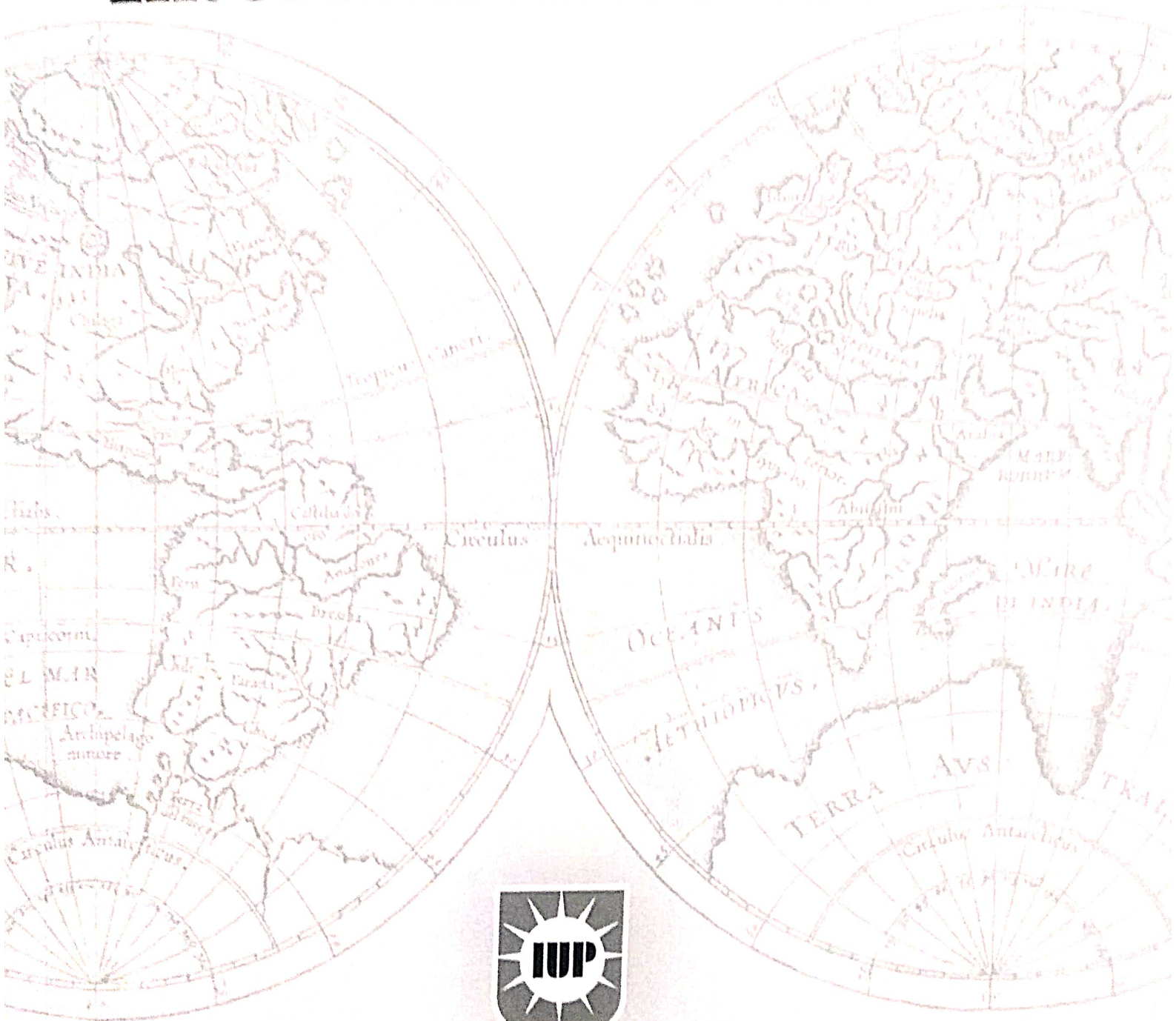


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Lebensraum Revisited: A Study of Chinese and Russian Strategies for Territorial Expansion

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and *Sabavath Ravi****

The paper revisits the Lebensraum concept and examines its role in world politics, with reference to the Chinese and Russian strategies towards Taiwan and Ukraine, respectively, to achieve their geopolitical goals, thereby drawing a parallel between Adolf Hitler's strategic ideas and those of Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin in the 21st century. The paper analyzes Lebensraum, both conceptually and theoretically, to examine how it influences the territorial annexation strategy of a country.

Introduction

The 21st century international relations center on the argument whether the importance of territory to a nation is a decisive factor in acknowledging the power of a nation or not. The pro-globalization scholars argued that with the coming of the notion of "borderless globe", the economy became a decisive factor in identifying the power of a nation. On the other hand, the critics of the notion of a borderless globe, and other schools of thought argued that even if economics became a prominent aspect of identifying the power of a nation, still territory remains one of the five elements to define a State as a nation-state. Based on this premise, this study highlights the importance of territory for a nation and how territorial annexation becomes an asset for a nation to multiply its powers by taking into account the notion of Lebensraum, which means 'space consciousness' and by applying the Lebensraum strategy to China's plan to annex Taiwan and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Lebensraum means state expansion or state consciousness. The German geographer and ethnographer Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904) coined the word Lebensraum (1901), which became popular after Germany made it a foreign policy. As a policy, it was first used by Nazi Germany during World War I to conquer territories in Eastern Europe. In the 1920s, Adolf Hitler in his book, *Mein Kampf* defined the

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