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U.S. & NATO Foreign Policy in Afghanistan: Historical Analysis During the Soviet Invasion, The Creation of the Taliban, and the Implications of the U.S. & NATO Members' Withdrawal from Afghanistan

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The Soviet Union and Historical U.S. Involvement

Over the past 50 years, Afghanistan's history has been constant tribal warfare and warfare with foreign nations such as the Soviet Union in 1979-1989. In 1965 the USSR saw an opportunity within Afghanistan to install a Communist regime with the rise of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). The Soviet plan started unraveling in 1967 when the PDPA split into two factions - the Khalq and Parcham political parties and Kremlin attempted to avoid direct involvement within Afghanistan while both Communist-Nationalist parties feuded for power for over the next decade.

"In April 1978, Afghanistan's centrist government, headed by Pres. Mohammad Daud Khan was overthrown by left-wing military officers led by Nur Mohammad Taraki. Power was thereafter shared by two Marxist-Leninist political groups, the People's (Khalq) Party and the Banner (Parcham) Party, which had earlier emerged from a single organization, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan—and had reunited in an uneasy coalition shortly before the coup."[1]

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[1] Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020, May 11). *Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Encyclopedia Britannica*. https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan

Within months the Soviet Union officially intervened on behalf of the newly formed government of Afghanistan, fighting the non-Communist factions and ending the internal quarrels between the Communist parties. The Soviet Union's invasion and subsequent occupation caused mass migration due to their horrific war crimes committed against the civilian populations. To stop Afghans from supporting the opposing Mujahideen, the Soviet army ran bombing missions against the rural areas and targeted civilians such as children and women. The bombing missions caused mass migration into Pakistan and Iran, so "by 1982 some 2.8 million Afghans had sought asylum in Pakistan, and another 1.5 million had fled to Iran."[2]

The continuous killing of civilians and mass migration led to a refugee crisis and allowed the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), which is the premier government intelligence agency, to take advantage of the situation. It took in Afghan refugee children from an early age and put them in Islamic theology schools, Madrassas, recruiting them later for war against the Soviet Union for two purposes - fight the Soviet foreign invaders and establish a government in Kabul that would be pro-Pakistani.[3] According to Sean Winchell "between 1983 and 1997, the ISI trained approximately 83,000 Afghan Mujahideen." (Winchell, 2003).

The U.S. was a minor player in the conflict until members of Congress and the CIA developed a plan (code-named operation Cyclone) to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan. The Americans funded and armed factions of the Mujahideen, which led to a stalemate for years until the CIA started supplying them with the Stinger surface-to-air portable missile systems. Those Stinger systems were easy to use and helped the Mujahideen fighters target the Soviet aircraft and armored vehicles that had been impenetrable to Afghan weapons until then.[4] The Soviet Union had 100,000 troops in Afghanistan, and by their withdrawal, they had estimated 15,000 deaths and a more considerable number of casualties.[5]

The Mujahideen forces eventually prevailed, and with the help of the CIA and ISI, forced the Soviet Union to withdraw entirely in 1989 after signing an agreement in 1988 with the United States, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. The Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 led the United States to cut its funding for Afghanistan's covert action and aid. In his book "Charlie Wilson's War: The Extraordinary Story of the Largest Covert Operation in History the journalist George Crile says that *"the cut to the Afghanistan budget was against the advice of the CIA, knowing that the country was in dire need of infrastructure funding and unification of the tribes to create stability."* [6]

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[2] Britannica, *Soviet invasion of Afghanistan*

[3] Winchell, S., (2003) Pakistan's ISI: The Invisible Government, International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence, 16:3, 374-388, DOI: 10.1080/713830449 retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/713830449

[4] Crile, G., (2003). Charlie Wilson's War: The Extraordinary Story of the Largest Covert Operation in History. Atlantic Monthly Press.

[5] Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020, May 11). Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Encyclopedia Britannica. https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan

[6] Crile, G., (2003). Charlie Wilson's War: The Extraordinary Story of the Largest Covert Operation in History

According to the New York Times (NYT) 1988 article, *"At the end of 1983, Mr. Wilson persuaded his colleagues to provide $40 million for weapons… The budget for the covert operation more than doubled, to $280 million in the fiscal year 1985 from $122 million in 1984, members of Congress said."* [7]

After Operation Cyclone officially ended, the U.S. agreed they saw victory in their mission within Afghanistan and left, but the actual result was a void that the Taliban and Al Qaeda later filled. In hindsight, the implications of the United States' policy not to invest in Afghanistan post-Soviet withdrawal led to the strengthened Taliban and Al Qaeda terrorist groups, which had haven internally to train members from various Muslim nations to fight their jihad globally.

The ISI's success in the students recruited from the Madrassas led them to invest further in the Taliban. *"The ISI, taking notice of the Taliban's gains, secured financial backing from Bhutto's government and began to recruit students from madrasas all over Pakistan to support the fledgling Taliban, then led by Mullah Muhammad Omar"* (Winchell, 2003). The continual investment into the Taliban, their growth and control over the majority of Afghanistan, and the Taliban's refusal to cooperate with the United States in capturing Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden led the U.S. to combat the Islamic fundamentalist movement after September 11th, 2001 (9/11).

Pakistan's ISI support ended after then-President Musharraf ordered General Mahmud, ISI's Director-General, to travel to Kandahar and order the Taliban to give up Osama bin Laden; General Mahmud did the opposite and advised against this order (Winchell, 2003). President Musharraf replaced Director-General Mahmud with Lieutenant General Ehsan Ul-Haq, leading the ISI to stop their funding and training of the Taliban and assisting the U.S. with intelligence to combat Al Qaeda.

Banking and Foreign Aid

The ancient unregulated hawala trade or currency exchange system in Afghanistan allows financing for terrorism and the drug trade to go unchecked.[8] *"In Afghanistan, banking has made improvements, but most transactions go unrecorded or through, often cheaper than banks, and transfers can be picked up the same day, making it faster than a traditional bank."*[9]

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[7] Pear, R,(1988), Arming Afghan Guerrillas: A Huge Effort Led by U.S., The New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/1988/04/18/world/arming-afghan-guerrillas-a-huge-effort-led-by-us.html

[8] Editor's note: hawala is an informal value transfer system used in the Muslim world that is based on honor and a huge network of brokers. It is usually outside of government or other control and it is thus convenient for different terrorist organisations.

[9] The Economist, (2020, November 28). *Hawala Traders Are Being Squeezed by Regulators and COVID-19*. Retrieved from Merchant bankers - Hawala traders are being squeezed by regulators and covid-19 | Finance & economics | The Economist

A sub-element of the banking issue in Afghanistan is the amount of foreign aid received. Foreign aid helps develop the country's alternative farming, building schools, roads, creating a stable government, and official banking institutions accessible for more Afghan people. A benefit to Afghanistan continuing to build banks and gaining more users is that this will keep accountability of where money is going and where it is coming from, e.g., corruption, drug trafficking, terrorism, waste, and fraud. The low accessibility to banks, ATMs, and the low amount of bank accounts possessed by Afghan nationals compared to the usage of hawala networks hinders the Afghan government from creating another avenue of security and prosperity. It is possible to see a decline in illicit funding of terrorism and drug trafficking if the number of Afghan nationals having and using bank accounts increases. No current data suggests that official banking systems will replace hawala, nor is there data to suggest that even with more bank accounts opened, the illicit funding of terrorism and opium trafficking in Afghanistan will diminish. However, having a reliable banking system in place for citizens to use, make transfers and take loans will help track any possible illicit funds, build businesses, and ensure financial stability.
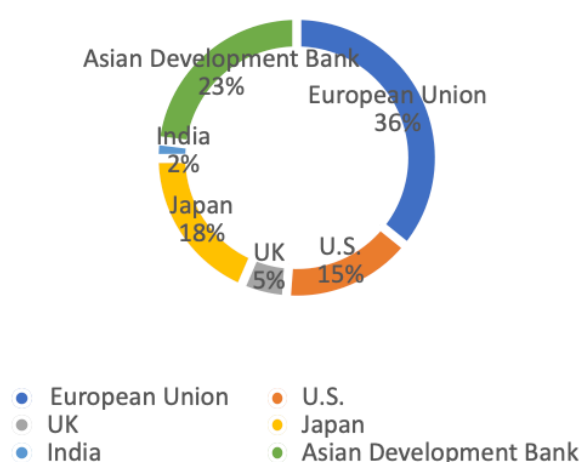
Foreign Aid in Afghanistan (In Millions of USD)

Figure 3 Zach Pittman created the chart using Foreign Aid for 2021-2024; Data retrieved from https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-25/donors-pledge-13-billion-for-afghanistan-as-u-s-looks-to-exit

In terms of foreign aid pledges by nations, in 2020 India promised $80 million for 150 projects, including a dam.[10] Meanwhile, Japan has offered $720 million over four years[11], and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has pledged another $100 million to help the Government of Afghanistan respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.[12] The European Union (EU) has pledged $1.2 billion from 2021-2025,[13] while the United

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[10] Shubjahid,R., (2020) India pledges aid to rebuild Afghanistan, commits to projects worth $80 million, The Indian Express, https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-pledges-aid-to-rebuild-afghanistan-commits-to-projects-worth-80-million-7064393/

[11] Japan Today (2020), Japan pledges $720 mil for Afghan reconstruction at int'l conference, https://japantoday.com/category/politics/update1-japan-pledges-720-mil.-for-afghan-reconstruction-at-int%27l-confab

[12] Asian Development Bank (2020), ADB Approves $100 Million Grant to Support Afghanistan's COVID-19 Response, https://www.adb.org/news/adb-approves-100-million-grant-support-afghanistan-covid-19-response

[13] EU Parliament, EU reconfirms support for Afghanistan at 2020 Geneva Conference, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_2193

States promised $300 million for 2021[14], and the United Kingdom is donating £155 million for 2021. [15]
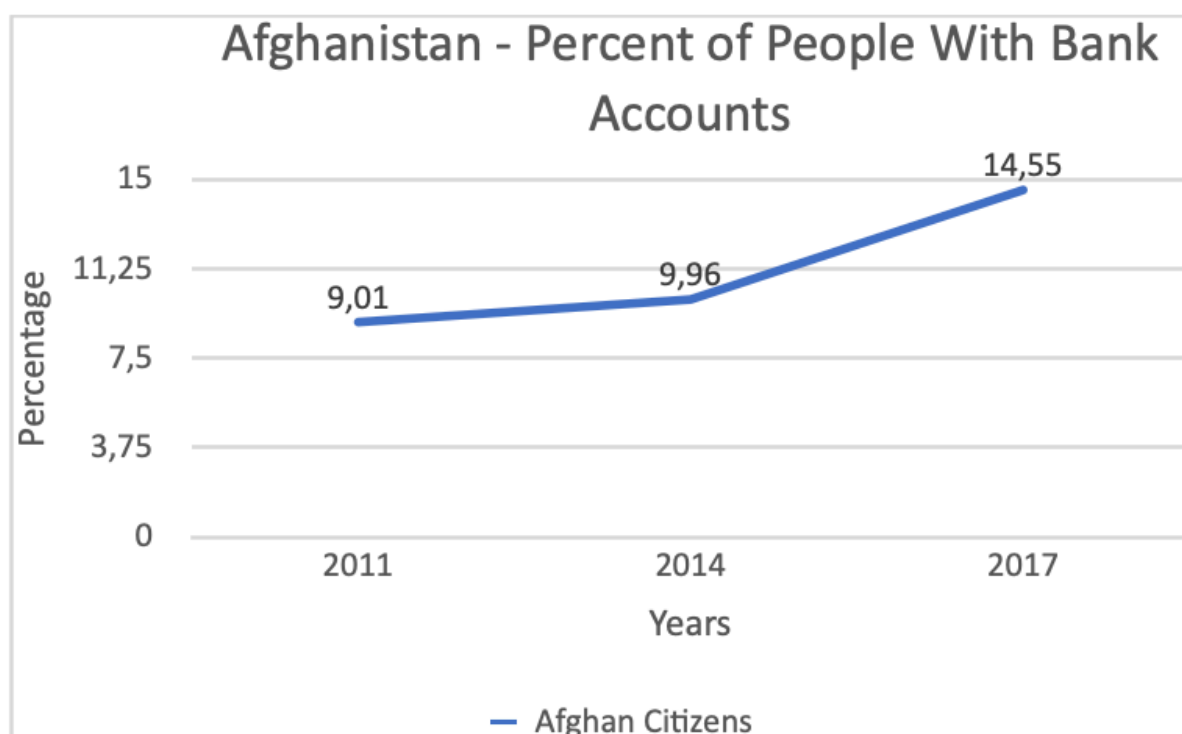

Figure 1 Chart created by Zach Pittman with data from The Global Economy, (2020). Afghanistan - Percent of People With Bank Accounts. Retrieved from https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Afghanistan/percent_people_bank_accounts/

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[14] Walsh, J.,(2021), U.S. Promises $300 Million Boost In Aid To Afghanistan. Here's Why., The Forbes, https://www.forbes.com/sites/joewalsh/2021/04/21/us-promises-300-million-boost-in-aid-to-afghanistan-heres-why/

[15] UK Government, (2021), UK pledges £155 million aid to support peace and stability in Afghanistan, https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-pledges-155-million-aid-to-support-peace-and-stability-in-afghanistan

Foreign aid is essential to developing Afghanistan's infrastructure and promoting government stability to enforce regulations. It assists with elements such as education, banking, employment opportunities, and domestic security.

The critical factor of foreign aid is ensuring independent overwatch agencies to mitigate waste and fraud. For years, however, Afghanistan has suffered from systematic corruption and a persistent lack of data to prove or disprove information on funding, where funding goes, and in other cases, it is difficult to trace the origin of funding. An example of reported fraud that led to an investigation by USAID, The United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan (SIGAR) released a report in June of 2015 about the $769 million investment the U.S. had made into Afghanistan's education sector. USAID claimed a successful program regarding the financial investments, but SIGAR stated that the data that USAID used was not verifiable and wasted or used in cases of fraud[16]. USAID responded that *"there is no specific evidence or allegation at this point that the U.S. assistance funds have been misappropriated*[17].*"*

The current implications of the withdrawal by NATO and the U.S. left a resurgence of the Taliban. We will see a decrease in accessibility to banking branches to citizens. The Taliban and the majority of civilians have used the Hawala system for generations, and it allows more privacy than a central institution would. Ultimately leaving speculation what will happen to the recently expanded banking system. The Taliban's resurgence and the withdrawal of NATO & the U.S. will cause a decline in the accessibility to bank branches in Afghanistan, especially outside of large cities like Kabul. Other nations' involvement like China will fill the void on this issue and even establish Chinese-owned or investments into the Afghanistan banking system.

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[16] Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (2015, June 11). *Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Official letter to USAID.* Retrieved from SIGAR-15-62-SP.pdf

[17] Ibid

Education

Afghanistan's literacy rates climbed for both boys and girls; however, there are signs of decline for young girls with the resurgence of the Taliban and COVID-19 shutting down schools[18]. The Taliban in the past made it difficult for women and young girls to have access to education and now there is already evidence that they are unwilling to allow women's rights or access to education for women. [19] If the Taliban continue to capture regions within Afghanistan, it will destroy the progress within Afghanistan's education system.

Population By Age

- 55+ Years Old
- 25-54 Years Old 30%
- 14 Years and Younger 42%
- 15-24 Years Old 21%

Legend:
- 14 Years and Younger
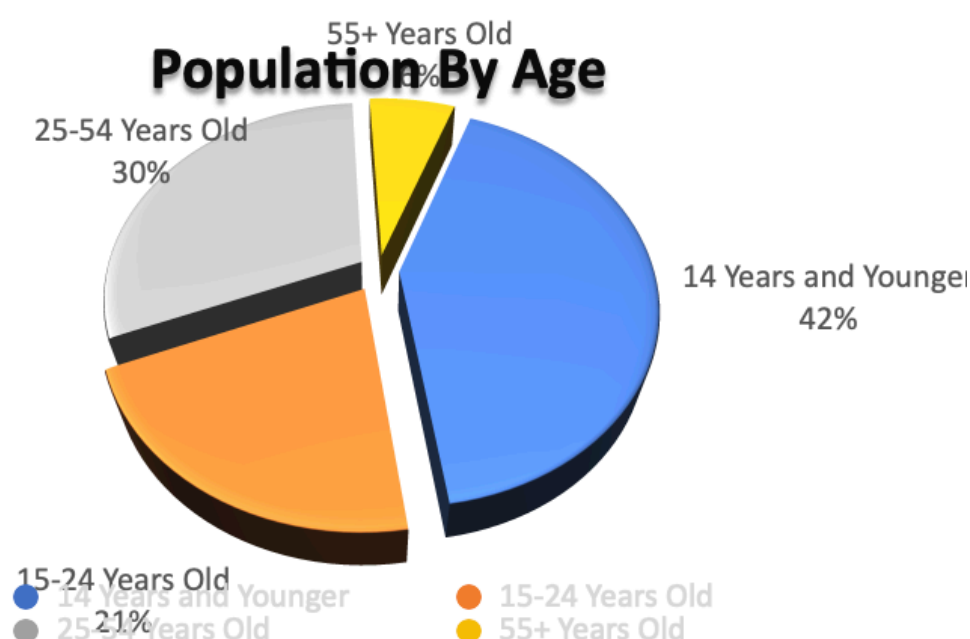- 25-54 Years Old
- 15-24 Years Old
- 55+ Years Old

Figure 4 Zach Pittman created the chart using data from 2018 Afghanistan Literacy and Illiteracy Rates 15 Years and Older. Data retrieved from http://uis.unesco.org/country/AF and https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html

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[18] Afghanistan Times (2021, March 02). *Taliban Ban Girls From Education In Takhar*. Retrieved from Taliban ban girls from education in Takhar – Afghanistan Times

[19] Merchant, N. (2021, May 05). *US Report: Taliban Will Likely Curtail Afghan Women's Rights.* Retrieved from US report: Taliban will likely curtail Afghan women's rights (pri.org)

According to a Brookings Institute report from 2017, there is mixed evidence about the correlation of education, literacy levels, and terrorism or extremist views.[20] However, another factor that the report argues is that *"a lack of adequate employment opportunities for educated individuals is fueling support for violent extremism among the general population"* (p. 3). Education rates affect employment and business opportunity. In this sense lack of access to education is also an exploitation tactic by the Taliban to repress children, particularly girls, from education and allow the Taliban control on the local population where schools are not accessible due to safety. Thus, leaving children vulnerable to recruitment, harassment, or death by the Taliban or other terror groups. In UNESCO's Education for All report *"barriers to access to education include: insecurity, poverty, and child work, lack of schools in remote areas, long walking distance to schools, and harassment of children on their way to school"*[21] (p. 12). A final aspect of formal education is preventing the Taliban or other terror groups from manipulating children's beliefs through propaganda in the Taliban-controlled Madrasas**.**
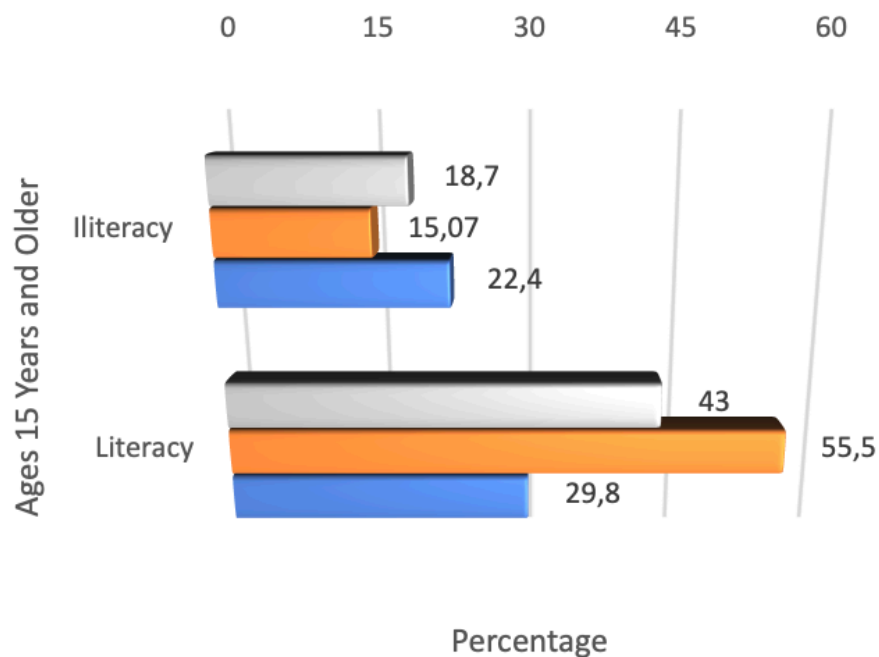
Another vulnerability Afghanistan faces is high rates of illiteracy among the population. However, promising data from UNESCO showed a steady increase in literacy rates for

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[20] Bhatia, K. & Ghanem, H., (2017, March). How Do Education and Unemployment Affect Support for Violent Extremism. Retrieved from global_20170322_violent-extremism.pdf (brookings.edu)

[21] UNESCO Education for All, (2015). Afghanistan: Education for All 2015 National Review. Retrieved from Afghanistan national Education for All (EFA) review 2015 report; 2014 - 232702eng.pdf (unesco.org)

both genders, from the exit of the Soviet Union to 2018. Literacy rates were adversely affected at the height of the Taliban, specifically for women and young girls. The withdrawal of the U.S. and NATO women and young girls are already facing the adversity of completing or even attending education due to lockdowns with COVID-19, Taliban regulations, and low family income. The withdrawal effects on literacy rates are speculative, but current events have proven that the Taliban are adversely affecting women's rights and access to education, which will create a decline in literacy rates.

Employment and Agriculture

Opium and poppy are a large amount of revenue for Afghanistan. Introducing other crops to create diversity is difficult due to the terrain, weather, and money necessity. In Agriculture, many important sub-elements are essential for reducing the total opium production; however, discussing only alternative crops and other revenue streams.

Figure 6 Afghanistan Combined Map – Terrain; Chart created by Zach Pittman with Data retrieved from The Long War Journal, UNHCR, and Geopium.org to combine into one map. Created using Google's My Maps. Retrieved from https:// www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1QcA5B0JGX70aV1Y-muLy6JLIB9D-

Afghanistan's other three significant factors in the illicit exporting of opium are the lack of established border control, refugee camps, and lack of transportation regulations/ enforcement. The border control element, transportation regulation, and refugee camps are displayed in Figure 6. All three of these elements control the flow of opium and cash from

sales. Currently, border control is fragile and has a significant level of corruption that allows illicit trafficking and terrorist activity. Adrien Morel reports that "*despite significant improvements in customs collection since 2015, considerable leakage persists because of insecurity, entrenched corruption, and insufficient processing points along thousands of miles of permeable borders… Insurgents levy taxes on trafficking and trade in areas that they control.*"[22]

Regional Instability and Opportunity for Adversary Nations

The U.S. and NATO withdrawal left a void in counterterrorism in which a resurgence of the Taliban has grown. A fabricated peace agreement continually violated by the Taliban shows convincing evidence that the NATO counterterrorism mission has not ended. The terrorist group ISIS even has claimed multiple recent attacks within Afghanistan, such as the attack on the HALO Trust[23][24] and the attack on a mosque in the Shakar Darah district of Kabul[25]. Counterterrorism efforts are collapsing with the Taliban capturing most Afghan provinces, ISIS re-emerging, and Al Qaeda potentially returning to Afghanistan. The withdrawal's implications mean that even though most troops will leave, the U.S. and NATO will continue counterterrorism operations within Afghanistan. The more likely scenario is that the U.S. will continue intelligence and special operations within Afghanistan to appease the public and continue supporting the current government of Afghanistan.

The instability of Afghanistan and the formal withdrawal of the U.S. gave more opportunity for China to increase relations and influence with the Afghan government. China has opened negotiations with Afghanistan and the possibility of expanding more projects within Afghanistan through its Belt Road Initiative (BRI) project[26][27]. China has opened negotiations with the Taliban, playing both sides of the fence due to their focus on

[22] Morel, A. (2020, January 22). Afghanistan's Borderlands: Unruly, Unruled, and Central to Peace. Retrieved from https://asiafoundation.org/2020/01/22/afghanistans-borderlands-unruly-unruled-and-central-to-peace/

[23] Elwazar, S. & Popalzai, (2021, June 10). *ISIS claims responsibility for attack on mine-clearing workers in Afghanistan.* Retrieved from Afghanistan: At least 10 killed in attack on Halo Trust mine-clearing workers - CNN

[24] Associated Press reposted by Al Arabiya English, (2021, June 10). *ISIS claims killing deminers in north Afghanistan.* Retrieved from ISIS claims killing deminers in north Afghanistan | Al Arabiya English

[25] AFP reposted by Al Arabiya English, (2021, May 16). *ISIS claims attack on Afghanistan mosque that left 12 worshippers dead.* Retrieved from ISIS claims attack on Afghanistan mosque that left 12 worshippers dead | Al Arabiya English

[26] Saraswat, A., (2020, April 17). *Chinese Interests in Afghanistan: From Indifference to Strategic Involvement.* Retrieved from https://diplomatist.com/2020/04/17/chinese-interests-in-afghanistan-from-indifference-to-strategic-involvement/

[27] Kaura, A., (2020, August 7). *What does China's growing engagement in Afghanistan mean for the US?* Retrieved from What does China's growing engagement in Afghanistan mean for the US? | Middle East Institute (mei.edu)

economic gain within Afghanistan. *"In June 2019, Beijing publicly declared that it had hosted a Taliban delegation led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar. When President Donald Trump suddenly canceled the talks with the Taliban in September 2019, China attempted to inject itself into the process by inviting the group to Beijing for a two-day intra-Afghan conference in October."*

China's interest within Afghanistan has been clear about resources in exchange for investment into infrastructure. Beijing understands that Afghanistan cannot pay with currency financially, but the billions of dollars in precious resources can offset investment costs. According to Caspian Report's YouTube video, *"China is interested in Afghanistan's resources to maintain its market share of rare earth metals. Currently, Beijing is the top supplier in the market, but its growing domestic demands going to renewable consumption have reduced its total exports. Thus, to supply its foreign and domestic associates, China seeks to find alternative sources and bring them online."[28]* Afghanistan can invest within itself, but the lack of stability, growth of the Taliban, lack of resources, and lack of businesses willing to invest in Afghanistan do not have opportunities for long-term resource mining projects. China and the U.S. are the best options for Afghanistan. China has an opportunity in the region due to the neighboring Xinjiang province with Afghanistan, and if they complete their logistics network with Pakistan, it will also allow more accessible transportation of minerals from Afghanistan. An article by Anushka Saraswat in the Diplomatist states that Beijing and Kabul have a memorandum of understanding for the BRI project.

"China and Afghanistan are connected in northern Afghanistan via Sino–Afghanistan Special Railway Transportation Project and the Five Nations Railway Project, and projects to connect with Southern Afghanistan via the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)… According to the Ministry of Public Works and AFRA, Afghanistan Rail Network will be beneficial in the transportation and industrial construction of goods and commodities. It will also resolve the problem of transporting Afghanistan's mineral products to regional ports." [29]

The BRI project within Afghanistan comes partially due to a lack of consistent U.S. policy within the country, and warming ties between Beijing and Kabul. Afghanistan cannot afford to pay back China except by allowing China to extract their precious resources, leaving Afghanistan without export trade products cutting down their potential revenue, and creating a strong dependency upon China.

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[28] Caspian Report. "Afghanistan Sits on $3 Trillion in Minerals." March 18, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9pOQioOEGg&t=156s

[29] Saraswat, A., (2020, April 17). Chinese Interests in Afghanistan: From Indifference to Strategic Involvement. Retrieved from https://diplomatist.com/2020/04/17/chinese-interests-in-afghanistan-from-indifference-to-strategic-involvement/

Conclusion

The Withdrawal of the U.S. and NATO are leaving various Afghanistan gaps filled by foreign nations like China. The banking system in Afghanistan still has sparse numbers of users in the nation, leaving the hawala system the primary currency exchange system. It leaves endless possibilities for untracked illicit funding, including funding for terrorism and a lack of data on the system, how much or how little spent, for drug trafficking or funding terrorism. China has begun the BRI project in Afghanistan by creating logistics networks for the transportation of resources. The Taliban gained influence and captured most provinces within Afghanistan, and ISIS re-emerged, taking ownership of two recent attacks. Afghanistan's education system is suffering due to COVID-19, and with the Taliban growing strength, women and young girls are not to have access to education. The implications of the withdrawal affect the security internally in Afghanistan, but the government and all sectors are at substantial risk. The U.S. and NATO have left an enormous void filled by adversary nations like China; The U.S. and NATO decision leaves a weakened influence and distrust towards Western intervention due to lack of consistent policies and commitment.

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Conflict and Violence in Colombia:

Insurgencies, Paramilitaries, Narcotraffickers, and the State

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The violent struggle that has endured in Colombia at varying levels of intensity since 1964 is a multi-dimensional conflict between the government, far-left guerrillas, far-right paramilitaries, and wealthy narcotraffickers. It began in earnest when the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* launched its armed revolt against the state and has persisted until the present day, although the historic ceasefire signed on November 24th, 2016 signals hope that a resolution to this long conflict is possible. This article hopes to concisely summarise the conflict, its origins, and dynamics to create a clearer picture of an often confusing conflict that has endured for decades. Analyzing the main actors involved, the global context, and the structural factors that made such violence possible, this article hopes to create a groundwork understanding and provide a useful lens to view one of the most complex conflicts of the modern era through and provide an analysis of the ongoing peace process.

Although a low-intensity war for much of its history,[30] the conflict in Colombia has seen spikes of high-intensity combat. This, and the changing dynamics of the conflict over time makes it appropriate for this essay to divide the conflict into two 'phases' to establish a deeper analysis of the development of the conflict, its main actors, and the nature of violence that defined it.

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[30] **Safford and Palacios. *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 347.**

A Brief History and the Changing Dynamics of Violence

The violent conflict that has been present in Colombia since 1964 is not the only major instance of intrastate war in modern Colombian history, and is rooted in an earlier Colombian civil war, known as *La Violencia,* which lasted roughly from 1948 to 1958 and led to between 80,000 and 400,000 deaths, the difference in variation reflecting differing partisan perspectives.[31] *La Violencia* itself was a product of elite manipulation, as it was chiefly caused by an aggressive confrontation between elites of opposing political parties seeking to impose through the state a model of modernization conforming to Conservative or Liberal norms, and the partisanship they rallied up across all groups, classes, and regions of Colombia,[32] which ultimately ignited due to the assassination of Liberal Party dissident Jorge Gaitan. Although Gutiérrez-Sanín notes that *La Violencia* should be recognized as a distinct conflict to the one that began in 1964 as the ideologies and objectives of the guerrillas were still confined to the limits of the Conservative-Liberal world and were thus far removed from their successors in the 1960s,[33] *La Violencia* highlights two major factors for the endurance of the later Colombian conflict: the demonstration of the weakness of the Colombian state, and the idea amongst many in Colombian society that violence seemed to be the only means for political participation.[34]

The first phase of the conflict, beginning with FARC's armed struggle, was primarily a conflict between the central government and the far-left guerrilla insurgencies who sought to overthrow it. This phase was heavily influenced by the dynamics of the Cold War that dominated the international order at the time and came to an end when the Soviet system began to collapse in the late 1980s. The fighting in the early years of the conflict was decidedly low intensity and restricted mostly to the remote areas in which the guerrillas operated, and, serious as though it was, affected primarily only those involved in the conflict itself, and marginal populations in rural areas.[35] As such it is difficult to refer to this first phase of conflict as a 'war'. Using the set of criteria for civil war established by the civil war scholar Nicholas Sambanis, which includes an ongoing struggle for political power; the existence of a distinct insurgency; the government as a principle combatant;

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[31] **Safford and Palacios.** *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society.* **p. 345.**

[32] **Safford and Palacios.** *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society.* **p. 345.**

[33] **Gutiérrez-Sanín, F.** *Clientelistic Warfare: Paramilitaries and the State in Colombia (1982-2007)* **(Oxford, Peter Lang AG, 2019), p. 102.**

[34] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia: A Concise Contemporary History.* **(Plymouth, Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), p.85.**

[35] **Moser, C. 'Violence in Colombia: Building Sustainable Peace and Social Capital', in** *Colombia: Essays on Conflict, Peace, and Development,* **edited by Andrés Solimano. (Washington D.C, The World Bank, 2000), p.9.**

the conflict characterized by sustained violence; and a weaker party that must be able to mount an effective resistance against the state,[36] it is clear that Colombia in this phase of violence only partially complied with the criteria for being in a war. Although the guerrilla forces aspired to national political power and kept their struggle against the state ongoing for years, Gutiérrez-Sanín (2019:99) the lethal consequences of the conflict were low: the guerrillas hardly had the size or firepower to inflict any serious harm on upon the state.[37]

Throughout the 1980s this changed at a rapid pace as the guerrillas grew in numbers and firepower and expanded their territorial control throughout Colombia's regions: by 1990, the scale and intensity of violence had changed so drastically that violence dominated the daily lives of most citizens.[38] This second phase, beginning towards the end of the 1980s, meets Sambanis' criteria for war and can thus be referred to as such. Several factors led to this increase in the scale of violence in Colombia, such as the implementation of neoliberal policies exacerbating the hardships of already poor Colombians, driving them into the arms of leftist groups, but the primary reason was the explosion of cocaine production throughout the 1980s, which Leech argues 'impacted every sector of Colombian society.[39] The reaction, both domestic and international, significantly impacted the dynamics of the war in Colombia: the production, taxation, and sale of narcotics became central to the funding of FARC's operations,[40] whilst the evolution of the drug cartels, particularly Pablo Escobar's Medellín Cartel, into wealthy crime syndicates introduced powerful new actors into the conflict and brought the ire of the United States, who by the 1980s considered Colombian narco-traffickers as its principal target in its 'War on Drugs'.[41]

As the overarching international backdrop of the Cold War was replaced by that of the War on Drugs, it became clear that the Colombian state was involved in two fully-fledged wars: one against insurgency, and one against narco-trafficking.[42] To complicate the matter, whilst the insurgents and cartels initially maintained an uneasy alliance, with FARC taxing the traffickers, who tolerated this as they could not yet compete with the strength of the guerrillas and were often subjected to kidnappings if they refused to pay, as

[36] Sambanis, N. 'What is Civil War: Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition', *The Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 48 (6) (2004) p.829-830.

[37] Gutiérrez-Sanín. *Clientelistic Warfare.* p.99.

[38] Moser. *Colombia: Essays on Conflict, Peace, and Development.* p.9.

[39] Leech, G. *FARC: The Longest Insurgency.* (London, Zed Books, 2011) p.56.

[40] Bruce-Jones, T & Smith, M. 'Coca, Clausewitz, and Colombia: The Inadequacy of Micro-level Studies in Explaining FARC Violence against Civilians during the Colombian Civil War', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism,* 44 (12), (2021). p.998.

[41] Leech. *FARC.* p.57.

[42] Gutiérrez-Sanín. *Clientelistic Warfare.* p.63.

the cartels grew in military capabilities, they invested their wealth in land, and formed paramilitaries to defend themselves against guerrilla threats and openly challenge the insurgents militarily to seize their territories.[43] Right-wing paramilitaries such as the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC) were formed to combat the leftist guerrilla groups, often sponsored by the Cartels, and in their campaign to take over territory left behind by retreating FARC and ELN forces, orchestrated numerous gruesome massacres of entire villages in former guerrilla controlled areas.[44]

The second phase of the Colombian conflict can thus be characterized as an intersection of violence between competing non-state actors and the state, and by the 1990s the situation was both highly violent and complex: the guerrillas were fighting the military, the paramilitaries were fighting the guerrillas, the military was supposedly fighting the guerrillas and the paramilitaries,[45] though Gutiérrez-Sanín in his study of Colombian paramilitaries challenges this assertion, and argues the state 'fought the paramilitaries very weakly if at all during this period.[46] All the while, the drug cartels fought the state whilst simultaneously fighting and collaborating with the guerrilla and paramilitary forces. As LaRosa and Mejía aptly put it, as the confusion and chaos spiraled out of control, so did the body count.[47]

By the late 1990s, international attention was heavily focused on Colombia, where the state appeared to be losing control of the situation, and had completely lost any sense of holding the 'monopoly of violence in the country: President Andres Pastrana, elected in 1998, even authorized "safe zones" in Colombia where the military would no longer operate as a sign of 'goodwill' to FARC, which promptly used this 42,000 square kilometer apea to house its weapons and kidnapping victims.[48] This situation appeared even worse to onlookers due to the success of peace accords elsewhere in Latin America during the era: the 'Chapultepec Peace Agreement brought the long Salvadoran civil war

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[43] **Leech.** *FARC***. p.62.**

[44] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.91.**

[45] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.91.**

[46] **Gutiérrez-Sanín.** *Clientelistic Warfare.* **p.111.**

[47] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.91.**

[48] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.92.**

to an end in 1992[49] and thirty-six years of violence ended in Guatemala in 1996 after a peace agreement was signed.[50]

President Pastrana's attempts at goodwill succeeded only in infuriating both urban elites and working-class Colombians alike, whilst alarming the United States,[51] and he subsequently lobbied President Clinton in Washington for an aid package that became known as 'Plan Colombia' - USD 1.35 billion in aid designated for the military and police in hopes of breaking the stalemate between the state and the guerrillas.[52] Plan Colombia passed through the Congress in the final days of the Clinton administration, turning Colombia into the third-highest recipient of US foreign aid after Israel and Egypt,[53] and was later extended for the duration of Álvaro Uribe's presidency (2002-2010). Uribe, a hard-line anti-leftist who immediately went on the offensive after his inauguration, was an outsider candidate who was elected after Pastrana attempted, and failed, in the latter days of his term to retake the demilitarized safe-zones.[54]

The Uribe administration did not end the violence in Colombia, but the president's determination to defeat the insurgencies in his country did significantly alter the dynamics of the war: utilizing what soon amounted to over 8 billion USD in funding, Uribe's Colombia was able to push the FARC into the far corners of the country. More importantly, Uribe launched a hearts and minds campaign, which LaRosa and Mejía argue 'won the public relations war',[55] as Uribe presented himself as an indefatigable patriot who would stop at nothing to defeat the guerrillas, whilst adopting the lexicon of the post-9/11 world order, referring to the violent non-state actors solely as 'terrorists', a move to which Washington responded to by placing FARC, the ELN, and the AUC on its list of terrorist organizations.[56]

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[49] Negroponte, D. 'Remembering El Salvador's Peace Accord: Why Was That Peace Elusive?' *Brookings* 19 January 2012. Available at: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2012/01/19/remembering-el-salvadors-peace-accord-why-was-that-peace-elusive/ [Accessed 20/11/2021].

[50] Janzen, R. 'From Less War to More Peace: Guatemala's Journey since 1996', *Peace Research* Vol. 40, No. 1 (2008), p. 55.

[51] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.92.

[52] Hylton, F. 'Plan Colombia: The Measure of Success', *The Brown Journal of World Affairs,* Vol. 17, (2010) p. 100.

[53] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.92.

[54] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.93.

[55] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.93.

[56] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.93.

In 2016, after years of debate and attempts, a peace treaty was signed between the government and FARC, signaling hope that the decades-long Colombian conflict may soon be coming to an end: in June 2017 FARC ceased its armed campaign, disarming and demobilizing under United Nations monitoring.[57] However, whilst the conflict has been in a clear de-escalatory phase since 2016, problems persist: FARC's disarmament left a power vacuum in regions such as Catatumbo that has led to fighting, specifically between the ELN, Frente 33 (a sub-division of FARC dissidents who rejected the treaty), and the state, highlighting that the path to lasting peace in Colombia is far from certain, and requires further work.

International Context of the Colombian Conflict

To create an effective and holistic understanding of the war in Colombia, the conflict must be viewed not solely as a domestic affair, but existing within the context of several 'global offensives' such as the Cold War, War on Drugs, and international counterinsurgency campaigns.[58] During the Cold War, the United States, influenced in much of its foreign policy actions by its fight against global Communism, had a vested interest in undertaking anti-Communist operations in South America, which McClintock argues promoted the creation of paramilitary forces and the use of lethal force against civilians.[59] This is certainly the case regarding Colombia, where in addition to encouraging the Colombian government to attack leftist groups in the country, the United States supported the creation of paramilitary groups as early as the 1960s to combat communist militias: in one official report, US Army General William Yarborough recommended: *"paramilitary and/or terrorist activities against known communist proponents…backed by the United States".[60]*

When the United States securitized drug trafficking and launched the War on Drugs, Colombia became more directly important to American foreign policy. This changing international context had a significant impact on the situation in Colombia: in 1978 the United States negotiated an extradition treaty from the Colombians, which became the greatest fear of the narco-traffickers for decades and pushed them into 'open war' against the state to force them into repealing the extradition.[61] Adopting the slogan '*Better a grave*

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[57] Bruce-Jones, & Smith. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism.* P.997.

[58] Gutiérrez-Sanín. *Clientelistic Warfare.* p.103.

[59] McClintock, M. (1992) *Instruments of Statecraft: US Guerrilla Warfare, Counterinsurgency, and Counter-Terrorism, 1940-1990.* (New York, Pantheon, 1992).

[60] Papers of John F. Kennedy. (1962) *Presidential Papers. National Security Files. Meetings and Memoranda. Special Group (CI): Subjects: Fort Bragg team visit to Colombia: March 1962.* Washington, DC: Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration. Available at: https://www.jfklibrary.org/asset-viewer/archives/JFKNSF/319/JFKNSF-319-003.

[61] Gutiérrez-Sanín. *Clientelistic Warfare.* p.106.

in Colombia than a jail cell in the United States, the cartels radically upped the violence, directing paramilitary forces against urban centers with dramatic consequences: adopting terrorist tactics, they launched a wave of urban bombings which peaked between 1989 and 1994, in which car bombs killed over 500 people, and the bombing of an Avianca airliner killed 119 passengers and crew.[62]

Colombian Conflict Actors

The State

Constituting the status quo, the state's primary objectives throughout the conflict were to defeat the insurgents threatening its legitimacy, maintain law and order, and persecute the drug cartels. The Colombian state began as vastly militarily superior to the guerrillas in the early phase of the conflict, however by the time the war between states and cartels peaked in the early 1990s, it was often outgunned, and even reluctant,[63] to fight the well-financed and brutal drug lords.

The Guerrillas: FARC and the ELN

The most prominent of the far-left guerrilla movements in Colombia is the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, whose name itself is almost synonymous with the conflict. At the time of the ceasefire, FARC was the world's oldest insurgency, having operated in Colombia's jungles and mountains for over half a century, and was the largest insurgency in Latin America, has increased its size and military capacity in the decade following the Cold War.[64] Originating in 1964, what would become the FARC began as an armed peasant movement following a pro-Soviet variant of Marxism, which was influenced by Communist cadres that had confronted the government with relative success in the municipality of Marquetlia.[65] Controlling large swaths of rural Colombia, FARC financed its operations chiefly through kidnapping, extortion, and the protection of the illegal narcotics industry.[66] FARC's policies included large-scale land redistribution to the poor and public works programs, however, its primary objective and focus was the seizure of national power.[67] Although officially committed to demobilization following the

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[62] Leech. *FARC*. p.58.

[63] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.90.

[64] Leech. *FARC.* P.2.

[65] Gutiérrez-Sanín. *Clientelistic Warfare.* p.60.

[66] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.88.

[67] Premo, D. (1982) 'The Colombian Armed Forces in Search of a Mission', in *New Military Politics in Latin America*, edited by Robert Wesson. (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1982), p.161.

ceasefire, some sub-groups have rejected the deal and continue to fight the state, with their fighters numbering around 2,500.[68]

The *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN), another left-wing guerrilla group, emerged in Colombia in the early 1960s, founded by disaffected students who shared FARC's objective of seizing national power and sought to imitate in Colombia Fidel Castro's path to power in Cuba.[69] LaRosa and Mejía argue that these students neglected the specific historical and cultural similarities between Cuba and Colombia, instead of focusing on Marxist theory.[70] As the ELN originated throughout the universities and not the countryside, and in contrast to FARC was never a peasant-based movement, its social base was never as broad as FARC's.[71] The ELN did however find an often wide following, having an especially strong constituency among the urban sector, students, and those who subscribed to its Liberation Theory ideology.[72] Operating primarily in the Northeastern and oil-producing departments, its guerrilla efforts subsequently target oil pipelines, to dissuade multinational companies, whom they claim are 'exploiting Colombia's natural resources to the detriment of local communities from keeping a presence in the country.[73]

The Paramilitaries and the Drug Cartels

Connected to the leftist guerrilla militia's war against the state, yet operating as its cycle of violence that uses its logic, the counterinsurgency warfare waged against the guerrillas by Colombia's paramilitaries should be understood as a distinct conflict *within* the Colombian war. Whereas the guerrillas see the war in Colombia as a revolution against the political system, grounded in either peasant agrarianism or Communist theory, the paramilitaries view it as a counterinsurgency, projecting themselves as legitimate self-defense of the people against the guerrilla militias.

The paramilitaries, which Gutiérrez-Sanín defines as "an armed structure, formally independent from the army or any state agency… [with] an array of objectives and interests, at the center of which was the combat against insurgency and communism",[74]

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[68] Acosta, L. 'At least 10 FARC dissidents killed in Colombia bombing, military says'. *Reuters* 27 September 2021. Available at: https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/least-10-farc-dissidents-killed-colombia-bombing-military-says-2021-09-27/ [Accessed 04/11/21].

[69] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.88.

[70] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.88.

[71] Cragin and Hoffman. *Arms Trafficking and Colombia.* (Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, 2003). p.6.

[72] Gutiérrez-Sanín. *Clientelistic Warfare.* p.60.

[73] Cragin and Hoffman. *Arms Trafficking and Colombia.* p.6.

[74] Gutiérrez-Sanín. *Clientelistic Warfare.* p.108.

began as local self-defense groups against guerrillas, rooted in the rural communities, but by the 1990s, due to the patronage of the drug cartels, acquired sufficient mobility and offensive power to project themselves on a national scale.[75] Devising their legitimacy vis-à-vis their supporters from their counterinsurgency campaigns, the make-up, and constituents of the paramilitaries varied, from local young men defending their communities against guerrillas to organized combatants and ex-guerrillas impelled by the 'passion of the converted',[76] yet the *modus operandi* of the paramilitaries remained the same: preventing the popular support for the guerrillas at all costs.

The paramilitaries, of which the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia,* active from 1997 until 2008 (when the Álvaro Uribe administration began to demobilize the paramilitaries and extradited much of its leadership to the United States) was foremost, were the most effective counterinsurgency force in Colombia, far more so than the Colombian army. At AUC's peak, it numbered around 30,000 members,[77] thus it was a formidable military able to efficiently combat the insurgents. However, this came with severe consequences: as stated, the paramilitaries were prone to committing massacres and to a degree far more than the guerrillas accepted the use of violence against civilians to achieve its aims. Gutiérrez-Sanín notes that the paramilitaries committed at least 1,400 massacres in which at least four people were killed at the same time and place,[78] and the deadly impact of the paramilitary campaigns was represented in the dramatic increase in political killings per year from 1,053 in the 1970s to 12,859 in the late 1980s.[79]

The force that helped unleash the brutality of the paramilitaries, the so-called *narcotraficantes*, deserve a brief analysis, although the impact of the cocaine boom has been analyzed throughout this article. By the mid-1980s the power and wealth of Escobar's Medellín Cartel were such that he was able to mount a years-long offensive against the state due to its attempt to crack down on narcotrafficking and its extradition treaty with the US. The intensity of this offensive skyrocketed after Escobar had the Colombian Minister for Justice, Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, assassinated after Lara attempts to shut down Escobar's cocaine laboratories.[80] With the Cartel's seamlessly endless supply of money, they were able to take advantage of Colombia's poverty and social inequality to recruit vast amounts of hired killers, typically teenagers from the slums, to act like

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[75] **Safford and Palacios.** *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society.* **p.364.**

[76] **Safford and Palacios.** *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society.* **p. 365.**

[77] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.91.**

[78] **Gutiérrez-Sanín.** *Clientelistic Warfare.* **p.88.**

[79] **Human Rights Watch. (1996)** *Colombia's Killer Networks: The Military-Paramilitary Partnership and the United States.* **(London, Human Rights Watch, 1996) p.40.**

[80] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.90.**

soldiers and assassins in their war against the state.[81] Although the objectives of the cartels were initially financial, the aforementioned extradition gave the cartels a political objective they were willing to use terrorist tactics to achieve: car bombings, political assassinations, kidnappings, and the murder of police officers became part of daily life in Colombia until Escobar's death in December 1993.[82]

Following Escobar's death, the open warfare between the state and the Cartels began to decline, particularly after the fall of the Cali Cartel shortly after the Medellín Cartel, and the rise of smaller and less aggressive *cartelitos* which held less systematic total control of the narcotics trade than the previous mega cartels.[83] Although narcotrafficking continued, bolstered by the protection of various guerrilla and paramilitary forces, the large-scale violent struggle between the cartels and the state appeared to have ended by the mid-1990s.

Structural Causes of Conflicts

Although the aims and objectives of the non-state actors have already been assessed, to understand the conditions that allowed for the outbreak of violence in the first place -and its ability to endure for over five decades- it is necessary to develop an understanding of the structural reasons for conflict in Colombia.

In her analysis of the causes of violence in Colombia, Moser concludes that unequal access to land and natural resources as well as economic and political power is an important cause of structural political violence in Colombia.[84] These factors were after all the issues that drove impoverished Colombians towards the guerrillas in the first place. Moser further posits that much of Colombian society has long accepted violence as a legitimate means of resolving disputes,[85] an argument that conforms to the sociological literature on the study of violence, which asserts that individuals are socialized into violence. Socialization into the norms and actions of violent groups however does not exist as a blank slate, as before recruitment by violent organizations, individuals are situated in a local normative context that will shape the dynamics of said socialization.[86]

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[81] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.90.**

[82] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.91.**

[83] **LaRosa and Mejía.** *Colombia.* **p.91.**

[84] **Moser.** *Colombia: Essays on Conflict, Peace, and Development.* **p.18.**

[85] **Moser.** *Colombia: Essays on Conflict, Peace, and Development.* **p.20.**

[86] **Checkel, J. 'Socialization and Violence: Introduction and Framework',** *Journal of Peace Research,* **54(5), (2017).**

Thus, a 'cultural match' is an important aspect of socialization.[87] Therefore, if Colombian society maintains a normative acceptance of violence as a legitimate means of dispute resolution, then this, combined with the nation's weak central government and vast inequalities, makes recruitment into violent groups much easier and explains the endurance of violence in the country.

Furthermore, Colombia's physical geography contributes to the growth and maintenance of conflict in the country: Colombia's major cities are located in the Andean mountains, which bisect the north of the country from the south, with much of the nation's population being centered in the urban centers, leaving the rural southeastern areas of the country sparsely populated and severely underdeveloped.[88] With little presence of the central government, FARC was able to operate in these areas for decades, building operational and logistical bases across Southern Colombia. In these remote regions, FARC embarked on many public works programs which, especially in the 1990s, led to significant infrastructure improvements, as hundreds of miles of roads were built which connected dozens of communities.[89] Given the lack of development action coming from Bogotá, there is little surprise that the people of these rural areas felt no incentive to obey arbitrary laws radiating from a distant capital, and written by politicians who never understood rural life in Colombia.[90]

Conclusion and the Prospects for Peace

As can be seen from the analysis, the Colombian conflict is a complex issue, with a large variety of interconnected actors, causes, and objectives. The goal of this analysis was to concisely summarise the history, causes, and primary actors involved in this enduring conflict to more clearly understand the major factors as to why violence began, persisted for so long, and remains despite the positive steps taken. At this moment in time, the situation in Colombia remains uncertain. With the demobilization of the paramilitaries during the Uribe administration and demobilization of FARC following the 2016 ceasefire, the Colombian conflict has been in a sustained de-escalatory stage for some time. In 2018 the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) held an optimistic view of the prospects of peace in Colombia,[91] however, whilst the armed groups have officially laid down their arms, Bogotá has not targeted the structural issues that plague

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[87] Checkel, J. (1999) 'Norms, institutions, and national identity in contemporary Europe', *International Studies Quarterly* 43(1).

[88] Cragin and Hoffman. *Arms Trafficking and Colombia*. p.10.

[89] Leech. *FARC*. P.40.

[90] LaRosa and Mejía. *Colombia.* p.85.

[91] Harnisch, C. (2018) 'Colombia: it is not too late', *International Committee of the Red Cross*. 28 February 2018. Available at: https://www.icrc.org/en/document/colombia-it-not-too-late. [Accessed 08/11/2021].

the country: there has been little investment in rural areas, and illegal drug production has soared.[92] The power vacuum left by FARC has been filled by its dissidents as well as the cartels, and fighting remains in certain regions. Furthermore, whilst paramilitary leadership was extradited to the US, thousands of mid-ranking soldiers were never convicted, nor did the government ever attempt to reintegrate them back into Colombian society, which Schuster calls a 'de-facto amnesty,[93] that has allowed former fighters to take advantage of the current situation and delve even deeper into illegal activities. If lasting peace is to be obtained, there is much work to be done. Structural inequalities, reintegration of militants from both guerrilla and paramilitary backgrounds, and land reform will remain as barriers to peace regardless of whether armed groups are fighting in the countryside and must be addressed if Colombia is to achieve peace.

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92 **Arredondo, J. (2019) 'The Slow Death of Colombia's Peace Movement', *The Atlantic*. 30 December 2019. Available at: https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2019/12/colombia-peace-farc/604078/ [Accessed 07/11/21].**

93 **Schuster, S. 'The Duty of Memory: La Violencia between Remembrance and Forgetting', in *Territories of Conflict: Traversing Colombia through Cultural Studies*, edited by Castro et al. (Woodbridge, Boydell & Brewster Limited, 2017). P.44.**

Harnisch, C. 'Colombia: it is not too late, *International Committee of the Red Cross*. 28 February 2018. Available at: https://www.icrc.org/en/document/colombia-it-not-too-late. [Accessed 08/11/2021].

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The Evolution of the US National Security Policy Towards USSR (1945-1991)

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T he Soviet Union was considered the biggest threat to American society from WWII to 1991. For many years the US has been making policy after policy to counteract Soviet influence abroad as well as to defend itself from war and possible nuclear annihilation. These policies vary in scope and over time have changed dramatically to fit with events occurring at specific times; many of these policies are influenced by interest groups, think tanks, the media, and even powerful figures in the US. All these factors have made US policy towards these countries dynamic and able to keep The USSR from creating massive damage towards the US. Though how has US policy changed and evolved during the Cold War and what created these changes?

To answer this question, it must be explored how US policy has been changed by looking into the policies of each president during this period, the views of the public, as well as key figures who were great influencers in these policies, were. Four specific eras can be identified when looking at how National Security Policy has evolved. These four eras each have their policy which differs either slightly or greatly from the other. The First Era is the period of containment that occurred from the beginning of the Cold War and lasted until 1960. This was an era where both Presidents Truman, and Eisenhower adopted the policy to prevent the USSR from expanding its influence around the world.

The Second Era is Flexible Response. This period characterized the governments of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and called for multiple options to deal with the USSR. The Third Era was characterized by the policy of Détente or peaceful coexistence, Presidents Nixon-Carter tried to find compromise and create a world where both the US and USSR could coexist. The Fourth Era exclusively delves into President Reagan's policy of rollback. Reagan unlike his predecessors made an aggressive policy to lower the amount of influence the USSR had around the world and he would actively support many movements and actions abroad to weaken the USSR.

Each of these periods shows how policies in the US evolved to counteract the threat, which the USSR posed. This paper will show how the policies of these eras were created, what factors contributed, who were the main advocates, and what were the effects. Then

in the end it is hoped to show a clearer understanding as to how these policies are made and how they are created especially towards national security risks such as the USSR.

Era I: Truman-Eisenhower, Containment

The years to start this historical period began with the end of World War II - Nazi Germany and a Militarist Japan had been defeated and a new order seemed to be forming. Much of the world had suffered during the war, Europe was devastated due to the Nazi's sweep of the continent, Asia was in pieces after the Japanese took European colonies in the region, and because of this, only two countries seemed to rise on top - the US and USSR. This was due to their industry and that both countries recovered quickly from the war. The American territory was unaffected and despite the European half of the USSR having been devastated, the country was able to move its industry into Siberia, which stayed untouched during the war. As the war came to its end the world was seeming to be formed by the ideas founded under the Yalta conference. But it did not take long for many of the promises made off the coast of Crimea to be broken.

In Eastern Europe, the USSR had occupied much if not all of the region. Soviet troops were in control, and it seemed like they were going to keep it that way. During the Yalta conference, it was agreed that the areas under Soviet occupation would have free and fair elections, this was especially true for Poland. Stalin would renege on this deal, and instead many of the governments in Eastern Europe would form what was to become the Iron Curtain.[94] None of the western powers would try to stop Stalin, and it would seem like he wanted more. Other situations would arise such as the Soviet Union's attempt to continue its shared occupation of Iran with the British Unilaterally, as well as attempting to demand that Turkey give the Soviets exclusive access to the Bosporus and Dardanelle straits. And what came as a bigger shock was a fear of a rising situation south of the Balkans near the Dardanelles. In Greece, a civil war had started between the newly liberated government, and communist factions wanting to create a communist state in Greece. This created fears between the British and Americans that it could threaten oil shipments from the Middle East.[95]

Seeing many of these events unfold made the US government debate Russian motives, and goals for the future. This would lead to a series of reports, and communique between Washington and the Soviet embassy, and two groundbreaking reports would come out of it. The first one was the Long Telegram made by George Kennan, an official at the US embassy in Moscow. In 1946 the US State Department asked Kennan why the Soviets

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[94] Wilson Center. 1945. "Yalta Conference Agreement, Declaration of a Liberated Europe." Yalta Conference Agreement, Declaration of a Liberated Europe. Yalta: Wilson Center. 3.

[95] 1996. Cold War. Performed by CNN.

didn't want to join the IMF or World Bank. This would lead him to write a telegram to explain that the Soviets never changed their views on the west and that they still viewed capitalist nations such as the US and Britain as the enemy.[2] [96] [97]The second report was a follow-up to Kennan's Long telegram being the Clifford Elsey Report. There are no surviving records of it for public consumption due to the Report being so top secret that all copies were given to President Truman. However, one of the writers Clark Clifford stated "We ended up the report by saying "The policy of our country should be set and set. The Soviet Union constitutes a real menace to freedom in this world. freedom in Europe, freedom in the United States..."[98]

These two reports would become instrumental in the formation of the first national security strategy made towards the USSR, which would be known as the policy of Containment. It advocated for the halt of the expansion of the USSR's influence through a multitude of means including the use of Economics, Military, and even certain covert tactics. The economic portion was done through a string of policies, which are now known as the Truman Doctrine. This set of programs advocated for providing both military and economic assistance to democratic countries under the threat of communistic or authoritarian forces.[99]

One of the biggest initiatives done in support of this was the European Economic Recovery Plan or the Marshal Plan. Its main mission was to help Europe recover economically from the devastation of WWII, but also it had the agenda to prevent Western Europe from turning to Communism. The reason for this was the idea that the longer Europe remained devastated and divided by the war the easier it would be for the soviets to influence the continent to turn communist. To prevent this the Marshal plan was made to rejuvenate the European countries so they would not be susceptible to communism. An estimated $13 billion worth of food, staples, fuel, machinery and direct investment was sent to Europe, which helped many European countries to rebound and recover from the Second World War.[100] [101]

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[96] George Kennan's 'Long Telegram'," February 22, 1946, History and Public Policy Program Digital

[97] Archive, National Archives and Records Administration, Department of State Records (Record Group 59), Central Decimal File, 1945-1949, 861.00/2-2246; reprinted in US Department of State, ed., Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946, Volume VI, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), 696-709. http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116178

[98] 1996. Cold War. Performed by CNN.

[99] Office of the Historian. n.d. The Truman Doctrine, 1947. Accessed April 5, 2021. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/truman-doctrine.

[100] Marshall Foundation. n.d. History of the Marshall Plan. Accessed April 5, 2021. https://www.marshallfoundation.org/marshall/the-marshall-plan/history-marshall-plan/.

[101] 1996. Cold War. Performed by CNN.

Other decisions made from the policy of containment and the Truman doctrine include the UN Military intervention in the Korean War. Upon the start of the Korean War in June of 1950 the US would bring the issue up to the United Nations Security Council, and it would vote to send troops to fight against North Korea. The US would contribute the most troops with an estimation of over 300,000 soldiers being sent into the conflict. Other reasons for this deployment by the US include the previous year when Mao Zedong and his communist party defeated Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalists which was a huge blow to the US. As well, there was a fear that the fall of the Korean Peninsula to Communism would put Japan and the US Occupation Force at risk.

As well in early 1950, the National Security Council would come out with a report known as NSC 68.[102] This document was made in light of the many foreign events that took place from 1945-1950, and it stated fears that the Soviet plans were to extend the communist influence/control and defeat any opposition. The report also showed a huge concern that the USSR was expanding its military for world domination. With these threats in mind, the document gave recommendations for US military spending to be increased, and that US military activity should be expanded to stop soviet expansion in other areas of the world.[103] With many of these thoughts in mind, it would boost the US's resolve to involve itself in other areas besides Europe to contain communism.

When Truman left office to be replaced by Eisenhower, the general policy of Containment would be kept in place and expanded. Eisenhower's view would be called New Look after the name of the Defense Budget of 1955. It called for making use of new missile technology to move the cold war away from conventional means and put more of an emphasis on Strategic Nuclear Weapons. This policy leads to the idea of "Massive Retaliation" which put more money into the construction of nuclear weapons as well as less reliance on conventional means because it was cheaper. There were multiple reasons for these policies, these include Eisenhower's desire to not go into another war after Korea, as well as balancing the budget and fixing inflation. He thought that the creation of new missiles and long-range bombers was the way to go because they were cheaper, plus they could be a deterrence to possible Soviet Expansion.[104]

This New Look policy would also advocate for the use of clandestine and covert operations, as they were cheap and effective. The idea came from the influences of both John and Allen Dulles (Secretary of State, and Director of the CIA respectfully). John Foster Dulles specifically was a fervent anti-communist and him along with his brother were one of the biggest proponents for the overthrow of the Iranian Government in 1953

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[102] National Archives. 2016. US Enters the Korean Conflict. September 7. Accessed April 5, 2021. https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/korean-conflict.

[103] National Security Council. 1950. NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security. NSC Report, Washington DC: National Security Council.

[104] Slantchev, Professor Branislav L. 2019. National Security Strategy: The New Look, 1953-1960. March 3.

as well as the Guatemalan Coup of 1954. Both brothers would have so much power in the administration that at times it would be only them and Eisenhower talking about possible covert actions with no insight from the National Security Council.[105]

The policy of containment would expand US action around the world as well as increase covert actions conducted by the US in the pursuit of making sure nations do not fall under Soviet influence. Though the policy would contain many shortfalls as well, such as in the first days of containment, it did not account for events in Asia that would turn China communist as well as events such as the Hungarian Revolution and the German uprising where the US were not able to act. This would make the US seem weak for not being able to react to such crises and many at home would see this inability especially with the rise of communism in China. And once the next president came to the US he would be able to change part of this policy to create the next in US National Security Policy against the Soviets.

Era II: Kennedy-Johnson, Flexible Response

The Previous era of Containment had brought the US to the global stage. The US was now active around the world to contain communism and the US and USSR entered a bitter struggle for supremacy. In this period, both sides acquired nukes and they would increase their abilities to deliver them. This could be seen with Eisenhower's attempt to boost the US's Missile capabilities. The effects of this policy made it known to the World that the US would go against soviet interference around the world to stop USSR from gaining any more influence. Though by the end many would debate if any of these policies were successful.

Truman's inability to predict and even stop the rise of communism would haunt his administration. Even Eisenhower's attempt to make a military reliant on missiles to deter future soviet aggression backfired as the Soviets developed their advanced technologies and at some point seemed to go farther as they were the first to launch satellites and even living beings into space. And many critics would arise towards Eisenhower's policy of Massive retaliation as when he could have made changes in the Soviet Bloc during its unrest in the 1950's he decided to stand back and not interfere which weakened his image. Tensions with the USSR would continue to rise throughout the 1950s and when the 1960 election came the US would choose a candidate that would be tougher on the USSR and would show the might of the US against the USSR. That candidate was John F. Kennedy.

Kennedy did not like Eisenhower's attitude of "brinkmanship" and massive retaliation, he wanted to be able to act more flexibly in policy and international affairs especially against the USSR. An Era of Flexible Response started. It was a policy where the US could have multiple options to work with when dealing with national security affairs. This idea was

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[105] State Department. n.d. Foreign Policy under President Eisenhower. Accessed April 7, 2021. https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/short-history/eisenhower.

further enforced after the Bay of Pigs fiasco where Cuban exiles supported by the CIA were trained and sent into Cuba to start a revolution. The mission failed due to poor intelligence and cutting back on sending air support towards the invasion. This was a plan adopted by Eisenhower's old model of the NSC, which didn't give any additional options and helped further convince Kennedy that there needed to change.

Many of these options would be across the spectrum of warfare but would avoid all-out conflict. The way this was done was Kennedy wanted multiple different pieces of information to reach him at once, each from a different source to understand what was going on. He would rely heavily on this information flow that could come directly to him from the state department, intelligence agencies, and others before he made a decision[106] [107] This did away Eisenhower's NSC that relied on a set system of bureaucracy through which the information would have to pass before reaching the president.

Through this policy, it would cause the president to work very closely with many of those he appointed into his cabinet. One of them was Robert McNamara whom he would work with closely on building up the US military as well as creating the policy of MAD, or mutually assured destruction, which did continue the production of missiles to widen the missile gap even further. As well, President Kennedy would rely on his Attorney General and brother Bobby Kennedy whom he would confide in during the Cuban Missile Crisis and use for back-channel talks with the Soviet Ambassador to the US.

This policy would give the administration a lot of flexibility to deal with many scenarios in different ways, giving them more options than just dealing with it in one way. This became true for many international scenarios such as the rise of the Berlin Wall where the US government decided not to react to the situation as it was not of vital concern to US interests in Germany and to react to its construction harshly could have created conflict. But when it came to situations such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, the US would use military and political pressure to force the USSR to remove those missiles.

However, despite these intentions to create plurality in the US national security decision-making process, they would lead to the highest tensions between the US and the USSR since the beginning of the Cold War. The US would also be dragged into a war in Vietnam, which would last for 10 years, and the rise of the first communist regime in the Western Hemisphere. With tensions running high following the presidential election of 1968, the succeeding US administration would attempt a policy, which would both ease tensions and properly divide the world between the two superpowers.

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[106] Neumann, Caryn E. n.d. Administration (1961–1963), United States National Security Policy. Accessed April 9, 2021. https://www.encyclopedia.com/politics/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/kennedy-administration-1961-1963-united-states-national-security-policy.

[107] Slantchev, Professor Branislav L. 2019. National Security Strategy: The New Look, 1953-1960. March 3.

Era III: Nixon-Carter, Detente

Upon the election of 1968, the country was getting out of the turbulent 1960s. The Kennedy and Johnson administrations used a policy that would give the US multiple avenues of approach to crises around the world. The US would find itself able to effectively react to situations such as the Cuban Missile crisis without having to use deadly force, and it would be able to show its resolve abroad. However, in this pursuit, it would create unprecedentedly heightened tensions. Throughout the 1960s the Soviets and US would continue to grow their military arsenals to dangerous levels, which would show some prevalence in the Cuban missile crisis when both countries were so close to the brink that it took a miracle to end the crisis. And despite policy abroad that seemed successful to some, there was unrest at home. The Civil Rights movement was in full swing along with many race riots during the Long Hot Summer of 1967, and the antiwar protests sparked by the countries commitment to Vietnam.

The US was going through a time of great internal instability as well as economic uncertainty as inflation was on the rise. During the election, both party platforms differed immensely. The Democrats looked upon the past eight years with the economic growth of the early 1960s and President Johnson's set of domestic programs for the elimination of poverty and racial injustice. They tried to show that they were successful and that under their leadership the country could continue to prosper.[108] Though the Republicans would make a different approach, instead of talking about past glories, they would talk about the many problems facing America and how the country was facing crises. They vowed for a domestic platform that would fix the US and its problems and this would bring many to their side leading the election of Nixon as the 37th President of the US. [109] [110]

With much of Nixon's Platform for fixing domestic issues as well as bringing the troops home from Vietnam, it meant that the US would have to relieve some of its commitments abroad in a bid to ease Cold War tensions. This helped to create the policy of the next era - Détente. It was meant to ease tensions and try to create co-existence among the Superpowers. The Nixon administration also hoped that the US and USSR could create more cooperation in limiting the arms race, which by 1968 was starting to become too

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[108] American Presidency Project. 1968. 1968 Democratic Party Platform. August 26. Accessed April 13, 2021. https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1968-democratic-party-platform.

[109] American Presidency Project. 1968. Republican Party Platform of 1968. August 5. Accessed April 13, 2021. https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1968.

[110] 1968. Nixon's 1968 RNC Acceptance Speech.

expensive for both sides. This policy would lead to the start of multiple discussions such as the SALT treaties and the Helsinki Accords in 1975.[111]

Though as much as this policy was used effectively by Nixon and his successors, its biggest contributor and inspiration came from Nixon's National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger. Kissinger was a long-time academic and was an advocate for the idea of "Legitimacy" in the international order - a system where the world order is accepted by the major powers. In his thesis, he described the multipolar structure in Europe after the Napoleonic wars and how they held the peace for a century as well as how each power agreed to the Concert of Europe, which helped to maintain that peace.[112]

Kissinger in the pursuit of his beliefs pressed a similar policy, which he would help to influence during his time as National Security Advisor, and later as Secretary of State under President Gerald R. Ford. And in many cases it was a success, there was an increase in trade between the East and West as well as cooperation in July of 1975 to create the first international space mission between the US and USSR. Though despite this some tensions and Cold War rivalries would remain such as the conflict in Vietnam, support for opposing forces in the Yom Kippur War, and especially the US move to normalize relations with China in the wake of the Sino-Soviet Split.

Many of Nixon's Policies would be continued under the Ford administration, especially with the use of Henry Kissinger leading the State Department culminating in the Helsinki Accord which called for cooperation and security in Europe, but many in the United States, especially in Congress would see this as the acceptance of Soviet domination in Eastern Europe because of Article IV on states integrity.[113]

After the 1976 election and inauguration of President Carter, the US would take the policy of détente further. Though compared to Nixon's and Gerald R. Ford's administrations which focused more on a Realpolitik approach, Carter would focus more on human rights and moral principles.[114] This was more of a foreign policy objective, but these did affect Carter's relationship with the USSR, as the administration would go after the Soviets on issues such as Jews who were not allowed to leave the USSR otherwise known as the Refuseniks. However, also there was cooperation and continued talks to decrease the arms race such as with the second SALT treaty from 1979. One of Carter's biggest objectives was to make a treaty for massive missile reductions with the USSR. This policy was

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[111] Office of the Historian. n.d. Détente and Arms Control, 1969–1979. Accessed April 13, 2021. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/detente.

[112] Kissinger, Henry. 1954. Peace, legitimacy, and the equilibrium : (a study of the statesmanship of Castlereagh and Metternich). Doctoral Dissertation, Cambridge: Harvard.

[113] SNYDER, S. (2010). "Jerry, Don't Go": Domestic Opposition to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. Journal of American Studies, 44(1), 67-81. doi:10.1017/S0021875809991332

[114] Office of the Historian. n.d. Carter's Foreign Policy. Accessed April 13, 2021. https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/short-history/carter.

influenced by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance who advocated for improved relations with the USSR as well as trying to find diplomatic avenues to work with the Soviets.[115] This was made clear in Presidential Directive NSC 7 that called for negotiations with the USSR to reduce both missile stockpiles and launching capabilities.[116]

Though figures such as Vance called for improved relations with the USSR, others called for confrontation. One of them was Zbigniew Brzezinski, a Polish immigrant and National Security Advisor to President Carter. Compared to Vance's views of improved relations with the USSR, Brzezinski believed that the US had to confront the Soviets on more issues such as human rights in the Eastern Bloc and even called for provocative acts such as trying to expand Radio Free Europe's broadcasting range to influence Eastern Europeans.[117] Brzezinski would advocate for "Peaceful Engagement", which called for putting pressure on the USSR though not using enough force to start a war. In pursuit of this, he was instrumental in assisting the mujahedeen in Afghanistan and bringing about the normalization of relations with China.[118]

Both officials would clash during President Carter's administration to put their policies forth towards the USSR. This would characterize much of Carter's policy towards the USSR as the US would try to juggle these two ideologies and even cause confusion about the US's motives and policies. Though despite everything, this period did create some compromise as the Carter administration was able to bring relative calm with the USSR. Under this administration both the Soviet Union and the US were able to make the provisions of SALT II, an arms limitation treaty which though did not go into force but both nations did adhere to it till the proposed deadline.[119]

However, despite the success during this period, many Americans had different thoughts on the effects of US policies towards the USSR. In 1977 Cyrus Vance was sent to Moscow to modify a proposal made by the Ford administration that meant to drastically cut the number of missiles both superpowers had to levels far below what President Ford's deal had proposed before. The Soviets denied any modifications to the deal, but the administration would present the talks as a success even though its constituents saw the

[115] Office of the Historian. n.d. Biographies of the Secretaries of State: Cyrus Roberts Vance (1917–2002). Accessed April 13, 2021. https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/people/vance-cyrus-roberts.

[116] Council, National Security. 1977. PD NSC-7. Presidential Directive, Washington DC: National Security Council.

[117] Binder, David. 1977. Carter Requests Funds for Big Increase in Broadcasts to Soviet Bloc. March 23. Accessed April 13, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/1977/03/23/archives/carter-requests-funds-for-big-increase-in-broadcasts-to-soviet-bloc. peaceful engagement brzezinskihtml.

[118] Lewis, Daniel. 2017. Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Adviser to Jimmy Carter, Dies at 89. May 26. Accessed April 13, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/26/us/zbigniew-brzezinski-dead-national-security-adviser-to-carter.html.

[119] Office of the Historian. n.d. Strategic Arms Limitations Talks/Treaty (SALT) I and II. Accessed April 20, 2021. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/salt.

negotiations differently. The American public saw Carter's initiatives towards the USSR as going nowhere and that the administration was allowing for the soviets to rise and that they would not abide by any treaties made between them and the US. [120] House Republicans as well as many conservative democrats especially were skeptical of the Soviet Union and denounce Carter's attempts to normalize relations and limit the arms race.[121]

Many think tanks would become prominent during this time such as The Committee of the Present Danger, which was a policy institute that called for a harder response against the Soviets for their actions. Many academics, intellectuals, and even politicians would be a part of this including one who would kick off the next era as the biggest shift in American foreign policy towards the USSR since the Start of the Cold War - Ronald Reagan.

ERA IV: Reagan, Rollback

The governments of Nixon and Carter created warmer relations between the US and USSR and resulted in improved dialogue and even cooperation between the superpowers. Both nations would have increased trade relations and would try to settle disputes peacefully. Nevertheless, many in the American public perceived these achievements as a sign of weakness while the USSR became stronger. Throughout the presidencies of Nixon, Ford, and especially Carter, the Soviets continued to expand their military budget and capabilities while it seemed the US was only lagging on these efforts.

This was complemented by the 70's energy crisis that greatly affected the western countries. At the same time, the Soviet's discovery of vast quantities of oil and natural gas only helped to expand the idea that the USSR was growing in strength and becoming more aggressive. [122] As well during the last years of the Carter administrations, communism seemed to be on the rise in countries like Nicaragua, and Angola. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the rise of Islamic Fundamentalism in Iran which resulted in the Iranian hostage crisis would also create a sense that the US was weak and on the decline.[123]

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[120] 1996. Cold War. Performed by CNN.

[121] Office of the Historian. n.d. Strategic Arms Limitations Talks/Treaty (SALT) I and II. Accessed April 20, 2021. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/salt.

[122] 1996. Cold War. Performed by CNN.

[123] American Presidency Project. 1980. Republican Party Platform of 1980. July 15. Accessed April 20, 2021. https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1980.

This and other factors such as harsh republican criticism of Carter's versions of Détente, and the rise of groups such as the Committee of the Present Danger helped to propel the idea that the US needed to exert itself once again as a dominant power, and that it must have nuclear superiority compared to nuclear parity with the Soviets. These views were espoused by the Governor of California Ronald Reagan who during the 1980 election campaigned on a platform of "Let's make America Great Again" to reverse the effects of the past decade and to bring America to a new age of prosperity. Reagan also campaigned on large budget increases for the military, policy to punish the Soviets whenever they go against international law, and to roll back soviet advances.

On January 20th, 1981 Ronald Reagan was inaugurated president and his policies came into effect as quickly as he came into office. He adopted a version of Eisenhower's policy of Containment, though modified it not only to contain the USSR but to roll back Soviet influence around the world. This policy was a complete turnaround from Carter's policy and too many at the time seemed to be highly aggressive and would start a period which was known as the 2nd Cold War. Reagan's policy is better explained through the 1983 National Security Directive Decision 75 (NSDD 75) which stated a multitude of strategies for military, economic, and political policy towards the USSR. This Directive called for the modernization of US military forces to as the document states "so that Soviet leaders perceive that the U.S. is determined never to accept a second place or a deteriorating military posture."[124] Another goal was reinvigorating NATO as well as alliances in the Far East to show that there would be no secure front for the USSR.

The Reagan administration would create an economic policy that advocated for continued East-West trade but stressed the importance of trade relations that did not help to support the Soviet military, or the transfer of technology as well as the creation of dependence on the USSR for natural gas and oil. In addition, the Reagan administration continued a version of the Truman Doctrine for support of any government threatened by communism as well as support for any movements in the Eastern European Bloc against Soviet Domination, such as Solidarity in Poland. The policy also called for making sure that the US was able to counter any forms of disinformation as well as make sure the Soviets never had the High Ground on any conflict.[125]

This entire policy was made to constrict the USSR so that they would not be able to expand as was perceived during the years of Jimmy Carter's presidency. It was the closest thing that the US had to a war strategy without even going to war. Designed to consider all shortfalls and to keep Soviet influence out of Western Europe and other places around the US's sphere of influence.   Though despite the antagonistic view of this policy directive it did carry the provision of working with Moscow to create arms controls

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[124] National Security Council. 1983. NSDD 75. National Security Directive, Washington DC: National Security Council.

[125] National Security Council. 1983. NSDD 75. National Security Directive, Washington DC: National Security Council.

treaties it was made clear that the US would not bend to make them possible and that they would only be made if they satisfied all US interests and policy objectives.[126]

This policy of Rollback would involve the US in an expansion of overseas power not seen since the Second World War. The US would commit itself to many operations abroad such as the US invasion in Grenada, the expansion of covert support to the Contra forces in Nicaragua, the mujahadeen in Afghanistan, as well as the supporting UNITA in Angola against the MPLA. All of this was the result of Reagan's belief that the Soviet Union was an "evil empire" and his resolve to stop communism from spreading globally. However, Reagan's renewed efforts of aggressiveness against the USSR were influenced by the conservative anti-communist Committee of the Present Danger- the group that advocated for an aggressive stance against the USSR. More than thirty officials of his administration were CPD members and even Reagan himself had been one before he became a president.

One of these figures is the former National Security Advisor William Clark, a long-time friend of the president that advocated for more involvement in Latin America to overthrow communist governments and movements in the region. During his tenure, he was considered one of Reagan's top advisors pushing for policies that would not give the USSR any concessions in the early '80s.[127]

After Clark resigned in 1983 over reported disagreements with other staff, another figure became very prominent -Secretary of State George Shultz. He was also a member of CPD and at first an advocate for many of the policies of Reagan. Nevertheless, in 1985 after meeting with President Gorbachev for the first time he realized that the administration was dealing with a new Soviet leader. Compared to the previous generation of Soviet leaders, Gorbachev was younger coming into power at the age of 54. He was born after the 1917 Revolution, but some of the biggest differences were how he interacted with his people. Gorbachev was known to talk with people in the Soviet Union, make jokes, have a general interaction with them. Gorbachev also had very different relations with foreign dignitaries including Margret Thatcher who was another figure that convinced Reagan to meet the Soviet Premier.[128]

The two would meet in Geneva Switzerland in 1985, and to many there it would be stated as two passionate men arguing with each other. Though what was interesting was for how long they talked, George Shultz would remark about their meeting "it was scheduled for 10 minutes. 20 minutes went by. 30 minutes went by. 40 minutes went by…" when an aide asked if he should interrupt their meeting Shultz would reply "If you do that, you

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[126] National Security Council. 1983. NSDD 75. National Security Directive, Washington DC: National Security Council.

[127] Joyner, James. 2013. William P. Clark, Reagan National Security Advisor, Dead at 81. August 13. Accessed April 25, 2021. https://www.outsidethebeltway.com/william-p-clark-reagan-national-security-advisor-dead-at-81/.

[128] 1996. Cold War. Performed by CNN.

should be fired…"[129] despite the topic of the meeting, it proved that both Superpowers were willing to talk again.

The changing of Soviet Leadership would lead to the warming of relations between the USSR and the US. President Reagan and Premier (Later Soviet President) Gorbachev would start to build a relationship, and both would sign a treaty limiting all Intermediate-Range Missiles in Europe. By the time the next presidential election in 1988 started, great changes were happening within the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The policies of glasnost and perestroika were making waves in the USSR and many of the Satellites were debating moving towards their path away from the USSR. By January of 1989, a new president would be inaugurated to deal with the crisis.

Hungary was the first of the Soviet Satellites to make its move by reburying Hungarian Revolutionaries from the 1956 uprising as well as having multi-party elections the next year. In wake of the reburials, many nations in Eastern Europe began to shift away from Communism and have multiparty elections where democratic forces would win.[130] Soon the rest of Eastern Europe would follow suit with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and others holding democratic elections. Changes in Eastern Europe would even be noticed within the USSR as Glasnost and Perestroika would create changes within a system that was considered unchangeable. The US would watch all these events closely both with jubilation and with caution fearing that the Soviet Union may reverse its policies.[131]

Despite the changes implemented by President Gorbachev and the events of Eastern Europe, the policies of this era did a great deal to influence the events inside the USSR. President Reagan's pursuit of a massive military buildup as well as the expanding American Covert operations would result in one of the biggest rises in tensions ever seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis. It would result in the Soviets trying to keep up with the United States, but in this process, the USSR would spend about 18% of its National Income to keep up while the US was spending approximately 6-7%.[132] This would help exacerbated the massive shortages occurring in the Soviet Union as well as lead to many within the country feeling frustrated with the Soviet System. Perestroika and Glasnost would be a response to these frustrations, but they would also widen these cracks which would lead eventually to the Fall of the USSR on December 25th, 1991.

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[129] 1996. Cold War. Performed by CNN.

[130] 1996. Cold War. Performed by CNN.

[131] National Security Council. 1989. National Security Directive 23. NSC Directive, Washington DC: National Security Council.

[132] Nintil. 2016. The Soviet Union: Military Spending. May\ 31. Accessed April 25, 2021. https://nintil.com/the-soviet-union-military-spending/.

Conclusion

In the four and a half decades of relations between the US and the USSR, we have seen several trials and warm gestures towards each other in efforts to either stop the other side or to de-escalate tensions. Over this time it also showed the creation of National Security Policy as well as the many influences which would make up much of the US strategy during the Cold War as well as our relationship towards the USSR.

From the first days of the National Security Council as an advisory body, it would propose the policy of containment towards the Soviet Union to prevent the spread of communism and expand the actions of the US across the Globe. Eisenhower would continue this and use more covert action from the influence of the Dulles Brothers to further prevent the spread of communism. Eisenhower would also be the creator of the Missile Race for Nuclear Presidency. Upon the end of the Truman and Eisenhower era, a fresh face would come to the White House and the National Security Council will change its tune to create a policy of Flexible Response to present multiple options to counter Soviet advances around the world to President Kennedy as well as President Johnson after him. It was here where the Influence of the National Security Council began to grow in the creation of policy rather than as just an influencing body and upon the next era, it would see its role shift to something far greater than the councils' designs.

Under the Nixon Administration, the policy of Détente would be adopted to ease the tension that was created during the Turbulent 50s and 60s. This policy was the brainchild of National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger who advocated for a multipolar world where the superpowers could co-exist. This policy would be echoed by Nixon's Successor Gerald R Ford who held Kissinger and made him Secretary of State which increased his power. President Carter would continue the Policy of Détente but this policy could create a rivalry between National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Both advocated and fought over different policies during the Carter Administration create a divided camp near the end of Carter's presidency when a more hardline president would occupy the White House.

President Reagan would throw away the Policies of Détente to introduce a Rollback Policy to not only contain the USSR but to take away recent gains in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Many policymakers in Reagan's administration would have been a part of the Committee of the Present Danger which advocated for aggressiveness against the USSR. This included people such as National Security Advisor William Clarke who advocated for more support to anti-communist groups in Latin America as well as other parts of the world. In many ways, this could have been considered the Zenith of the NSC's power as the National Security Advisor would have enough influence within the White House that he could abruptly disturb the President at any moment to talk about National Security Concerns. Though this would soon change as Reagan's later presidency would turn from an aggressive stance to one that would seek to ease tension like during détente, and it

would create the START treaties. But the policies of his first four years would help to change the situation of Eastern Europe and create the modern world as it is today.

Throughout these eras the NSC had evolved in terms of its role and how much influence it has in creating policy. Throughout the Cold War, it became very influential in creating a policy against the USSR to the point that it seemed like there wasn't any need for Congress or the State Department to create foreign policy. This begs the question: did this advisory board over-exceed its mandate, or did it do the job it was intended to do? Additionally, do the actions and policies of the National Security Council warrant its actions during the Cold War, and could they be used towards contemporary issues of a resurgent Russia?

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The European Union in the cold war between the US and China

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Introduction

In one of his brilliant analyses, Samuel Huntington argued that a world without US domination is doomed to be more violent, less democratic, and suffering an economic recession[133]. According to him, the leading American role in world affairs is a central prerequisite for freedom and democracy at the global level. Many of us were also convinced of this. Thus, we followed with interest and some concern as the United States gradually lost its credibility, leaving room for other ambitious state leaders who, in turn, felt that their countries deserved a leading role on the world stage. The first to oppose American hegemony were the 9/11 bombers, who, with their deadly act, made it clear that the United States was no less vulnerable to external attacks.

The terrorist atrocity was just the beginning of a series of destabilizing events that dealt a severe blow to Western liberal democracy, the model, which defeated Soviet Communism in the Cold War and became a primary pole of attraction afterward. However, its attractiveness started to fade during the second war in Iraq and the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. In addition, the West's impotence became even more apparent after the annexation of Crimea and in the context of the Middle, East chaos provoked by the Arab Spring. Moreover, the election of Donald Trump as president, who openly admired autocratic leaders such as Viktor Orban and Vladimir Putin, emphasized the trend of imitating those who until recently strived to resemble them.[134]In the end, events of the past years have shown that unipolarity is fragile or, as the famous neorealist Kenneth Waltz has pointed out, the least durable of international configurations[135]. Therefore, it was expected that the other players in the

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[133]Huntington, S. 1993. **Why International Primacy Matters, p. 83.**

[134]Krastev, I., Holmes, St. 2019. **The Light that Failed, Sofia: Obsidian.**

[135]Waltz, K. 2000, **Structural Realism after the Cold War, p. 27.**

international arena would seek ways to balance the distribution of power. Some of them would try to build up their strength, while others would win allies.

The Current Order of International Relations

The outlined shortcomings of the Western or American model caused an undisguised wave of resentment and activated a search for alternatives. Back then, during the historical East-West division, the resistance against hegemony, along with the desire to establish democratic principles in the field of international relations, gave birth to the concept of multipolarity meaning that power and influence are distributed among several actors rather than being dominated by one or two. In the 21st century, numerous actors could take a leading role in the current multipolar international structure where, along with the United States and China, the European Union, Russia, India, and Japan are considered power centers. However, it is right to point out the considerable economic distance between the first two and the other states. According to the World Bank, in 2020, the United States ranked first in GDP with an economy worth more than $20 trillion, and China is closing the gap with its $14.7 trillion. [136] In third place is Japan with a GDP of about 5 trillion dollars, followed by Germany with 3.8 trillion dollars. The economy of the UK, India, France, Italy, Canada, and Russia vary between 1 and 3 trillion dollars. However, the first two countries continue to occupy a significant share of the world economy and therefore have an immense impact.

Washington and Beijing, followed by the EU, are leading in science and technology at a time when the development and use of artificial intelligence are pivotal for economic competitiveness. In 2020, the US maintained its leading position in key areas such as financing research and development and investments in startups, as a report by the Center for Data Innovation shows comparing China, the EU, and the US[137]. Washington leads also in the number of experts employed in the development of artificial intelligence. [138] China, for its part, has made artificial intelligence a top priority, as the reducing gap in with the US in important areas shows. For example, last year, Beijing owned 214 of the 500 most powerful supercomputers (Center for Data Innovation, p. 15). By comparison, Washington had 113 and EU - 91. The indicator is important because high-performance computing provides an immense advantage in all other areas. Another significant indicator is the development of

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[136] **The World Bank, GDP (current US$),** **https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD**

[137]**Castro, D., 2021. Who is winning the AI race: China, the EU, or the United States? 2021 Update. Center for Data Innovation** **https://www2.datainnovation.org/2021-china-eu-us-ai.pdf**

[138] **World Intellectual Property Organization. 2021. World Intellectual Property Indicators 2021.** **https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4571**

semiconductors, which have become a matter of national security. According to a Semiconductor Industry Association report, the capacity of the countries traditionally dominating chip production, Japan and the United States and several European countries has eroded in 2020, with a negative trend continuing. [139] On the other hand, the manufacturing capacity of states such as South Korea, Taiwan, and especially China, whose goal is to achieve independence from semiconductors, is growing.

In addition, Beijing and Washington were the states with the highest military spending in 2020. US military spending was estimated at 778 billion dollars. Meanwhile, China has increased its military budget for the 26th consecutive year, reaching 252 billion dollars. In comparison, the other largest spenders in the Asia-Pacific region are India ($72.9), Japan ($49.1), South Korea ($45.7), and Australia ($27.5). Military spending in Europe has also risen by 4%, and that of Russia reached 61.7 billion dollars.[140]

We have already pointed out that the concept of multipolarity emerged in response to the unipolar structure of international relations. In this sense, multipolarity is more politically correct than the model with one or two leading forces as it provides relative freedom to small and medium actors that do not necessarily excel in an economic or military sense. The subsequent emergence of new centers of power in the first decades of the 21st century, which opened up opportunities for competition in various fields, took place in the context of multilateralism - an institutional form regulating relations between countries based on general principles and a set of rules. Namely, the interconnectedness achieved through multilateral organizations distinguishes the contemporary multipolar world. However, the system of collaboration has recently been shaken by two events, which is evidence that the world is not ready for cooperative multipolarity. These are the coronavirus pandemic and climate change. In essence, both challenges affect all nations in the world equally and require a coordinated response by a united force. At the same time, both face the prevailing multipolarity and rivalry between countries that refuse to compromise their interests.

For the second year in a row, humanity has been battling COVID-19, but beyond the health crisis, the pandemic has shed light on the tragic lack of trust between people, public institutions, and states. In this crisis, the absence of global leaders to inspire a coordinated global effort was strongly felt, and we, therefore, saw all kinds of chaotic national measures. Some politicians, including US President Donald Trump, who did his best to undermine supranational organizations during his term, have some credit

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[139]Varas, A., et al., 2020. Government Incentives and US Competitiveness in Semiconductor Manufacturing. Semiconductor Industry Association, https://www.semiconductors.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Government-Incentives-and-US-Competitiveness-in-Semiconductor-Manufacturing-Sep-2020.pdf

[140]SIPRI. World Military Spending Rises to Almost $2 Trillion in 2020.

for the diminished role of international cooperation. Now, it is up to Biden to reveal how he's imagining the role of multilateral organizations.

International summits are made for cases when humanity faces global challenges such as the coronavirus pandemic and climate change. The recent meeting of G-20 that took place in Rome had to address the issue of unequal distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, as well as the uneven global recovery, and to move states in the direction of their commitments under the Paris Agreement. In the end, G-20 members agreed on a Joint Finance-Health Task Force to enhance collaboration against future health threats. But when it came to tackling climate change, the summit was marked with disappointment, as it only confirmed its urgency but offered modest steps avoiding any concrete commitments. No less disturbing is the fact that the president of the world's greatest greenhouse emitter was not present. Chinese President Xi Jinping was one of those who did not attend, and who participated in the UN Climate meeting (Cop26) with a written statement. [141]

This does not necessarily mean that China is not taking global warming seriously. There was a significant shift in the Asian superpower's attitude in recent years. China scaled up its pledges a few days before Cop26 and was still criticized for not doing enough. However, what we need to pay attention to is how China is boycotting international cooperation by refusing to take part in the negotiations between the state leaders. In this way, it refuses to withstand pressure from international structures still dominated by the United States. Even the published document with the updated commitments to combat climate change states that China would address global warming "not at others' request" but on its initiative.[142]

The task of defining the current international system is not an easy one, as it contains some contradictions. In today's world, we see a growing importance of regional actors, with whom the former hegemon must now collaborate. However, the latter continues to play a leading role in certain fields. At the same time, resentment against the American global adventures and the model it embodies allows for the rise of alternative forces. In combination with China's economic rise, these sentiments have allowed Xi Jinping to try to position his country as a global power on a par with the United States. As for Washington's part, there is a reluctance to recognize such equality, so it is doing everything in its powers to limit the strengthening of Chinese authority and to prevent an eventual development of the international system towards bipolarity.

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[141] **Liptak, K., The absence of key world leaders hangs over Biden's first G-20, https:// edition.cnn.com/2021/10/31/politics/xi-jinping-vladimir-putin-g20-joe-biden/index.html**

[142] **China's First NDC, https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NDCStaging/Pages/Party.aspx? party=CHN&prototype=1**

The attempts to deter the Beijing area related to fierce economic and technological competition that affects the international economy. However, President Biden attempts to draw an ideological element of the confrontation. In this spirit stands his rhetoric of a democratic alliance against autocratic governments. For instance, he has been arguing that the world has reached an inflection point that will determine which model is better and which one will dominate the century. [143] In the same spirit is Biden's position in a news conference at the end of the G7 summit in June that democracy competes with authoritarianism. [144] The meeting of the richest democracies held in Cornwall was part of his first official trip to Europe as a president and was charged with strengthening partnerships. In the end, Biden managed to push the other leaders to be more ambitious. Thus, the Build Back better World infrastructure plan, a positive alternative, according to Biden, to Beijing's Belt and Road initiative was launched. [145]

In this context, the current order of international relations represents a new multipolar model characterized by many growing powers, but where the United States and China still have a clear leading role. Their bilateral relations run in a progressively growing confrontational trajectory in the field of economics and technology and can easily spiral into a new cold war.

Against this background, the European Union, the most successful liberal project, is trying to play the role of a global actor. The aggregate size of the economic indicators of the member states positions the Union just between the two great powers. We must also keep in mind that the EU devotes a large part of its budget to the development of technology, and the ambitious goals it sets for itself and humanity as a whole attach to it significant weight on the international stage. However, the EU has several deficits, making its foreign and security policies highly inefficient. Nevertheless, tracing its position in the US-China competition is essential, as it will demonstrate that due to the interconnectedness and interdependence of states, a sharp division of the world, as it was during the last century's Cold War, is unlikely.

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[143] **Remarks by President Biden at 2021 Virtual Munich Security Conference, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/02/19/remarks-by-president-biden-at-the-2021-virtual-munich-security-conference/**

[144] **Reuters, Biden: Democratic nations in a race to compete with autocratic governments, https://www.reuters.com/world/biden-democratic-nations-race-compete-with-autocratic-governments-2021-06-13/**

[145] **Holland, St., Faulconbridge, G., G7 rivals China with grand infrastructure plan, https://www.reuters.com/world/g7-counter-chinas-belt-road-with-infrastructure-project-senior-us-official-2021-06-12/**

The Transatlantic Relations and Their Difficulties

EU-US relations under Donald Trump's mandate cooled to such an extent that the European states had to begin talks on their strategic autonomy and the need to strengthen their common defense capabilities. Unfortunately, the pandemic diverted attention from the topic of defense and interrupted the momentum. At the end of 2020, American voters elected Joe Biden as a new president, who promised to reconcile with European partners. Inevitably, the new presidential administration was loaded with optimistic expectations from across Europe. However, the brief honeymoon between President Biden and the EU, as Professor Nathalie Tocci has described it[146], met its end as Washington decided to withdraw from Afghanistan because of the American-Taliban deal that sidelined the European partners.

Another dose of frustration in the transatlantic relationship was introduced by the new AUKUS agreement between the US, the UK, and Australia, which effectively rejected a $60 billion submarine contract with France. [147] It was a huge blow for the European defense industry as well as both French and EU strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific region, while the way Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced the news to Emmanuel Macron did not soften it at all. AUKUS was not intended to affect the ego of the French. The agreement is part of the US strategic efforts to thwart China's growing power, and Australia's acquisition of nuclear submarines supports that goal.

It is also important to note that relations between the AUKUS states have historical roots dating back to the Second World War. Back then, the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada agreed on intelligence sharing creating the so-called Five Eyes alliance. Europe has never had a place in such a configuration. On the one hand, this is due to contempt for the EU coming from Australia, where Euroscepticism has penetrated deeply into politics[148] and where Brexit has been welcomed. On the other hand, Washington and Canberra share a common distrust of the Union when it comes to China, since Brussels does not unambiguously see the Asian state as a rival, but rather relies on the economic opportunities of their bilateral partnership. In addition, a day after the announcement of AUKUS, the EU unveiled its Indo-Pacific strategy

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[146]Tocci, N. 2021. After the honeymoon, how to make the EU-US relationship work, Politico.

[147] How a submarine deal sparked a major diplomatic crisis, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/19/explainer-why-is-a-submarine-deal-sparking-a-diplomatic-crisis

[148]Kitney, G. 2017. Letter from Canberra. Carnegie Europe

with the essential goal of maintaining the stability of the region through "building strong and lasting partnerships" without excluding any side.[149]

However, just a few weeks after the AUKUS announcement, there were already attempts for the revival of the EU-US relations with the newly launched Pittsburgh Trade and Technology Council (TTC). With its dozen working groups, the initiative can potentially be the core of transatlantic relations in the future as the two sides have vowed to fight several unfair trade practices usually associated with China's market behavior. The TTC can be more successful than previous cooperation mechanisms, as it raises discussions on specific areas of interest and omits difficult topics on agricultural subsidies and regulatory barriers. Moreover, at the G-20 in Rome, the EU and the US managed to negotiate an agreement that, according to Biden, marks "a new era in transatlantic relations"[150]. The decision to put an end to the steel and aluminum disputes related to the US imposed tariffs on metals imported from the EU will affect Beijing, which is accused of generating overcapacity. In addition, the settlement lifts the EU tariffs on key US products.

From the withdrawal of the Allied troops from Afghanistan, between the pompous words of shared values, through AUKUS and the attempts to develop trade and technology relations, the transatlantic relationship has not followed a straight and unhindered trajectory. The ups of cooperation are due precisely to the shared democratic and human rights principles that the US and the EU associate with as well as their common desire to promote them throughout the world. However, Washington has always directed its actions according to its national interest that at this point are associated with deterring China. Such strategic reorientation of Washington towards the Indo-Pacific region could reduce the American engagement in Europe.

Although the confederate nature of Brussels' foreign and defense policy has always been an obstacle to its effectiveness, it is now necessary to adapt it to bring balance to security and defense in transatlantic relations. More European responsibility would strengthen the partnership, as it will increase mutual respect. An effective EU defense and security policy would provide an opportunity for the US military resources that have so far been invested in Europe to be used regarding essential national interests, and at the same time will make the Union a more capable partner in the fight against terrorism. In the post-recovery period, European leaders will need not only to enhance their military capabilities but also to design a firmer common security policy to warrant its neighborhood and deter Russia.

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[149]**Questions and Answers: EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_21_4709**

[150]**Remarks by President Biden and the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on US-EU Agreement on Steel and Aluminum Trade, October 31 2021**

The EU Has Its Approach toward China

Brussels' attitude toward China is not unambiguous. This is reflected in the way the Union defines the latter as a „cooperation and negotiating partner, but also an economic competitor and a systemic rival".[151]Crucially, the Europeans did not take the American approach to confrontation. Instead, they recognize Beijing's growing role on the global stage and rely on the possibility of dialogue on common challenges such as environmental issues, the situation in Afghanistan and its transformation into a terrorist base, as well as North Korea's evolving nuclear program.

At the same time, the EU and China have several differences on topics such as democracy, and human rights, which go through open condemnation of the violation of rights in Hong Kong and Xinjiang as well as the imposition of sanctions. The European member states' support for Taiwan's autonomy is also an irritant in bilateral relations. Still, on the economic front, China is the EU's largest trading partner for 2020. It was no surprise that all 27 states approved a Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, which would have been ratified by now if it were not for the sanctions over human rights abuses by Beijing and its reciprocal response aimed to hurt European companies. Chinese investments are quite welcomed in Europe, as 18 Member states are part of the Belt and Road Initiative.[152]

However, Beijing is pursuing a policy that, summarized in a case study by Brattberg et al., aims to increase Chinese exports, exert political influence on institutions in European countries and build a positive public image.[153]Through the development of bilateral relations with individual member states, the Asian state compromises the European consensus. Thus, it exercises influence on issues concerning the circumstances over Taiwan, the South China Sea, Hong Kong, and Xinjiang. For instance, in April, Hungary which became part of the Chinese sphere of influence in Europe undermined the EU's aim of upholding human rights in Hong Kong by blocking an EU statement criticizing Beijing's new security law in the autonomous region.[154] Greece, a significant recipient of Chinese investments, is another Member state that has been seen to change opinion according to Beijing's interests. In 2016, both Athens and Budapest showed reluctance to condemn China by undermining the

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[151]European Parliament Resolution on a new EU-China strategy. Strasbourg: 16 September 2021.

[152]Countries of the Belt and Road Initiative, https://greenfdc.org/countries-of-the-belt-and-road-initiative-bri/v

[153]Brattberg, E., Corre, Ph., et al. 2021. China's Influence in Southeastern, Central, Eastern Europe: Vulnerabilities and Resilience in Four Countries.

[154] Chalmers, J., Emmott, R. Hungary blocks EU statement criticizing China over Hong Kong, diplomats say, https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/hungary-blocks-eu-statement-criticising-china-over-hong-kong-diplomats-say-2021-04-16/

adoption of a declaration supporting the International Arbitrations Court's rule against Beijing in a case brought by Manila regarding the South China Sea dispute. [155] A year later, Athens, vetoed an EU statement at the UN criticizing Beijing's human rights record calling it unconstructive. [156]

It is essential to keep in mind that China is an ideological opponent of the concept of liberal democracy and the values of the West. By investing in current states, Beijing opens the door not only to their markets but also to the hearts of their nations and institutions. In this sense, the encroachment of Beijing into the EU's immediate neighborhood - Ukraine and the Balkans, is extremely dangerous. Just recently, Ukrainian Prime Minister Zelensky withdrew his support for an investigation into human rights violations of the Uighurs after he signed a deal with China. [157] Moreover, Kyiv is an example of how the diminished willingness to promote pro-European and pro-NATO aspirations is provoking the search for alternatives.

Despite the open differences and competition for influence in the European Neighborhood, Beijing and Brussels must and will probably continue to make their way to each other. The desire to do so is reflected in the recent telephone conversation between President Xi Jinping and European Council President Charles Michel and their urge to hold a planned bilateral summit. The EU's policy towards China is softer than the American approach due to the importance of their economic relations, as well as the desire of European leaders to play an international role on important issues through dialogue. It is no coincidence that Brussels' Indo-Pacific strategy is so inclusive and cooperative. The truth is that European foreign policy is guided by the principle that the more connected we are, the more we will listen and respect each other. This explains the play on human rights in China and the situation in Taiwan. But to make demands on the increasingly powerful Beijing with impunity, Brussels must strengthen its position as well, starting with its immediate neighborhood.

Conclusion

[155] Gotev, G., EU unable to adopt statement upholding South China Sea ruling, https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/eu-unable-to-adopt-statement-upholding-south-china-sea-ruling/ ; Emmot, R., EU's statement on South China Sea reflects divisions, https://www.reuters.com/article/southchinasea-ruling-eu-idUSL8N1A130Y

[156] Denyer, S., Europe divided, China gratified as Greece blocks EU statement over human rights, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/06/19/europe-divided-china-gratified-as-greece-blocks-e-u-statement-over-human-rights/

[157] Bennetts, M., China to invest in Ukraine after Kiev drops complaint over Uighur abuses, https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/china-to-invest-in-ukraine-after-kiev-drops-complaint-over-uighur-abuses-7cgm7jklk

In late September, the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) published a study in 12 EU member states that found that most Europeans believe the United States is in a cold war with China and that Brussels is Washington's foremost partner in the confrontation with Beijing.[158] The most interesting of the survey is the finding that a significant proportion of respondents do not see their country as a participant in the cold war. Moreover, most Europeans do not even think that China is a threat to their countries. In other words, public perception captures the discrepancy between Brussels' attitude towards Beijing and the position of national governments. One reason is that the EU has taken a tougher line with China because of the critical state of human rights and unfair trade practices. At the same time, member states do not seek to translate them to their citizens and instead welcome the deepening of the economic partnership with the Asian country. Apart from Hungary, whose dependence on Chinese investment we have already highlighted, the study involved citizens from Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Poland, and Bulgaria. The only exception to the prevailing view that their country is not involved in the confrontation with China, are respondents in Sweden, where the report found a division on the subject.

From one point of view, the results, as the authors conclude, show that European citizens already see the outlines of EU foreign policy. However, the difference between the policies of nation-states and supranational European institutions seems to be worrying. Such a public attitude means that the controversial course towards Beijing can hardly be replaced, at least at this stage. Without a clear consensus, the European institutions cannot risk explicitly opposing China, as their actions would face accusations that they do not represent European citizens nor reflect the interests of member states.

In that case, the EU will have to find a way to balance carefully between China and the US whilst developing both its military and soft power capabilities to gain strategic autonomy from NATO. There is some reason to believe that President Biden does not see the increase in the military resources of European partners as a threat and would welcome their effective use in joint operations within NATO.
A continuing European integration in the field of defense and security, which tends to develop as a result of crises, needs to take place at this stage. It would serve as another strong push to provoke a desire to improve the common policies. A more united and stronger EU will keep Beijing on the negotiating table and cooperate more successfully with Washington on trade, technology, and security. In this way, the EU

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[158] **European Council on Foreign Relations, 2021, What Europeans think about the US-China Cold War,** https://ecfr.eu/publication/what-europeans-think-about-the-us-china-cold-war/

will play perhaps the most significant role in the modern international system, amid the rivalry between the two great poles, namely to soften the divide and be a mediator.

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Demographic Engineering – Migration as a Political Instrument

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Introduction

❝ We will make it!" said the German chancellor Angela Merkel at the Federal press conference on September 31, 2015. Europe was on the verge of a massive influx of Syrian refugees. This statement became one of the most controversial slogans of the so-called new "German welcome culture", paving the way to Europe for millions of primarily Syrian, Afghani, and Iraqi refugees. Merkel received both praise and condemnation for her humanitarian efforts domestically and internationally. It brought attention to existing structural and economic differences within the European Union, given that Spain, Greece, and Italy faced and continue to face relatively low support from the Union in terms of a fair sharing of the burden the ongoing immigration puts on these countries. Furthermore, the nature of immigration to the EU has grown even more nuanced in recent years, reflecting a rather aggressive instrument of foreign policy from non-EU partner countries such as Morocco and Turkey and, as recognized by the European Union on a summit in October 2021, becoming a means of hybrid warfare used by Belarus.

Migration itself as a natural occurrence could therefore be used to implement or even weaponize a particular policy. The term for this important yet mostly unexplored phenomenon is *Demographic Engineering* (DE) and will be the subject of this article. The first part provides a short conceptualization and a digression on the happenings at the Western Belarusian border in 2021, while the second presents two case studies. Section **A** deals with DE as a political instrument of the Soviet Union and Section **B** with Chinese migration to Africa. This article intends not to provide deep analysis, but rather an overview that will potentially inspire the reader to investigate the issue further.

What is Demographic Engineering?

Ethnic or ethnonationalism is at the root of the majority of internal conflicts. They have been used throughout history as a political instrument to modify the ethnic composition of a given society, as a population's size often defines its economic potential and political power. The capacity of an ethnic group within a particular society can imply a broader representation in political organizations, a more significant influence on decision-making processes, and greater access to civil rights and legal protection. The most extreme manifestation can consist of territorial autonomy. A vital element of the *demographic struggle for power* is the heterogeneity of the given country and perception of threat, whether to secure its privileges or the struggle for their attainment.[159]

According to the definition of Paul Morland, the central aspect of DE is a conflict between ethnic groups occupying the same territory, which aim to assure survival, presence, or growth.[160] Nowadays, this constitutes a considerable potential for conflict that is not to be underestimated. Current trends of accelerated demographic growth and migration can impact demographic concentration faster than ever. Morland introduces a binary typology to distinguish existing forms of DE, classified as hard and soft demographic engineering.

The hard DE consists of political instruments such as the encouragement or discouragement of reproduction of a certain group, the influence on its mortality, and, in the worst cases, genocide. Another instrument is migration; it can be the immigration of a favored group to a disputed territory or forced emigration, resettlement, and deportation of a disfavoured group. On the other hand, the soft DE is often used more as it complies with democratic values and is less prone to evoke condemnation from the international community. Instruments of soft DE include the manipulation of ethnic identities or census, the movement of borders, the concession of territories, and the integration/ assimilation of minorities into the national identity of a given country. However, as Morland rightfully concludes, the actual intention of a particular state to conduct is hard to circumstantiate; it can just as easily be considered an instrument for crisis management.[161]

On their part, Myron Weiner and Michael Teitelbaum define DE as the sum of every legal action undertaken to influence the size, consistency, placement, and growth of a specific

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[159] Bookman, M. Z. (1997). *The Demgraphic Struggle for Power - The Political Economy of Demographic Engineering in the Modern World.* Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University, p. 1-28.

[160] Morland, P. (2014). *Demographic Engineering: Population Strategies in Ethnic Conflict.* Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

[161] Ibid.

population.[162] It promotes slow population growth, family subventions, and abortion policies. Often, however, these policies do not only concern economic growth but rather security issues. The model developed by Weiner and Teitelbaum focuses on migration; it presents instruments such as the promoted immigration of certain ethnic groups to strengthen state or regional identity, forced emigration, and resettlement of ethnic groups, even though they might have lived together peacefully for centuries. Another form is a substitution, which means the immigration of one group and the emigration of another. A state can also decide to promote emigration to realize its economic or international goals by generating an inflow of money to families, which have been "left behind", investments made by ex-pats, and the influx of foreign technology. Another possibility is the use of a diasporic population abroad to influence the national politics of the receiving country.

An essential problem of DE, especially concerning migration politics, is the potential consequences. For example, colonization in the past has provoked conflicts between groups, as in many cases, the indigenous populations did not accept the presence of settlers. Consequently, this led to uprisings, secessionist movements, and even deportations or genocide. Democracy is unlikely to occur in such circumstances, so one group might have to suffer suppression at the hands of the other. On a larger scale, these conditions can generate serious international consequences, such as humanitarian intervention, an armed conflict, or a refugee crisis. The movement of refugees could be used on a tactical level and as a political instrument, for example, to destabilize a targeted country, realize political demands, pressure another government, or simply as blackmail.[163]

Kelly Greenhill provides a more profound analysis, referring to the aforementioned phenomena as *Coercive engineered migration* (CEM). [164] As seen through that theory, this can pose a genuine threat to targeted countries that, for example, have an insecure situation, where social conditions are complex with a government facing a potential crisis or has legitimacy issues, or where ethnic pressures already exist. External adversaries can take advantage of the internal weakness by generating anti-government demonstrations and by fuelling existing polarisation and thus limiting the government's scope of action. Western democracies are especially vulnerable to this scenario. This stems from, on the one hand, the natural potential for conflict inherent to pluralistic systems. On the other hand, these countries often proclaim human rights on an international level and comply with the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

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[162] Weiner, M. and Teitelbaum, M. (2001). *Political Demography, Demographic Engineering.* Oxford: Berghahn Books.

[163] Ibid., p.45-113.

[164] Greenhill, K. M. (2010). *Weapons of Mass Migration - Forced Displacement, Coercion and Foreign Policy.* London: Cornell University Press.

For example, in the current case of Poland and the Baltics, this translates into real responsibility, which is hard to avoid without losing credibility and providing another target for Russian propaganda. Here, state sovereignty and human rights conflict. Actors who use CEM can be divided into three groups: generators, provocateurs, and opportunists. The two first groups act to create and manipulate a migration crisis, whereas the last one only takes advantage of a crisis. A suitable example for the weaponization of migrants is the circumstances at the Polish-Belarusian border. There, since October 2021, Poland has faced increased kinetic pressure by vast masses of migrants coming from the Middle East that are allegedly being supported by Belarusian border guards and other security services.

Digression: Weaponisation of migrants as a communication strategy of Belarus

Within the last years, there has been a tendency that neighboring countries to the EU use migrants from Africa and the Middle East to push their political agenda. In recent times, Turkey did that at the beginning of 2020, when the government opened the border in an attempt to coerce the EU for additional financial aid and support. This attempt, however, was not successful, as the pandemic situation provided the Union with a legitimate option to close the border.

With the Taliban coming to power in the summer of 2021 and a worsening of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, a new massive migration movement towards the European Union is looming, and Belarus has since acted as an actor exploiting this situation for its political purposes in an attempt to copy Turkey's model of applying pressure. Since this summer, Minsk has started a campaign to attract migrants from unstable regions into Belarus and then channel them to the borders with Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia. Allegedly, this is the reaction of Aleksander Lukashenko to EU sanctions against his regime and also an attempt to generate political bargaining capital.[165] Figures speak of about 35,000 illegal border-crossing attempts and thousands of migrants stuck in the region since the beginning of the crisis in the summer of 2021, as Poland does not let them in, and Belarus does not let them back.[166]

Their humanitarian situation is precarious with looming winter and increasing tension that leads to violence among the migrants and attacks with stones against border guards. As a result, the Polish Sejm decided to build a border wall and implemented a state of

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[165] Statement by President von der Leyen on the situation at the border between Poland and Belarus, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_21_5867 (opened 22.11.2021).

[166] Chołodowski, M., Kryzys na granicy polsko-białoruskiej. Migranci są wywożeni z obozowiska. SG: Pozorny spokój, https://bialystok.wyborcza.pl/bialystok/7,35241,27815316,kryzys-na-granicy-polsko-bialoruskiej-migranci-sa-wywozeni.html (opened 22.11.2021).

emergency denying access to journalists and activists. At the time of writing this text (November 2021), there is still no political solution in sight.

The Belarusian communication strategy is primarily aimed at discrediting Western democracy. The individual fates of refugees are presented as horrible stories to generate outrage about unfair treatment by the EU and show the European hypocrisy when it comes to human rights. This narrative is meant to strengthen Lukashenko's position within Belarus and gather popular support after the mass anti-government protests last year. It also underscores the aggressive nature of NATO and creates a sense of threat to generate political support and legitimacy among its population, thus counteracting the Belarusian emigration movement to the EU. This strategy by Minsk is thus primarily targeting its society, but not only.

Given the fact that Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel had phone conversations with Lukashenko twice proves this strategy might work successfully in reopening negotiations. Internationally, the crisis works as a tool to bring Lukashenko back on the negotiating table, fortifying his position, and yet it undermines the EU's narrative as a campaigner for democracy and human rights. On a further note, most of the involved parties try to benefit from the situation. In Poland, the ruling PiS party can present itself as the defender of Poland, whilst Lithuania and Latvia could receive more EU funding. The EU, on its part, could use this situation to change migration laws to react to such occurrences in the future more efficiently. In the end, the real victims are the migrants, who are not welcomed on either side of the fence.

A. DE as an instrument of Soviet politics

One of the most popular instruments of the Stalinist Russification was DE, which was intended to abolish cultural barriers and establish one *lingua franca* among the Soviet Union. One way was to formally eliminate ethnic minorities by changing their ethnic status in the passport – many ethnic groups, such as the Sarts, for example, disappeared by becoming Uzbeki citizens. The Soviet government introduced incentives so that many Russians migrated from the center to the periphery based on the idea of Soviet indigenization policies.[167] They were meant to industrialize these regions and transfer technical competencies by emigrating qualified Russian workers. That, however, did not take place. An example is the cotton farms in Uzbekistan SSR, which required processing factories, which were not located in Uzbekistan but Russian SFSR. That meant that in Uzbekistan only a primary sector was developed, but nothing beyond. Another example is that locals sometimes were not included in nearby projects. Instead, most of those hired on industrial projects in Kazakhstan SSR were from the Russian and Ukrainian SSRs. Therefore the propagated transfer of knowledge could not happen.

Russian immigration caused a population shift in the receiving countries. In the Latvian SSR, the Russian share rose from 8,8% in 1935 to 34% in 1989, whereas the Latvian

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[167] Indigenisation is a cultural process that makes a certain society adapt elements of a foreign culture. An example is the Europeanisation of the world during colonialism.

share fell from 77% in 1935 to 52% in 1989.[168] Besides that, DE was used to discipline or punish ethnicities that Joseph Stalin perceived as inherently anti-Communist, those who collaborated with the National Socialists during the occupation or belonged to an enemy nation. Approximately 700 000 Volga Germans were deported from Kazakhstan to Siberia, the Chechens, Ingush, Crimean Tartars, Muslim minorities, Polish, Jewish, Koreans, Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians faced a similar destiny.[169] The Baltic case is an excellent example of Soviet DE and its lasting consequences.

To prepare for the occupation and annexation of the Baltic states, Stalin used the ethnic minorities in the given country by elevating ethnic tensions through misinformation and racist ideology aimed at these groups. The Soviets trained partisans and militia, and the political offices were predominantly held by Russians or Sovietised Latvians loyal to the Party. The intention was to eliminate Latvian culture and glorify ethnic Russians and their culture. To punish the Baltic people for their collaboration with the Germans, many were either executed or deported to Siberia.[170] Between 1941 and 1953, approximately 60 000 Latvians were deported to make room for the creation of *Kolkhozes,*[171] too.[172]

Another well-documented case of DE took place in Lithuania. In early June 1941, the first massive wave of deportation was to replace the old elite with a new one to secure the newly formed Western border. The goal was to discourage the local population from mounting resistance, but instead, it provoked alienation and prolonged conflict. Due to the onset of the so-called Great Patriotic War, the process was delayed, and in 1944, when Soviet victory was certain, thousands of locals moved to the forests and organized the anti-Soviet resistance from there. As a reaction, in 1948, more than 50 000 Lithuanians were deported to Siberia. After their arrival, they were placed in wooden barracks, which were not suitable for the Siberian winter conditions. Medical supplies were insufficient, and sometimes medical staff rejected treatment of the arrivals. Diseases such as malaria and typhus began to spread, with most deportees dying in the first year. Many survivors received rights as Soviet citizens but were prohibited from returning to their country of origin. After some years, the situation of the deportees improved as they were increasingly integrated into mainstream society, with some even allowed to attend institutions of higher education. However, the transformation of the counter-revolutionary Lithuanians to loyal Soviet citizens did not take place as expected because most of the settlers preserved their

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[168] Fowkes, B. (1997). The Disintegration of the Soviet Union - A study in the Rise and Triumph of Nationalism. London: Macmillan Press.

[169] Fowkes, B. (1997), p.70f.

[170] Felder, B. M. (2016). Stalinist National Bolshevism, Enemy Nations and Terror; Soviet Occupation of the Baltic States 1940-41. W O. Mertelsmann, The Baltic States under Stalinist Rule. Köln: Böhlau Verlag, p.13.

[171] Kolkhozes are collective farms, an agricultural model developed in the Soviet Union.

[172] Pridge, W. D. (2014). Sovietization, Russification and Nationalism in Post-War Latvia. W O. Mertelsmann, *The Baltic States under Stalinist Rule.* Köln: Böhlau Verlag.

cultural identity, language, religion, and developed a deep-rooted hatred towards the Soviet regime. There were even calls for justice as recently as 1989.[173] Even today, there is a significant anti-Russian sentiment among the Baltic countries that hinder the normalization of relations between the Baltic nations and the Russian Federation.[174]

Another long-term consequence of DE is the turbulent relationship between the EU and Russia and NATO and Russia, which was further aggravated by the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014. The Baltic countries once again felt threatened by Russian imperial ambitions. This development also strained the relationship between the Baltic countries and its Russian-speaking minorities who are especially vulnerable due to Moscow's propaganda and potential instrumentalization.[175] Within the frame of *Russkiy mir*,[176] these minorities might be exposed to disinformation campaigns that portray Russian-speaking minorities as victims of discrimination and violence. Consequently, they could demand the Russian Federation to create or support separatist movements or intervene, as in Crimea.

On a smaller scale, Russian propaganda already plays a destabilizing role in the region by undermining NATO and Baltic domestic politics. Furthermore, the ongoing political integration of Belarus to the RF and the geostrategically crucial position of the Suwalki gap, and the fact that Russia based its best-trained troops at its Western border are a threat to the Baltic countries.[177]

The Suwalki Gap is the only land bridge connecting the EU and the Baltics – a narrow piece of land between Belarus and Russia's Kaliningrad exclave. If occupied by Russian or Belarusian armed forces, the Baltics would be no longer accessible by land. It is difficult to defend in an area primarily inhabited by Russian, Polish, and Lithuanian minorities, which could be motivated towards separatism if the Russian armed forces do not succeed in occupying the gap to connect Belarus with the Kaliningrad oblast. This operation could instigate a refugee movement limiting NATO's ability to move directly to the region.[178] At this point, the Baltic countries demanded help from the Alliance and

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[173] Bashkuev, V. (2016). The Post-War Deportation of Lithuanians to Curiat Mongolia (1948-1958) as an example of Repressive Population Transfer Policy of the Stalinist Regime. W O. Mertelsmann, *The Baltic States under Stalinist Rule.* Köln: Böhlau Verlag, p.136

[174] Bashkuev, V. (2016). p.119-135.

[175] Simonjan, R. (2019). The Baltic States and Russia in the Context of the Ukranian Crisis . *МИРОВАЯ ЭКОНОМИКА И МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ, том 63, № 9,* pages 61-68.

[176] A concept proclaimed by W. Putin in 2001 that foresees the defence of Russian civilisation by all means outside the Russian Federation.

[177] Muzyka, K. (2021). Russian Forces in the Western Military District. New York: Center for Naval Analysis, p.4.

[178] Hodges, B., Bugajski, J. and Doran, P. (2018). *Securing the Suwałki Corridor - Strategy, Statecraft, Deterrence, and Defense.* Washington: Center for European Policy Analysis.

received funding to modernize and strengthen their military potential in each country. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland implemented the long-term NATO exercise *Enhanced Forward Presence* to deter the Russian Federation. Although the situation is currently stable, the dependence on Russian energy resources and the European Union's inability to confront Russia may, in the long run, undermine a strong and united position that allows a quick and coordinated reaction, as demonstrated by the migration crisis at the Polish/Lithuanian border.

B. Chinese migration to Africa: a case of Demographic engineering?
China's Silent Army is the dramatic title of a book written by the journalists Juan Pablo Cardenal and Heriberto Araujo, who traveled across the African continent to document China's global economic conquest. Over the last centuries, there has been a sizable steady stream of Chinese immigration to Africa. Current estimates place the number at around 2 Million.[179] This significant figure begs the question - is this a case of demographic engineering?

Chinese interest in the African continent is focused on access to natural resources such as petroleum, copper, coal, diamonds, gold, bauxite, iron ore, lithium, and wood. Beijing invests a lot in infrastructures of strategic value like ports, highways, airports, railways, dams, and power plans. Other than that, China aims to create markets for goods, build diplomatic contacts and promote *soft power* with the help of international media campaigns. China engages in UN peace missions in Mali and South Sudan built a Chinese naval base in Djibouti and intends to integrate Africa into the Belt and Road Initiative.[180]

In this sense, Chinese mass emigration to Africa started with the so-called *"going out"* politics, proclaimed in 1999. It foresees the expansion of businesses and companies through its activity and investments abroad, supports the companies financially, and initiates contracts with African governments to facilitate operations in these countries. State-owned enterprises are the catalyst for Chinese immigration to Africa, as most immigrants come within the frame of temporary contracts, to return once it ends. We also see a significant increase in private companies operating in the area could be observed, too.[181]

There are three main types of migration that can be defined. The first one, as previously mentioned, is a temporary relocation for a government-initiated construction project. The second is the immigration of businesspersons hoping to find new markets for their products. The third is transitional migration when migrants understand Africa as some sort

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[179] The truth about Chinese migrants in Africa and their self-segregation, https://qz.com/africa/1865111/chinese-migrant-workers-in-africa-and-myths-of-self-segregation/ (opened 13.07.2021).

[180] Sullivan, J. and Cheng, J. (2018). Contextualising Chinese Migration to Africa. *Journal of Asian and Africa Studies, Vol. 53, No. 8*, pages 1173-1187.

[181] Postel, H. (2017). Moving Beyond "China in Africa": Insights from Zambian Immigration Data. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs, Vol, 2*, pages 155-174.

of intermediate stop, where they can earn money and later continue to Western countries.[182]

However, the perception of Chinese citizens' government-sponsored migration to advance their interests abroad would be misguided. On the contrary, firstly, there is no "*the Chinese*" in the universal sense, as China is a country consisting of many different local groups with Chinese passports, who often tend to avoid contact with each other. Secondly, the ongoing immigration of compatriots increases the economic competition that the settlers wanted to get away from by leaving China. Many people come with limited capital and knowledge of local languages and cultures. However, they appear very motivated and competitive, expecting a better quality of life. Some of them simply want to escape political pressure in China.[183] Many of them experience Africa within the framework of a *going out* contract, some stay, and some return to Africa after some time, or they reunite with their families. Sometimes they are motivated by the lack of employment opportunities in China. In other cases, it is because there is no space for them in the literal sense, which is understandable due to the size of China's population and density.[184]

On the one hand, Chinese immigration to Africa demonstrates the enormous potential for economic development thanks to the creation of infrastructure, jobs, and the transfer of knowledge and competencies. However, it becomes problematic when the foreign companies bring in their workers, and the locals are not hired or paid. A case was reported in Guinea by Aziz Diop, head of Guinea's National Council of Civil Society (CNSOC), for example, where construction only took place at night and Africans were not allowed on the construction site.[185] If hired, the locals can be treated very poorly or even be shot if they protest.[186] The local government sometimes does not react because the Chinese support the ruling elites, and in return, they get access to raw materials and a blank cheque in the legal sphere. This fuels corruption and undermines democratic principles.

Another point is the dramatic environmental pollution in some regions and increased competition through the import of cheap products from China, which causes discontent among locals.[187] Oppositionists and local media exploit the prevailing mood and resentment against the Chinese diaspora spreading in many regions, resulting in violence

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[182] Kuang, E. M. (2008). The new Chinese migration flows to Africa. *SAGE Publications Special Issue on Mirants and Clandestiny*, p. 643-659.

[183] Sullivan and Cheng (2018), p. 1176.

[184] Antwi-Boateng, O. and Akudugu, M. A. (2020). Golden Migrants: The Rise and Impact of Illegal Chinese Small-Scale Mining in Ghana. *Politics & Policy Vol. 48, No.1*, p 144.

[185] French, H. W. (2014). China's second continent. New York: Knopf, p. 123f.

[186] https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-11568485 (opened 21.11.2021).

[187] French, H. W. (2014). China's second continent. New York: Knopf, p. 57-125.

against them.[188] The expected population growth of Africa is globally regarded as one of the largest in the future. Therefore, it is crucial that Africa, as a region, must develop a strong middle class and sense of stability. A Chinese "Exploit-and-Leave" strategy would not only make life harder for Chinese immigrants to Africa but also, in the long term, continue to destabilize the EU and the Middle East, as refugees and economic migrants would continue to seek living opportunities in the Global North.

In conclusion, it can be stated that China's exit policy has an ethnic component and that political and economic interests are closely intertwined.[189] However, it would be too simple to assume that Chinese immigration to Africa is a political instrument of Demographic Engineering to colonize Africa and the world in the long term. Instead, it should be regarded as a "side effect" that the Chinese government does not fully supervise. There is a lack of a clear and plausible intention. We are unaware of any policies intended to implement ethnic-based changes or exert influence on the African continent. Originally expatriates were supposed to return, and those who decide to stay usually lead a simple life, integrating themselves into the host nation. However, if this diaspora radically increases and (mutual) resentments increase in the future, this could lay the groundwork for political exploitation or lead to a major ethnic conflict. In addition, one has to bear in mind the increasing Chinese military presence on the mainland and – theoretically – the increasing number of immigrating trained reservists from the Chinese military—a population which, potentially, could be called to action.

Conclusion

The Soviet Union and Africa have provided us with numerous examples of Demographic Engineering. There are many other currents and historical examples of demographic engineering, which cannot be examined here due to word limitations. In light of the

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[188] Postel, H. (2017).

[189] Pairault, T. (2013). Chinese Direct Investment in Africa: A State Strategy? *Région et Développement, Vol. 37*, p. 260-284.

current political turmoil, we must continue to address it in our political, scientific, and journalistic discourse. The use of migration as a weapon at the borders of the European Union and the sensitive situation in the Baltic states should force the EU to reach a consensus on the issue of mass immigration from turbulent regions. It necessitates the development of effective political measures to counter weaponized migration. Maybe then we will make it.

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Fear and faith during the Black Death

Our team supports young researchers and authors, and we want to publish as many texts as possible. The text of Yoana Dancheva, which you will read below, is the winner of a competition we organized with students from the National High School of Ancient Languages and Cultures, Sofia, Bulgaria. The text is originally published in Bulgarian.

Death. Black Death. People are sobering up and the realization that nobody can help them is astonishing and horrible. So they just stop fighting against it. Corpses pile up, animals scatter parts from dead bodies. A gruesome silence looms over the city. Doors and windows are closed and no smoke comes out from the chimneys. In everyone's eyes, there is only despair, a demented fear, and an insurmountable aversion to pain. All this "turns the whole town into an endless funeral procession." [190] Such muddle of sorrow, fear, cruelty, loneliness, torment, and misery compels people to realize that neither master nor God, however they call it, can help them. The response to the plague is seen differently in various countries, cities, communities, and families, but fear is the common factor everywhere. When fear has conquered all senses, the most natural reaction is trying to explain the root cause of the misfortune and maybe to understand how to deal with it. Thus, faith becomes the only light in one's grim life.

Having something to believe in makes people feel more secure. And although everyone believes in something different – might be God, the state, the family, or witches and demons - everyone has faith. The purpose of this text is to examine the relationship between faith and fear and their interrelated role during the period of the Black Death.

Let's rewind and take a closer look at what was one of the most horrendous diseases in human history. The cause of the plague, according to most theories, is the bacterium Yersinia pestis, which was transmitted to humans by fleas carried over by rats. "Originating from Central Asia, the disease killed an estimated 25 million Chinese, Indians, and other Asians during the 15 years before it entered Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1347. From there it quickly spread to Genoa, Naples, Venice, Marseille, and other Mediterranean ports; ships carrying Crusaders returning from the Middle East were a major factor in this respect. …until 1350, all of Europe (including Iceland and Greenland, according to some sources) was in the grip of the plague."[191]

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[190] Manzoni, A., *Les Fiancés*, II p.77: text of Ripamonti, De peste quae fecit anno 1630, Milan, 1940, p. 81

[191] Kohn, G., C., *Encyclopedia of Plague and Pestilence, 3rd Edition* (Facts On File), p. 31

Bubonic plague is most commonly found in two forms. The first one infects the victim's blood and is transmitted through contact. In those affected, black swellings appear on the groin and underarms, which occurs as a result of inflamed lymph nodes. The second one affects the lungs and is transmitted through a respiratory infection.[192] Some of the other symptoms are fever, dizziness, nausea. Sometimes victims spit blood with an unpleasant odor.

"Usually the symptoms were shivers, a weak pulse… and such a weight in the head that the patient could barely hold it up, looking dizzy and confused, as if drunk, staring and expressing horror and despair."[193] There is no accurate number of victims of the infection with some historians claiming that half of the population was wiped out during the plague.

However, most consider these assumptions to be extremely exaggerated and accept Yves Renoir's account, according to which "the proportion of plague victims to the total population seems to vary between 2/3 and 1/8 depending on the different areas."[194] To date, the epidemic of 1348-1350 is considered the most devastating in human history, although the contagion has repellently returned again and again and often "assumed the scale of a catastrophe at urban, regional or even national level."[195]

By 1346, rumors of an unknown deadly disease in Asia began to circulate in Europe. Portrayals of it were appalling and well known on the Old Continent but no one paid much attention until it was inevitable to face the truth and was too late to take action. Until the very end, the authorities denied the existence of such thing, so as not to cause panic, thinking that fear might be much more destructive than the plague itself. They feared that the economy will collapse and people will stop working, and they (the authorities) will lose influence and wealth. In this sense, Jean Delumeau writes that "in Italy in 1348, when the epidemic spread through the ports, Florence was the only inland city trying to protect itself."[196]

Common people hoped the plague will go away unnoticed. The recognition of its existence had been postponed until the very end, and the manifestation of this probably unconscious selfishness caused the deaths of thousands. It was easier to turn a blind eye to the problem than to solve it because the solution would cost a lot. However, they did not know that fleeing would cost them much more - their lives. People did not learn from their mistakes and repeated them as the events of 1630 in Lombardy were similar, described by Alessandro Manzoni.

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[192] According to Tuchman, B., W., *A Distant Mirror The Calamitous 14th Century*, p. 80

[193] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.167

[194] Renouard, Y., Conséquence et intérêt démografique de la Peste Noire de 1348, в Population, III, 1948, p. 463

[195] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.148

[196] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.159

When the news arrived for infested villages that form a semicircle around the city, anyone would think that there would be a general upheaval, a desire for applying precautions, or at least some kind of anxiety. And yet... the memoirs of that time are unanimous,.... that there was no response. Hunger, foreign armies, and mental anguish were enough to explain mortality. If anyone says a word about the danger, he or she is met with angry contempt.[197]

From time immemorial, people have been afraid to say certain words. They believed that the naming of these "forbidden" words would provoke the emergence of evil. „By naming evil, they will attract it and destroy the last stronghold that stops it", writes Delumeau.[198] Maybe it was a kind of superstition or apotropaic magic designed to ward off wicked influences. When they could no longer deny the existence of the plague, people had two possible choices - fight or flight.

The second option was a purely physical escape, not just mental, as it had been so far. Europeans believed that the enemy is more vigorous than them so they prefered not to engage in an open battle against the virus and find ways to dodge it. Therefore, seeing some nobles desert, common people did the same as their masters. As one chronicle describes the events in Marseilles at that time, „all the city gates are barely enough to let the crowd out. Everyone deserts, leaves, run away." [199]

The situation in which people found themselves seemed hopeless as fear of the unknown took over while mistrust was even worse than the epidemic itself. Relationships between people collapsed - just when the victims needed support, they were abandoned. Laws of love were forgotten. The threat was no longer death itself, but to experience the agony of the sick with the environment so "inconsolable that the living envy the fate of the dead."[200] Left behind alone, and with nothing to fight for, victims surrendered and died in unbearable conditions. And even then, the bitterness did not end.

Instead of performing the usual burial ritual, the body would often either be left on the street or thrown into a cart and then in a pit with dozens of other corpses. "By disturbing the everyday life and blocking the way to the future, the plague shakes the foundations of both the individual and collective psyche."[201]

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[197] *Manzoni, A.,* Les Fiancés*, II p.61*

[198] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.162

[199] Carière, M. Courdurie, F. Rebuffat, Marseille, ville morte. La peste de 1720, Marseille, 1968, p. 66

[200] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.161

[201] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.171

Then questions and theories about the origin of this disaster began to arise along with a sense of revenge. When something of such magnitude takes place, there always must be a culprit, and that culprit must be punished. Fear of the "other" and the "distant" has always been a key factor in human history. As in antiquity, so in the Middle Ages, contempt for foreigners has always existed. It is them who were the scapegoats on whom the aggression caused by fear was poured. In this case, the blame fell mostly on the Jews, although the potential culprit could have been anyone who was not well integrated into the local community.

Jews were accused of poisoning wells and deliberately spreading the disease. Moreover, their image was seen as anti-christian, which added to the common anger and led to the deaths of innocent people considered a threat to the Christian world. That certainly was not the first time Jews have been persecuted, accused, and killed, but the scale of the repressions against them increased significantly with the outbreak of the plague.

Some historians, such as Samuel Cohn, reject the thesis, saying „that the blind rage of the crowds of workers, craftsmen, and peasants responsible for the extermination of the Jews by the Black Death stems from the reasoning of modern historians not from medieval sources"[202] Proof of the falsity of his claim, however, is the bull of Pope Clement IV of July 26, 1348, as described by Jean de Vionnet:

And Pope Clement attacks those who attribute responsibility for the plague to the Jews. His argument is as follows: if the accusation is well-founded, then why are Jews also victims of the contagion or why is the epidemic affecting Jewish settlements?[203]

If there wasn't a negative attitude towards the Jews, then why did the Pope call for an end to the violence against them? Some people knew that the "different" might not be the ones to blame for the plague. Not only for the reasons that Pope Clement listed, but because there were too few of them to cause a plague of this scale.

There were other groups as well labeled as „outsiders" that were blamed - the ones engaging in incomprehensible for the common folk practices. People like witches and magicians, whose persecutions grew exponentially between 1320 and 1486. In Europe, there were 12 trials against witches, led by the Inquisition tribunals between 1320-1420 and grew to 34 from 1421 to 1486. There were only 24 trials in civil courts between 1320 – 1420 compared to 120 from 1420 to 1486.[204] Many thought, that human beings can't cause so much pain on such a scale so there had to be something greater involved.

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[202] *Black-Death social toxins (taken from https://www.cairn.info/revue-annales-de-demographie-historique-2017-2-page-39.htm#no7)*

[203] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.196

[204] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.518

Some researchers at that time thought that the disease is caused by air pollution. They suggested that the air is polluted from the reek coming from rotting bodies, from the Earth's core, or the landfills. People even started wearing masks, used perfumes, and did whatever they could think of to fight the pollution. Others however thought that the reason behind the plague could be found in the arrangement of celestial bodies, falling meteorites, or the placement of clouds in the sky. They even tried to forecast when a new wave would come by calculating the position of stars.

These and many other measures were seen as psychological weapons against evil. Although most of them didn't help against the disease, people felt they had regained control and again had hope for life. So they fought. They fought for their life, for the life of their loved ones, they fought for the survival of humanity.

At this point, people's only stronghold was faith in God. „Over the centuries, there have been numerous testimonies of the religious understanding of collective misery as the fault of all, not just the scapegoats"[205] In this sense the Black Death was seen as God's punishment for the sins of the entire humanity. Many nations related God's rage with all cataclysmic events. In Europe, many priests, as well as common people referred to Nineveh from the Old Testament, where the threat of a disaster is presented as a divine punishment. Distributed by the Church and reflected in European art, this explanation turned out to be most plausible for the people of that time. They all believed that personal and collective guilt must be redeemed, and therefore the self-flagellation movement emerged.

It appeared in Austria as "a group of zealous Christians, led by a teacher, who roam from city to city, performing self-immolations for their sins of humanity, falling to the ground in repentant rage and leading communities in the persecution and massacre of Jews, Gypsies, and other minority groups."[206] They went even further, arguing that the movement must last 33 years after which 1,000 years of happiness will follow. Some people even sold all their possessions because they believed that the rich and the poor will become equal.

People have always wanted to be happy and every action in our lives is dictated by the desire for happiness. This had also applied to the people of the Middle Ages until someone or something came and took away their peace and happiness. Realizing they lose grip on their lives, they wanted to keep control with the belief that they deserve eternal joy

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[205] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.201

[206] Mark, J., J., *Religious Responses to the Black Death (taken from https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1541/religious-responses-to-the-black-death/#citation_info,)*

after experiencing indescribable horror. Therefore, people decided that by punishing themselves, they'll be marching towards eternal happiness.

Such a notion, however, was not unique for Christianity. There were similar movements in the Muslim world, where events were viewed differently. For them, the plague was not God's wrath, but a path towards martyrdom for the faithful Muslim. It was His creation and therefore one should not run away from the infected sites. In most cases, Europeans recommended evacuation of infected areas, but there were also Europeans with very similar to the Muslim views. A. Pare, for example, argued that the plague is not a cause for fear and he presented the escape from it as a sin.[207]

Catholics and Protestants considered repentance and prayer to be the most important tools for the prevention and treatment of the disease. Faith in God was the only thing they could hold on to, so people kept it as their most precious treasure. As D. Defoe notes, "There is nothing more bizarre than seeing how bravely people go to church, even at a time when they are afraid to go out for any other reason."[208] At one point, however, when all efforts and attempts did not work, fear was replaced by despair with more and more Christians losing trust as they see that even the church cannot fight the Black Death.

There was a decline in confidence before the outbreak, but it deepened over time. The church became more interested in gaining political power and accumulation of wealth rather than caring for the laity. An example of this was the practice of selling indulgences as a way to reduce the amount of punishment one has to undergo for sins. Another factor that contributed to the loss of confidence in the church, was the conflict between the pope and the French crown resulting in the relocation of the papacy from Rome to Avignon.

In most regions "church people are dedicated to serving the sick and giving them the most appropriate communion at the risk of their lives."[209] As a result, a large percentage of priests and monks also died from the disease, leaving vacant positions impossible to fill. Others just fled, which was seen as unforgivable. People felt abandoned, and the fact that those closest to God were also frightened and hopeless only made things worse. As Philipp Ziegler writes, "The sudden disappearance of almost half of the clergy inevitably strains the church's machinery and reduces its ability to deal effectively with rebellion movements"[210]

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[207] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.202

[208] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.203

[209] Delumeau, J., *La Peur en occident,* p.188

[210] Quoted in Zentner, M., H., *The Black Death and its Impact on the Church and Popular Religion* (taken from https://egrove.olemiss.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1682&context=hon_thesis,)

Thus the laity saw themselves in an inconsolable situation - facing death at every step, while their sole support could not help because of its deteriorating condition. The depleting number of priests also led to the desire of those who are left to accumulate wealth even more eagerly as due to high demand, they required higher pay for their services.[211] Again, actions that are understandable during periods of chaos and troubled times, but morally unacceptable. In a time of an unprecedented crisis, those who had to be pillars of support proved to be examples of greed and selfishness.

After all, despite all the difficulties facing the European civilization, it not only managed to survive but also marked the beginning of a new era and recovered even stronger paving the way towards the Renaissance and modernity. Just as it can be said that misfortunes engineer the individual character of a man, in the same sense the challenge of the Black Death built the character of our civilization.

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[211] According to Zentner, M., H., *The Black Death and its Impact…*