare. Following a three-decade lull, the wheels of world history are beginning to turn again. Countries are grappling with a sense of insecurity regarding their future prospects. They do not encourage greater cooperation and instead tend to be more isolationist.

What becomes evident is the *simultaneity* of the ecological and international crises. This juncture constitutes a unique opportunity to rethink our strategies towards tackling environmental challenges. In the past, when American global dominance was not in doubt, efforts to address ecological crises were focused on promoting international collaboration. However, an era reminiscent of the Cold War (Kotkin 2022) is emerging, emphasizing the conflicting interests of nations. Protecting our country's sovereignty seems to be more important than cooperating to preserve the planet.

Amid these challenging circumstances, it is critical to investigate novel approaches to address the environmental predicament. Can this global issue be resolved *sans* cooperation from all major nations? Can we protect the planet while confronting nations like China and Russia? With minimal coordination between governments, can we address this universal challenge? Is it possible to foster the common good while each state pursues its own national interests vigorously? Could the intuitive imperative for all major countries worldwide to collaborate be a flawed and deceptive belief that

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[1] For a rejection of the notion of sovereignty, see for example, Smith (2011). For an overview of the debate on the concept of sovereignty, see Bilder 1994.

[2] Cf. The historical materialist "regards it as his task to brush history against the grain" (Benjamin 1986, 257).

undermines the existing tools in place to tackle the environmental crisis? Conversely, could the increasing friction between nations be the guiding light to pave the way forward?

Interstate confrontation prompts states to prioritize their self-reliance. As a result, states will be cautious about choosing their partners, especially if they cannot afford not to cooperate. The idea that good trade relationships lead to amicable ties is now obsolete. Due to the unpredictable and unstable climate, countries will no longer *teleologically* assume that sharing the capitalist "base" will have a positive impact on the political "superstructure" in the future. It is worth considering whether exclusively instrumental rationality in economic relations can promote a superior level of international relations, such as lasting peace or friendship. By way of precaution, countries tend to approach others with reserve and scrutiny, often adopting conservative risk management strategies and seeking to spread their risks.

My argument for how mutual distrust contributes to solving the ecological crisis is as follows. States driven by their basic instinct for sovereignty inadvertently become more detached from the natural environment. Their inclination for independence from other countries unintentionally results in their increased independence from the physical world as well. Fostering self-reliance in relation to other countries also positively impacts self-reliance concerning the environment. The need to exhibit resilience in international relations includes withstanding the unpredictability of nature. The hazards of war and natural disasters are analogous. Neither world peace nor the preservation of life on Earth can be assured anymore.

When the three main sources of energy – renewables, fossil fuels and nuclear power – are assessed according to the resilience criterion, nuclear power emerges as the clear winner: it is environmentally friendly and also friendly to state sovereignty. This is why the unstable geopolitical situation could help countries to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis.

I. Hegel on Sovereignty and International Relations

Before delving into the details of nuclear power and its characteristics, it is necessary to establish the essential concept of state sovereignty in the context of international relations.[3] The controversial issues surrounding the concept of sovereignty will also be briefly examined.

The formation of international relations cannot be taken for granted. It necessitates the existence of numerous political entities. The interconnectedness between nations is achieved when these political actors differentiate themselves from one another, whilst retaining their own distinct identities. Each entity seeks to preserve its position as a node

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[3] For a detailed historical discussion of the relationship between national sovereignty and international law, see Hinsley (1986, 158 – 235).

within the network and shows no inclination to merge or dissolve with its fellow units, unlike Prussia in the past.

> Those who speak of the wishes of a totality [*Gesamtheit*] – which constitutes a more or less independent state with its own centre – to abandon this focal point and its own independence in order to form a whole with another state know little of the nature of a totality and of the self-awareness which an autonomous nation possesses. (Hegel 1991, 360, § 322).

To maintain their sovereignty and prevent disintegration, states focus on preserving their borders, which separate them from the outside world. If a country did not feel its independence, it would not be threatened by another country violating its territorial integrity. Sovereignty is the core of every state. It is the soul of its body. A made-up state that is not independent could let itself be taken over and assimilated by another country without any resistance or a war of independence, but it could also try to expand because it would not be aware of the difference between itself and the outside world. This latter situation aligns with the description of empires given by Henry Kissinger: "For the greatest part of humanity and the longest period of history, empire has been a typical mode of government. Empires have no interest in operating within an international system; they aspire to *be* the international system" (Kissinger 1994, 21).

Empires cannot be considered sovereign states due to their constant desire for more land. They lack self-control and their size fluctuates based on their current level of power. Thus, the concepts of power and sovereignty are not identical. Being a sovereign state requires more than just strength (Hegel 1991, 316, § 278). Modern nation-states represent the ideal counterpart to empires. These political entities can genuinely claim sovereignty because they are capable of self-limitation. They are not solely shaped by external forces, but also by their citizens. These citizen-states define themselves through their individual moments, while conversely citizens define themselves through the nation-state.

This is how the philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel views the modern nation-state, namely as a personality or individuality, irreducible to its constituent parts. Individuality is an "infinitely negative reference to itself" (Hegel 1991, 359, § 321), which equates to self-determination. Individuality demonstrates its completeness, coherence, and unity to the outside world by referring to itself.[4] It presents itself as a self-contained and determined unit. "Individuality, as exclusive being for itself, appears as the relation [of the state] to other states, each of which is independent [*selbständig*]

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[4] One focal point is what Europe lacks. Recall one of the commonly held sayings attributed to Henry Kissinger: "Who do I call if I want to call Europe?"

in relation to the others" (Hegel 1991, 359, § 322). Hegel thus describes modern or constitutional states as "organisms," a commendable designation (Hegel 1991, 304, § 271). By contrast, he demotes empires, despotisms, or former feudal monarchies (Hegel 1991, 327, § 286) as "aggregates" due to their lack of proper self-relation (Hegel 1991, 315, § 278). Their unity is not genuine but rather a mere collection of parts. The aggregate only imitates unity, and this type of conglomeration of parts does not constitute a living whole. Several federations nowadays bear a striking resemblance to such an aggregate. By definition, these political associations stifle the ability of nations to exercise self-determination. "What is lacking [in these regimes] is the principle of subjective freedom" (Hegel 1991, 338, § 299). Their level of self-determination does not meet the standards of democratic nations. As a result, these countries are often classified as non-Western or authoritarian. The West's relationship with what it perceives as flawed countries is characterized by an incomplete or limited form of recognition, with both parties experiencing mutual misrecognition and mistrust. This asymmetry fundamentally hinders the pursuit of common solutions to global issues.

This section has demonstrated that the assertion of state sovereignty is not an archaic concept, to be relinquished, but rather a contemporary principle that organizes the relationships between states (Hegel 1991, 368, § 333). The pursuit of independence is primarily a state's pursuit of recognition for its independence by other states (Hegel 1991, 367, § 331). Thus, independence does not signify an unattainable or regulatory aim of total absence of dependence on others.

II. Independence? It Depends on What Country and to What Extent

When the international and natural environment turn unfavorable and turbulent, it would be irresponsible and manifestly irrational for states to rely on what is unreliable and unstable. However, it would be equally irrational for states to sever all outside connections.[5] The prudent response would be to pursue self-sufficiency to a satisfactory degree.

Different nations hold different views on what constitutes an acceptable level of autonomy. Generally, it is deemed sufficient for countries to exercise control over what is known as critical or systemically relevant infrastructure. However, pinpointing exactly what falls within this category is a matter of subjective assessment and cannot be accurately determined from the outside. Ultimately, a state is considered to be "a wholly

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[5] For the sake of illustration, perhaps the most significant attempt to disengage from international relations was once made by the Soviet Union, which wanted to escape the capitalist environment and the "imperialist policies" of the bourgeois states.

spiritual entity" (Hegel 1991, 369, § 335), with varying levels of anxiety across different states (cf. Biess 2019).

A country's self-reliance potential is dependent on numerous factors. While I will not delve into these factors in detail, I will provide a brief list of some: scientific and technological expertise, geopolitical location, size of territory, size of population, level of patriotism, and access to natural resources. Furthermore, strong relationships with other nations, particularly neighboring ones, also significantly contribute to this potential. Friendly nations typically compensate for their lack of self-sufficiency through military, technological, trade and energy cooperation.

But among nations, too, a friend in need is a friend indeed. It is specifically the emergency situation that we are concerned with. When states feel that they are in need, they will generally and instinctively react as individuals, taking care of themselves first and then, if necessary, helping others. In times of crisis, it is more important for the state to prioritize its relationship with its citizens over maintaining friendly relations with other nations. The precarious and volatile external circumstances complicate the task of mutual assistance. Cooperation is complicated by the lack of confidence that what is valid today will be valid tomorrow. As the environment becomes increasingly unpredictable, nations will aim to rely more on their own resources and less on others. Reducing their reliance on external sources fosters greater self-sufficiency.

We have highlighted that independence should not be viewed as a binary concept, but rather as a matter of the degree or extent to which a state is self-sufficient. This is because a state can maintain sovereignty while still depending on other nations and the natural environment. The struggle for recognition amongst states illustrates this point. A state cannot attain sovereignty by isolating itself from its surroundings and becoming self-sufficient. Sovereignty is attained through recognition and respect from other states. A state is only truly sovereign when it is sovereign not only for itself but also for other states (Hegel 1991, 367, § 331). The recognition of its sovereignty by others is necessary for a state to secure its identity and international status. Therefore, interdependencies between states do not negate state sovereignty[6] and only become problematic when they are no longer accompanied by mutual trust and recognition. Relying on a disrespected and untrustworthy state can turn dependence into a perilous source of insecurity and danger (cf. Hoffmann 1963, 321). Being reliant, particularly in critical sectors, on an entity that is not substantially recognized as an equal political partner is contradictory and hazardous.

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[6] Some scholars claim otherwise. Interconnectedness and globalisation violate the notion of sovereignty, e.g., Bragdon (1992, 384).

We can see the primacy of a political category of misrecognition over the economic viewpoint of utility and profitability. When alienation and disrespect intervene in the relationship between states, the need arises to make oneself independent of the country that is disrespected.

There is another reason why it is important to understand independence as a matter of degree and scale. It makes sovereignty less of an unattainable ideal and more of a practice that is lived. If a country is disappointed by another and finds itself dependent on its potential enemy, it does not cease to be sovereign for this reason. Sovereignty is not just a desired goal, but the actual pursuit of being more sovereign. Only an already existing sovereign can seek a more perfect fulfilment of sovereignty. A state must already be an individuality that exists for itself in order to want to be more materially independent of the states that it does not recognize. Analogously, it must already be an individuality to want to be recognized as such by other states. Only a sovereign can have the desire to be truly sovereign. Sovereignty is not only the end, but also the way to this end.

So I propose to understand state sovereignty as a movement between what is and what is desirable. It is neither what it is, nor what it is going to be, but what it is becoming. It is what is happening right now. It is a movement between what is and what ought to be. This movement is the "soul" of reality. Reality is not spiritless. It is not that which opposes an ideal, but that which already fulfils the ideal. Only when states are under the illusion that a lasting peace is at hand can this dynamic stagnate. Once the illusion of permanent friendship between all the great nations of the world has been dispelled, states that have awakened to the new realities will have to relearn the pursuit of their sovereignty.

III. Featuring Nuclear Power

Having introduced the concept of state sovereignty, the struggle of states for recognition of their sovereignty and the concept of misrecognition, it is clear that the harmonization of interstate relations and the stagnation of their dynamic development is an interlude rather than the result of historical evolution. Against this background, the robustness of nuclear power stands out in comparison with other energy sources. To assess the reliability of nuclear power, Martin Heidegger's notion of "enframing" (*Gestell*) proves useful, even though he did not intend to endorse the technology, but rather to criticize it. I generally believe it is quite legitimate to use a term against the intentions of the author who originally used it. In this case, I am also being honest because Martin Heidegger worries about exactly what I find to be the benefit of nuclear energy.

In his essay "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger explains enframing "as the name for the essence of modern technology" (Heidegger 1977, 20), with the contrasting example of "the old windmill" (Heidegger 1977, 14). This "ancient" source of energy defies the modern paradigm of enframing because its sails "are left entirely to the wind's blowing" (Heidegger 1977, 14), so it produces energy only occasionally. When it is windy, the mill grinds flour; when it is not windy, it produces nothing. The mill does not draw wind power from a "standing-reserve" (*Bestand*) (Heidegger 1977, 17). Wind cannot be stored and made available to turn the mill when it is needed. Wind cannot be commanded. It is maladaptive. It cannot be stockpiled for the bad times to come when the wind stops blowing. "The windmill does not unlock energy from the air currents in order to store it" (Heidegger 1977, 14). However, if we were to store the energy from the wind in batteries, we would incorporate windmills into the enframing at that moment. Hydroelectric power stations, for example, work in this framework because instead of using the energy of the water flow directly, as watermills do, the turbines are driven by water stored in a dam, so that if the water flow suddenly dried up, we could rely on the hydroelectric power station being able to produce electricity for some time thanks to the enormous amount of water in reserve.

In terms of *Gestell*, temporality plays a crucial role as we can see. The more accumulated energy humanity has available for immediate use, the more time it has to realize its goals, the less time is in the hands of "the future," the less power fate has over humanity, and the more firmly humanity holds its destiny and its future in its own hands (cf. Groys 2018, 8).

Before our time runs out, we are free to plan our future without any limitations. If I thought there might be a power cut in the next 24 hours, I would not be able to make plans for tomorrow. That is why coal was such an important breakthrough for humanity. People discovered that coal (and later other fossil fuels) provided not only a vast amount of energy, but also energy that could be used immediately. Coal "is stockpiled; that is, it is on call, ready to deliver the sun's warmth that is stored in it" (Heidegger 1977, 15). Overnight, people no longer had to save energy and live in energy and time poverty from day to day, year to year. Instead, they could pursue their full potential without constraint.

It was not until the industrial revolution, powered by fossil fuels, that the era of the natural or circular perception of time came to an end. Although Christianity had already rejected this pagan perception of time (Löwith 1949, 3, 30f.), the reality of life in a constant energy shortage did not correspond to this new awareness. People kept relying on bioenergy (wood, water, sun) which, although infinitely replenished, could only be regenerated slowly and unreliably. This handicap of renewables is fundamental and persists to this day. While wind and solar power are basically

limitless, they are not constantly available for long periods of time. By contrast, coal and other fossil fuels are still there, as an emergency line. Until all the fossil fuels are used up, they will remain obedient to our orders, akin to an athlete ready for the starting signal. The constant presence of this resource allows us to truly live in accordance with a linear perception of time.

Inevitably, growth becomes an end in itself for a humanity governed by a linear understanding of time. While growth for the sake of growth is not always looked upon favorably,[7] a society without energy scarcity can project itself spontaneously into the future over unprecedented distances. Consequently, it can contemplate future possibilities far beyond what previous generations, who suffered from energy deprivation, could conceive.

The contemporary proliferation of unreliable energy sources that are not available around the clock, such as wind and solar power, is a surprising development in light of Heidegger's notion of enframing. Rather, the expansion of nuclear technology might have been predicted. This is because nuclear technology takes the logic of enframing to its imaginary peak, given that the reserves of uranium and thorium (i.e. two elements that can be converted into fissile material and used as fuel for nuclear power stations) will last for tens of thousands of years at current rates of energy consumption (e.g. Herring 2021, 661 – 669).[8]

In addition to their vast availability in the Earth's crust and oceans, uranium and thorium have a deeper advantage compared to fossil fuels. They do not rely on the existence of a specific biosphere that produces fossil fuels over millions of years. These substances come into being due to the collision of neutron stars (Herring 2021, 661ff.), so their occurrence is not limited to planet Earth, and they will be found on other planets throughout the universe.

When discussing nuclear energy viewed from the enframing perspective, remember that the location of energy reserves is important. If they are in a limited space, such as the Earth's crust, it is different than if they are in an unlimited space, like the universe. As a result, the common argument that unlimited growth is impossible with limited resources becomes irrelevant if energy exploitation is not restricted to our planet.

In terms of international politics and the struggles of states to secure their independence, nuclear energy offers the following advantages over fossil and renewable sources. Firstly, those powerful nations in search of reliable access to natural resources will be happy to learn that reserves of uranium and thorium are more or less evenly spread throughout the entire planet's surface. It is also comforting to know that proven technologies can extract uranium from seawater. "Thus no country or international cartel

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[7] E.g., "Growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell" (Abbey 1977).
[8] See also https://www.kernenergie.ch/de/rohstoff-uran-_content---1--1085.html.

can monopolize the uranium market, as has been the case with petroleum (Herring 2021, 668). Given this situation, nuclear energy can help strengthen a country's sense of self-sufficiency and independence from other states.

National self-sufficiency greatly depends on a country's energy reserves. Fissile materials have several orders of magnitude higher energy density than fossil fuels, making them vital to this goal. A consistent supply of fuel is needed to maintain the uninterrupted operation of coal- and gas-fired power plants, regardless of whether it is transported via long coal trains or gas pipelines. The high energy density of uranium allows nuclear power plants to order fuel years ahead, although current plants only use about 1 per cent of the energy in the fuel rods. As a result, there remains unused energy in nuclear waste that could potentially serve as a considerable source (cf. Smil 2015).

The enormous energy density results in a high EROI coefficient (Weißbach 2013). This indicator measures how efficient an energy source is overall. It shows how many times more energy this or that energy source produces over its lifetime relative to the energy consumed in its manufacture (construction), operation, decommissioning, fuel purchase, and any other costs we count. Heidegger speaks of expediting (*Fördern*), which "is always itself directed from the beginning toward furthering something else, i.e., toward driving on to the maximum yield at the minimum expense" (Heidegger 1977, 15).

Under ideal circumstances, renewable sources generate a tenfold return on the energy invested, and coal-fired power plants have an EROI of around 30. Nuclear power plants nowadays produce about 75 times the energy required to build, operate and decommission them. Nonetheless, the possibilities of innovative fourth-generation reactors are impressive. One calculation suggests they could effectively generate up to 2000 times the energy invested in them (Huke, et. al 2015, 234).

Regarding environmental protection, splitting atoms is a much more efficient way of exploiting nature's resources than any other type of energy source. Figuratively speaking, nuclear exploitation of nature is so effective that it causes comparatively little damage to nature. This also makes it a substitute for less efficient, i.e. more violent, ways of extracting energy from nature. Put simply, if we use nature in a more intensive, concentrated and efficient way, we would not need to use it in a way that is wasteful, primitive and uncivilized. Rather than exploit nature in ways less productive than technically possible, the logic of capitalist ideology suggests that it is better to let nature take its natural course.

IV. Conclusion: After the Comeback of History
Although nuclear power has the ability to minimize insecurity by decreasing reliance on potentially unfriendly states and unforeseeable environmental circumstances due to its

robustness, its use for civilian purposes poses environmental and economic risks (Müller-Jung 2023). Considering the objective decline and waning of the "first nuclear era" (Weinberg, 1994), these limitations have outweighed the advantages of nuclear power. Consequently, it is necessary to mention at least two factors to provide context to the nuclear phase-out. Firstly, this policy is mainly implemented in Western democratic nations where public opinion carries great weight. Secondly, it is taking place in geopolitical conditions that are considered favorable.[9]

International politics no longer elicits insecurities for a country that has fulfilled the universal history of humankind and sees its triumph as an inspiration for others. By adopting such a grand, teleological narrative, a nation does not fear economic dependency on states with less advanced forms of government. This dependence does not cause a sense of insecurity because, as the argument goes, the telos of historical development is to transform all countries into liberal democracies (see Fukuyama 1992). This view of history may be the sole means of challenging a fundamental claim of realist theory, which is the lack of certainty regarding the intentions of other nations in the present or future (Copeland 2000, 210).

When the idea that international relations are subject to progress and that all countries want to westernize collapses, Western countries will experience the insecurity they have forgotten. They will realize that they do not know what other people's intentions are. What exactly do these other nations desire if not liberal democratic governance? Amidst the current state of uncertainty and in a real competition with no clear winner, the time has come for a comparison, namely between the risks of using nuclear energy and the risks of not using it (Kalmbach, et al. 2020). This reassessment will highlight the previously disregarded advantages of nuclear energy. In uncertain times, refraining from nuclear energy and depicting it as an uncontrollable and high-risk technology may no longer be easy, given that its alternatives also present substantial risks, particularly at an international level. If avoiding nuclear energy is considered equally perilous, the fear of nuclear power may thus be put into perspective, paving the way for a more level-headed, less emotive, and more rational discussion on energy policy.[10]

However, the uncertainty resulting from a lack of knowledge of other states' intentions has another crucial dimension. It prompts us to reflect upon what other states know and the knowledge that underpins their plans and intentions. While Western

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[9] One good illustration of this thesis is Iran, which is developing its nuclear programme partly because it does not feel that it is in a geopolitically benign situation.
[10] This invitation to compare the risks associated with the use and non-use of nuclear energy allows me to avoid a separate approach to the issue of nuclear security, which I believe is unfair because it implicitly suggests that the other options on the table do not pose serious geopolitical risks.

countries, as evident by their energy policies, may harbor serious doubts about the viability of nuclear energy, certain other countries could be unshakably convinced that there exists no (sustainable) alternative to this energy source. While certain countries may hesitate, others will focus on developing technologies that can provide them with an almost insurmountable edge. It is exceedingly risky to allow a potentially hostile state to establish a major technological lead. The inference drawn from this argument is that some countries may harbor doubts regarding the future potential of nuclear power, yet they should still pursue technological development as a precautionary measure to safeguard against potentially unfriendly nations obtaining an undue advantage in the event of successful nuclear power exploitation. This argument would be pointless if we were to assume that peace between states is guaranteed.

The insecurity among states ought to prompt countries to maintain an open-minded outlook and steer clear of self-centered tendencies (cf. Kissinger 2010, 10). Taking security concerns into consideration will help prevent nations from succumbing to populist temptations and determining, for instance, a country's energy policy according to their whims. Nations need to harness their views on energy production with regard to the international landscape, putting aside subjective evaluations. It is therefore important that countries learn to keep their willfulness in check and act accordingly. The increasingly perceived tragedy of international politics will compel nations to curb their self-absorption and consider the actions of others. External risks will be a challenge for nations to move away from insularity and instead engage with other people's perceptions of them. Understanding international relations as social relations cultivates respect for the views of others.[11] Sociability involves relativizing one's own opinions by considering those of others.[12] By openly acknowledging the unfavorable nature of interstate relations, countries could be encouraged to adopt an energy strategy that enhances their self-reliance and consequently their resilience in the face of international and environmental challenges.

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[11] On understanding international relations as social relations, e.g., Wendt (1999).

[12] Cf. "Thus, since the size of the body politic is purely relative, it is forced constantly to compare itself in order to know itself; it depends on everything that surrounds it, and must take an interest in everything that happens there, for, wish as it might to remain inside itself without gaining or losing anything, it becomes small or large, weak or strong, according to whether its neighbour extends or contracts and becomes stronger or weaker" (Rousseau 2005, 67).

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