

Chapter 2

Sublimated Expansionism? Living Space Ideas in Nordic Small-State Geopolitics



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Introduction

In the run-up to the 2019 Danish elections, the Social Democratic Party took out billboards with slogans like ‘Denmark should again be a green great power’. Further to the north, in 2013, the liberal-conservative Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carl Bildt, described Sweden as a ‘humanitarian great power’ – a phrase which has gained wider currency across the political spectrum (Swedish Government, 2013).

Something intensely geopolitical is at play in these statements, which combine a concept usually linked to territorial possession and hard power with more transcendental notions. Focusing on two Nordic proponents of classical geopolitical reasoning, Rudolf Kjellén (1864–1922) and Gudmund Hatt (1884–1960), we will in this chapter propose that such statements are articulations of a distinct mode of geopolitics. Tunander (2008) hints at this as a ‘*Geopolitik* of the weak’, while Sharp (2013) engages with somewhat related issues as ‘subaltern geopolitics’. Here, we will approach the subject as ‘small-state geopolitics’, which we provisionally see as ‘a situated perspective on both the small-state “self” and the wider worlds’ (Larsen in Moisiso et al., 2011, p. 245). Even when looking at Kjellén and Hatt alone, there are many possible facets to this. We will mainly focus on the questions of geographical expansion and ‘living space’ and, building on Marklund (2021), we argue that Kjellén and Hatt in their small-state geopolitics proposed what we term ‘sublimated expansionism’. By this, we refer to the tendency evidenced in the geographically driven, but socially oriented thinking of our two interlocutors to transform notions of success, survival and supremacy from categories of territorial control into

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P. Jakobsen et al. (eds.), *Socio-Spatial Theory in Nordic Geography*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-04234-8_2

cultural, economic and technological factors. Moreover, we suggest that Kjellén and Hatt in their small-state geopoliticking – i.e., their political advocacy and academic activities – exhibited somewhat surprising flashes of *avant la lettre* socio-spatial thinking. Their views were ‘classical’ in the sense that they saw territorial expansion and domination as essential – for great powers. But when it came to small states, notably their native Sweden and Denmark, they readily ‘sinned’ against these geographical-determinist ideas and engaged in more nuanced arguments stressing geography as interrelated with social and historical factors and processes.

Other politicians and scholars in the Nordic area engaged with geopolitics during the first half of the twentieth century, notably in Finland (for a discussion, see Paasi, 1990), but here we will focus on the most vocal Danish and Swedish proponents of geopolitical reasoning during this period. In the greater part of this chapter, we analyse how Kjellén and Hatt theorised territorial or, rather, spatial expansion in their small-state geopolitics. In the terminology of Ó Tuathail and Agnew (1992), we approach our protagonists as ‘intellectuals of statecraft’ engaged in ‘formal’ small-state geopolitics. By way of conclusion, however, and already hinted in the opening of this chapter, we suggest that past and present ‘practitioners of statecraft’ engage in paralleling ‘practical’ modes of small-state geopolitics. Drawing on our analyses of Kjellén and Hatt, we propose three important characteristics of small-state geopolitics: (1) determinism is qualified by voluntarism; (2) space is complemented by future; and (3) external expansion and military prowess is sublimated into internal progress and, possibly, international norm pioneering. But we also emphasise the significance of historical-geographical context. Differences between Kjellén and Hatt, and their sometimes seemingly inconsistent shifts in thinking, importantly relate to geographical and historical differences and changes.

Kjellén: ‘Big Is Beautiful, But Small Is Smart’

Rudolf Kjellén began his academic career in 1891 as a teacher of political science at the newly founded Gothenburg University College, a position which eventually also included the subject of geography. Some eight years later, Kjellén (1899) introduced the concept of geopolitics as the doctrine of the state as a ‘geographical organism’. While Kjellén’s notion of geopolitics has often been seen in terms of determinism and the dominance of great powers, Kjellén in fact underlined the importance of the interplay between geographical factors and various power resources for the interrelations between states (Kjellén, 1901, p. 401). In this initial framing of his geopolitical theory, Kjellén rejected the notion of borders being determined by nature alone but viewed them as profoundly shaped by human agency and intentions. In Kjellén’s conception, the ‘laws’ of geopolitics are thus determined at the intersection between nature and culture. This in turn points to another strand in Kjellén’s theory of geopolitics, which underscores the elements of power struggle and processual elements in the relations between states and peoples

(Marklund, 2014; Roitto et al., 2018, p. 121; Abrahamsson, 2021; Björk & Lundén, 2021; Davidsen, 2021).

From this basic insight, Kjellén developed an organic conception that ‘the peoples’ develop in interplay between contraction and expansion (Kjellén, 1900, pp. 32, 34), ominously concluding that great power interests and resources would always present a threat to the security and prosperity of smaller states. In short, for great powers there could be no such thing as ‘natural borders’, especially not in the era of fast-advancing transport technology.

What would this imply for small states, such as Kjellén’s home country, Sweden, and its future domestic and foreign policies? Kjellén (1906, 1908) sought to explore this problem in a series of popular articles as well as political tracts on Sweden’s position in the world. A set of main arguments emerge in this political-scientific advocacy for a Kjellénian geostrategy for Sweden: Kjellén saw internal stability, economic prosperity and ‘cultural’ advancement as deeply entangled prerequisites for the survival of small states in a world marked by geopolitical competition between great powers. This programme in turn built upon three interrelated aspects: national unity, biopolitical reform and (small-state) geopolitics. While this strategy did not entail military aggression towards either neighbours or peoples far away, it can nevertheless be interpreted as a proto-fascistic program for state-led and export-oriented commercial and intellectual mobilisation at home, based on active social and population policies as well as ambitious economic and research programmes, designed to curb socialism and strengthen the state.

Kjellén’s attempts at making sense of Sweden’s place in the world were deeply shaped by the historical situation facing Sweden as well as Swedish conservatives in the aftermath of the dissolution of the union with Norway in 1905. To the majority of conservatives, the secession of Norway had not only caused a sense of national loss, but also an objectively different situation for Sweden in terms of military and economic geography, making the country perceptively more vulnerable to possible attack from abroad. Kjellén and his associates in the so-called academic right or *Unghögern* (Young Right), whom he represented politically as a member of the Second Chamber of the *Riksdag* (parliament) in 1905–1908 and of the First Chamber in 1911–1917, drew a different conclusion. To them, the secession of Norway served to strengthen Swedish inner cohesion and the Norwegian experience could be used to invigorate ideas on national rebirth through a social reform *within* Sweden itself. Sweden needed what he called ‘*nationell samling*’ (national unity, national rally) in the face of internal divisions, a thought epitomised in the concept of *folkhem* (peoples’ home), a figure of thought Kjellén most likely coined (Lagergren, 1999; see also discussion in Björk & Lundén, 2021). Kjellén argued that there were objective reasons for expecting Sweden to fare better than other comparable ‘small’ states – its territorial size and natural resources in fact implied its status as a ‘*mellanstat*’ (middle state) akin to Spain or Turkey, rather than a genuine small state, and it thus had latent potential for self-sufficiency or ‘autarky’, thus ensuring Sweden’s future security and wealth (Kjellén, 1906, pp. 17, 191–192).

However, Sweden’s greatest obstacle to realising its latent power potential rested with its ‘underpopulation’, Kjellén argued. This, in turn, was exacerbated by

emigration and a declining birth rate. Additionally, the vastness of Sweden's territory itself – which encompassed the same area as Japan, but with only one-tenth of the population – complicated matters. As a member of parliament, Kjellén often spoke about the need to 'regain Sweden within Sweden's borders', a notion which in various ways had been articulated since the 1809 loss of Finland, for example by the national poet Esaias Tegnér. Acknowledging the worsening social inequality caused by rapid industrialisation, modernisation and urbanisation, he expressed both fear and understanding towards the demands for democracy and socialism following in its wake, coining the concepts of 'national democracy' and 'national socialism' in his rhetorical struggle for 'national unity'. To Kjellén and the Young Right, Sweden required an active and ambitious modernisation programme in all fields of life, not only to defend Swedish territory against external aggression by great powers locked in geopolitical competition, but, perhaps even more importantly, to secure Swedish society from inner dissolution (Larsson, 1994, pp. 63ff, 69).

As Kjellén took a seat in the Riksdag in 1905 – the same year as the dissolution of the union with Norway – he began formulating a political science research programme for a 'biopolitical' study of the state, attempting to explore the scientific laws of great power development (Kjellén, 1905, p. 23f). This programme would examine the geographical location, boundary situations and morphology of different countries (geopolitics), their economic resources (ecopolitics), their population development and 'racial' composition (demopolitics), their social conditions (sociopolitics) and finally their constitutional structure (kratopolitics). In Kjellén's initial biopolitical programme – eventually revised a decade later in *Staten som livsform* (Kjellén, 1916; for a discussion, see Abrahamsson, 2013) – geopolitics emerged as just one of several different biopolitical methods available to states in their attempts to secure and/or strengthen their position and status in an increasingly competitive world (Kjellén, 1908, pp. 30–62).

While this initiative has correctly been understood as primarily a research programme (Elvander, 1961, p. 270f; Hornvall, 1984, pp. 313–322; Soikkanen, 1991; see also discussions in Esposito, 2008, p. 16f; Lemke, 2011; Gunneflo, 2015), it also in important ways reflects Kjellén's political activity. His motions before parliament and Riksdag debates appear as a series of attempts at a practical implementation of this theoretically oriented academic programme. Taken together, they present a kind of plan for 'internal colonisation', in the sense of drawing up an inventory of Sweden's national resources and planning for their purposeful long-term exploitation in close coordination between state agencies and corporate actors, thus combining his biopolitical and geopolitical precepts for Swedish domestic and foreign policy, as adapted to the latent power resources he judged would be available to Sweden, if modern and rational reforms were initiated to make use of them.

Domestically, Kjellén argued in general terms for social reforms. But few of his proposals addressed practical social health and social policy. His social programme appears less concerned with economic redistribution than economic growth, possibly a precursor of contemporary discourses on 'social investment'. Primarily, Kjellén detailed demands for state intervention and government support for such diverse things as home ownership and land reclamation, railways and roads, canals

and ports, transoceanic shipping lines and business schools. Most of all, he concerned himself with the nationalisation of major natural resources – especially of hydropower, iron and timber for the industrialisation of Norrland, the northern two-thirds of Sweden. These investments would, Kjellén assured, generate new jobs and opportunities for economic growth and hence social mobility within Sweden itself, above all to and within Norrland, discouraging future Swedish emigration abroad, promoting the Swedish birth rate and economic growth, thus ensuring national unity.

However, even if these measures would be implemented, Kjellén concluded, Sweden would remain ‘underpopulated’ not only in relation to its objective natural resources and the expanse of its territory but also in relation to Northern Europe’s more obvious powerhouses: Russia, Germany and Britain. Like the United States, he noted, Sweden required migrant labour to realise its latent potential. But Kjellén did not specify from where Sweden would be able to attract migrants. Elsewhere, for example in his statement before the parliamentary Emigration Study, he spoke favourably of Chinese and Japanese seasonal migration to the United States – especially to California and Hawaii. At the same time, he argued in favour of anti-immigrations laws, primarily directed against Polish seasonal workers from Galicia, using explicitly racist rhetoric (Kjellén, 1908, p. 215ff; for a similar argument, almost verbatim, see Emigrationsutredningen, 1910, pp. 15–20).

Internationally, Kjellén’s programme called for renegotiating the terms of trade and tariffs in agreements with Sweden’s main trading partners, Germany and Great Britain. More specifically, Kjellén envisioned a future role for Sweden in Russia in general and in the Baltic Sea Region in particular, proposing that Sweden should serve as a transit route for Russian exports and imports, as well as a provider of modern science, technology and know-how in exploiting vast Russian natural resources (Kjellén, 1911, pp. 18, 28). This ‘Baltic programme’ would not entail any aggression but base itself on the proposition that Swedish immaterial resources in terms of commerce, culture, science and technology would prove attractive to Russia, Sweden being neutral (Kjellén, 1911, p. 27). Kjellén also strongly advocated the need for state support in opening markets for Swedish business interests in officially independent and sovereign nations and semi-colonies across the world. The focus on Russia is of importance as a specifically Swedish preoccupation with the East (Marklund, 2015), and Kjellén does not seem to have taken a great deal of interest in Arctic or Antarctic endeavours. This marked a contrast to Danish and Norwegian activities at the time, later leading to Dano-Norwegian competition over Northeast Greenland, which has been theorised as an example of ‘small-state imperialism’ (Nilsson, 1978). As concessions were not expected from the colonial powers, the efforts and expertise of Swedish diaspora, entrepreneurs, explorers and scholars active in other parts of the world were to be engaged (cf. Avango et al., 2018). His programme presaged small-state geopolitics or ‘resource colonialism’ (for the concept, see Vikström et al., 2017) – a kind of colonialism without colonies (Lüthi et al., 2016).

In his argumentation for the viability of this joint biopolitical and geopolitical programme, Kjellén explicitly drew upon his perceptions of Swedish ‘superiority’ in cultural, moral and technical terms, arguing that material and immaterial factors

conditioned each other, not least in the era of modernity when science and technology fused practical and theoretical knowledge. The dream of a ‘new Sweden’ based upon investment in its own natural resources and social capital, exploitation of Baltic and Russian markets, as well as commercial outreach to the semi-colonies and intermediary states of the world, suggest visions of Kjellén as a ‘hyperborean’ (Schough, 2008). This aligned him with other Swedish conservatives and proto-fascists enchanted by the prospect of rekindling the Swedish Empire anew, if less through military aggression but ‘sublimated’ through joint cultural and commercial mobilisation, directed inwards as well as outwards (Elvander, 1956, 1961, p. 270ff; Hall, 2000; Linderborg, 2001, p. 268ff; Björk & Lundén, 2021).

Here, Kjellén’s thinking seems in important ways to have reflected the complex tension between small-state realism and the idealism dominating Swedish foreign policy during the 1900s, the interpretation of which is still a central question in the history of Swedish foreign policy (Bjereld & Möller, 2016; Brommesson, 2018). Moreover, to Kjellén, geopolitical laws existed in a complex interaction between culture, history and geography, where at different times one or the other could get the upper hand. These fluctuations in turn give rise to a fundamentally dynamic and processual view underpinning Kjellénian geopolitics.

In this application of small-state geopolitics, Kjellén nuanced the determinism of geopolitics, arguing for a mutuality between nature and culture in shaping geopolitical processes, preceding debates on geo-economics and critical geopolitics in important respects. However, as the First World War unfolded, Kjellén adapted his own thinking to the opportunities arising from Germany’s relative military success against Russia, aligning with the so-called ‘activists’ in favour of a Swedish expansion in the East. These activist ideas were admittedly marginal in a society where even observers far to the right generally believed in neutrality, also marginalising the influence of Kjellén’s thinking in right-wing circles. It soon lost geopolitical relevance as liminal states were established across Eastern Europe (Kuldkepp, 2014). Indeed, Kjellén’s commentary on post-Versailles Europe related to the great powers rather than Sweden, and to theory rather than practice.

It has been argued that his advocacy informed Swedish ‘social engineering’ domestically (Larsson, 1994; Björk et al., 2014; Gunneflo, 2015), while his ideas on Sweden’s imagined position in the world have been mostly obscured. There is little evidence of any ‘Kjellénian programme’ on the part of official Sweden (see, however, Tunander, 2008). Nevertheless, there are indications that Kjellén’s small-state geopolitics – implying that Sweden’s future lies in developing its material and immaterial power resources internally in order to compete on the world market – gained wider currency among Swedish thinkers on international relations in the interwar period (Marklund, 2021). Actual developments in the 1920s to some degree correspond with Kjellén’s earlier ideas, as they led to a marked increase in Swedish commercial and technological activities internationally, not least in Eastern Europe, also involving a modest advocacy for Swedish transoceanic ‘colonies’ (see for example Key, 1922, 1923, 1926) and the return of irredentist Swedish minorities from abroad, as well as a deepening of intra-Nordic cooperation (Marklund, 2015). While Kjellén himself remained deeply sceptical about Nordic cooperation, there

are numerous instances where Kjellénian geopolitics – already sublimated into abstract notions of Swedish ‘leadership’ among the Nordics or otherwise unspecified ‘tasks’ in the East (e.g., Staël von Holstein, 1918) – were refocused by the next generation of Swedish conservatives towards the issue of eventual security and/or military cooperation with newly independent Finland (e.g., Rappe, 1923; Essén, 1930) as well as stating explicitly that ‘the Baltic Sea and the Nordic countries are Sweden’s “living space”’ (for the concept, see Andreen, 1940, p. 12; for a recent discussion, see Stadius, 2020). These expressions demonstrate another, geo-economic and more regionally oriented ‘internationalism’ alongside the more known Swedish (and other Scandinavian) ‘socio-political’ internationalism addressing global issues of justice and peace, within for example the League of Nations (for the latter, see Gram-Skjoldager et al., 2020). While Kjellénian notions of future deterritorialized Swedish grandeur gradually became reterritorialized by young academic conservatives during the interwar years, progressive interlocutors protested, arguing that Sweden’s future lay in international cooperation and that ‘Sweden’s living space is the world!’, as proclaimed by national economist Gunnar Westin Silverstolpe (1941; see also Myrdal, 1944).

Hatt: ‘Through Private Enterprise and Frequently Under Foreign Flag’

Gudmund Hatt was drawn to geography by an interest in ethnography, and during his ten years at the National Museum in Copenhagen, he developed a life-long passion for archaeology (for a biography, see Larsen, 2009a). However, around the time he was appointed professor of human geography at Copenhagen University, in 1929, he started to cultivate ideas about geography and world politics. These ideas transpired in scholarly texts, but his work increasingly took the form of articles for newspapers and magazines as well as subsequently published radio talks (for a bibliography, see Larsen, 2009b). Hatt was in various ways a political activist, but unlike the radically conservative Kjellén, he did not engage in parliament or party politics. He wrote almost exclusively for newspapers of the conservative Berlingske Printing House, but if he oriented himself party-politically, he was probably a social liberal (Lund, 2007). Hatt was a remarkably productive public intellectual, which made him a well-known if ultimately infamous figure, and in the recollections of a student at the time, his ‘teaching on political geography aroused so much interest that students from other faculties thronged the lecture room’ (Hansen, 1988, p. 149). His predominantly popular form of communication makes it difficult to pinpoint his sources of inspiration. That said, Kjellén is highly visible in his most systematic discussion of geopolitics, the essay ‘What is geopolitics?’, and the copy of Kjellén’s (1916) *Staten som livsform* at the now defunct library of the Department of Geography at Copenhagen University was well annotated in Hatt’s unmistakable scrawl. He recognised Kjellén as the originator of the term ‘geopolitics’, and in the

opening of his essay, Hatt (1940b, p. 170) summarised Kjellén's understanding of geopolitics as 'the science of the state as a geographical organism.' This 'sounds German' Hatt added, 'and to understand Kjellén's conception of the state it is necessary to go to German science from which he has his impulses.' For Hatt, this involved Henrich von Treitschke and particularly Friedrich Ratzel.

Hatt sometimes used the term 'geopolitics', and as war engulfed Europe, his commentaries included excursions into military geostrategy. But his approach to the geography of world politics was essentially economic, tied to what he called the 'industrial culture' (for an elaboration of the following, see Larsen, 2011). Access to well-developed markets for raw materials and sales was in this respect central, and while he also (if frequently inconsistently) dabbled in racialised environmental determinism (e.g. Hatt, 1928), access to cheap and exploitable labour eventually became an important element in his understanding of colonialism. To a significant degree, he was a geo-economist rather than a geo-politician.

For Hatt, the industrial culture was geographically expansive, and he found that 'any vital people possesses the need and ability for expansion' (Hatt, 1928, p. 230). Ultimately, and clearly (but not uncritically) related to the popularisation of Ratzel's notion of *Lebensraum* in the interwar period, he termed this as a need for *Livsrum* (living-space) propelled by *Livsrumspolitik* (living-space politics) (e.g. Hatt, 1941b). In this perspective, the second part of the nineteenth century had been Europe's 'happiest age' (Hatt, 1940b, p. 176). During this 'great age of liberalist politics' under British hegemony, the world was open for trade and navigation: 'Humankind has never been closer to a coherent world-economy' (Hatt, 1941b, pp. 5, 7). He recognised that this involved 'much human extermination and much bloody oppression' and mocked altruistic portrayals of colonialism (Hatt, 1940b, p. 176; also Hatt, 1938a). The notable exception was Denmark's remaining colony of Greenland, which for him was 'one of the few colonial areas where the consideration of what is best for the native population weighs more heavily than the demands of European trade' (Hatt, 1929b, p. 13). Despite moral reservations, he seems to have recognised (direct and indirect) colonialism as an unavoidable feature of the expansive industrial culture. But the 'happy age' crumbled. 'Liberal principles could only hold sway as long as possibilities for expansion were practically limitless' (Hatt, 1941b, p. 93), and by the early twentieth century 'the Earth was divided between its conquerors' (Hatt, 1940b, p. 176). Moreover, it became apparent that 'economic liberalism did not bring equal economic progress to all states' (Hatt, 1938b, p. 5), and as Britain in the face of crisis turned to imperial nationalism, opportunities for non-territorial expansion through access to resources and markets dried out. This entailed the emergence of 'satisfied' and 'hungry' great powers, where the former – mainly Britain, Russia and the United States – were powers that had acquired autarkic 'living-space' through territorial expansion, while the latter – Germany, Japan and Italy – sought border revisions 'because they lack raw materials, markets, land for settlers, and generally fields of action for their national energies' (Hatt, 1938a, p. 72). The global conflict was thus driven by great-power quests to establish or maintain 'living-space' through autarkic 'economic-geographical great-spaces' (Hatt, 1941b, 1941c), a notion clearly inspired by

contemporaneous debates on *Großraumwirtschaft* (see also Lund, 2012). As Hatt put it, ‘what is happening in the world today is a tremendous struggle, not over ideologies but over real assets ... the struggle concerns such realities as colonies, markets and resources’ (quoted in Jerrild, 1939, p. 174).

Despite placing a heavy emphasis on economic forces, Hatt’s great power geopolitics largely paralleled contemporaneous ideas about expansionist grand designs (cf. Walter, 2002), and while in a more reduced form than Kjellén’s magnum opus on the great powers, he analysed them in broadly similar form (e.g. Hatt, 1941b). However, small states were also accorded a place in his geopolitics. The basis of this was his longer-standing emphasis on the expansive nature of the industrial culture. But in the final years of his engagement with geopolitical analyses, at a time when the future of the Danish state was uncertain and frequently in outlets and contexts that proved politically controversial (Larsen, 2015), he developed explicit small-state geopolitical ideas. He often directly related these ideas to Denmark, but even when he wrote in general terms, he was implicitly referring to particularly Denmark.

Referring to Ratzel and Kjellén, Hatt saw the state as an ‘organic whole’ of land and people, emphasising a qualitative assessment of this relationship: ‘Small states can be strong, well organised, full of life and leading in cultural development’ (Hatt, 1940b, p. 174). In fact, like Kjellén, he hinted that small states could be qualitatively superior to large states. But Hatt’s small-state geopolitics was more radically de-territorialised than Kjellén’s, arguably because Sweden territorially was a ‘middle-state’ for Kjellén, while continental Denmark unquestionably was small. Unlike Kjellén’s Sweden, however, Denmark had overseas colonies and dependencies. Yet Hatt does not seem to have lamented the 1917 sale of the Virgin Islands to the United States (Hatt, 1924), and he seems to have accepted Icelanders’ quest for independence from Denmark (Hatt, 1941c). Nor are there any indications of him being an irredentist in relation to the land lost to Prussia in 1864, a national trauma that had sealed Denmark’s small-state status, which was only partly rectified when Northern Schleswig/Sønderjylland returned to Danish control following the 1920 Schleswig plebiscite. Greenland was the exception. He was an outspoken proponent of Danish sovereignty over the island (Vahl & Hatt, 1924; Hatt, 1940a), and his previously mentioned self-serving analysis of Danish colonialism in Greenland appeared in a volume aimed at the Hague settlement of the Danish-Norwegian dispute over Northeast Greenland.

Apart from his ‘small-state imperialism’ (Nilsson, 1978) when it came to Greenland, Hatt could be said to have heeded the post-1864 saying ‘Hvad udad tabes, skal indad vindes’ (What is lost on the outside, shall be won on the inside) – with a particular take on expansionism beyond small-state borders. The expansion, which he considered inherent to the industrial culture, could for a small state be achieved through networking into the world economy rather than through territorial control: ‘the Danish people’s expansive capacity has primarily not unfolded through state expansion. But through private enterprise and frequently under foreign flag, the Danish expansive force has asserted itself all over the globe’ (Hatt, 1942, p. 6). As seafarers, traders, engineers and managers and owners of plantations, for example, Danes had accessed overseas resources and markets that were essential for the

country's intensified agriculture and industrialisation: 'The mounting intensity of Danish economic life has thus gone hand-in-hand with – and partly depends on – a kind of expansion, an increasing adjustment to and entanglement in the world economy' (Hatt, 1942, p. 7). The small state of Denmark had, in other words, established a 'living-space' through economic-geographical relations rather than military-geographical control and domination. Hatt was not alone in this sort of non-territorial expansionist thinking. For one of the leading Danish contractors, Rudolf Christiani, the aim of his company's far-flung multinational operations was 'to make Denmark larger' (see Andersen, 2005), while one of the very few female Danish geographers at the time, Sophie Petersen, similarly found the multinational The Great Northern Telegraph Company to be 'one of the enterprises that make Denmark larger' by running telegraph lines in Russia and the Far East (Petersen, 1936, p. 49). Notably, for Hatt, this non-territorial expansion happened through the people (*Folk*) rather than the state. This does not imply that he bought into concurrent German ideas about *Lebensraum* and *Volk* – with its underlying emphasis on aggressive expansion of political boundaries (Klinke & Bassin, 2018). Hatt was not a *Blut und Boden* geopolitician. Rather, he emphasised the nation as the source of capacities to establish non-territorial living-space. Moreover, as we will see, his geopolitics seemed to include the possibility of a small-state existence detached from notions of absolute territorial sovereignty.

Considering his emphasis on economic-geographical relations, it is neither surprising that Hatt mourned the passing of the liberalistic free trade era, nor that he worried about the rise of autarchic 'economic-geographical great spaces' under the sway of competing great powers: 'The idea of national self-sufficiency, in its origin geopolitical rather than based on considerations of economic geography, can strike root in big states with rich and varied natural resources,' Hatt (1938c, p. 143) observed, 'but it can never be a very tempting gospel to small countries with undiversified resources.' Like others at the time, he considered whether the Scandinavian or Nordic states could be a viable economic 'block', but rejected such ideas (Hatt, 1934, 1938c). Denmark had to find a place in a wider European space, and he initially saw prospects in Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideas about 'Pan-Europe' (Hatt, 1929a). He later dismissed these ideas as 'unrealistic' (Hatt, 1943, p. 54), and as realities on the ground changed and Denmark was occupied by Nazi Germany on 9 April 1940, he – like the Danish elite more generally (Andersen, 2003; Lund, 2004) – worked hard to protect the Danish economy in what seemed likely to become a 'New European Order' under Germany. A fear in this respect was that Denmark would be ruralised, forced away from the industrial culture (Hatt, 1941b). As the Soviet Union entered the European war, his 'pro-German' position also became a question of protection against what he saw as a naturally expansive 'Russia' (e.g. Hatt, 1943). The fate of Finland seemed to have animated this fear (e.g. Hatt, 1941a).

Hatt's 'pro-German' stance (and activities) came to haunt him. But beneath his wartime writings and activities lurks an important element of small-state geopolitics that arguably has wider purchase. As we have seen, back in the 1920s he had written about the expansive capacities of a 'people', and not least when it came to small

states, he frequently wrote about peoples rather than states. While not desirable (and thus something that should not be expounded too clearly), he seemed to recognise that a small state, like Denmark, could not defend its territorial sovereignty. Rather, the key was to maintain the nation as an economically viable and – as far as possible – independent political unit. For example, one of Hatt's (very few) praises of Hitler was a wartime appeal for Nazi Germany to respect national self-determination in the reordering of Europe (Hatt, 1941c), and as he defined himself as a democrat (Jerrild, 1939), national self-determination probably included a measure of democracy (which, indeed, Denmark maintained under Nazi German 'protection' until August 1943). In this way, Hatt tapped into a wider and longer-standing 'survival strategy' in which powerful political actors, in and around the Social Democratic and Social-Liberal parties in particular, strove to protect and maintain the Danish nation (rather than the state of Denmark) as a coherent, viable and democratic entity (Lidegaard, 2003). 'The land conditions the people and the people condition the land,' Hatt (1940b, p. 175) argued in a Kjellénian fashion, 'and together they form a higher entity that is the state.' While he emphasised an intimate bond between people and land, he seemed to recognise that this social-geographical relationship – for a time, at least – could be maintained without the 'higher entity' of the fully sovereign territorial state. Also in this respect, there seems to be an important note of de-territorialisation (but not de-spatialisation) in Hatt's small-state geopolitics.

In the post-war purges, Hatt was convicted of having engaged in 'dishonourable national conduct' during the Nazi-German occupation, on the grounds of his geopolitical activities. He was neither an active nor ideological supporter of Nazism (or other radical ideologies), and, with reason, he felt that he had simply served the policy of the legitimate Danish government. Nonetheless, he was divested of his professorship and, to a large extent, became *persona non grata* (Larsen, 2015). Against this background, it is no surprise that he effectively vanished from scholarly and public discourse. Even less than Kjellén, he did not attract followers or spark a school of thought. Nonetheless, and with the notable difference that the United States replaced Germany in matters of defence, Denmark adhered in key respects to Hatt's small-state geopolitics in the post-war decades of 'block politics', first by joining NATO and subsequently the EEC (Borring Olesen & Villaume, 2005). This is not to suggest that Hatt was uniquely insightful. Rather, in the historical-geographical conjunctures of his time, he articulated key elements of a wider small-state geopolitics, which in important respects emphasises social-geographical relations as de-territorialised from the sovereign state.

Conclusions

Drawing on our analyses of Kjellén's and Hatt's thinking, we conclude by outlining what we see as three important characteristics of small-state geopolitics. First, while their small-state geopolitics is also marked by *realpolitik* and materialism, Kjellén and Hatt viewed the opportunities of their own small-state home countries as

significantly brighter than the ‘vulgar geopolitics’ they have been associated with would imply. Determinism is complemented by a measure of voluntarism, as the prospect of (their) small states is not simply determined by territory and natural endowments, but to a significant degree by how states and peoples make use of such factors – in a global perspective. Second, in acknowledging the impossibility of territorial expansion for their home countries, ambitions to improve their international status and security are projected onto commercial and technological prowess in the future, rather than upon geographical expansion in the present. Third, this reasoning is premised upon territorial expansionism being ‘sublimated’ into internal progress in an internationalist setting. The critical factor in their small-state geopolitics is not primarily the *quantity* of material factors and geographical acquisitions. Rather, they emphasised the *quality* of domestic relationships and linkages into global networks, thus balancing the determinist materialism traditionally viewed as central to geopolitics.

Kjellén’s and Hatt’s articulations of these three dimensions of small-state geopolitics are particular to their time and place. However, as suggested in the opening of this chapter, although beyond our present scope, we propose that they reflect more widely on ‘formal’ as well as ‘practical’ small-state geopolitical practices (for some indications, see Marklund, 2015; Tunander, 2008). These are as geographical and political as the more well-known instances of large-state geopolitics, and therefore worthy of critical scrutiny, but they take distinctive forms. A key aspect in this respect is how the expansionist theme of classical geopolitics is maintained in a sublimated form.

As emphasised in critical geopolitics (e.g. Ó Tuathail, 1996), geopolitical reasoning is situated knowledge. In fact, when reflecting on geopolitical thinkers of his time, Hatt seems to have approached such an understanding when he called attention to ‘*the personal equation*, i.e., the error included because of the individual’s particular position’ (quoted in Jerrild, 1939, p. 173; see also Larsen, 2011). While neither Kjellén nor Hatt engage with their own ‘personal equation’, their small-state geopolitics was highly situated too. Indeed, we suggest that their small-state geopolitics emerged from the fact that they, as national if not nationalistic inhabitants of small states, had to make geopolitical sense of their home countries. As suggested above, we find some common themes in this. But due to their different historical and geographical settings, and perhaps also because of different political outlooks, the small-state geopolitics of Kjellén and Hatt also differed in many respects.

Arguably spurred by their small-state setting, Kjellén and Hatt demonstrated surprisingly nuanced approaches to ‘geography’ in their small-state geopolitics. This does not amount to socio-spatial theory in a contemporary sense of the term. Neither Kjellén nor Hatt employed social theories systematically (if at all), and their approach to relations between the social and the spatial was not dialectical. However, when shifting their gaze from great powers to small states, they relaxed their deterministic approach to geography. Often, if tacitly, this involved nuanced considerations of social relations and spatial structures that were ahead of their time – and their great power geopolitics.

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