



SELINUS UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCES AND LITERATURE

**TOWARDS A THEORY OF SOCIO-RELIGIOUS
INCOMPATIBILISM:
UNDERSTANDING THE EMERGENT COLD WAR
BETWEEN THE WEST, POST-COMMUNIST RUSSIA,
CHINA, AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD**

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ATTESTATION

I attest that I am the sole author of this thesis, and I now declare that this work is mine unless expressly indicated in the text.

Signature

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ABSTRACT

Numerous theorists are concerned that a new cold war is developing between the West and Russia, China, and the Islamic World. Since the collapse of the Soviet bloc in the 1990s and especially following the September 2001 terror attacks on United States (U.S.) soil, the West, primarily led by Washington and London, has involved itself in perpetual warfare. Their attacks on Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and Syria are prime examples. Bombastic language by western politicians against Moscow, Beijing, and the Islamic world only exacerbates the already tense situation. President Trump's description of the COVID-19 disease, the Chinese virus, did little to help the situation. The January 2019 assassination of Iran's General Soleimani by American forces at a civilian airport in Baghdad shows how easily a cold war could quickly escalate into a hot one. Iran retaliated to his killing by launching dozens of missile attacks against U.S. military bases stationed in Iraq. Fortunately, no American personnel died from these strikes, and an uneasy calm ensued between the two adversaries.

The phrase New World Order (NWO) traces back to around 1940 when author H.G. Wells used it for the title of a book about a one-world government. Professor Blum defines the NWO as a vehicle for Washington to force its economic and political hegemony onto others. This paper examines whether a new Cold War is emerging between the West, the post-communist country of Russia, the Islamic world, and to a lesser extent China. In light of its waning economic power, it asks if the U.S. will accept that its unipolar moment from the 1990s is over. Moreover, as a result, it questions if it is

willing to cooperate with countries that do not share its political, economic, and cultural values. It suggests that Russia is the main bulwark against Washington's globalist agenda.

INTRODUCTION

Thesis Question

This thesis intends to determine why a new Cold War is emerging between the West, the post-communist country of Russia, the Islamic World, and to a lesser extent China

Hypothesis

In light of its waning economic power, it will hypothesize that the West is unprepared to accept that its unipolar moment from the 1990s is over. Moreover, as a result, it will ask if it is willing to cooperate with countries that do not share its political, economic, and cultural values.

Definition of the West

For this study, the West will encompass only the Anglo-American countries of Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom (U.K.). There will, however, be some overlap with other western states that are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (E.U.) trading bloc. The phrase ‘Anglo-American’ describes a relationship between the U.S. and the U.K. (specifically England), “or the two countries shared language English and cultural heritage. In this context, the term may refer to an English American, a person from the United States whose ancestry

originates wholly or partly in England, {or} a person from the United States who speaks English as their first language."¹

Definition of the Islamic World

Followers of the Islamic religion are Muslims and amount to approximately one-fifth of the world's population. For this thesis, the Islamic World is a belief that "Islam is the faith of all God's prophets from Adam onwards and therefore is the original religion. They see the formal creation of a distinct religion in the seventh century A.D. as the final form of the religion, explicitly revealed in the Quran."²

Definition of the Cold War

It was a term given to the conflict between the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), aided by its Eastern European satellite states, and the U.S., helped by its Western European allies. A very high level of political and military tension existed between these two camps, but it stopped short of a full-scale conflict, hence the Cold War, instead of a hot one. Fought through a nuclear arms race, proxy wars, spying, and ideological propaganda, it enormously impacted the world.³ In April 2018, the United Nations (U.N.) Secretary-General said the Cold War "is back with a vengeance."⁴

¹ Wikipedia website, "Anglo-Americans," *Wikipedia*, May 20, 2018, accessed January 22, 2023, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Anglo-Americans&oldid=842139228>.

² Elizabeth et al Breuilly, *Religions of the World*, 2nd ed. (London: Wayland, 2000), 67.

³Robert Wilde, "Learn the Origins of the Cold War in Europe and Its Worldwide Effects," *ThoughtCo*, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.thoughtco.com/origins-of-the-cold-war-in-europe-1221189>.

⁴ Mythili Sampathkumar, "'Cold War Is Back with a Vengeance,' Says UN Chief - as He Issues Warning over Syria Escalation," last modified 2023, accessed January 30, 2023,

Definition of the Military-Industrial Complex

The above is “a formidable union of defense contractors and the armed forces.”¹ President Dwight Eisenhower warned of the danger of a close relationship between the government and the defense industry. He said, “in the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.”²

Definition of the New World Order (NWO)

The above has various meanings. It may merely be:

A new or alternative model of social organization, interaction, or control; (Politics) a new balance of power among nations, sometimes as manifested in arrangements established internationally for preserving political stability; especially (in recent use) the state of global politics and the global economy following the end of the Cold War.³

A more sinister definition of the term expresses it as:

A worldwide conspiracy being orchestrated by an extremely powerful and influential group of genetically-related individuals (at least at the highest echelons) which include many of the world's wealthiest people, top political leaders,

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/syria-world-war-russia-trump-us-uk-un-secretary-general-antonio-guterres-a8303096.html>.

¹ NPR Staff, “Ike’s Warning Of Military Expansion, 50 Years Later,” *NPR.Org*, last modified 2023, accessed January 26, 2023, <https://www.npr.org/2011/01/17/132942244/ikes-warning-of-military-expansion-50-years-later>.

² Christopher Ball, “What Is the Military-Industrial Complex?” History News Network, accessed January 17, 2023, <https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/869>.

³ Oxford Dictionary website, “New World Order Definition of New World Order in English by Oxford Dictionaries,” accessed January 30, 2023, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/new_world_order.

and corporate elite, as well as members of the so-called Black Nobility of Europe (dominated by the British Crown) whose goal is to create a One World (fascist) Government, stripped of nationalistic and regional boundaries that is obedient to their agenda.¹

Definition of the Deep State

Replying to a question from a Whitehouse journalist in 1995, President Clinton remarked that “there is a government within our government, and I do not control it.”² It is also sometimes called the Shadow Government or the Secret State, and law Professor Michael Glennon describes it as the “Double Government.”³ Another definition labels it “an alleged secret network of especially nonelected government officials and sometimes private entities (as in the financial services and defense industries) operating extralegally to influence and enact government policy.”⁴

General Introduction

This thesis intends to ascertain if a new Cold War is developing. It seeks to determine whether the West, Russia, China, and the Islamic World can ever work together for the benefit of all civilizations. Belligerent statements made in April 2017 by U.S. President Trump and his Western allies regarding the Syrian crisis contrasted with

¹ Adachi k., “The New World Order, An Overview,” last modified 2018, accessed January 1, 2023, <http://educate-yourself.org/nwo/>.

² Richard Lighthouse, *Treason at the CIA*, (Texas: Smashwords, 2017), 7.

³ Michael Glennon, “The Deep State—or Double Government?” The Freedom Project, speech at Wellesley College January 23, 2019, accessed January 20, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nE5byTkvRXs&t=2102s>

⁴ Merriam-Webster, “Definition of Deep State,” last modified 2023, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/deep%20state>

the conciliatory comments from Russian President Putin in reply. It suggests to the author that the West opposes cooperating with countries with a different viewpoint.¹

Several assumptions are made based on the author's experience and knowledge of international affairs. Firstly, the West fears competitors obtaining a more significant share of the world's resources- therefore, we can assume that a resource war is underway. Secondly, religious differences between the various power blocs make cooperation difficult because all sides view each other with suspicion. Thirdly, differences in what constitutes a political democracy, combined with how a state should run its economic affairs, add further complications in light of the West's belief that their governance is superior.

Russophobia has existed in the western world for many centuries. Russia "was particularly hated because it had defied efforts of Western European countries to submit to their authority and impose Catholicism."² Queen Victoria described the Russians "as barbaric and corrupt."³ The Bolshevik uprising headed by Vladimir Lenin led to the removal of the Romanov dynasty and Russian Imperial rule. Bolshevik Marxists eventually seized state power and began constructing a new type of society. By 1921, the Leninists had complete control of the country and primarily reunited the old empire with

¹ Alexei Druzhinin, "Putin: The World Is Getting More Chaotic, but We Hope That Common Sense Will Prevail — RT World News," accessed November 4, 2018, <https://www.rt.com/news/423835-putin-world-chaos-common-sense/>.

² Jeremy Kuzmarov, "The Long Roots of Our Russophobia," *Counterpunch*, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2020/03/06/the-long-roots-of-our-russophobia/>

³ Erin Blakemore, "How Queen Victoria's Matchmaking Helped Cause World War I," *History.com*, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.history.com/news/queen-victoria-grandchildren-matchmaking-wwi>

the USSR. Relations between the West and Moscow badly deteriorated during the period, mainly because Washington, London, and Paris supported the monarchists against Lenin's insurgents.

Numerous researchers believed the old Soviet bloc was an existential threat to the West.¹ The geopolitical conditions that led to its collapse in 1991 left the U.S. as the world's only superpower. Many analysts thought that after the Soviet meltdown, Russia would have been a natural ally of the West, and for a short time, under the leadership of President Boris Yeltsin, to some extent, it was. The aftermath of the Cold War led to a rapprochement between Western states and the new Russia. Yeltsin, who played a significant role in the downfall of the communist system, was vigorously courted by Washington and its allies, receiving enormous support from many prominent Western politicians.²

Nevertheless, Yeltsin's Presidency during the early nineties proved disastrous. His autocratic rule and obsession with privatizing state assets (even when these assets ended up in the hands of criminals) received total support from the U.K., the U.S., and the E.U. The Russian economy suffered, and the nation was slowly humiliated, especially when bordering states signaled their desire to join pro-Western organizations like NATO and the E.U.³ Experts estimate that Yeltsin's reforms led to the impoverishment of some

¹ Vladimir Solovyov and Elena Klepikova, *Inside the Kremlin*, 2nd ed. (London: W.H. Allen, 1987), 10.

² Walter Pincus, "Bush Aided Yeltsin in 91 Coup, New Report Says," *Washington Post*, May 15, 1994, accessed May 30, 2018, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1994/05/15/bush-aided-yeltsin-in-91-coup-new-report-says/ff37eef3-b524-4c4f-a26b-9f927c11a405/>.

³ Alexander Koliandre, "Yeltsin's Economic Legacy," April 24, 2007, accessed January 10, 2023, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6585321.stm>.

seventy million Russians.¹ Many former Warsaw Pact members were now switching sides and joining their old rivals. For a while in the 1990s, globalization did appear to mean Westernization, as the number of liberal democracies exploded.

After Yeltsin, the emergence of Vladimir Putin as the new Russian President marked a significant change in the relationship with the U.S. Putin was no longer willing to be pressured by his western counterparts. He has criticized and adopted a different policy on several issues. Many have accused him of being dictatorial and wishing to reinstate the boundaries of the old Soviet regime, especially after the Russian annexation of Crimea. Numerous theorists claim he is trying to make Russia the new Byzantine, with himself as Constantine.² Putin generally projects an image of the strong leader heading a powerful state, presenting himself as the servant of the population- a trick learned from the Byzantium Emperors.³ He has also aligned himself with the Russian Orthodox Church and seems intent on defending the borders of the new Russian Federation.⁴ Moscow's interventions in Syria, Georgia, and Ukraine have led most mainstream western theorists

¹ Dean Henderson, "The Rothschilds' March To WWII," *Réseau International (English)*, April 4, 2018, accessed May 11, 2018, <http://en.reseauinternational.net/the-rothschilds-march-to-wwiii/>.

² Theodore Christou, "The Byzantine History of Putin's Russian Empire," *The Conversation*, last modified 2023, accessed January 30, 2023, <http://theconversation.com/the-byzantine-history-of-putins-russian-empire-90616>.

³ Peter Frankopan, "Vladimir Putin: A Classic Byzantine Emperor," *Peter Frankopan*, last modified 2023, accessed January 1, 2019, <http://www.peterfrankopan.com/1/post/2013/06/vladimir-putin-a-classic-byzantine-emperor.html>.

⁴ Alexis Mrachek, "How Putin Uses Russian Orthodoxy to Grow His Empire," *The Heritage Foundation*, last modified 2023, accessed January 26, 2023, <https://www.heritage.org/europe/commentary/how-putin-uses-russian-orthodoxy-grow-his-empire>.

and politicians to suggest that Putin's Russia is a threat to their interests.¹ Therefore this thesis will contemplate a perception of non-compatibility between the current Russian and Western societal models.

Byzantine "was and continues to be a less-than-perfect but convenient label which differentiates the Eastern Roman Empire from the Western Roman Empire, especially important after the fall of the latter in the 5th century."² For centuries, the Eastern Roman Empire was the only civilized power. It collapsed during the fifteenth century, but its influence affected numerous people who interacted with it. The Russian state did not exist during its timeframe, but Byzantium did extend into small areas of the former Soviet Union's territory. It heavily influenced the Slavs. The Bulgars, Serbs, and Russians, alongside the Greeks and other western states, did not become Moslems but remained Orthodox Christians. Putin received criticism from numerous experts who claimed he was trying to build a new Byzantium Empire.³

The 2003 U.S./UK-led war in Iraq led to a deep suspicion that their motives for the attack were highly suspect, especially when the Iraqi regime's alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction never materialized. Washington's *War on Terror* appeared to be a convenient method for the world's only Superpower to rid itself of any

¹ James Kirchick, "Russia's Plot against the West," *Politico*, last modified 2023, accessed January 11, 2023, <https://www.politico.eu/article/russia-plot-against-the-west-vladimir-putin-donald-trump-europe/>.

² Mark Cartwright, "Byzantine Empire," *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, last modified 2023, accessed January 30, 2023, https://www.ancient.eu/Byzantine_Empire/.

³Nina L. Khrushcheva, "Putin may be endangering Russia's future by revisiting the past - Lost in Byzantium," *The Bible Museum*, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.thebiblemuseum.com.au/Third-Rome-News/putin-may-be-endangering-russias-future-by-revisiting-the-past-lost-in-byzantium.html>

government it did not like.¹ Most of these Western interventions have occurred in Muslim countries, too, prompting numerous researchers to ask if there is a clash of civilizations between the Western and Islamic worlds.² President Bush's unfortunate use of the word 'crusade' shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks allowed many theorists to criticize these Modern-day Western escapades as a revival of the Crusades.³

Even though the new Russia adopted a form of economic capitalism, relations with the U.S. and the U.K. are now (due to the Ukraine crisis) at breaking point. Moscow opposed the 2003 Iraq war and is critical of American policies in the Middle East and Asia. They are still hostile to the expansionist policies of NATO and upset at the West's meddling in countries that border them. Moscow has also provided a haven to American whistleblower Edward Snowden, causing further diplomatic tension. Putin's Russia is still a powerful country and is unwilling to be bullied by any Western powers.

The U.S. post-communist dominant power appears to be slowly weakening, especially after its disastrous interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Various societal forces now appear to be challenging the secular Western model, which had dominated since the Soviet collapse. Many senior Anglo-American political and military figures still talk today as if Washington has not left its unipolar moment from the 1990s. The

¹ Richard Jackson, "War on Terrorism Summary & Facts," accessed January 22, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/war-on-terrorism>.

² Alan Woods, "George W. Bush and the Crusades," *In Defence of Marxism*, last modified 2023, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://www.marxist.com/iraq-bush-crusades080503.htm>.

³ James Carroll, "The War on Terror as the Launching of an American Crusade," *LobeLog*, last modified 2023, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://lobelog.com/the-war-on-terror-as-the-launching-of-an-american-crusade/>.

challenge for them is to alter their mindset concerning their belief in ‘American Exceptionalism.’¹ The tension between the West and Russia appears to be spilling into numerous areas, from economic and sporting issues, border disputes, espionage, international foreign policy, western general elections, alleged overseas assassinations, and space exploration.

In December 2017, U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson accused the Kremlin of destabilizing the West with invasions, killings, and attempts to undermine democratic elections. During the same interview, he claimed that relations were as bad as they were during the Cold War.² Putin’s Russia is now regularly portrayed as a threat to the West and accused of interfering with other countries’ domestic policies. On the other hand, over the years, Washington and London have periodically intervened in other countries’ affairs to put in a government that is friendly to them. Meddling in the affairs of others is not confined to Russia only.³

Great powers like Russia and China do not always share American values, and the various Islamic models also challenge the Western secular model. Since the 2001 World Trade Centre attack, we have seen a rise in religious intolerance, especially toward

¹ Donald E. Pease, “American Exceptionalism - American Literature,” last modified June 27, 2018, accessed January 25, 2023, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199827251/obo-9780199827251-0176.xml>.

² Jason Groves, “Boris Johnson: Britain Is ‘ready to Hit Back,’” accessed January 1, 2023, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5204151/Borish-Johnson-Britain-ready-hit-back.html>.

³ Scott Shane, “Russia Isn’t the Only One Meddling in Elections. We Do It, Too.,” *The New York Times*, February 21, 2018, sec. Sunday Review, accessed January 3, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/17/sunday-review/russia-isnt-the-only-one-meddling-in-elections-we-do-it-too.html>.

Muslims in many western countries.¹ This backlash has angered many Middle East countries, and the illegal 2003 attack on Iraq has alienated them even further. Putin, however, appears to have adopted a fair and measured policy on many vital international affairs issues.

The thesis assumes that a new Cold War is developing, suspecting that the West, primarily the U.S. and U.K. governments, are adopting an aggressive policy towards Russia. It also examines the relationship between the West and China. A 2015 report produced by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman claimed that Beijing's behavior in the Asia-Pacific, regarding its land reclamation policy in the disputed South China Sea, is allowing Beijing to boost its military and civilian presence there.² Several other factors, too, have been substantiated by theorists to suggest that China may be a threat. These include ideological and cultural factors and Beijing's recent strong economic growth.³ The fact that it claims to be communist makes the West view it with suspicion too. Many researchers believe Chinese nationalism could force Beijing into a clash with the U.S., especially if the latter refuses to respect the former as a rising power.⁴

¹ Haas Institute, "Othering, Discrimination, and Hate Crimes," last modified 2019, accessed October 27, 2019, <https://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/global-justice/islamophobia/resource-pack-us/othering-discrimination-hate-crimes>.

² Richard Sisk, "Dempsey Clashes with Chinese General On Pacific," *Military.Com*, accessed January 30, 2023, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2014/05/15/dempsey-clashes-with-chinese-general-on-pacific.html>.

³ Roger Kimball, "Never Mind Russia – the Real Threat to the US Is China," accessed January 30, 2023, <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2018/02/never-mind-russia-the-real-threat-to-the-us-is-china/>.

⁴ Kishore Mahbubani, "Red Alert: A New Geopolitical Haze, Opinion News & Top Stories," *The Straits Times*, accessed January 31, 2023, <https://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/red-alert-a-new-geopolitical-haze>.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

a) Research Outline

The thesis begins with an introduction and critical definitions. Next are the research questions, the theoretical framework and methodology, and the literature review. Also investigated are the post-Yeltsin years, incorporating Putin's first Presidency. The latter examines the cordial relationship between Moscow and the West after the 9/11 New York attacks, which led to the formation of the Nato-Russia Council (NRC). Next, the 2003 Iraq war and its resulting chaos in the Middle East are analyzed. There, we see the main starting point for the slow deterioration of the relationship between Washington and Moscow, primarily due to the former's illegal behavior. Tensions rose further after the alleged murder by Moscow in 2008 of a Russian national residing in London. The thesis then examines the relationship between Russian President Medvedev and the West concerning the Georgian and Libyan conflicts. Although tense relations existed between Moscow and the West, they became slightly less so compared to the previous Putin years. Next are resource wars and the West's interventions in Libya and Syria.

Examining the Putin years from 2012 onwards incorporates the controversial issues within this timeframe, including the Magnitsky Act, the 2014 economic crisis, and the termination by the U.S. of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Today's situation in Ukraine, plus events after World War Two, including the Orange Revolution,

the lead-up to the bloody civil war in 2014, the controversial Crimean annexation, and Ukraine's attempts to join NATO, are analyzed.

Examined is the improved relationship between the Russian state and Church, alongside cultural differences between the West, Russia, and the Islamic World. Also perused are non-state actors like ISIS (also called The Islamic State, Daesh, or ISIL). The next chapter examines globalism and the apparent push by the West for a one-world government. It also discusses the findings of Professor Quigley and questions whether Moscow is acting as a buttress to the NWO. Also scrutinized is the Chinese relationship with both Russia and the West.

b) Research Questions

The West has involved itself in perpetual warfare since the Soviet collapse. Are there reasons for this rush to use force rather than diplomacy? There is little doubt which nation was left with the most potent military force after the Soviet collapse, as seen in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the former Yugoslavia (FRY). Numerous theorists claim a small but powerful clique of individuals is intent on creating a NWO. Usually confined to conspiracy theorists, this opinion now has many high-level academics and former government officials sharing this viewpoint.¹ Therefore, this thesis will ask several questions:

¹ Arjun Walia, "Professors & Politicians Gather To Warn Us About The New World Order (NWO)," *Collective Evolution*, accessed January 23, 2023, <https://openheartedrebellion.com/2015/10/27/professors-politicians-gather-to-warn-us-about-the-new-world-order-nwo/>

1. Does the West perceive Russia, China, and the Islamic World as a threat, especially in competition for world resources?
2. How is Russia's relationship with the West different under Putin than Yeltsin and Medvedev?
3. Is Putin trying to make Russia into the new Byzantium Empire?
4. Does the Military-Industrial Complex drive U.S. foreign policy?
5. Does the 'New World Order' exist, and is Russia providing a bulwark?
6. Given the strong U.S. relationship with Israel, can Washington be fair to the Arab World?

c) Theoretical Framework

This thesis will use a theoretical examination rather than an empirical discovery. Qerimi asks whether “people will finally succeed in the 21st century in securing the “eternal peace” between countries with democratic constitutions that Immanuel Kant suggested two hundred years ago?”¹ Alternatively, as political scientist Samuel Huntington wrote, will the future of international politics be molded by a new clash between different cultures and civilizations, between the West, Islam, and Chinese society? A 2003 report produced by The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) noted the existence of rising anti-Americanism and a growing cultural gulf between the United States and much of the planet, causing them to view the world through vastly different cultural lenses, resulting in different sets of values.² Further studies reached similar

¹ Qerim R Qerimi, “The Real Face of the New World Order,” *Selected Works of QERIMI* (2004): 1.

² Peter G. Peterson et al, *Finding America's Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating U.S. Public Diplomacy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force on Public Diplomacy, 2003), file:///C:/Users/Admin1/Downloads/public_diplomacy.pdf.

conclusions.¹ A UK's Royal Institute of International Affairs report noted that until 2003, "a modernizing Russia might be accommodated into the international system as a constructive and benign actor. Variations on this view have given way to the realization that Russia, on its present course, cannot be a partner or ally and that differences outweigh any common interests."²

Many theorists believe that the criticism Washington receives is the result of its various interventions around the world since the end of the Cold War.³ Even realists like former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger have criticized Washington's post-Soviet foreign policy for taking on the role of the world's policeman.⁴ So too, has Liberal thinker Professor Held, blaming them for misguided military interventions and blindness in their understanding of different cultures.⁵ Consequently, this information encourages

¹ Brenda Jenifer Bee, "Economic Implications of Anti-Americanism," *Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects* (May 1, 2010), https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone/393.

² Taras Kuzio and Paul D'anieri, "Towards a New Cold War?," *E-International Relations*, June 23, 2018, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/06/23/towards-a-new-cold-war/>.

³ Suzy Hansen, "Why Do They Dislike Us? An American in Turkey Seeks an Answer.," *America Magazine*, last modified September 27, 2017, accessed January 3, 2023, <https://www.americamagazine.org/arts-culture/2017/09/27/why-do-they-dislike-us-american-turkey-seeks-answer>.

⁴ Kai Kaarelsen, "The New World Order According to Kissinger and Fukuyama: Who We Are and Who We Could Be," *ICDS*, last modified 2014, accessed January 3, 2023, <https://icds.ee/the-new-world-order-according-to-kissinger-and-fukuyama-who-we-are-and-who-we-could-be/>.

⁵ Jacqueline Kay Cessou and Albena Azmanova, "Breaking the Gridlocks of Globalisation: The World According to David Held," *Global Policy Journal*, last modified 2017, accessed January 3, 2023, <https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/20/03/2017/breaking-gridlocks-globalisation-world-according-david-held>.

experts like Professor Cohen to assume that the West cannot deal fairly with other power blocs.¹

The absence of a world government necessitates states to interact with each other at the international level. Through a framework of realist theory, we best understand this. The latter is the restraints on politics by human nature and the absenteeism of global government, which make international politics primarily an arena of power and interest.²

According to Professor Lawson, realism is a view of international relations (I.R.) that “emphasizes the role of the nation-state and makes a broad assumption that all nation-states are motivated by national interests, or, at best, national interests disguised as moral concerns.”³ Realists believe this system is anarchical, and I.R. is “best understood by focusing on the distribution of power among states.”⁴ Kenneth N. Waltz criticizes experts who say realism is obsolete, arguing that “it remains the basic theory of international politics.”⁵ Realism embraces several perspectives; the most critical are classical realism

¹ Kevin Rothrock, “Cohen vs. McFaul Is Russia or America to Blame for the New Cold War?,” *Meduza*, last modified 2018, accessed January 4, 2023, <https://meduza.io/en/feature/2018/05/11/cohen-vs-mcfaul>.

² Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9.

³ Ruth C. Lawson, “Political Realism,” last modified 2010, accessed January 31, 2023, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pol116/realism.htm>.

⁴ Martin Griffiths, *Fifty Key Thinkers In International Relations*, 5th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 2.

⁵ Kenneth N. Waltz, “Structural Realism after the Cold War,” accessed January 12, 2023, http://www.columbia.edu/itc/sipa/U6800/readings-sm/Waltz_Structural%20Realism.pdf.

and neorealism (structural realism).¹ On the other hand, some theorists like Jorgensen see them as being two distinct theories.”²

Realism’s roots refer to thinkers like Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes.³ Machiavelli has been called the founder of Political Science.⁴ His most famous work, *The Prince*, argues that using force and deceit to counter any political threat from rivals is acceptable.⁵ Classical realists like Morgenthau, Kennan, and Carr emphasize the role of human nature in I.R. Peter Ednah states realism “argues that power lies in human nature, as the laws that govern politics are made by men and also emphasizes that International Politics is a struggle for power which emanates from human nature.”⁶

There are differences between neorealism and classical realism, but the impetus driving both schools is the nation-state, where the latter is compelled to survive in the anarchical world, sometimes creating security problems as they form coalitions with other states. Countries must build their armies and influence their neighboring countries

¹ Jennifer Sterling-Folker, *Making Sense of International Theory* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 15.

² Victor Jephson, “The Differences Between Classical Realism and Neo Realism,” *E-International Relations*, 2012, accessed January 1, 2023, <https://www.e-ir.info/2012/01/24/the-differences-between-classical-realism-and-neo-realism/>.

³ W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, “Political Realism in International Relations,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Summer 2018. (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2018), accessed January 31, 2023, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/realism-intl-relations/>.

⁴ Harvey C. Mansfield, “Machiavelli’s Political Science,” *The American Political Science Review* 75, no. 2 (1981): 293.

⁵ Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 12th ed. (London: Penguin, 1978), 24.

⁶ Ednah M. Peter, “Classical Realism and International Relations,” *Grin*, last modified 2015, accessed January 1, 2023, <https://www.grin.com/document/310216>.

to do likewise. These formations of power blocs for self-preservation may lead to unintended conflicts, such as during the original Cold War. Classical realists blame these disputes on human nature due to their dim view of people. However, neorealists place responsibility on the structural nature of the international system, where all national actors either vie for power or seek security from the lack of a global governance network.¹

Neorealists contend that of the three systems within the international structure, a bipolar one is more stable than a multipolar one. During the Cold War, bipolarity occurred. Before that, we had multi-polarity, where three or more entities scrambled to attain power and security. As noted by Professor Harris, the current state of world affairs is unipolar; the U.S. is the most potent economic and military force.² Nevertheless, with its weakening economic power and recent disastrous foreign interventions, this thesis asks if it can accept bipolarity or even multi-polarity worlds again. Theorists like Mearsheimer contend that:

The balance of power is more efficient in bipolar systems because each great power has no choice but to directly confront the other. After all, there are no other great powers that can do the balancing or can be part of a balancing coalition, and, although lesser powers can be useful allies, they cannot decide the overall balance of power. In multipolarity, however, threatened states would often be tempted to pass the

¹ DB website, "Difference Between Classical Realism and Neorealism: How to View the World as 'Half Empty' in Two Similar Ways Difference Between," 2014, accessed January 2, 2023, <http://www.differencebetween.net/miscellaneous/politics/ideology-politics/difference-between-classical-realism-and-neorealism-how-to-view-the-world-as-half-empty-in-two-similar-ways/>.

² Peter Harris, "When Will the Unipolar World End?" *The National Interest*, last modified May 27, 2019, accessed January 3, 2023, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/when-will-unipolar-world-end-59202>.

buck to other threatened states. Although buck-passing is an attractive strategy, it can lead to circumstances where aggressors think they can isolate and defeat an adversary.¹

Most western states would readily accept that their countries are liberal democracies. Liberalism's core tenets "stress individualism, human rights, universality, freedom from authority, the right to be treated equally under the protection of the law and duty to respect and treat others as "ethical subjects" as well as freedom for social action."² Therefore, Liberalism desires the construction of institutions that protect individual rights by placing limits and checks on political authority. According to Meiser, "while these are issues of domestic politics, the realm of I.R. is also important to liberals because a state's activities abroad can have a strong influence on liberty at home."³ In his thesis, *The End Of History*, Fukuyama believed that the USSR's demise would lead to liberal institutions in Communist countries like Russia and China, enabling major powers to convert to one political and economic model based on liberal democracy.⁴

Experts criticized Fukuyama for his lack of foresight. He failed to comprehend the many miscalculations made by western powers after the collapse of communism and to recognize the rise of non-state actors like ISIS. Instead, he placed too much emphasis on

¹ John Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism," 2016, accessed January 31, 2023, <https://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/StructuralRealism.pdf>.

² Hamza Jehangir, "Realism, Liberalism and the Possibilities of Peace," *E-International Relations*, February 19, 2012, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.e-ir.info/2012/02/19/realism-liberalism-and-the-possibilities-of-peace/>.

³ Jeffrey Meiser, "Introducing Liberalism in International Relations Theory," *E-International Relations*, February 18, 2018, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/02/18/introducing-liberalism-in-international-relations-theory/>.

⁴ Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?," *The National Interest*, Summer (1989): 8.

the link between capitalism, democracy, and liberalism.¹ Free market reforms have not solved the economic problems in countries like Greece and Hungary. Stanley & Lee argue that "liberal capitalist democracy hasn't triumphed. Instead, the failures of capitalism have turned democracy against liberalism. In turn, liberalism's intellectual self-identity has been left in tatters."²

Offensive and defensive realism are derivatives of structural realism. Lobell states that "offensive realism seeks power and influence to achieve security through domination and hegemony. On the other hand, defensive realism argues that the anarchical structure of the international system encourages states to maintain moderate and reserved policies to attain security."³ The "balance of threat theory, first developed by Stephen Walt, is an example of the defensive realist school of thought."⁴ It argues that "states take action to counter threats to their security."⁵ Offensive realism holds that "states are disposed to competition and conflict because they are self-interested, power maximizing, and fearful

¹ Louis Menand, "Francis Fukuyama Postpones the End of History," August 27, 2018, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/09/03/francis-fukuyama-postpones-the-end-of-history>.

² Alexander Lee and Timothy Stanley, "It's Still Not the End of History," *The Atlantic*, last modified September 1, 2014, accessed November 2, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/09/its-still-not-the-end-of-history-francis-fukuyama/379394/>.

³ Steven E. Lobell, "Structural Realism/Offensive and Defensive Realism," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* (March 1, 2010), accessed January 2, 2023, <https://oxfordre.com/internationalstudies/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-304>.

⁴ Robert Person, "Balance of Threat: The Domestic Insecurity of Vladimir Putin," *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2017): 44–59.

⁵ Robert Person, "Balance of Threat: The Domestic Insecurity of Vladimir Putin," *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2017): 44–59.

of other states.”¹ It argues that they “are obliged to behave this way because doing so favors survival in the international arena.”²

The unwillingness of the West to cooperate with countries like China and Russia, especially over such significant issues as Syria, suggests to some theorists that they are engaged in various resource wars to prevent competing countries from accessing vital necessities to maintain their economies.³ Sir David King, previously the British Government’s Chief Scientific Advisor from 2000 to 2007, has categorically rejected the U.S. and British government’s claim that they went to war to remove Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction. Instead, he articulated their concern about energy security and supply because of reliance on foreign oil from unstable states.⁴ Western support for Saudi Arabia has angered many people in the Muslim world too. The only real ally it has there is Saudi Arabia, whose government’s unpopularity, according to the Woodrow Wilson Centre, has increased in its neighboring states since 2007.⁵ Therefore, offensive realists may perceive western involvement in the Iraq and Syrian conflicts as a way in which they

¹ Dominic D. P. Johnson and Bradley A. Thayer, “The Evolution of Offensive Realism: Survival under Anarchy from the Pleistocene to the Present,” *Politics and the Life Sciences* 35, no. 1 (2016): 1–26.

² Ibid.

³ Tom Clonan, “US Generals Planning for Resource Wars,” *The Irish Times*, last modified 2023, accessed January 4, 2023, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/us-generals-planning-for-resource-wars-1.940207>.

⁴ James Randerson, “UK’s Ex-Science Chief Predicts Century of ‘resource’ Wars,” *The Guardian*, February 13, 2009, sec. Environment, accessed January 31, 2023, <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2009/feb/13/resource-wars-david-king>.

⁵ Wilson Center, “Saudi Arabia’s Popularity Wanes in Region,” *Wilson Center*, last modified October 21, 2013, accessed January 22, 2023, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/saudi-arabias-popularity-wanes-region>.

maximized their power through resource wars and as a strategy to deny those resources to their enemies. Mearsheimer expresses a similar viewpoint.¹

Herrera opines that “after 9/11, and now with the election of Donald Trump, the stability of liberal democracies seem to be in question.”² Many theorists claim Trump’s victory represented a challenge to the existing orthodoxy.³ His election rhetoric comprised anti-war comments and nationalism, promising to put American workers and businesses first. In a 2018 speech to the U.N. General Assembly, he pronounced a “direct and unapologetic defense of his manifesto of anti-globalism and economic nationalism in plain populist language.”⁴ His policies on several issues marked a clear difference between his predecessor and his presidential rival Hilary Clinton.

Both Trump and his lawyer, former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani have even implied that there existed a deep state plot to undermine his Presidency.⁵ Trump has regularly lashed out at the mainstream media, accusing it of producing fake news, and also directed criticism at the intelligence services. Therefore, his idea of a plot to

¹ John Mearsheimer, “Structural Realism,” 2016, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/StructuralRealism.pdf>.

² Jack Herrera, “Is This Still the End of History?,” *Philosophy Talk*, last modified April 17, 2017, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.philosophytalk.org/blog/still-end-history>.

³ Scott Sumner, “Is neoliberalism dead?” The Library of Economics and Liberty, accessed January 9, 2023, <https://www.econlib.org/is-neoliberalism-dead/>

⁴ Al Jazeera Centre For Studies, “Why Trump Remains Anti-Globalist Even Inside the United Nations?,” accessed May 11, 2020, <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2018/10/trump-remains-anti-globalist-united-nations-181001102544114.html>

⁵ Neale Spencer, “Deep state department’: Trump blasts agency workers while standing next to secretary of state,” *Washington Examiner*, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/deep-state-department-trump-blasts-agency-workers-while-standing-next-to-secretary-of-state>

undermine his Presidency may have some credibility. General Michael Flynn, his former National Security Advisor, was an early victim of the so-called Russiagate scandal- an alleged plot by the Kremlin to help Trump win the Presidency. Documents released in April 2020 show Flynn's initial guilty plea was to a highly dubious charge of lying to the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation). It forced his resignation and led to criminal charges against him. Many analysts now claim that Flynn was the victim of an FBI entrapment plan. The dropping of all charges against Flynn occurred in May 2020.¹

Nevertheless, Trump's campaign rhetoric seems not to have been matched by his actions in government, with military attacks on Syria and continual threats to Iran. Although, to be fair to him, his administration did not embark on a new war. Could Trump have come under severe pressure from the deep state and the Western ruling class after achieving power? The latter is probably a combination of the military-industrial complex, multinational corporations, Washington/London Intelligence services, and political bureaucracy. Perhaps Professor Crick was correct when he sarcastically wrote, "whatever you intend to change, you will discover that in practice, things work out differently- and much the same."²

d) Methodology

After ascertaining the research topic, identifying its scope, and formulating the theoretical framework, this section focuses on how to conduct the research. Several

¹ Tim Black, "Mike Flynn and the FBI's assault on American democracy," *Spiked Online*, accessed May 8, 2020, <https://www.spiked-online.com/2020/05/07/mike-flynn-and-the-fbis-assault-on-american-democracy/>

² Bernard Crick, *Political Theory and Practice*, 12th ed. (London: Penguin Press, 1971), 18.

experts in the field were contacted for details about a particular topic area. This work is non-experimental, where the researcher observes an occurrence without interfering with the independent variables. Therefore it is a qualitative study, often used for policy and program evaluation research, as it gives freedom to answer specific salient questions better and more effectively than quantitative approaches.¹ Qualitative studies best determine how specific certain outcomes occur instead of quantitative ones. This naturalistic approach is typical of existing research on Anglo-Russian relations, much of which is qualitative.

An inductive approach is taken based on grounded theory. Pioneered by Glaser and Strauss, this approach compels the researcher to start with an open mind without any preconceived thoughts.² Nevertheless, as warned by Professor Flick, a portion of the objectivity formulated in advance cannot always be fulfilled, as “the research and its findings are unavoidably influenced by the interests and the social-cultural backgrounds of those involved.”³ The researcher must be alert to the problem of personal bias in interpretation.⁴

The thesis instigates a thorough literature review using books, documents, various newspaper articles, and journals ranging from Cold War political history to texts

¹ Shidur Rahman, “The Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches and Methods in Language ‘Testing and Assessment’ Research: A Literature Review,” *Journal of Education and Learning* 6 (November 10, 2016): 102.

² Martyn Hammersley, *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Sage, 1997), 21.

³ Uwe Flick, *Introduction to Qualitative Research* (London: Sage, 1998), 4.

⁴ Norman Denzin, *Sociological Methods* (London: Mcgraw-Hill, 1978), 234.

concerned with more current information. Primary sources are television and radio interviews with key figures, public speeches, memoirs, government documents, and newspaper reports. Nevertheless, primary sources have limitations. Statements made in lectures and discussions are not always later formulated into policies. However, they can help verify data obtained from other sources. This salience is that actions, not words promulgate a country's strategy. The secondary sources include a wide range of books, reports, and journals written by experts in the area

The Internet was accessed, too, due to its limitless and varied resources. However, as warned by experts, anyone anywhere can put data on the Web. To overcome this, the author has located further background checks regarding the writers of online information to confirm data authenticity. These include tests to see if the information is valid; whether it appeared in or is based on past research; whether the author cited well-known researchers, and whether the piece is well-written. Hopefully, any information accrued will generate new insights into diplomacy and international relations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Soon after the Soviet collapse, there was a noticeable moderation of the critical language typically reserved for Russia. After its demise, **Honeck** argued that there was no need for Washington to continue its containment policy.¹ However, **Jatras** contends that the West's historical suspicion of Russia would remain, and it would continue its containment policy.² With its vast population and landmass, anxiety over China has always resonated in the West. Luckily for the latter, during the Cold War, the lukewarm relationship between Moscow and Beijing made a strategic alliance between the two communist giants difficult. Much of the literature suggests that a coalition between the two may ultimately prevail, which could hinder any attempts by western states to force their hegemonic interests onto others. Now widely discussed in academic circles and think tanks, a 2008 book by **Lo** concentrates on the geopolitical factors examining areas

¹ Joachim Honeck, "Has US Grand Strategy Served US Interests in Relation to China and the European Union? A Universalized Test of Mead's Paradigm of US Foreign Policy." (Webster University, 2014), accessed October 8, 2019, file:///C:/Users/admin/Downloads/lit%20rev2.pdf.

² Jim Jatras, "The Cradle of Russophobia," *Katehon Think Tank. Geopolitics & Tradition*, last modified 2022, accessed January 1, 2023, <http://katehon.com/article/cradle-russophobia>.

of cooperation between the two, such as economic integration.¹ Various experts both agree and disagree with her viewpoints.²

Moscow received somewhat muted criticism for opposing the West's Yugoslav policy, but this was not to the extent to which we see it now. Therefore, only limited academic work regarding a new Cold War occurred in this timeframe.³ Even during the 2003 Gulf War, Moscow's lack of support for western aggression received little criticism compared to today. The fallout from the latter conflict increased after the Georgian crisis, which provoked further Western criticism against Russia. The new Cold War subject garnered more significant attention, reflecting its importance for international relations. The current Ukraine crisis promoted the tensions to a fever pitch. These conflicts appear to be the catalyst that provoked the heightened hostility to Moscow, evoking a return to what we saw in the original Cold War.

Numerous experts claim that Russia and China's leading political and economic goals are economic growth, defense, and seeking a multipolar world order rather than

¹ Bobo Lo, *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the New Geopolitics* (Washington DC: Brookings, 2008). Leon Aron, "Are Russia and China Really Forming an Alliance?," January 4, 2023, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-04-04/are-russia-and-china-really-forming-alliance>.

² James Dorsey, "Eurasia's Great Game and the Future of the China-Russia Alliance," LobeLog, last modified April 17, 2019, accessed May 18, 2019, <https://lobelog.com/eurasias-great-game-and-the-future-of-the-china-russia-alliance/>. Leon Aron, "Are Russia and China Really Forming an Alliance?," April 4, 2019, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-04-04/are-russia-and-china-really-forming-alliance>.

³ Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War* (Washington DC: Brookings Institute, 1995). Noam Chomsky, *Imperial Ambitions (American Empire Project)* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2005). Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (London: Penguin, 2009). Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (Dumfries: Holt McDougal, 2007). Johnathon Schell, *The Seventh Decade: The New Shape of Nuclear Danger* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008). Michael Hudson, *Super Imperialism - New Edition: The Origin and Fundamentals of U.S. World Dominance* (London: Pluto Press, 2003).

forcing their policies on other states. Many theorists agree that the West does not wish to lose control of the unipolar power they attained after the Soviet collapse. Russia and China do not necessarily want to bring the existing world order down but instigate reform instead. **Schaeffer** suggests Moscow and the West have adopted a reasonable level of cooperation to solve the Syrian conflict.¹ However, other theorists disagree.²

Resource Wars have been prevalent throughout history. Through its imperialist adventures, the West has long engaged in invading resource-rich states for its own political and economic reasons. Many see the problems between the West, Russia, and China as merely a grab for the world's resources. Numerous academics have researched this phenomenon, and there is a wide divergence of thought. **Bakeless** wrote in 1921 that resources were the primary catalyst for war.³ Professor **Klare's** *Resource Wars* book is a crucial proponent in modern times.

Widespread Internet usage has allowed virtually unknown phrases like the NWO or one-world government to become commonplace, prompting numerous experts to write about it.⁴ **HG Wells** discussed the latter in 1928, and although generally supportive of it, he highlighted its dangers too. In his two seminal works, experts like Professor Quigley believed the NWO related to an Anglophile movement funded initially and founded by

¹ Janine Christine Schaefer, "Syria; The Emergence of a Cool War," American University of Paris (2014)

² Ahmed Mahdi., *Energy and US Foreign Policy*, (London: L.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2012), 8.

³ Daron et al Acemoglu, "A Dynamic Theory of Resource Wars," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (July 10, 2011): 40.

⁴ Daniel W. Drezner, "The New New World Order," November 11, 2009, accessed January 18, 2023, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2007-03-01/new-new-world-order>.

Cecil Rhodes.¹ Recently, numerous theorists have linked it to the globalist agenda, which many see as an attempt to facilitate the NWO.² Even insiders like **Perkins** have spoken similarly.³ Specific works suggest that Russia, China, and the Islamic World are now the critical bulwark against the NWO.⁴

Theorists like **Sandovsky** argue that Putin is trying to rebuild a new Byzantine empire with himself as the head. He cites the President's sympathy for the Russian church and his alleged desire to instigate Kremlin power in the Middle East.⁵ Other experts disagree.⁶ Religious differences relate more to the West and its seemingly ongoing demonization of the Islamic World than any perceived religious conflicts between it and Russia. **Huntingdon's** *Clash of Civilizations* was complimented and criticized by others in the preceding years.⁷ Although theological differences between the

¹ Quigley, Carroll. *The Anglo-American Establishment*. 2nd ed. Dauphin Publications, 2013. Quigley, Carroll *Tragedy and Hope*. London: Collier-Macmillan, 1966.

² Daniel Estulin, *The True Story of the Bilderberg Group*, 2nd ed. (Oregon: Trine, 2008).

³ John Perkins, *The New Confessions of an Economic Hit Man: How America Really Took over the World* (London: Ebury Press, 2018).

⁴ Gulnar Aybet, "We Must Work Together to Build a New World Order. This Is How We Can Do It," *World Economic Forum*, last modified 2018, accessed January 19, 2023, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/12/we-must-work-together-to-build-a-new-world-order-china-russia-us/>.

⁵ David Sandovsky, "Putin Building a New Byzantine Empire," accessed January 1, 2023, <https://southfront.org/putin-building-a-new-byzantine-empire/>.

⁶ Constantina Katsari, "What Do Vladimir Putin and Constantine the Great Have in Common?," *Love of History*, September 29, 2019, accessed January 13, 2023, <http://loveofhistory.com/what-do-vladimir-putin-and-constantine-the-great-have-in-common/>.

⁷ Huntington, Samuel P. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, June 1, 1993. Accessed March 5, 2019. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1993-06-01/clash-civilizations>. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, "Islam & the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis.," accessed September 21, 2019, <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/publications/islam-west-testing-clash-civilizations-thesis>. Eric

West and Russia exist, these are mostly immaterial primarily because both have falling church attendance.¹ The critical problem mainly relates to the conflict between Islam and Judaism. The latter has some of its roots in organized religion. Therefore, it is crucial to sort out this problem if a peaceful world is to materialize. Here, bigotry on both sides refuses to accept alternative opinions.

Putin is now regularly portrayed as a hate figure like Ghadaffi, Khomeini, Saddam, Castro, and Hugo Chavez. Scholarly articles with an anti-Moscow slant easily surpass any pro-Russian literature and are now the staple diet of most mainstream western media and research. Nevertheless, with higher usage of the Internet and growth in alternative news channels like Press tv and R.T., broader access to varied sources over the last decade has occurred, and we have seen an increase in academics and authors opposing the western mainstream viewpoint of Russia.

Neumayer and Thomas Plumper, "International Terrorism and the Clash of Civilizations," last modified 2009, accessed September 21, 2019, <https://www.prio.org/Publications/Publication/?x=4293>.

¹ Michigan News University of Michigan, "Study Identifies Worldwide Rates of Religiosity, Church Attendance," *University of Michigan News*, last modified January 22, 2007, accessed January 22, 2023, <https://news.umich.edu/study-identifies-worldwide-rates-of-religiosity-church-attendance/>.

THE POST-YELTSIN YEARS 1999-2008

This section discusses the relatively cordial relationship between Russia and the West during the early years of Putin's Presidency. Despite some disagreements, we see how the two cooperated on many issues. It then exposes the faltering relationship created by the Iraq war and the alleged assassination by Moscow of a former Russian spy residing in the U.K.

a) Putin's Early Years

After Yeltsin resigned, Putin became acting president on the last day of 1999. The new leader began to enact regulatory measures to reduce the financial corruption left over from his predecessor. Relations with the West were still cordial, and within a year, Putin and U.S. President Clinton met in Moscow and signed two arms control agreements. Nevertheless, the two disagreed over American plans for a national missile defense system, with the Chinese Government supporting the Moscow viewpoint.¹

Putin made a goodwill gesture to Washington in December 2000 when he pardoned the convicted American spy Edmond Pope who was serving a 20-year prison sentence. Nevertheless, relations deteriorated slightly during the following year when Washington expelled 51 Russian diplomats for alleged spying, prompting Moscow to retaliate with

¹ NPR News website, "Vladimir Putin: A Biographical Timeline," National Public Radio, 2018, accessed December 4, 2022, <https://www.npr.org/news/specials/putin/biotimeline.html>.

the same number of expulsions. Putin played down the spat, not wanting to damage bilateral relations, and a few months after the incident, both Presidents made welcoming speeches praising each other's sincerity. Russian criticism was limited even when new President George W. Bush abrogated the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

b) The September 11th Attacks

The 2001 attacks in New York City led to the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and warmer relations between the West and Moscow.¹ In the immediate aftermath, Putin was one of the first foreign heads of state to speak with President Bush, expressing his condolences to the U.S. people in one of their country's darkest hours. In the wake of the New York attacks, Bush announced in Congress that he was launching his *War on Terror* policy, blaming the Kabul-based Al-Qaeda organization for the attacks. Moscow had seen several terrorist attacks on its soil instigated by Islamic terrorists from Chechnya. Therefore, despite slight disagreements, Putin and Bush cooperated closely in combating Islamic terrorism.

The Kremlin's salience rested on its geographical ability to assist the Americans in their War. In return, Washington promised to refrain from meddling in Russian internal affairs and would try to accelerate Russian membership of the World Trade Association (WTO), helping Moscow upgrade its economy.

¹ Jill Dougherty, "CNN.Com - 9/11 a 'turning Point' for Putin - September 10, 2002," last modified 2002, accessed December 5, 2022, <http://edition.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/europe/09/10/ar911.russia.putin/index.html>.

Cordial relations became bolstered during the formation of the NRC in 2002. Its remit was “to serve as the principal structure and venue for advancing the relationship between NATO and Russia.”¹ Speaking after the formation, Bush claimed that the ideological differences of the Cold War were over, and Russia was making positive moves toward democracy.² Putin accepted NATO expansionism into the former Soviet-bloc countries, albeit reluctantly.³ Nevertheless, divisions soon surfaced when the West decided to move its *War on Terror* campaign toward Iraq.

c)The West’s Breaking of International Law

The real catalyst for the 2003 invasion of Iraq was undoubtedly the attacks in New York City during September 2001. Washington alleged that Saddam was hiding weapons of mass destruction from U.N. inspectors and continually hindering the latter. Just before the war started, the U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Anan, argued that force would “not be in conformity with the Charter.”⁴ Many legal experts now describe the US-UK attack

¹ Nato-Russia Council website, “Nato-Russia Council - About,” accessed December 5, 2022, <https://www.nato.int/nrc-website/en/about/index.html>.

² Mariake Vendrik, “American-Russian Relations after 9/11 Grand Strategy & the Failure of Bush’s and Putin’s Strategic Partnership” (Utrecht University: Utrecht, 2017), 32.

³ Thomas Ambrosio, “The Russo–American Dispute over the Invasion of Iraq: International Status and the Role of Positional Goods: Europe-Asia Studies,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, no. 8 (2005), accessed December 5, 2022, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09668130500351357?scroll=top&needAccess=true>.

⁴ Euan Mckaskill and Julian Borger, “Iraq War Was Illegal and Breached UN Charter, Says Annan,” *The Guardian*, September 16, 2004, sec. World news, accessed December 5, 2022, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/16/iraq.iraq>.

as an act of aggression, violating international law.¹ They discuss illegalities in the U.S. conduct of the war and violations of the Geneva Conventions by the West concerning their responsibilities as an occupying power² According to Professor Aust, “Article 24 confers on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.”³ Without any UNSC resolution, the West’s invasion was unlawful.⁴ A year after the intervention, the U.N. Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, declared explicitly for the first time that the US-led war on Iraq was illegal.⁵

Even though Saddam’s Regime violated existing U.N. resolutions, such as hindering U.N. staff and the possible use of torture on citizens, most legal experts agree that a second U.N. Resolution explicitly authorizing an invasion should have occurred.⁶ It did not happen because London and Washington knew they could not pass it. Russia and France had promised to use their veto in any vote. As concluded by many Western

¹ Carrell Severin and Robert Verkaik, “War on Iraq Was Illegal, Say Top Lawyers,” *The Independent*, last modified May 25, 2003, accessed December 25, 2022, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/war-on-iraq-was-illegal-say-top-lawyers-106099.html>.

² Global Policy Forum, “International Law Aspects of the Iraq War,” accessed December 5, 2022, <https://www.globalpolicy.org/political-issues-in-iraq/international-law-aspects-of-the-iraq-war-and-occupation.html>.

³ Anthony Aust, *Modern Treaty Law and Practice*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁴ Keep Calm Talk Law, “Fighting a Losing Battle? Justifying the Iraq War under International Law,” *Keep Calm Talk Law*, last modified June 5, 2016, accessed October 25, 2019, <http://www.keepcalmtalklaw.co.uk/fighting-a-losing-battle-justifying-the-iraq-war-under-international-law/>.

⁵ Mckaskill and Borger, “Iraq War Was Illegal and Breached UN Charter, Says Annan.” *The Guardian*, accessed December 5, 2022, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/16/iraq.iraq>

⁶ Jeff Sallot, “Attack Illegal, Experts Say,” *The Globe and Mail*, last modified 2003, accessed December 7, 2022, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/attack-illegal-experts-say/article20448249/>.

Academics and high-level civil servants, it seems the real reason for the invasion was regime change enabling the West to secure Iraq's oil assets allowing dollar maintenance as the world's reserve currency.¹ Although Saddam's regime was unpleasant, the invading forces had no legal right to remove it. Many senior diplomats and politicians in the U.S., U.K., and the U.N. have said the war was illegal. Even John Prescott, the former Deputy Prime Minister of the U.K. at the time of the war, said he agreed with the opinion of Kofi Annan. Prescott wrote, "I now believe him to be right."²

. There were many reasons Russia opposed the Anglo-American War on Bagdad. Primarily they were unhappy at U.S. unilateralism but also worried that removing Saddam might prevent the Iraqi debt of 8 billion dollars from ever being repaid. They also feared the cancellation of contracts awarded to Russian firms under the U.N. Iraqi Oil-For-Food Program. A leaked Iraqi document showed that Moscow gave Iraq details of Washington's invasion plans even before hostilities commenced.³

During the fighting, Putin criticized the West's invasion decision numerous times. Washington claimed Moscow had sold weapons to Bagdad in violation of UNSC resolutions stemming from 1990. Russia denied the latter and counterclaimed by accusing them of spying on their troop movements around the Georgian border through ariel

¹ John Chapman, "John Chapman: The Real Reasons Bush Went to War," *The Guardian*, December 27, 2020, sec. World news, accessed December 11, 2022, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/jul/28/iraq.usa>.

² Reuters website, "Former UK Deputy PM Prescott Says Now Considers Iraq Invasion Illegal," Reuters, last modified 2018, accessed December 5, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-iraq-prescott-idUSKCN0ZPOWY>.

³ Joel Wing, "Russia Provided Iraq with Details of the US's Planned Invasion in 2003," *Business Insider*, accessed December 25, 2022, <https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-provided-iraq-with-details-of-the-uss-planned-invasion-in-2003-2016-4>.

reconnaissance. These potential sores between the two jeopardized their rapprochement on the need to combat terrorism in the Russian Caucasus area. Russia perceived a warning made by Washington to them over the safety of its diplomats in Baghdad as a threat. American Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz angered them further by arguing they should forgive all or some of Iraqi debts.¹

Throughout the Middle East, the aftermath of the war proved disastrous. Instead of turning Iraq into a liberal democracy, it emboldened terrorists and inflamed sectarian conflict. Many surrounding states have suffered instability, too, especially in Syria. Al-Qaeda morphed into various terror groups wreaking worldwide havoc. The misleading of the U.K. Parliament by the Blair government regarding the war created a crisis of trust between people and government in British politics, as confirmed by a survey in 2013 by *The British Social Attitudes*. It stated that “those who govern Britain today have an uphill struggle to persuade the public that their hearts are in the right place.”²

A survey by *Pew Global Attitudes Project* in 2005 conducted in more than fifty Arab and Muslim countries also painted the U.S. negatively. It concluded that Washington faces a problematic task in improving its image there because of the Iraq war and supporting

¹ Mark N. Katz, “Playing the Angles: Russian Diplomacy Before and During the War in Iraq,” *Middle East Policy Council*, last modified 2003, accessed December 6, 2022, <http://www.mepc.org/journal/playing-angles-russian-diplomacy-and-during-war-iraq>.

² Gary Younge, “Fifteen Years on, the Iraq War Is Still Poisoning Our National Life,” *The Guardian*, last modified 2018, accessed December 6, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/mar/29/iraq-war-poisoning-national-life-corbyn-brexit-britain-vietnam>.

Israel.¹ Numerous citizens of Middle East countries, alongside western states, were very hostile to the invasion. Many saw it as an imperialistic adventure used to suppress freedoms by their governments as justification for the *War on Terror*. We now see this in repressive countries like Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Egypt.²

d) The Litvinenko Incident

Alexander Litvinenko was a former agent of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB). After a dispute with the Kremlin, he left his job and country and obtained political asylum in the U.K., where he got employment as a journalist and consultant. He continued to speak out in his criticism of the FSB, accusing them of corruption, murder, and organizing false flag terrorist events.

In 2006, he fell seriously ill after being diagnosed with poisoning from polonium-210. In the hospital, Litvinenko accused President Putin of ordering his assassination.³ The incident led to a bitter diplomatic row between Moscow and London after the British mainstream media and politicians made scurrilous accusations against Putin following the deathbed statement. Today, the crime remains unsolved, but it promulgated the deterioration of relations between London and Moscow. Later, the 2019 Scripal affair in

¹ Andrew Kohut, "Arab and Muslim Perceptions of the United States," *Pew Research Center*, November 10, 2005, accessed December 6, 2022, <http://www.pewresearch.org/2005/11/10/arab-and-muslim-perceptions-of-the-united-states/>.

² Dean Obeidallah, "15 Years On, Muslims In The Middle East Still Feel The Backlash Of 9/11," last modified 2017, accessed December 6, 2022, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/dean-obeidallah/911-15-years-muslims-middle-east_b_11938494.html?guccounter=1.

³ Alexey Eremenko and Alastair Jamieson, "Vladimir Putin Likely Approved Murder of Alexander Litvinenko: Inquiry," *NBC News*, last modified 2016, accessed December 7, 2022, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/vladimir-putin-likely-approved-murder-alexander-litvinenko-inquiry-n500996>.

Salisbury, England, mirrored the Litvinenko one and plummeted Moscow's relationship with London to new depths.

THE MEDVEDEV YEARS 2008-2012

a) *The Georgian Conflict*

Georgia declared independence from the USSR in 1991, but parts of it remained under the de facto control of pro-Moscow separatists, especially in the Southern Ossetia and Abkhazia regions. The early 1990s conflict between the various combatants eventually ended with a joint Russia/Georgian peace agreement, allowing both to police the ceasefire agreement. Unfortunately, relations deteriorated again when a pro-Western government in Georgia took office in 2003, headed by Mikhail Saakashvili, whom Putin had described as “a puppet of the U.S.”¹ He regularly pronounced his hostility to Moscow, and the fact that he continually tried to obtain NATO membership for Georgia only added to the tension. These factors, alongside others, paved the way for the severe crisis of 2008.

A referendum in South Ossetia overwhelmingly voted for independence from the Georgian regime in 2006. It prompted a war of words between Moscow and Tbilisi, with both sides accusing the other of war preparations over the next eighteen months. Sporadic clashes occurred between South Ossetian separatists and Georgian forces. The conflict began in 2008 after a massive military assault by Georgia. It intended to retake the

¹ William J. Burns, “How the U.S.-Russian Relationship Went Bad,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, last modified 2019, accessed October 26, 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/03/08/how-u.s.-russian-relationship-went-bad-pub-78543>.

breakaway republic of South Ossetia before the Kremlin could react.¹ This attack killed many civilians and fifteen Russian peacekeeping troops stationed there under the nineties peace agreement. Caught out by the surprise incursion, Moscow responded by sending in ground troops, which quickly overpowered the Georgian forces. French President Sarkozy eventually brokered a six-point peace plan and a ceasefire. It called for the reinstating of Georgian sovereignty with the provision that their army could not enter the breakaway regions and that Moscow must withdraw its forces back to where they were before the conflict commenced.²

The U.K. and the U.S. severely criticized Russia and blamed it for starting the conflict, while the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. accused Moscow of plotting Georgian regime change.³ After a lengthy investigation, a more nuanced version came from the E.U., blaming Georgia for starting the conflict and accusing Moscow of overreacting.⁴ There was also a strong suspicion that Washington had been aiding the Georgians in the fight, stationing 1,500 "advisors" there and sending massive shipments of U.S. arms and

¹ CSC Monitor, "Russia-Georgia Conflict: Why Both Sides Have Valid Points," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 19, 2008, accessed July 31, 2018, <https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2008/0819/p12s01-woeu.html>.

² The Economist, "A Scripted War," *The Economist*, August 14, 2008, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.economist.com/briefing/2008/08/14/a-scripted-war>.

³ Roger A. Lee, "The Georgia-Russia War (2008)," last modified 2015, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.historyguy.com/georgia-russia-war.htm#.W2jGcdVKjIV>.

⁴ Bruno Waterfield, "EU Blames Georgia for Starting War with Russia," September 30, 2009, sec. World, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/georgia/6247620/EU-blames-Georgia-for-starting-war-with-Russia.html>.

ammunition. Moscow was suspicious of U.S. interference, especially when it arrived on military ships and airplanes.¹

b) A Slight Thaw in Relations

Some experts argued that the Medvedev and Putin presidencies hardly differed.² On the other hand, despite the Georgian conflict, many theorists argued that a slight thaw occurred between the West and Moscow during the Medvedev presidency.³ The personal relationship between Medvedev and many Western leaders appeared slightly friendlier than Putin's.⁴ Duncan states that "Medvedev's presidency did not lead to a fundamental change in Russia's foreign policy, but allowed an improvement in relations with the West and the maintenance of the strategic partnership with China."⁵ Nevertheless, this situation did not last long after it appeared Moscow was severely misled by the U.K., U.S., and France during the West's catastrophic Libyan intervention.

¹ Byron J. Richards, "What's Really Behind The Russia-Georgia Conflict," accessed August 7, 2018, <https://renew.com/general83/dreep.htm>.

² Guardian Staff, "US Embassy Cables: 'Tandem Politics' of Medvedev and Putin," *The Guardian*, December 1, 2010, sec. World news, accessed October 12, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/178955>.

³ Cath Young, "Will There Be a Thaw in US-Russian Relations?," *Boston.Com*, n.d., accessed August 7, 2018, http://archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/01/31/will_there_be_a_thaw_in_us_russian_relations/.

⁴ CBS News, "Bush: Russian President A 'Smart' Guy," accessed August 7, 2018, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/bush-russian-president-a-smart-guy/>.

⁵ P. J. S. Duncan, "Batman and Robin? Exploring Foreign Policy Differences between Putin and Medvedev during the Medvedev Presidency," Working / discussion paper, (*CEPSI Centre for European Politics, Security & Integration Working Papers*). *CEPSI Centre for European Politics, Security & Integration, UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies: London*. (2013), last modified 2013, accessed October 12, 2019, <http://www.ssees.ucl.ac.uk/BatmanRobin.pdf>.

c) *The Libyan Fiasco*

Medvedev served as President for one term only. Even though relations remained tense with the West, primarily due to the Georgian crisis, his tenure in actual foreign policy proved a little different from Putin's. Perhaps the most significant difference was that Putin would have vetoed the U.N. resolution, preventing the removal of Ghaddafi's regime. During a 2017 interview, the former Russian ambassador to Libya confirmed that Medvedev "did not expect Gaddafi to be forcibly overthrown by NATO forces when UNSC Resolution 1973 was approved."¹ Medvedev later claimed that Western powers misled him regards to their real intention.² Perhaps, he was exercising a realist viewpoint at the time of the vote, as Moscow had \$10 billion worth of commercial deals with Libya and was trying to safeguard its investments. Putin was the Russian Prime minister at the time, and he was particularly scathing over the West's intervention and Medvedev's handling of the crisis.³

¹ Sam Ramani, "Interview with Former Russian Ambassador to Libya Veniamin Popov on Russia-Libya Relations and Libya's Political Future," *HuffPost*, last modified October 9, 2017, accessed August 10, 2018, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/interview-with-former-russian-ambassador-to-libya-veniamin_us_59b9ba9ee4b02c642e4a13a1.

² Dmitry Sudakov, "Why Didn't Russia Use Veto Right on Libya?," *PravdaReport*, last modified July 11, 2012, accessed August 19, 2018, <http://www.pravdareport.com/world/asia/11-07-2012/121625-libya-0/>.

³ Ellen Barry, "Putin Criticizes West for Libya Incursion," *The New York Times - Europe Section*, last modified 2011, accessed August 10, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/27/world/europe/27putin.html>.

RESOURCE WARS

a) History of Resource Wars

According to the U.K. Government's ex-chief scientific advisor, the 2003 Iraq war was not about finding Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) but about the West controlling the country's oil resources, arguing instead that it was the first resource war of the 21st century.¹ The phrase resource war:

Has been steadily broadened to include minerals, oil, land and rhino horn, to ivory, water, timber, wildlife and more: on the one hand this reflects the increasing fragmentation and motivation of conflicts linked to natural resources while on the other hand it contributes to a lack of focus and prioritizing. It is possible to categorize resources from the 'high politics' resources of oil, gas, and water to one that it is controlled by market forces and which is accompanied by a sliding scale of 'conflict-risk' that ranges from high (cocaine, coltan, diamonds) to mid-low (copper, gold, rhino horn) to very low (coffee, tea): these conflicts can be called 'commodity conflicts.'²

Caselli et al. argues that experts are aware of the alleged role of natural resources in the Iran-Iraq war, the 1991 Gulf war, and the Falklands conflict.³ These conflagrations over

¹James Randerson, "UK's Ex-Science Chief Predicts Century of 'resource' Wars. last modified February 12, 2009, accessed August 10, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2009/feb/12/king-iraq-resources-war>

² King's College London, "King's College London - Resource Wars: Revisited," accessed August 11, 2018, <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/warstudies/research/groups/marjan/resource.aspx>.

³ Francesco Caselli et al, "The Geography of Inter-State Resource Wars" (n.d.): 74. <https://personal.lse.ac.uk/casellif/papers/oil%20wars.pdf>

resources have also occurred in various continents over many epochs. A report by the Worldwatch Institute cites numerous examples.¹

The International Energy Agency (IEA) defines energy security “as the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price.”² For instance, in the U.K., recent studies have shown it becoming more reliant on Russian gas, particularly in winter.³ Also, for approximately four decades, U.S. energy security “has focused on decreasing the Nation’s dependence on foreign oil. Policies have promoted the production of domestic oil resources, maintenance of the world’s largest strategic oil reserve, increased vehicle fuel efficiency standards, and a host of other oil-related actions and policies.”⁴

Professor Klare argues that fossil fuels are behind many conflicts worldwide, including Iraq, Syria, Ukraine, Sudan, Nigeria, and the South China Sea. He claims that, at first glance, the eruption of historic antagonisms among neighboring (often intermingled) peoples sparked these disputes. However, he states further that, in reality, these are resource wars struggling for control over the primary source of national

¹ Fred Pearce, “Resource wars” ignite around the world,” *New Scientist*, accessed May 8, 2020, <https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn1778-resource-wars-ignite-around-the-world/>

² IEA Website, “Energy Security,” accessed August 15, 2018, <https://www.iea.org/topics/energysecurity/>.

³ Jillian Ambrose, “Government Scrutinises Energy Security amid Russia Tensions,” last modified March 17, 2018, accessed August 19, 2018, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2018/03/17/government-scrutinises-energy-security-amid-russia-tensions/>.

⁴ US Office of Policy website, “Valuation of Energy Security for the United States,” *Energy.Gov*, last modified January 19, 2017, accessed August 20, 2018, <https://www.energy.gov/policy/articles/valuation-energy-security-united-states>.

earnings.¹ The U.S. “gets 81% of its total energy from oil, coal, and natural gas, all of which are fossil fuels.”² It now produces more crude oil, and its vehicles have higher efficiency standards, yet they still import millions of barrels daily.³ It occurs because “the U.S. is a transport-intensive society, and even though production is up by around 3.2 million barrels per day since 2005, it is not enough to satisfy [its] thirst for oil.”⁴ That necessitates a need to import foreign oil for its addiction. In a speech before the Senate in 2006, then-US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated that nothing concerns her more than the energy problem and its damage to international diplomacy.⁵

From this dependency, we can see that western economies require a safe, reliable, cheap energy source. It means that “the Middle East remains critical for future energy supplies, holding between two-thirds and three-quarters of all known oil reserves.”⁶

¹ Michael T Klare, “Energy Wars: How Oil and Gas Are Fuelling Global Conflicts,” *EnergyPost.Eu*, July 15, 2014, accessed August 20, 2018, <http://energypost.eu/twenty-first-century-energy-wars-oil-gas-fuelling-global-conflicts/>.

² The National Academy of Sciences website, “Fossil Fuels — The National Academies,” accessed August 20, 2018, <http://needtoknow.nas.edu/energy/energy-sources/fossil-fuels/>.

³ Nathan Taft, “Why Is the U.S. Still Dependent on Foreign Oil?,” *Fuel Freedom Foundation*, September 21, 2016, accessed August 20, 2018, <https://www.fuelfreedom.org/still-dependent-foreign-oil/>.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Gal Luft, “Dependence On Middle East Energy And Its Impact On Global Security,” in *Energy and Environmental Challenges to Security*, ed. Stephen Stec and Besnik Baraj (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2009), 197–210, accessed August 20, 2018, http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-1-4020-9453-8_13.

⁶ Michael Meacher, “This War on Terrorism Is Bogus,” *The Guardian*, last modified 2003, accessed March 15, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2003/sep/06/september11.iraq>.

Therefore, the West has continually labeled the region as critically important.¹ Professor Chomsky concurs that the 2003 Iraq war occurred “to gain control over the world's second-largest oil reserves, which will place the U.S. in an even more powerful position of global domination, maintaining a stranglehold on the global economy.”²

Professor Colgan articulates numerous reasons why oil is a major cause of wars. He believes countries are trying to acquire oil by force and petrol aggression, where oil protects brutal dictators like Saddam from domestic resistance. He cites funding for uprisings, confrontations over oil transit routes such as pipelines, and wars provoked by the thought of dominating the oil sector, such as the 1991 U.S. war with Iraq regarding Kuwait.³ In the recent Iraqi, Syrian, and Libyan conflicts, we see how ISIS has used the oil they seized to sell on the black market to fund their terrorist campaigns.⁴

b) Water Resources

A World Health Organization (WHO) report approximates that twenty percent of the world population “does not have access to safe and affordable drinking water, and half

¹ Shibley Telhami, “The Persian Gulf: Understanding the American Oil Strategy,” *Brookings*, November 30, 1AD, accessed August 20, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-persian-gulf-understanding-the-american-oil-strategy/>.

² Human Nature Review website, “Iraq: The Real Agenda. An Interview with Noam Chomsky - Michael Albert,” *28/04/2003*, last modified April 28, 2003, accessed August 20, 2018, <http://human-nature.com/nibbs/03/iraq.html>.

³ J. Colgan, “Oil, Conflict, and U.S. National Interests,” *Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs*, accessed August 21, 2018, <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/oil-conflict-and-us-national-interests>.

⁴ Carol Nakhle, “ISIL Sells Its Oil, but Who Is Buying It?,” last modified December 6, 2015, accessed August 21, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2015/12/isil-sells-oil-buying-151206055403374.html>.

the world's people do not have access to sanitation. Each year at least 3–4 million people die of waterborne diseases, including more than 2 million children who die of diarrhea.”¹ A definition for water scarcity “is either the lack of enough water (quantity) or lack of access to safe water (quality).”² According to the World Wildlife Organization, at the current consumption rate, it is possible that by 2025, approximately two-thirds of the world population may suffer shortages.³

There are many reasons for water scarcity. One is the increasing production of food and consumer products. Industrial and agricultural usage consumes roughly 90 percent of the earth's fresh water. Modern farming methods require vast amounts of water, as does the cooling process for the thermal and nuclear power industries.⁴ Increased industrial and agricultural usage frequently creates pollution from toxic chemicals in the surface water that runs off fields sprayed with pesticides. It deposits in rivers and lakes and proves a severe problem in underdeveloped countries with reduced environmental regulation. All of this occurs because of increased population growth. According to the Food and Agricultural (FAO) website, “demographic growth and economic development are putting unprecedented pressure on renewable, but finite water resources, especially in

¹ Jessica Berman, “WHO: Waterborne Disease Is World's Leading Killer,” *VOA*, accessed August 22, 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/a-13-2005-03-17-voa34-67381152/274768.html>.

² The Water Project, “Water Scarcity in Africa,” *The Water Project*, accessed August 22, 2018, <https://thewaterproject.org/water-scarcity>.

³ “WWF website, “Water Scarcity Threats” *World Wildlife Fund*, accessed August 22, 2018, <https://www.worldwildlife.org/threats/water-scarcity>.

⁴ Neal Fox, “Is There Really a Freshwater Crisis?,” *Scientific American*, accessed August 22, 2018, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/is-there-really-a-freshwater-crisis/>.

arid regions. By 2025, 1800 million people may live in countries or regions with “absolute” water scarcity.”¹

Poverty, too, causes inadequate or non-existent infrastructure due to a lack of governmental financial resources, even if its particular area has a high water supply. This problem often manifests itself in underdeveloped regions.² There is also an increasing consensus among climate scientists that freshwater resources are increasingly vulnerable to long-term climate change.³ Logging of forests, pollution, and wars can lead to massive environmental degradation and droughts, allowing rivers that flow from these forests to disappear.

The Middle East is one of the regions in the world that has had its fair share of water disputes. Water is scarce there, and a tense situation is complicated further by religious and political differences and the ongoing Palestinian conflict. Israel and its neighboring Arab states see water as a national security issue. Jordan, Syria, and Israel have involved themselves in water disputes, occasionally leading to violence.⁴ According to the Pacific Institute, there has been a protracted history of water disputes that go back centuries.

¹ UN FAO website, “Water Scarcity,” *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*, last modified 2018, accessed August 22, 2018, <http://www.fao.org/land-water/water/water-scarcity/en/>.

² Ibid

³ J. Morrison, et al. “Water Scarcity and Climate Change, Growing Risks for Businesses & Investors,” (California, Pacific Institute, 2009), pp 5-8.

⁴ M.T. klare, *Resource Wars* (New York: Henry Holt Company, 2002), 169.

They argue that disputes over access to water, its weaponization, and the targeting of water plants during wars remain prevalent.¹

The Pacific Institute criticizes theorists for arguing that water disputes are not a significant cause of war and conflict, claiming they “ignore the complex and real relationships between water and security, which remain a major challenge.”² The Institute believes water conflicts are likely in the future, arguing these risks are materializing at a sub-national level rather than as disputes among nations. But even at the national level, there are increasing concerns about tensions in Africa and parts of Asia that share international rivers but lack international agreements on managing those waters.”³

More recently, we have seen water resources targeted in various conflicts. In 2014, ISIS insurgents seized the Fallujah Dam in Iraq and closed the floodgates to cause upstream flooding that cut the downstream water supply.⁴ The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has warned of future wars over water resources, where rivers and lakes become national security imperatives to fight over.⁵ The demand for water in areas like

¹ Pacific Institute website, “Water and Conflict,” *Pacific Institute*, last modified 2018, accessed August 22, 2018, <http://pacinst.org/issues/water-and-conflict/>.

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Peter Schwartzlein, “Amid Terror Attacks, Iraq Faces Water Crisis,” National Geographic, accessed May 13, 2020, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/11/141104-iraq-water-crisis-turkey-iran-isis/>

⁵ IC-coordinated paper, *Global Water Security, Intelligence Community Assessment* (US Department Of State, 2012), https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Special%20Report_ICA%20Global%20Water%20Security.pdf.

northern and east Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia is quickly overtaking supply.¹ Unfortunately, there are many reasons why water conflicts will occur. As stated, population growth, climate change, poor management, and water privatization will compound the problem.²

c) Ukraine, a Resource War?

Ukraine's vast resources may not be the main reason for the 2022 Russian intervention, but it is possibly a contributory factor. Moscow's invasion of Ukraine means "the former will rein in the exports, which will create food security issues as Ukraine is one of the largest distributors of wheat and corn. Grain exports are the mainstay of Ukraine's economy."³ Ukraine holds some of the world's largest reserves of titanium, iron ore, lithium, and colossal coal and gas deposits. Most coal deposits reside in the east, where Russian forces have obtained the most inroads. That has put them in Moscow's hands, alongside other mineral deposits used for everything from airplane parts to

¹ Carolize Jansen, "Demand starts overtaking water supply in the Western Cape," Fresh Plaza, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://www.freshplaza.com/article/2182127/demand-starts-overtaking-water-supply-in-the-western-cape/>

² Water for All, "Top 10 Reasons to Oppose Water Privatization," *Water for All: Campaigning to keep Water as a Public Trust*, accessed May 6, 2020, <https://www.citizen.org/wp-content/uploads/top10-reasonstoopposewaterprivatization.pdf>

³ Business Today Desk, "Are Ukraine's vast natural resources a real reason behind Russia's invasion?" *BT*, 2022, accessed February 1, 2023, <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/world/story/are-ukraines-vast-natural-resources-a-real-reason-behind-russias-invasion-323894-2022-02-25>

electrical items. Kiev could lose approximately six percent of these assets, hindering Western Europe's search for alternatives to imports from Russia and China.¹

The Nord Stream pipeline is another factor. The two channels, (one and two), are owned by the Russian energy firm Gazprom. They can transport billions of cubic meters of gas to several European countries, including Germany. Washington "opposes the pipeline, arguing that it hands too much market (and therefore geopolitical) power to Vladimir Putin."² Nord Stream 2 "would allow Germany to effectively double the amount of gas it imports from Russia."³

Washington has criticized Berlin by claiming it is a hostage to Russian gas imports and for filling Moscow's coffers with oil revenue. It also has a selfish reason to oppose Nord Stream 2. U.S. companies "have already started selling gas obtained by fracking to European countries, backed by U.S. authorities who say Europe should seek alternatives to Russia. However, U.S. gas is more expensive than Russian pipelines."⁴

The E.U. extended its sanctions against Moscow over The Kremlin's Ukraine invasion for six months in January this year, targeting Russia's oil exports, its banking

¹ Anthony Faiola and Dalton Bennett, "Is the Ukraine war, a battle for the nation's mineral and energy wealth," *Washington Post*, accessed February 1, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/08/10/ukraine-russia-energy-mineral-wealth/>

² Editor, "Why Nord Stream 2 is the world's most controversial energy project," *The Economist*, accessed February 6, 2023, <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2021/07/14/why-nord-stream-2-is-the-worlds-most-controversial-energy-project>

³ Darko Janjevic, "Nord Stream 2 – What is the controversy about?" *DW*, accessed March 1, 2023, <https://www.dw.com/en/nord-stream-2-gas-pipeline-what-is-the-controversy-about/a-44677741>

⁴ Ibid

sector, and President Putin.¹ In 2021, more than fifty percent of all Russia's oil exports went to European countries. However, in 2022, U.K. imports from Russia fell dramatically, and other European countries have cut back too. Nevertheless, Europe still relies on Russian gas, and “reducing gas imports from Russia has been a major challenge for many European countries, as the continent has been getting most of its gas through pipelines linked to Russia.”² JP Morgan Bank states, “while the U.S. and its allies have so far stopped short of imposing penalties directly on Russian oil and gas, it has become increasingly clear that Russian oil is being ostracized.”³

Nevertheless, The Kremlin appears to be winning the energy war. Russia has found new markets to buy its oil, such as Turkey and India. The sanctions appear to have only a minimal effect. Blas stated that:

A combination of cold weather, surging demand for electricity, and soaring prices later this year risks undermining Western support for Ukraine. European politicians who've been eager to win international kudos by flaunting their support for Kyiv may be less willing to foot the domestic bill for averting energy poverty among their own voters. In public, European governments are still resolute in their determination to

¹ Le Monde with AFP, “EU extends sanctions on Russia over Ukraine for six months,” *Le Monde*, accessed February 16, 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/01/27/the-eu-extends-sanctions-on-russia-over-ukraine-for-six-months_6013348_4.html

² Jake Horton & Daniele Palumbo, “Russia sanctions: What impact have they had on its oil and gas exports?” 2023, accessed February 11, 2023, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/58888451>

³ JP Morgan, “What’s Next For Oil And Gas Prices As Sanctions On Russia Intensify,” 2022, accessed February 15, 2023, <https://www.jpmorgan.com/insights/research/oil-gas-energy-prices>

wean themselves off Russian energy. Privately, they must be acknowledging the hardships that stance threatens to inflict on their economies.¹

According to Professor Sim, Russia is currently winning the energy war against the West, but he states that this may change as the war drags on.²

¹ Javier Blas, "Putin is winning the energy war as Russia milks its cash cow," *Sidney Morning Herald*, 2022, accessed February 5, 2023, <https://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/putin-is-winning-the-energy-war-as-russia-milks-its-cash-cow-20220811-p5b8wj.html>

² Li-Chen Sim, "Russia vs Europe: Who Is Winning the Energy War?," *Belfer Center*, accessed February 11, 2023, <https://www.russiamatters.org/analysis/russia-vs-europe-who-winning-energy-war>

RESOURCE WARS: THE SYRIAN, IRAQI, AFGHAN, AND LIBYAN INTERVENTION

a) The West's Libyan and Syrian Intervention

A series of anti-government demonstrations called *The Arab Spring* spread across many countries in the Middle East in 2011. Eventually, the trouble spread to Colonel Gaddafi's Libya, and a direct challenge to his authoritarian regime became a reality. The civil war erupted in February 2011, and as casualties began to mount, the U.N. implemented a No-Fly Zone over Libya by UNSC Resolution 1973 on 11 March 2011 to help protect civilians.

The U.N. called on NATO to enforce this. The U.S. became the first country to freeze Libyan overseas assets, encouraging others to follow suit. Washington, London, and Paris became the loudest cheerleaders for U.N. military intervention. Following the latter's authorization, the US-led coalition of states launched airstrikes against Gaddafi's forces. The first wave of assaults destroyed Libya's air defense system. Following this, the U.S. negotiated with NATO and persuaded them to take over military operations, which they did on March 27th.

Nevertheless, Washington still provided jet-refueling facilities, intelligence, and electronic jamming equipment. Eventually, the NATO intervention enabled the anti-Gaddafi Forces to launch significant attacks on regime strongholds in Tripoli and Sirte. Gaddafi was quickly captured and murdered by the rebels, causing his government's end.

The National Transitional Council (NTC) for Libya took control of the country at the end of October. Unfortunately for them, arguments between the various factions quickly manifested, and violence ensued. The country is still volatile today.¹

Numerous theorists have argued that the U.S., U.K., and NATO were not entirely honest regarding the reasons for their military strikes in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. Here are some of the other possible justifications for the interventions. The Nixon Administration took the American dollar off the gold standard in 1971, which led to a severe currency devaluation and pressured the U.S. to seek a deal with the Saudi Arabian government. In return for American arms and protection, the Saudis promised to conduct all oil sales in the dollar. Other oil-producing states followed suit, thus allowing the Americans to export some of their inflation because the circulation of these dollars was outside the U.S.² Therefore, Gaddafi's scrapping of the petrodollar and his intention to create a hard currency would create considerable anxiety in Washington.³

Like Saddam Hussein, it appears that Gaddafi became keen to stop using the dollar for oil trade. Military intervention possibly occurred because he desired to introduce a gold dinar currency for oil and commodity purchases, which could have severely affected

¹ Press TV, "Ankara threatens to target Haftar's forces if they continue to attack Turkey's interests." *Press TV*, accessed May 6, 2020, <https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2020/05/10/625056/Turkey-Libya-GNA-Haftar-Tripoli-LNA>

² Andrea Wong, "The Untold Story Behind Saudi Arabia's 41-Year U.S. Debt Secret," *Bloomberg*, last modified May 31, 2016, accessed August 8, 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2016-05-30/the-untold-story-behind-saudi-arabia-s-41-year-u-s-debt-secret>.

³ Ellen Brown, "Why Qaddafi had to go: African gold, oil and the challenge to monetary imperialism," *The Ecologist*, accessed May 14, 2020, <https://theecologist.org/2016/mar/14/why-qaddafi-had-go-african-gold-oil-and-challenge-monetary-imperialism>

the U.S. dollar's purchasing power. Numerous theorists believed that Gaddafi's plan to stop selling Libyan oil in American dollars, demanding payment in gold-backed dinars, was the leading cause.¹ The regime, owning a massive 150 tons of gold, encouraged neighboring countries to follow suit.² It prompted former French President Nicholas Sarkozy to call Gaddafi's actions "a threat to the financial security of the world."³

Theorists like Mahdi believe the West intends to control the world's oil resources. According to him, this policy "is not limited to America's consumption, but also to denying it to others to control the economic destinies of others."⁴ He, too, argues that the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq occurred not because of the latter regime's ties to terrorism but due to Saddam Hussein's decision to trade oil in euros instead of U.S. dollars and the significance of its massive oil reserves.

The theory of denying others also ties in with the concept known as Peak Oil. It occurs when there is no longer enough of it to match the world's requirements. Some analysts assert that the world has already reached this milestone, and China's rapid economic growth over the last decade has placed further pressure on the world's oil

¹ Peter Koenig, "Let's never forget why Muammar Gaddafi was killed," *Pambazuka News*, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://www.pambazuka.org/pan-africanism/let's-never-forget-why-muammar-gaddafi-was-killed>

² Alex Newman, "Gadhafi's Gold-Money Plan Would Have Devastated Dollar," *New American*, last modified 2011, accessed August 8, 2018, <https://www.thenewamerican.com/economy/markets/item/4630-gadhafi-s-gold-money-plan-would-have-devastated-dollar>.

³ Ibid

⁴ Ahmed Mahdi., *Energy and US Foreign Policy*, London: L.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2012,8.

reserves.¹ According to early Chinese media reports, approximately 75 Chinese companies operating in Libya before the conflict comprised around 36,000 staff and 50 projects. Most of those firms were engaged in building roads, buildings, and other infrastructure. Beijing's top three state oil firms, CNPC, Sinopec Group, and CNOOC, had significant projects there.²

Dr. Paul Craig Roberts, a former Assistant Secretary to the U.S. Treasury, believes the U.S. Administration wants to clear China and Russia out of the Mediterranean. He claims China has massive energy investments in eastern Libya and relies on Tripoli, Angola, and Nigeria for energy needs. Roberts believes the decision to invade Libya occurred to deny resources to China just as Washington and London denied them to the Japanese in the 1930s.³

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) claims “over the last sixty years, at least forty percent of all internal conflicts have been linked to the exploitation of natural resources, whether high-value resources such as timber, diamonds, gold, and oil, or scarce resources such as fertile land and water.”⁴ Fresh, clean water is vital for human

¹ Tom Whipple, “The Peak Oil Crisis: It’s All Around Us - Falls Church News-Press Online,” last modified September 17, 2014, 2011, accessed August 9, 2018, <https://fcn.com/2014/09/17/the-peak-oil-crisis-its-all-around-us/>.

² Deborah Brautigam, “China, Libya, and Oil: Update,” *China Africa Research Initiative*, 2011, accessed August 9, 2018, <http://www.chinaafricarealist.com/2011/08/china-libya-and-oil-update.html>.

³ Paul Craig Roberts, “Press TV Interviews Paul Craig Roberts on Libya,” *Foreign Policy Journal*, last modified April 18, 2011, accessed August 9, 2018, <https://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2011/04/18/press-tv-interviews-paul-craig-roberts-on-libya/>.

⁴ UNRIC website, “40% of Conflicts Linked to Use of Natural Resources,” *United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe (UNRIC)*, last modified November 6, 2013, accessed August 9, 2018, <https://www.unric.org/en/latest-un-buzz/28808-international-day-for-preventing-the-exploitation-of-the-environment-in-war-and-armed-conflict>.

existence. Roughly, “40% of the global population has little to no access to clean water, and that figure is expected to jump to 50% by 2025.”¹ French multinational water companies like *Suez*, *Veolia*, and *Saur* control nearly fifty percent of the world’s water resources and are keen for governments to privatize their water systems.² Libya’s highly advanced water system (constructed under Gaddafi’s regime) would be a financial goldmine for these companies.³

The US, UK, and France were the leading proponents for taking military action claiming it was necessary to protect the Libyan people from Gaddafi’s armed forces. Unfortunately, this argument does not have much credibility. Firstly, why intervene in the Libyan civil war but not in the Nigerian one? Secondly, Washington’s main Arab ally in the Gulf area is the Saudi government. Hardly a beacon for democracy and human rights, the Saudis appear to be funding many radical Islamic terrorist groups in the region, like ISIS.⁴

The *Arab Spring* eventually spread to Syria in March 2011 as protests gathered momentum, culminating with a substantial anti-regime rally of one-hundred thousand

¹ M Mathaba, “Libya’s ‘Water Wars’ and Gaddafi’s Great Man-Made River Project,” Global Research Centre for Research on Globalization, accessed August 9, 2018, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/libyas-water-wars-and-gaddafis-great-man-made-river-project/5334868>.

² Aoife White, “Suez, Veolia, Saur Probed by EU on Water-Services Collusion,” *Bloomberg.Com*, 2012, accessed November 9, 2019, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-01-18/suez-veolia-saur-under-investigation-by-eu-antitrust-regulator>.

³ Simba Russeau, “Libya: water emerges as hidden weapon,” *Guardian*, 2011, accessed February 2, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/may/27/libya-water-hidden-weapon>

⁴ Martin Williams, “FactCheck Q&A: Is Saudi Arabia Funding ISIS?,” *Channel 4 News*, last modified June 7, 2017, accessed August 21, 2018, <https://www.channel4.com/news/factcheck/factcheck-qa-is-saudi-arabia-funding-isis>.

people taking to the streets of Daraa. According to Schaefer, the Syrian conflict “is a defining moment for Russian and U.S. relations.”¹ Leaked correspondence from the private intelligence firm *Stratfor* confirmed US-UK training of Syrian opposition forces since 2011, which intended to cause the collapse of Assad's regime from within.² Also, two years before the civil war erupted, in an interview on French television, the former French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said, “I was in England two years before the violence in Syria on other business. I met with top British officials, who confessed to me that they were preparing something in Syria. It was in Britain, not in America. Britain was preparing gunmen to invade Syria.”³

Even General Flynn, the former head National Security Advisor to President Trump, has confirmed that “the Obama administration made a willful decision to support Al-Qaeda, the Muslim Brotherhood, and other jihadist terror groups in Syria.”⁴ *Wikileaks*

¹ Janine Christine Schaefer, “Syria; The Emergence of a Cool War,” *American University of Paris* (2014): 3.

² Naheez Ahmed, “Syria Intervention Plans Fuelled by Oil Interests, Not Chemical Weapon Concerns,” *Environment Section The Guardian*, last modified 30/08/21013, accessed August 21, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/earth-insight/2013/aug/30/syria-chemical-attack-war-intervention-oil-gas-energy-pipelines>.

³ Peter Hitchens, “A Lecture on the Russian Question - Mail Online - Peter Hitchens Blog,” last modified October 14, 2016, accessed August 21, 2018, <http://hitchensblog.mailonsunday.co.uk/2016/10/a-lecture-on-the-russian-question.html>.

⁴ Alex Newman, “U.S. Defense Intel Chief: Obama Gave ‘Willful’ Aid to Al-Qaeda,” last modified August 11, 2015, accessed August 21, 2018, <https://www.thenewamerican.com/usnews/foreign-policy/item/21384-u-s-defense-intel-chief-obama-gave-willful-aid-to-al-qaeda>.

also released diplomatic cables in 2011, alleging that Washington gave financial support to Syrian political opposition groups and related projects from 2006 to 2010 onwards.¹

General Wesley Clarke, the former NATO Supreme Allied Commander of Europe, claims he saw documents from 2007 showing the U.S. intended to “destroy the governments of seven different countries in the next five years, starting with Iraq, then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and finishing off with Iran.”² Speaking on R.T. News, the journalist John Pilger claims declassified documents show that since the 1950s, the West has been trying to take Syria away from Moscow’s sphere of influence.³

It is not the first time Washington and London plotted regime change in Syria. From the onset of the Cold War, the West desired to remove the Syrian regime from power and bring Damascus into its orbit of control.⁴ Respected U.S. journalist Seymour Hersh asserts that Syrian insurgent funding came from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the CIA, with the support of MI6, instigating front companies in Libya under cover of Australian organizations. Hersh also says that retired American soldiers, who sometimes did not know who was employing them, were hired to run the shipping of Libyan arms to

¹ Craig Whitlock, “U.S. Secretly Backed Syrian Opposition Groups, Cables Released by WikiLeaks Show,” *Washington Post*, last modified April 27, 2011, accessed August 18, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/us-secretly-backed-syrian-opposition-groups-cables-released-by-wikileaks-show/2011/04/14/AF1p9hWD_story.html.

² Steven Chovanec, “The West Created & Perpetuates The Syrian Civil War,” *MintPress News*, accessed August 18, 2018, <https://www.mintpressnews.com/MyMPN/the-west-created-perpetuates-the-syrian-civil-war/>.

³ L. Samuelis, “Going Underground” (RT News, August 18, 2018).

⁴ Mark Curtis, “British Plans to Overthrow the Syrian Government, 1956-7,” *Mark Curtis*, last modified November 16, 2016, accessed August 22, 2018, <http://markcurtis.info/2016/11/16/british-plans-to-overthrow-the-syrian-government-1956-7/>.

anti-Assad forces. He claims that CIA director David Petraeus orchestrated the entire operation.¹

ISIS seized large swathes of Iraq in 2014 and controlled a significant portion of land in Syria too. As of May 2015, according to *The Guardian* newspaper, ISIS controlled about fifty percent of Syria.² The Assad regime was now battling Western-backed insurgent forces alongside ISIS. While some Western-backed forces were conspiring with ISIS, others were fighting amongst themselves and against ISIS.

Unfortunately, the conflict got even messier. Fearful of an ISIS takeover, Kurdish forces on the Turkey-Syrian border supported the Assad regime. At the same time, NATO member Turkey considers the Kurdish forces terrorists. Also, Ankara appeared to be turning, at best, a blind eye to ISIS oil smuggling operations and, at worst, conducting joint military adventures with ISIS against Assad's military. Although the Turks deny the latter happened.³ Israel provided a field hospital for injured ISIS soldiers on its Syrian border.⁴ Jordan also allowed training camps for anti-Assad militias on its perimeter.

¹ T.J. Coles, "Britain's Secret War in Syria," *PIPR*, July 4, 2015, accessed August 18, 2018, <http://www.pipr.co.uk/britains-secret-war-in-syria/>.

² Kareem Shaheen, "Isis 'controls 50% of Syria' after Seizing Historic City of Palmyra," *World News The Guardian*, last modified June 21, 2015, accessed August 18, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/21/isis-palmyra-syria-islamic-state>.

³ Mehmet Emim Caliskan, "Turkey Denies Turning Blind Eye to Islamic State as Bombing Stokes," *Reuters* (21/07/2015, July 21, 2015), accessed August 18, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-turkey-suruc/turkey-denies-turning-blind-eye-to-islamic-state-as-bombing-stokes-anger-idUSKCN0PV16M20150721>.

⁴ Fars News Agency, "Sraeli Hospitals Treat Injured ISIL Operatives," last modified March 18, 2015, accessed August 18, 2018, <http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13931227000899>.

Further chaos ensued in October 2019 when Turkey invaded numerous northern cities in Syria on the pretext that it was trying to remove Kurdish troops from its Syrian border. Professor Landis described the latter as a scramble for resources in the area.¹The whole region became dangerously unstable.

The West alleged Damascus had used chemical weapons on its citizens, but Assad's regime denied doing so.² It prompted a call in the UK parliament for a vote to launch airstrikes against Syria, which UK Prime Minister David Cameron narrowly lost. For the moment, London could not officially join its anti-Assad allies, comprised of the US, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Qatar, who have already decided to take military action there. Nevertheless, a new vote occurred in London in December 2015; this time, most parliamentary members voted for military strikes.

As terrorists gained territory, Assad asked the Russian government to intervene against them. Moscow agreed to the request and began a massive air campaign in September 2015. The Russian military intervention caused severe damage to ISIS forces and infrastructure, allowing Damascus to retake lost territory. Russia received permission from the sovereign government in Damascus. Therefore, its intervention did not breach the rules of international law. Neither of the western allies had authorization from the Regime.³

¹ Joshua Landis, *News Bulletin 1.00 AM* (London: RT News, October 14, 2019).

² RT News website, "BBC Producer Says Hospital Scenes after 2018 Douma 'Chemical Attack' Were Staged," *RT International*, last modified 2018, accessed March 6, 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/451538-bbc-douma-chemical-staged/>.

³ Schaefer, "Syria; The Emergence of a Cool War." *American University of Paris*, 2014, 3, accessed August 21, 2019. <https://pqdtopen.proquest.com/doc/1859692679.html?FMT=AI>

As stated by Professor Anderson, one suspects their real motive for intervening was regime change only.¹ Tensions escalated further when NATO member Turkey shot down a Russian jet claiming it violated its airspace, and began shelling Kurdish and Syrian army positions in Syria during mid-February 2016. It also appears that the West never negotiated constructively with Moscow and Damascus to solve the crisis, preferring a military solution instead. Ex-Finnish Prime minister Martti Ahtisaari who tried to construct a Syrian peace plan, confirmed the latter.² After more severe fighting, and a halt in peace talks, Damascus asked Russia for more military help. Massive Russian airstrikes ensued against ISIS, allowing the regime to regain even more territory.

b) The Syrian Endgame

The military intervention from Russia has been a game-changer. Assad's military has regained lost territory and is now in a much stronger position when or if final negotiations occur. This conflict always had the potential to spiral into a dangerous situation, which could lead to a risky situation developing between the NATO forces and Russia. The Syrian peace talks also show how difficult multilateral negotiations can be, especially when coalition groupings develop entrenched positions.

¹ Tim Anderson, "The Dirty War on Syria: Professor Anderson Reveals the 'Unspoken Truth,'" *Global Research*, last modified March 26, 2018, accessed November 10, 2019, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-dirty-war-on-syria/5491859>.

² Primož Manfreda, "What Is the US Role in Syria Now?," *ThoughtCo*, last modified December 3, 2017, accessed August 18, 2018, <https://www.thoughtco.com/reasons-for-us-intervention-in-syria-2353550>.

Though some theorists disagree, there is a widely held belief amongst many experts that the Syrian violence is just another war regarding Middle East energy resources.¹ In October 2019, after his speech announcing the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, Trump said US troops would stay in Syria to secure the oil.² Experts have alleged that many of the leading players are fighting over one thing- a billion-dollar oil pipeline.³

Russian state-controlled company Gazprom exported around 80% of its oil to European countries before the 2022 Ukraine conflict. Oil is an essential market for Moscow, and the Europeans do not like being so dependent on this. Supported by Washington, they are keen to reduce this dependency to weaken Russian influence. Much of Moscow's strength comes from its established network of pipelines used to transport gas across the continent. In 2014, US President Obama confirmed Europe's need to reduce its reliance on Russian oil following the fighting in Ukraine.⁴ Dmitry Minin writing for the *Strategic Cultural Foundation*, states that:

¹ Paul Cochrane, "The 'Pipelineistan' Conspiracy: The War in Syria Has Never Been about Gas," *Middle East Eye*, last modified May 10, 2017, accessed August 23, 2018, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/essays/pipelineistan-conspiracy-why-war-syria-was-never-about-gas-144022537>.

² Wesley Morgan, "Trump's Syria Pullout That Isn't," *POLITICO*, last modified October 31, 2019, accessed November 2, 2019, <https://www.politico.com/news/2019/10/31/trump-syria-oil-field-mission-062510>.

³ Charis Chang, "The One Thing We've All Missed in Syrian Conflict," *NewsComAu*, last modified November 30, 2015, accessed November 10, 2019, <https://www.news.com.au/world/middle-east/is-the-fight-over-a-gas-pipeline-fuelling-the-worlds-bloodiest-conflict/news-story/74efcba9554c10bd35e280b63a9afb74#.hfkor>.

⁴ Charis Chang, "Syrian War Explainer: Is It All about a Gas Pipeline?," *News, Com.Au*, last modified December 2, 2015, accessed August 21, 2018, <https://www.news.com.au/world/middle-east/is-the-fight-over-a-gas-pipeline-fuelling-the-worlds-bloodiest-conflict/news-story/74efcba9554c10bd35e280b63a9afb74>.

A battle is raging over whether pipelines will go toward Europe from east to west, from Iran and Iraq to the Mediterranean coast of Syria, or take a more northbound route from Qatar and Saudi Arabia via Syria and Turkey. Having realized that the stalled Nabucco pipeline, and indeed the entire Southern Corridor, are backed up only by Azerbaijan's reserves and can never equal Russian supplies to Europe or thwart the construction of the South Stream, the West is in a hurry to replace them with resources from the Persian Gulf. Syria ends up being a key link in this chain, and it leans in favor of Iran and Russia; thus, it was decided in the Western capitals that its regime needs to change.¹

There is much more to the conflict than what the simplistic western narrative concentrates on, namely that Assad is a brutal dictator and must go for a democracy to flourish in the country. The issue of resource acquisition is paramount in the minds of the key countries involved, as articulated by a 2008 report from the Rand Corporation.² The current state of the Syrian war shows that Assad's forces have won and have virtually wiped out the insurgents. While tiny pockets of resistance still exist, Damascus and its Russian backers are now firmly in control.

C} The Invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq

Immediately after the 2001 World Trade Centre tragedy, numerous reports suggested that the Whitehouse became keen to link Iraq and Afghanistan to the crime, even though the alleged hijackers were primarily Saudi nationals.³ Paul O'Neill, a former senior official of President George W. Bush, went further, claiming "the administration began

¹ Mnar Muhawesh, "Refugee Crisis & Syria War Fueled By Competing Gas Pipelines," *MintPress News*, September 9, 2015, accessed August 21, 2018, <https://www.mintpressnews.com/migrant-crisis-syria-war-fueled-by-competing-gas-pipelines/209294/>.

² G Pernin et al, *Unfolding the Future of the Long War: Motivations, Prospects, and Implications for the U.S. Army* (California: RAND Corp., n.d.).

³ Aljazeera News, "The Connection between Iraq and 9/11," last modified August 7, 2011, accessed October 24, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/the911decade/2011/09/201197155513938336.html>.

planning an Iraqi invasion just days after taking office.”¹ Before those attacks, the Whitehouse involved itself in secret dealings with the Afghan Taliban regime over an oil pipeline.² These negotiations faltered, and according to Mr. Niaz Naik, an ambassador from Pakistan, the Americans “threatened a military option if the Taliban did not acquiesce to Washington’s demands.”³

Conveniently for President Bush, the alleged Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks in New York allowed him to announce a *War on Terror*, which former Canadian Diplomat Professor Peter Dale Scott described as “a pseudo war.”⁴ This policy allowed him to link Afghanistan and Iraq to those events, even though he presented no genuine proof of their involvement.⁵ Washington invaded Afghanistan a few weeks after the New York attacks, resulting in the removal of the Taliban regime. However, a bloody civil war resulted in thousands of deaths, and the Taliban eventually returned to power in 2021 after the Americans retreated from the country.

¹ Corbett B Daly, “CNN.Com - Ex-Bush Aide: Iraq War Planning Began after 9/11 - Mar 20, 2004,” last modified April 6, 2004, accessed August 8, 2018, <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/US/03/20/clarke.cbs/>.

² AHT Staff, “Bombshell: Secret Negotiations between the Taliban and the US to a Build a Pipeline through Afghanistan,” *American Herald Tribune*, last modified October 9, 2016, accessed October 26, 2019, <https://ahtribune.com/politics/1248-taliban-us-oil.html>.

³ R.C Clarke, *Petrodollar Warfare* (Canada: New Society Publisher, 2005),59.

⁴ Peter Dale Scott, “The Falsified War on Terror: How the US Has Protected Some of Its Enemies,” *Asia Pacific Journal*, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://apjif.org/2013/11/40/Peter-Dale-Scott/4005/article.html>

⁵ Msnbc com Staff and News Service Reports, “9/11 Panel Sees No Link between Iraq, al-Qaida,” *Msnbc.Com*, last modified June 16, 2004, accessed October 24, 2019, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/5223932/ns/us_news-security/t/panel-sees-no-link-between-iraq-al-qaida/. David Coleman, “The War on Trial” (London: Channel 4, 2001), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=769vRdpFlhI>.

With its vast oil reserves, Iraq was next on Washington's itinerary, and the invasion began in March 2003. Some theorists claim that it was no coincidence that a few months before the 2003 invasion, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had stopped his country's oil exports from using the dollar and transacted in euros instead.¹ Therefore, the attack on Iraq, under the guise of fighting terrorism and building democracy, could well be construed as a veiled warning to other oil-producing countries considering stopping trading oil in dollars. They, too, could risk an attack by Washington. Iraq, Libya, and Afghanistan were strategically important to the US government. The first two had substantial oil reserves, and the latter was necessary for providing a potential pipeline link to the oil-rich Caspian Sea region. It fits the theory that the West intervened here for resource issues.

¹ Bart Gruzalski, "The USA Attacked Iraq Because Saddam Had W\$D," *CounterPunch.Org*, last modified March 22, 2013, accessed September 30, 2019, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2013/03/22/the-usa-attacked-iraq-because-saddam-had-wd/>.

PUTIN'S PRESIDENCY 2012- PRESENT

This section examines issues that occurred during the tenure of Mr. Putin from 2012 to the present day. As well as receiving western criticism for supporting the Syrian regime, he faced hostility from the West over many other issues. As the Syrian and Libyan conflicts raged on, Putin faced further western pressure, primarily over his alleged dictatorial behavior in Ukraine, a subject that we shall examine in detail during the next chapter.

a) *The 2012 Election Victory*

Putin successfully obtained a third presidential term after comfortably winning the vote on March 5th. Immediately, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) was keen to promote stories of widespread voter fraud, and similar reports echoed in the US media, too.¹ After taking his time, President Obama eventually summoned the energy to phone the new Kremlin occupant with a lukewarm message. Transcripts showed a keenness to promote cordial relations and cooperation over issues such as Syria, Iran, and various trade deals.² Nevertheless, anxiety resurfaced when Moscow expressed concern at the behavior of US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, accusing her office of encouraging

¹ Bridget Kendall, "Putin Declares Win in Elections," March 5, 2012, sec. Europe, accessed October 13, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17252190>.

² Whitehouse Briefing Room, "Readout of the President's Call with President-Elect Putin," *Whitehouse.Gov*, last modified March 9, 2012, accessed November 10, 2019, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2012/03/09/readout-president-s-call-president-elect-putin>.

recent street protests against Putin, interfering in Russia's electoral process, and funding anti-Putin opposition groups.¹

b) The Magnitsky Act

Tensions became further exacerbated in 2012 with the passing of the US Congress of the Magnitsky Act. The recently deceased anti-Putin campaigner, Senator John McCain, co-sponsored this bill. In 2009, Russian-based lawyer Sergei Magnitsky died in a Moscow jail after investigating a massive fraud allegedly committed by senior Russian government officials. Instead, Russia claims that he committed the fraud and promptly arrested him in 2008, which led to him being found guilty and sentenced for the crime. His subsequent death in custody created a major international row, with many in the West accusing the Russian prison warders of beating Magnitsky to death. However, a report produced by the Physicians for Human Rights does not appear to support the latter.² Nevertheless, it did criticize Moscow for keeping Magnitsky in inhumane conditions and for not properly treating existing medical conditions.³

¹ D.M Herszenhorn and S Myers, "Ties With U.S. Remain Strained After Russian Election," *The New York Times*, March 6, 2012, sec. Europe, accessed October 14, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/07/world/europe/ties-with-us-remain-strained-after-russian-election.html>.

² William Browder, "Tortured to Death by Putin's Jackboot State: Inside the Rat-Infested Gestapo-like Russian Prison Where Eight Guards Beat Lawyer Who Exposed Moscow's Gangster Regime," *Mail Online*, last modified November 3, 2012, accessed October 14, 2018, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2227309/Tortured-death-Putins-jackboot-state-Last-words-Moscow-lawyer-death-screams--chilling-truth-Russias-terrifying-gangster-regime.html>.

³ Jeff Carlson, "The Inconsistencies of Bill Browder and the Magnitsky Act," *The Epoch Times*, last modified 2018, accessed October 14, 2018, https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-inconsistencies-of-bill-browder-and-the-magnitsky-act_2642783.html.

The Magnitsky Act placed economic sanctions on Russian individuals allegedly involved in the corruption and the lawyer's death. According to the UK's *Financial Times*, it sent relations between the US and Russia "to a then post-cold war low."¹ Putin publicly criticized the Act, and Moscow inevitably retaliated in December of that year. With Presidential support, Russian parliamentarians passed a law banning American citizens from adopting Russian children. The legislation "abruptly halted plans for 50 children to join new families in the U.S."² Facing criticism from both Russian and Western journalists for using impoverished children in a political battle with the West, Putin responded angrily to them, asking how journalists could stand idly by while the US humiliates Russia?³ The latter is an apparent reference to the Magnitsky bill. Moscow's response also included a travel ban on over 100 US government officials from various departments, banning them from entering Russian territory.⁴

c) The 2014 Economic Crisis

Russia's most recent economic crisis began with the collapse of its currency in 2014. The Rubles devaluation meant "Russian companies found it increasingly difficult to repay foreign-denominated debts – such as U.S. dollar-denominated debt. These

¹ M Seddon and M Buckley, "Russia: Magnitsky's Bitter Legacy," *Financial Times*, last modified June 12, 2016, accessed October 14, 2018, <https://www.ft.com/content/1eb38914-2ca4-11e6-a18d-a96ab29e3c95>.

² Josh Lederman, "The Obscure Sanctions Law That Made the Kremlin See Red," *AP News*, July 11, 2017, accessed December 10, 2018, <https://www.apnews.com/43336d7403d84efeadb7159735e2a8ba>.

³ Simon Shuster, "Why Has Moscow Passed a Bill to Ban U.S. Adoption of Russian Orphans?," *Time*, 2012, accessed October 14, 2018, <http://world.time.com/2012/12/20/why-has-moscow-passed-a-law-to-ban-u-s-adoption-of-russian-orphans/>.

⁴ RAPSİ, "Russia's Anti-Magnitsky List May Include over 100 Americans Russian Legal Information Agency," *RAPSİ*, accessed October 15, 2018, <http://www.rapsinews.com/news/20130412/266999199.html>.

dynamics took an early toll on the country's economy, which was further hit in 2015 with sharply lower crude oil prices."¹ Oil is the mainstay of the Russian economy, with approximately half of Moscow's revenue derived from its exports. Also, around a quarter of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is connected to the sector.² Therefore, a price fall is bound to hurt the Russian economy.

Nevertheless, according to numerous theorists, another root cause of the crisis was the economic sanctions placed on Moscow by the West.³ Powerful states enjoy great flexibility when deciding how they react to scenarios that they perceive may be a threat to their interests. Other options may need consideration if a lack of action or military intervention has serious consequences. As most states rely on foreign goods and services for their economy, "this international interdependence can be exploited to register displeasure with the actions of a particular country by restricting the flow of certain goods and services to the country in question."⁴ It will "suffer some deprivation and be forced to change its ways in order to rejoin the community of nations and the economic benefits therein."⁵

¹ Justin Kuepper, "What Caused the Russian Financial Crisis of 2014 and 2015," *The Balance*, last modified 2018, accessed October 16, 2018, <https://www.thebalance.com/what-caused-the-russian-financial-crisis-of-2014-and-2015-1979012>.

² Financial Fudge website, "December 2014 Financial Fudge," accessed October 16, 2018, <https://financialfudge.wordpress.com/2014/12/>.

³ Ken Rogoff, "Economic Sanctions Have a Long and Chequered History," sec- *Business The Guardian*, last modified May 1, 2015, accessed October 17, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jan/05/economic-sanctions-long-history-mixed-success>.

⁴ Selden, Z., *Economic Sanctions as Instruments of American Foreign Policy* (London: Praeger, 1999), 3.

⁵ Ibid

During the Cold War, the USSR and the West used sanctions on countries to destabilize unfriendly regimes or try to make another country alter a policy. Moscow sanctioned Finland, Albania, China, and Yugoslavia, while the West did the same to countries like Cuba, Iran, and numerous South American countries. The consensus amongst most experts is that generally speaking, sanctions do not work. They mostly fail to force the recipient to alter policy, arguing that their use is more for cosmetic reasons. The instigator of the sanction looks strong and appears to be doing something for the benefit of their home audience.¹ During the Cold War, US sanctions on Cuba failed to topple the Castro government, nor did they force the North Korean regime to alter its course.

Nevertheless, sometimes, they do work. Sanctions hampered the Apartheid regime in South Africa and possibly helped bring Iran to the negotiating table regarding its alleged nuclear weapons program. Even though they are mostly ineffective, it is not debatable that their use can sometimes devastate a country's population. According to numerous surveys and experts, western sanctions on Iraq may have caused the death of approximately half a million people. This figure was derived primarily from the British

¹ Ken Rogoff, "Economic Sanctions Have a Long and Chequered History," *The Guardian Business Sec.*, last modified January 5, 2015, accessed October 17, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jan/05/economic-sanctions-long-history-mixed-success>.

medical journal called *The Lancet*.¹ At the time, the US Ambassador to the UN casually told a reporter that the number of Iraqi deaths they caused was a price worth paying.²

Decades-long sanctions imposed on Cuba by the US are criticized by many medical experts, too. Numerous studies show their effects have caused many people to die there.³ A study by the American Association for World Health determined that the US embargo made it difficult for the Cubans to acquire essential medicines, which resulted in deaths and suffering.⁴ A similar situation has occurred in Iran, too, where the Islamic state became subject to a sanction regime in 1979. Many people have died as a result, according to various studies.⁵

d) *The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty*

In November 2018, President Trump announced that Washington intended to withdraw from the 1987 INF treaty. In response to Trump's declaration, Moscow

¹ Barbara Crossette, "Iraq Sanctions Kill Children, U.N. Reports," *The New York Times*, December 1, 1995, sec. World, accessed October 18, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/1995/12/01/world/iraq-sanctions-kill-children-un-reports.html>.

² J.G. Hornberger, "500,000 Dead Children Haunt Madeleine Albright," *The News Doctor*, last modified May 15, 2016, accessed October 18, 2018, <http://thenewsdoctors.com/500000-dead-children-haunt-madeleine-albright-jacob-g-hornberger/>.

³ Andrea Klestdat, "US Trade Embargoes - Are They Effective Tools to Promote Change?," *NCBFAA*, last modified 2019, accessed October 19, 2018, http://www.ncbfaa.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/cms/review.html?Action=CMS_Document&DocID=17727&MenuKey=pubs.

⁴ M Frank, et al., "The Impact of the US Embargo on Health and Butruition in Cuba," January 15, 1997, https://medicc.org/ns/documents/The_impact_of_the_U.S._Embargo_on_Health_&_Nutrition_in_Cuba.pdf.

⁵ Larry Everest, "Sanctions: Weapons of Mass Death and Destruction," *World Can't Wait*, last modified 2018, accessed October 19, 2018, <http://www.worldcantwait.net/index.php/features/iran/8128-sanctions-weapons-of-mass-death-and-destruction>.

announced its withdrawal too. Nevertheless, in January 2019, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stated that his country wished to save the landmark INF Treaty.¹ Many senior American politicians did not support Trump's decision, and consequently, it received severe criticism from various quarters.² The Americans and Russians always accused each other of violating the treaty terms. Following Trump's announcement, USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo outlined longstanding US allegations of Kremlin violations of the cold war-era treaty with developing and deploying a new ground-launched cruise missile. He opined that it was "part of a wider pattern of lawlessness by the Kremlin."³ Canada and other NATO members mostly concurred.⁴ However, some members of the latter organization have stated that Washington did not provide enough proof of Russian INF violation.⁵

¹ Eline Schaart, "Lavrov: Russia Keeps Door Open for Talks with US to Save INF Treaty," POLITICO. Accessed February 11, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/nuclear-sergei-lavrov-russia-keeps-door-open-for-talks-with-united-states-to-save-inf-treaty/>.

² Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard has pledged to try to introduce a bill that will prevent Washington from withdrawing the treaty, ("RT News," *11.00 Pm News Bulletin*, February 16, 2019.)

³ Julian Borger, "US Says It Will Pull out of INF Treaty If Russia Does Not Comply within 60 Days," World News The Guardian, accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/04/us-inf-russia-nuclear-treaty-deadline>.

⁴ James McCarten, "Winnipeg Free Press," *Canada Echoes NATO, Pins Blame on Russia for U.S. Pullout from Nuclear Treaty*, accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/canada/canada-echoes-nato-pins-blame-on-russia-for-us-pullout-from-nuclear-treaty--505204392.html>.

⁵ Matthias Gebauer et al, "US Delivers Ultimatum to NATO Regarding Russian Missiles," SPIEGEL ONLINE, accessed February 11, 2019, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/us-delivers-ultimatum-to-nato-regarding-russian-missiles-a-1182426.html>.

Moscow denied all these accusations arguing that Washington has continually violated the treaty by placing the *Aegis* missile defense system in Romania and Poland.¹ Putin said the USA had decided long ago to destroy the agreement and is now looking for justifications by blaming Moscow. He also claimed Russia is against scrapping the treaty.² Putin's comments appeared justified when satellite imagery became public, showing alleged American violations at its *Raytheon Corporation* plant in Arizona at least two years before Trump's withdrawal comment.³ Although he takes a neutral position as to which side is at fault, Professor Postol states:

The Russians have rightly raised questions about the possibility that the Aegis Ashore system could constitute a preparatory violation of the INF Treaty. Russian concerns are further supported by the fact that the Aegis radar is not up to the job of identifying attacking long-range ballistic missiles at long enough ranges to allow enough time for missile-defense interceptors to reach intercept points. It, therefore, appears—from a technical point of view—that the Aegis Ashore system has little or no true missile-defense capabilities against long-range missiles.⁴

Numerous other experts in the field also claim that Russia is not to blame for the treaty's demise but rather Washington. An article in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*

¹ Julian Borger, "US Says It Will Pull out of INF Treaty If Russia Does Not Comply within 60 Days," World News The Guardian, accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/04/us-inf-russia-nuclear-treaty-deadline>.

² Press tv website, "PressTV-US Suspends Obligations under INF Treaty with Russia," accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2019/02/01/587389/US-Mike-Pompeo-INF-Treaty-suspension-Russia>.

³ Rahule Kaivepelle, "Russia Releases Satellite Image Purporting to Show U.S. Missile Plant Violating INF Treaty - National," *Globalnews.Ca*, accessed February 11, 2019, <https://globalnews.ca/news/4918569/inf-treaty-russia-satellite-image-raytheon-missile-plant/>.

⁴ Theodore A. Postol, "Is Russia Solely to Blame for Violations of the INF Treaty?," January 17, 2019, accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.thenation.com/article/russia-inf-nuclear-treaty-aegis/>.

claims “allegations that Russia is serially violating its arms control commitments are one example of the mudslinging. The evidence presented to date does not support these charges.”¹ Professor Gillespie partially concurs, claiming that no definite proof shows Moscow guilty of violations.² Theorists like Dr. Bruce Blair, a nuclear expert from Princeton University, are critical of Trump’s behavior, stating that the pullout is a dangerous thing to do.³ Others agree, claiming the move could spark a new nuclear arms race.⁴ The original INF agreement:

Sent thousands of midrange nuclear missiles to the scrap heap, {and} was central not only to stopping but reversing the most dangerous military buildup in history: It cleared the way for a series of deals that brought global nuclear stockpiles down from their estimated peak of 70,300 weapons in 1986 to the 14,485 that remain today. For 30 years, Reagan's historic achievement largely held fast -- until Trump.⁵

Why would Washington wish to scrap it if Russia did not violate the treaty? Andrea Thompson, the USA Secretary of State for Arms Control, stated: “now the Department of Defense (DOD) will be able to conduct those research and development activities banned

¹ Kingston Reif, “Don’t Blame Moscow - Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,” accessed February 10, 2019, <https://thebulletin.org/2013/08/dont-blame-moscow/>.

² Alexander Gillespie, “The End of INF: Another Nuclear Treaty Bites the Dust,” USA Al Jazeera, accessed February 10, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/inf-nuclear-treaty-bites-dust-181022104406151.html>.

³ David Axe, “China’s Missiles Are a Dumb Reason for America to Quit the INF Treaty,” *The National Interest*, last modified January 28, 2019, accessed February 11, 2019, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/chinas-missiles-are-dumb-reason-america-quit-inf-treaty-42747>.

⁴ Alexander Gillespie, “‘Huge Mistake’: Fears of Arms Race as US, Russia Suspend INF Pact,” *Russia News Al Jazeera*, accessed February 11, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/mistake-fears-arms-race-russia-suspend-inf-pact-190203152747235.html>.

⁵ Derek Johnson, “Terminating the INF Treaty Could Be Disastrous (Opinion),” *CNN*, accessed February 10, 2019, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/10/25/opinions/terminating-inf-treaty-disastrous-johnson/index.html>.

under the INF treaty so the DOD will start those steps on building those systems they couldn't before."¹ It means millions of dollars of taxpayer's money will now divert to the coffers of the US military-industrial complex. Numerous theorists suggest the latter, through its various pressure groups, can significantly influence Whitehouse policy to further its financial gain.² Even President Trump opined that he is struggling against a military-industrial complex in Washington that desires to keep the wars going.³ Numerous experts agree with the former President.⁴ According to Professor Thomann, Washington already:

Destabilized the nuclear balance when they decided to get out of the ABM treaty in 2002, and when you look at a map, the United States is putting missile defense bases all around Eurasia, creating a feeling of encirclement in Russia and China. Their ideology intends to put sovereignty above international law, and they want to have a free hand to keep their supremacy in the world as long as possible, and these treaties are constraining them.⁵

¹ Andrea L. Thompson, "DC Hawks, US Defense Giants Race to Score Profits from INF Demise," *RT World News*, accessed February 11, 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/450874-inf-defense-industry-profits/>.

² Michel Chossudovsky, "2019, The Strategies of Global Warfare: War with China and Russia? Washington's Military Design in the Asia-Pacific - Global Research," *Centre for Research on Globalization*, accessed February 12, 2019, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-strategies-of-global-warfare-war-with-china-and-russia-washingtons-military-design-in-the-asia-pacific-2/5541976>.

³ Susan Jones, "Trump: 'You Do Have a Military-Industrial Complex. They Do Like War,'" *CNS News*, last modified May 20, 2019, accessed October 13, 2019, <https://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/susan-jones/trump-you-do-have-military-industrial-complex-they-do-war>.

⁴ Mike Raddie, "Demystifying Syria," *RT International*, accessed October 13, 2019, <https://www.rt.com/shows/crosstalk/470674-turkish-operation-syria-border-kurds-militias/>. Jonathan Turley, "Big Money behind War: The Military-Industrial Complex," accessed February 12, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/01/big-money-behind-war-military-industrial-complex-20141473026736533.html>.

⁵ Pierre-Emmanuel Thomann, "After Killing INF US Has 'Free Hand' to Reassert 'Supremacy in the World' with 'New Arms Race,'" *RT World News*, accessed February 11, 2019, <https://www.rt.com/news/450414-inf-russia-suspension-reaction/>.

Other theorists concur with Thomann.¹ After the 2001 New York attacks, Secretary for Defense Donald Rumsfeld defined “the Pentagon’s need to dominate the entire planetary battle-field (Full-Spectrum Dominance) to maintain the unipolarity of the world.”² Dinucci states this “is exactly what the United States is attempting today.”³ According to him, this type of mindset creates:

Contempt for the most elementary rules of conduct in international agreements. The United States and their allies accuse Russia of violating the INF Treaty, without presenting the slightest proof while ignoring the satellite photos broadcast by Moscow which prove that the United States had begun to prepare the production of nuclear missiles forbidden by the Treaty two years before they accused Russia of violating the Treaty.⁴

The Arms Control Organization criticized Trump’s withdrawal decision, claiming his former hawkish National Security Advisor, John Bolton, could have unduly influenced his decision. They argue that the move “to blow-up the INF Treaty is unnecessary and a self-defeating wrong turn that could lead to an unconstrained and dangerous nuclear arms competition with Russia.”⁵ In a BBC interview in November

¹ Yenisafak World website, “Military: geopolitical calculus behind INF debates,” *Yeni Şafak*, accessed February 11, 2019, <https://wa-piri-yenisafak-en.azurewebsites.net/en/world/military-geopolitical-calculus-behind-inf-debates-3469556.po>

² Manlio Dinucci, “Washington, the Logic of Force, by Manlio Dinucci,” *Voltaire Network*, accessed February 12, 2019, <https://www.voltairenet.org/article205079.html>.

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Arms Control Association website, “Trump’s Counterproductive Decision to ‘Terminate’ the INF Treaty,” *Arms Control Association*, accessed February 12, 2019, <https://www.armscontrol.org/issue-briefs/2018-10/trumps-counterproductive-decision-terminate-inf-treaty>.

2019, former Soviet President Gorbachev warned that dangerous tensions now exist between the West and Russia and expressed fears of another nuclear arms race.¹

¹ BBC News, "Gorbachev: World in 'Colossal Danger,'" *BBC News*, last modified 2019, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-50284597/gorbachev-world-in-colossal-danger>.

THE UKRAINE CRISIS

a) Ukraine after World War Two

. When the Soviet empire fractured into numerous countries overnight, long-suppressed quarrels among rival groups ignited. Ukraine was a prime example, with its western part wishing to see more significant links to Europe, while the east desired greater ties to Russia.¹ During the early days after independence, “Ukrainian nationalists in the government seized the moment to declare Ukrainian the national language. Russian-speaking regions grumbled but then carried on.”² Ukraine’s economy suffered after the Soviet collapse, experiencing “hyperinflation and an exceptionally huge production decline for a country not ravaged by a major war. Official GDP collapsed by almost half from 1990 to 1994, and the slow decline continued throughout the decade.”³

Both Moscow and the West were fearful that Kyiv’s stockpile of former Soviet weapons was at risk of falling into the hands of terrorists. Therefore, American President Bill Clinton visited Kyiv during the winter of 1994 to sign a deal that enabled the Ukraine

¹ Greg Myre, “Why Can’t The Former Soviet Republics Figure Out Democracy?,” *NPR.Org*, accessed February 20, 2019, <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2014/02/19/279464408/why-can-t-the-former-soviet-republics-figure-out-democracy>.

² Sabra Ayres, “Ukraine’s Post-Soviet History: United in Poverty, Now Divided in War,” *The New Republic*, last modified 2019, accessed February 20, 2019, <https://newrepublic.com/article/119925/ukraines-post-soviet-history-united-poverty-now-divided-war>.

³ Pekka Sutela, “The Underachiever: Ukraine’s Economy Since 1991,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, accessed February 20, 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2012/03/09/underachiever-ukraine-s-economy-since-1991-pub-47451>.

government to dispose of its nuclear weaponry in exchange for security guarantees from the US, the UK, and Russia. During this timeframe, American policy focused on promoting democracy and economic reform in Ukraine. The country became inundated with multimillion-dollar “democracy-building” projects funded by USAID (United States Agency for International Development).¹ While Moscow could not prevent this interference in Kyiv’s affairs, it was doubtless irritated at what it perceived as western meddling in its backyard. Russia countered by introducing its soft power via “nongovernmental organizations pushing a pro-Kremlin agenda, particularly in the east and in Crimea.”²

b) The Orange Revolution

Massive demonstrations occurred during the winter of 2004/2005, straight after the 2004 presidential election, with the latter alleged to have been impaired by fraud and widespread voter intimidation. The public also became tired of the slow pace of economic and political reform. Former President Leonid Kuchma intended then prime minister Viktor Yanukovich to succeed him. However, when then-opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko succeeded in the poll instead, the government manipulated the results. It declared Yanukovich the winner, prompting massive protests that eventually compelled the government to collapse.³ Russia supported Yanukovich, and it was

¹ Sabra Ayres, “Ukraine’s Post-Soviet History: United in Poverty, Now Divided in War,” *The New Republic*, accessed February 20, 2019, <https://newrepublic.com/article/119925/ukraines-post-soviet-history-united-poverty-now-divided-war>.

² Ibid

³ Toby Vogel, “Crunch Time for the Orange Revolution,” *Politico*, accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/crunch-time-for-the-orange-revolution/>.

unhappy when the election re-run brought pro-Western President Viktor Yushchenko to power.¹ Numerous theorists have argued that western money and support for Yushchenko did influence the outcome.² It is also likely that Russia was meddling there to bring about the result it desired.³

While admitting that the pro-Russian candidate was involved in voter fraud, the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) pronounced a more nuanced view. It claimed Western Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved themselves in organizing anti-government protests, providing demonstrators with free food and accommodation, and even paying money to people for attending rallies. When public pressure influenced Ukraine's Supreme Court to annul the election result and order a revote, the Western-backed Victor Yushchenko was elected President.⁴ Zhurzhenko believes that the Orange Revolution did little to help the country's deep political division between the east and west. She argues the pro-Western government "did very little to win

¹ Oleg Karpyak, "Ukraine's Two Different Revolutions," December 3, 2013, sec. Europe, accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25210230>.

² Andrew Wilson, "Ukraine's Orange Revolution, NGOs and the Role of the West," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*: Vol 19, No 1, accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09557570500501747?src=recsys&journalCode=ccam20&>.

³ Steve York, et al, "Orange Revolution Study Guide," 2010, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Orange-Revolution-Study-Guide-2.pdf>

⁴ Alexander Thalís, "Threat or Threatened? Russia in the Era of NATO Expansion," Australian Institute of International Affairs, n.d., accessed February 23, 2019, <http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/threat-or-threatened-russian-foreign-policy-in-the-era-of-nato-expansion/>.

the sympathies of eastern Ukrainians, and the “economic miracle,” which could become a unifying factor, has yet to take place.”¹

c) The 2014- 2023 Ukraine Conflict

Viktor Yanukovich obtained power in 2010 after winning the presidential election. Soon after, the Ukrainian parliament voted to scrap all plans to join NATO, a decision welcomed by the Kremlin. The 2014 crisis started when Yanukovich rejected a deal to join the EU, and it sparked widespread violent demonstrations resulting in Yanukovich fleeing to Moscow.

The Kremlin became angered when US Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland joined the anti-Russian demonstrators in Kyiv. A released phone call also showed her conspiring with the American ambassador to Ukraine to influence the outcome of the crisis.² The latter is blatant interference in the affairs of another state with the desire to achieve western geopolitical wishes in eastern Europe.³ The film *Ukraine on Fire* provides significant evidence of what mainstream media called a popular uprising, a Western-backed coup designed to install a pro-western regime.⁴ Professor Katchanovski's

¹ Tatiana Zhurzhenko, “What Is Left of the Orange Revolution?” Eurozine, accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.eurozine.com/what-is-left-of-the-orange-revolution/>.

² Johnathon Marcus, “Transcript of Leaked US Ukraine Call,” February 7, 2014, sec. Europe, accessed February 24, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26079957>.

³ Ted Carpenter, “America’s Ukraine Hypocrisy,” *Cato Institute*, last modified August 6, 2017, accessed November 12, 2019, <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/americas-ukraine-hypocrisy>.

⁴ Igor Lopatonok, *Ukraine on Fire* (Cinema Libre, 2017).

research, described as a detailed academic investigation, examined the uprising. He agreed and believed the whole operation was a false flag.¹

After a referendum voted overwhelmingly to join Russia, Moscow eventually retaliated and annexed the Crimean region.² Home to Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol, this was condemned by US Congressman John McCain, who accused Putin of trying to rebuild the Soviet empire. The Kremlin claimed it was to protect the rights of Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Crimea and southeast Ukraine. It also feared "that Ukraine's new government might join NATO, and Kyiv might evict Moscow's Black Sea Fleet."³ It would hinder the Kremlin's ability to project its naval strength throughout the region, resulting in Russia's encirclement on its western side. Putin had good reasons to be fearful. According to Salushev, the Yushchenko regime:

Repeatedly threatened to expel Russia's Black Sea Fleet from Sevastopol. These irresponsible threats and Yushchenko's determination to push Ukraine into NATO damaged already frail ties between Kyiv and Crimea. Given the aforementioned litany of arguments, it should not be surprising that the people of Crimea took advantage of the coup in Kyiv and voted to be reunified with Russia.⁴

¹ Ivan Katchanovski, "The 'Snipers' Massacre' on the Maidan in Ukraine," *SSRN*, last modified 2015, accessed May 15, 2019, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2658245.

² Orlando Figes, "Ukraine Crisis: Why Russia Sees Crimea as Its Naval Stronghold | World News | The Guardian," accessed February 25, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/07/ukraine-russia-crimea-naval-base-tatars-explainer>.

³ Daniel Treisman, "Why Putin Took Crimea," *Foreign Affairs*, April 18, 2016, accessed February 25, 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2016-04-18/why-putin-took-crimea>.

⁴ Sergey Salushev, "Annexation of Crimea: Causes, Analysis & Global Implications" (n.d.): 11. <https://journalistsresource.org/studies/international/the-roots-of-anti-americanism-in-the-middle-east>

The Crimean crisis undoubtedly increased ethnic tensions, and these became further exacerbated when shortly after, pro-Russian Ukrainians in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine held referendums to leave and join up with Russia. Thousands of people died in the conflict before Moscow's 2022 invasion. Despite various truces, sporadic fighting continually flared up in the disputed regions. In 2014, the West blamed pro-Moscow rebels for shooting down a Malaysian passenger jet near the conflict zone. Both Russia and the rebels deny this, blaming the Ukrainian army instead. So far, no conclusive proof exists to suggest Kremlin involvement.¹ Theorists claim that the new Western-backed Ukrainian government has even collaborated with Neo-nazis.²

Russia was the recipient of numerous western incursions during the twentieth century. The UK, Canada, and the USA intervened in its 1918 civil war, and the German invasion during World War Two resulted in millions of Russian deaths. The typical western narrative blames the civil war entirely on President Putin, arguing that the annexation of Crimea was a pretext for taking over the whole of Ukraine and other ex-Soviet countries. However, is this the case? Many theorists take a different view arguing that the real blame lies with Washington and its European allies. They say, "the taproot of the trouble is NATO enlargement, the central element of a larger strategy to move

¹ Shane Quinn, "Five Years on from Malaysian Airlines MH17 Destruction: A Clear Lack of Evidence That Moscow Was Behind It," *Global Research*, last modified July 17, 2019, accessed November 14, 2019, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/five-years-mh17s-destruction-clear-lack-evidence-remains-moscow-culpable/5683793>.

² Rudy Takala, "The Reality of Neo-Nazis in Ukraine Is Far from Kremlin Propaganda," *TheHill*, last modified November 9, 2017, accessed February 24, 2019, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/359609-the-reality-of-neo-nazis-in-the-ukraine-is-far-from-kremlin-propaganda>.

Ukraine out of Russia's orbit and integrate it into the West."¹ Simultaneously, "the EU's expansion eastward and the West's backing of the pro-democracy movement in Ukraine - - beginning with the Orange Revolution in 2004 -- were critical elements, too."² Since the break-up of the USSR (even the pro-western Yeltsin), all Russian leaders have opposed NATO expansion.³

According to the AIIA, between 2003 and 2005, the West expanded its influence further into former Soviet states "by aiding revolutions against pro-Russian regimes in Georgia and Ukraine. Between 1993 and 2003, \$700 million in US aid and \$420 million in EU aid were directed into Georgia. Most of this money was channeled through Western NGOs and used toward electoral and judicial reform and citizen mobilization."⁴

During the Cold War, approximately twelve hundred miles separated the Soviet border from any NATO country. However, that distance became less than one hundred miles when many former Soviet-bloc countries joined NATO. It prompted fear in Moscow that Washington was determined to encircle them, especially in light of the Pentagon's strategy for World Domination produced in a document by the American

¹ John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault," *Foreign Affairs*, August 18, 2014, accessed February 22, 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault>.

² Ibid

³ David Hoffmann, "Yeltsin Links Bigger NATO To New War," *Washington Post*, September 9, 1995, accessed February 23, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/09/09/yeltsin-links-bigger-nato-to-new-war/e4e013ff-8c88-42a9-a79d-fdc14c9de6a3/>.

⁴ Alexander Thalys, "Threat or Threatened? Russia in the Era of NATO Expansion," *Australian Institute of International Affairs*, n.d., accessed February 23, 2019, <http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/threat-or-threatened-russian-foreign-policy-in-the-era-of-nato-expansion/>.

military in 2010 called *Joint Vision 2020*. Its key term was the phrase called Full-Spectrum Dominance. Its methods included “control of propaganda, use of NGOs for regime change, color revolutions to advance NATO eastwards, and a vast array of financial/economic warfare techniques. The strategic focus of an overwhelming US military buildup was the control of potential rivals on the Eurasian continent – Russia and China.”¹

In 2007, President Bush announced a plan to install a missile defense shield in Eastern Europe, claiming it necessary to safeguard the EU from an Iranian or North Korean nuclear attack. Suspicious of Washington’s claims, Putin rejected the idea and offered a joint Russia-US radar warning system in Azerbaijan, and the West rejected this prompting him to criticize them heavily.² A few months later, Moscow also suspended its cooperation with the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty.³ The Bucharest Summit in 2008 heightened tensions further when NATO issued a statement welcoming Ukraine and Georgia’s membership application, saying “that these countries

¹ Sam Barker and Joe Black, “Full Spectrum Dominance.” *Behind the News*, accessed February 23, 2019, <http://www.behindthenews.co.za/2018/03/11/full-spectrum-dominance/>.

² Rob Slane, “Putin’s State of the Union Address,” n.d., accessed February 23, 2019, <https://www.theblogmire.com/tag/putins-state-of-the-union-address/>.

³ Wade Boese, “Russia Suspends CFE Treaty Implementation,” *Arms Control Association*, last modified 2008, accessed February 23, 2019, https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2008_01-02/cfe.

will become members of NATO.”¹ Many experts say the latter was extraordinarily threatening and provocative to Russia.²

As noted by Professor Sauer, at the time of German reunification, Moscow received Western assurances that NATO would not expand eastwards.³ Putin responded by informing NATO that it would threaten Moscow if it grew further east.⁴ From the Kremlin’s viewpoint, its fears are understandable, especially after “Napoleonic France, Wilhelmine Germany, and Nazi Germany all invaded Russia through south-eastern Europe.”⁵

The American *Rand Corporation* “has studies that call for the break-up of Russia into many smaller pieces, thus giving western corporations better access to the vast resource base available there.”⁶ As one researcher notes:

¹ NATO website, “Bucharest Summit Declaration - Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008,” *NATO*, accessed February 23, 2019, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_8443.htm.

² Stephen Lendman, “Russia Warns Against Georgia Joining NATO,” *Stephen Lendman*, August 8, 2018, accessed February 23, 2019, <https://stephenlendman.org/2018/08/russia-warns-against-georgia-joining-nato/>.

³ Tom Sauer, “The Origins of the Ukraine Crisis and the Need for Collective Security between Russia and the West,” *Global Policy* Volume 8 . Issue 1 . February 2017, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1758-5899.12374>

⁴ Adrian Blomfield and James Kirkup, “Stay Away, Vladimir Putin Tells Nato,” *The Telegraph*, last modified 2008, accessed February 23, 2019, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1584027/Stay-away-Vladimir-Putin-tells-Nato.html>.

⁵ Alexander Thalys, “Threat or Threatened? Russia in the Era of NATO Expansion,” *Australian Institute of International Affairs*, n.d., accessed February 23, 2019, <http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/threat-or-threatened-russian-foreign-policy-in-the-era-of-nato-expansion/>.

⁶ Bruce Gagnon, “The Pentagon’s Strategy for World Domination: Full Spectrum Dominance, from Asia to Africa,” *Global Research* *Global Research - Centre for Research on Globalization*, accessed February 24,

The arc of the encirclement of Russia gets strengthened. NATO ties facilitate the [eventual] deployment of the US missile defense system in Georgia. The US aims to have a chain of countries tied to ‘partnerships’ with NATO brought into its missile defense system – stretching from its allies in the Baltic to those in Central Europe. The ultimate objective of this is to neutralize the strategic capability of Russia and China and to establish its nuclear superiority. The National Defense Strategy document, issued by the Pentagon on July 31, 2008, portrays Washington’s perception of a resurgent Russia and a rising China as potential adversaries.¹

We witnessed the balkanization of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and later the same policy manifested in Libya, Iraq, and Syria. According to Gagnon, with the West’s continuing encirclement of Russia, the plan “appears to be to draw Moscow into a military quagmire in Ukraine that will weaken that nation.”² It complements the statement of former American NATO General Wesley Clark. He said, “the United States and NATO have been engaged in a campaign of actively destroying countries with the final goals being military confrontations with the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China and their eliminations as influential world powers.”³ Dr. Marcus Papadopoulos believes Ukraine is critically important to the US for many reasons. The country has vast

2019, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-pentagons-strategy-for-world-domination-full-spectrum-dominance-from-asia-to-africa/5397514>.

¹ Bruce Gagnon, "The Pentagon’s Strategy for World Domination: Full Spectrum Dominance, from Asia to Africa," *Global Research - Centre for Research on Globalization*, accessed February 24, 2019, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-pentagons-strategy-for-world-domination-full-spectrum-dominance-from-asia-to-africa/5397514>.

² Bruce Gagnon, "The Pentagon’s Strategy for World Domination: Full Spectrum Dominance, from Asia to Africa," *Global Research - Centre for Research on Globalization*, accessed February 24, 2019, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-pentagons-strategy-for-world-domination-full-spectrum-dominance-from-asia-to-africa/5397514>.

³ John Robles, “9-11, US Global Domination, NATO and Full Spectrum Dominance,” accessed February 24, 2019, http://www.pravdareport.com/world/128508-usa_global_domination/.

agricultural resources, and depriving Moscow of a close relationship with Kiev weakens the Kremlin's relationship with the EU and the world.¹

After the USSR collapsed, many experts like Professor Tierney questioned the reason for NATO's existence.² Professor Stephen Walt argues that NATO continually requires a constant enemy to justify its existence.³ Dr. Coles also believes "NATO is expanding its presence in and around Ukraine, provoking a potentially catastrophic reaction from Russia which sees America's involvement as further proof of US imperial designs."⁴

The western mainstream media approach to Moscow's 2022 invasion of Ukraine places the blame squarely on the shoulders of Vladimir Putin. It hardly ever presents the Russian perspective in a fair and balanced way. The kremlin's intervention occurred for numerous reasons. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy asked Washington in 2021 if Kiev could obtain NATO membership. This was a step too far for Moscow and understandably infuriated them. Before the invasion, President Putin made allegations of genocide in Ukraine's Donbas region, where pro-Moscow forces have been fighting the Ukrainian army since 2014. Moscow is also angry with the integration of the neo-Nazi

¹ Marcus Papadopoulos, "CrossTalk Bullhorns: Real Ukraine," *RT International*, last modified 2019, accessed November 21, 2019, <https://www.rt.com/shows/crosstalk/473655-real-ukraine-trump-poli/>.

² John J. Tierney Jr, "Is NATO Necessary?" *News & Publications: The Institute of World Politics*, accessed March 2, 2019, https://www.iwp.edu/news_publications/detail/is-nato-necessary.

³ Stephen Walt, "NATO Owes Putin a Big Thank-You." *Foreign Policy*, accessed February 24, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/09/04/nato-owes-putin-a-big-thank-you/>.

⁴T.J. Coles, *Britain's Secret Wars* (Sussex: Clairview, 2016),85.

Azov Brigade into the main Ukrainian army.¹ Ukraine does appear to have a severe Nazi problem. Sociologist Dr. Andrew Austin states that “the Western media feigns a puzzled look at the mention of Nazis in Ukraine, {but} Putin is not wrong—and the media knows that. Donetsk and Luhansk have large populations of ethnic Russians who seek Putin’s help; there are extremist groups in Ukraine who mean them grave harm.”²

The failure of Kyiv to fully comply with the Minsk Agreements (a point noted by the British foreign secretary in 2015) was another factor.³ Addressing the Russian populace just before the invasion, Putin said:

The purpose of the “operation” was to protect people in Donbas “who, for eight years now, have been facing humiliation and genocide perpetrated by the Kiev (Kyiv in Ukrainian) regime. To this end, we will seek to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine, as well as bring to trial those who perpetrated numerous bloody crimes against civilians, including against citizens of the Russian Federation.” [Since 2014, Russian citizenship has been granted to more than 700,000 residents in the portions of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine controlled by the pro-Russian separatists.]⁴

The Ukraine conflict has caused relations between the West and Russia to plummet to dangerous levels and risks further deterioration that complicates cooperation on other

¹ Andrew Austin, “History and Sides-Taking in the Russo-Ukrainian War,” *AndrewAustin.blog*, 2022, accessed February 11 2023, <https://andrewaustin.blog/2022/02/27/history-and-sides-taking-in-the-russo-ukrainian-war/>

² Ibid

³ EURACTIV.com with Reuters,

⁴ David R. Cameron, “Frustrated by refusals to give Russia security guarantees & implement Minsk 2, Putin recognizes pseudo-states in Donbas and invades Ukraine,” *Yale Macmillan Centre*, accessed February 2, 2023, <https://macmillan.yale.edu/news/frustrated-refusals-give-russia-security-guarantees-implement-minsk-2-putin-recognizes-pseudo>

issues such as terrorism, and arms control. It also shows that the crisis between Moscow and the West is about geography and not ideology.¹

Instead of getting the Russian and Ukrainian governments to meet for a diplomatic resolution, the Biden Administration seems intent on escalating the conflict to dangerous levels. It has now developed into a proxy war, with the West giving weapons and training to the Ukrainian army. The actions of Washington and other NATO countries have risked both prolonging the bloodshed further and a potentially dangerous confrontation with Moscow.

Ukraine is not a member of NATO, so the West is not protecting any NATO country. Dr. Austin believes the military-industrial complex is driving western foreign policy there, stating that “the military-industrial complex has its own organic appetites and that in itself drives geopolitical policy and behavior. War stuffs billions of dollars into the pockets of those corporate elites who effectively run the complex. The current situation is C. Wright Mills’ power elite mapped onto the planet.”² As the war drags on, even some EU officials have accused Washington of “profiting from the Ukraine conflict in the energy and defense sectors while Europe suffers.”³

¹ Benn Steil, “Russia’s Clash With the West Is About Geography, Not Ideology,” *Foreign Policy*, 2018, accessed March 5, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/02/12/russias-clash-with-the-west-is-about-geography-not-ideology/>.

² Andrew Austin, “Will WW3 Begin in Eurasia,” *AndrewAustin.blog*, 2023, accessed 9 February, 2023, <https://andrewaustin.blog/2023/01/25/will-wwiii-begin-in-eurasia/>

³ CTN News, “US Military Industrial Complex the Clear Winner in the Ukraine War,” *CTN News*, 2023, accessed February 6, 2023, <https://www.chiangraitimes.com/opinion/military-industrial-complex-ukraine/>

RELIGIOUS AND SOCIETAL DIFFERENCES

a) Putin -Religion and the Byzantium Empire

When the western half of the Roman Empire fell, a new one began in the east- the Byzantine.¹ It proved a significant point in the past; its existence extended over one thousand years and derived from the classical traditions of Greece and Rome. The Byzantine Greeks rejected the old pagan gods of those traditions and developed a functioning Christian civilization, its capital being Constantinople.² Aside from the geographic and military strategic importance, it is difficult to explain the significance of Crimea for Russian national self-awareness to one unfamiliar with the intricate details of the peninsula's history. Here, the Byzantine Empire passed the mantle of Orthodox Christianity to Russia when, in the ancient Greek colonial city of Chersonesos, the Byzantine emperor christened the Ukrainian Rus Prince Vladimir. Therefore, in 867, Russia became a Christian nation.³ Professor kozelsky states:

As analysts debate Russia's interests in Crimea, they must not underestimate the role of religion. Orthodox Christian nationalism has been on the rise in Russia from the collapse of the Soviet Union. The close relationship between the Russian church and state is everywhere evident, from the persistent refusal to allow the pope onto Russian soil, the ejection of the Salvation Army from Moscow in 2001, and the

¹ Hazel Maru Martell, *The Ancient World* (London: Kingfisher, 2001), 87.

²Kinros Lord et al, *Hagia Sophia* (London: Readers Digest, 1973), 14.

³ Sergey Salushev, "Annexation of Crimea: Causes, Analysis & Global Implications", *Global Societies Journal*, Volume 2, 2014, 33.

subsequent restrictions placed on Protestant missions. Patriarch Kirill has inserted himself more visibly in Russian politics than his predecessor, Patriarch Aleksei. The prosecution of *Pussy Riot* for performing in an Orthodox church, as well as dismaying anti-homosexual legislation, reflects a new stage in the evolution of Russia's deeply conservative Orthodox identity. As the so-called "Cradle of Russian Christianity," Crimea fits into this trajectory too.¹

Theorists claim that "Russia's exclusion from the Roman heritage was the essential feature distinguishing it from the West."² Slavophiles were critical of corrupt western influences that could permeate through Russia. Ermolaeva states that their philosophy "was subsequently replaced by the Civilizationist school in the 20th century, {and according to their approach}, Russia is viewed as a civilization in its own right, which had a mission of spreading the Russian values abroad."³

Some theorists argue that Putin does not intend to revive the Byzantium empire.⁴ Nevertheless, others differ, comparing him to a classic Byzantine Emperor who frequently uses methods learned from the Emperors of Byzantium.⁵ First aired on Russian television in 2008, the documentary *Death of an Empire* reflects the Byzantine's

¹ Mara Kozelsky, "Don't Underestimate Importance of Religion for Understanding Russia's Actions in Crimea," *Washington Post*, accessed February 25, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/03/13/dont-underestimate-importance-of-religion-for-understanding-russias-actions-in-crimea/>.

² Olga Ermolaeva, "An Analysis of Identity-Based and Security-oriented Russian Foreign Policy in Relation to Syria" (Middlesex University, 2016).

³ Ibid

⁴ Constantina Katsari, "What Do Vladimir Putin and Constantine the Great Have in Common?," *Love of History*, September 29, 2019, accessed October 13, 2019, <http://loveofhistory.com/what-do-vladimir-putin-and-constantine-the-great-have-in-common/>.

⁵ Peter Frankopan, "Putin - A Byzantine Emperor in All but Name," *HuffPost UK* accessed March 1, 2019, https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/peter-frankopan/vladimir-putin-byzantine-emperor_b_3426216.html.

demise. Professor Shlapentokh explicitly references modern Russia arguing that Byzantine “was strong when it followed its autocratic tradition and was attached to Orthodoxy.”¹ According to journalist and author Anthony Barnett, it is well known that Russians adore strong leaders.² The latter is doubtlessly a throwback from the USSR and the old Monarchical regime where democracy became stifled and critical decisions centralized. Professor Hosking believes the Russians “fear both external invasion and internal subversion. A glance at their history reveals why. Their frontiers are very long and open, and over the centuries, they have suffered an invasion many times.”³ Many experts concur with the documentary by blaming its collapse on western influence and its ecclesiastical union with Rome.⁴

Putin’s reluctance to bow down to western pressure over several issues and his desire to halt western influence in his own country shows that he is aware of this discourse, possibly explaining his uneasiness towards the West.⁵ Professor Christou says, “historians are reclaiming this Byzantine history and its Russian legacy. Under Vladimir Putin, Russia’s history has been largely Byzantine. Putin has associated Russia with

¹ Dmitry Shlapentokh, “Byzantine History and the Discourse of the Russian Political/Intellectual Underground - ScienceDirect,” *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, last modified September 10, 2008, accessed February 28, 2019, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1879366511000303#!>

² Anthony Barnett, *Soviet Freedom* (London: Pan Books, 1988), 26.

³ Geoffrey Hosking, “Why Are Russians Attracted to Strong Leaders?,” *OUPblog*, last modified May 4, 2012, accessed March 3, 2019, <https://blog.oup.com/2012/05/russia-putin-elections-power/>.

⁴ Roman Aksenov, “The Fall Of An Empire—The Lesson Of Byzantium,” 2008, <http://vizantia.info/docs/73.htm>. See also (John Julis Norwich, *Milestones of History Expanding Horizons*, 2nd ed. (New York: Newsweek Books, 1974).

⁵ BBC News website, “Does Putin’s Russia Reject the West?,” accessed March 5, 2019, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/russia_election.

Byzantium in ways that are apparent to countries with an Orthodox legacy, but not necessarily clear to the rest of the world.”¹

There is disagreement within Ukraine over church independence. Before the current conflict, Ukraine’s two rival Orthodox churches had existed somewhat uncomfortably, with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate owing loyalty to Russia. In contrast, the Kiev Patriarchate lived internationally unrecognized. Ukraine’s Russian-speaking south and east mainly oppose the former, in comparison to the pro-Western-leaning part of the country. Its alleged support for the pro-Moscow separatists prompted calls for forming a Ukrainian Orthodox church independent of Moscow. Negotiations resulted in the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople granting Kiev autocephaly in January 2019. To complicate matters further, Mike Pompeo, the US State Department head, welcomed Constantinople’s 2019 decision. Simultaneously, he criticized Russia’s alleged stifling of Ukrainian religious freedom.² Russia reacted angrily to Constantinople's decision. Patriarch Kirill accused the US and Ukraine of trying to “tear apart the last connection between our people (i.e., Russians and Ukrainians).”³ Pompeo’s criticisms of Putin are somewhat unfair. The latter has refrained

¹ Theodore Christou, “The Byzantine History of Putin’s Russian Empire,” *The Conversation*, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://theconversation.com/the-byzantine-history-of-putins-russian-empire-90616>.

² Ekathimerini, “Pompeo welcomes Greek church recognition of Ukrainian Church's autonomy,” Ekathimerini.com, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://www.ekathimerini.com/249076/article/ekathimerini/news/pompeo-welcomes-greek-church-recognition-of-ukrainian-churchs-autonomy>

³ Khrystyna Karelska and Andreas Umland, “Russia set to escalate fight against Ukrainian Orthodox independence in 2020,” Atlantic Council, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/russia-set-to-escalate-fight-against-ukrainian-orthodox-independence-in-2020/>

from engaging in policies of religious discrimination. Under the old Soviet, and Monarchical regimes, various denominations suffered. The Governor of Moscow expelled thousands of Jews in the late nineteenth century.¹ While the Communists, especially under Lenin and Stalin, engaged in various forms of religious intolerance.²

The Constitution that emerged from the American Revolution achieved religious freedom for all citizens.³ The Declaration of Independence, derived from Christian theology, represented the concept of Scripture. The domain of man placed there by God “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”⁴ It is supreme in law, and natural law demands it is honored. Christianity “is often linked to a general American identity and patriotism. Some examples include the public religious rhetoric of ‘God Bless America’ or the

¹ Tom Segev, “Portrait of a Duke,” *Haaretz*, accessed May 9, 2020, <https://www.haaretz.com/1.5043585>

² Brandon Christensen, “10 Ways Religious Intolerance Changed USSR,” *Real Clear History*, accessed May 8, 2020 https://www.realclearhistory.com/articles/2018/10/04/10_murderous_facts_about_religion_in_the_ussr_364.html

³ F. Tupper Saussy, *Rulers of Evil*, (Nevada: Ospray Bookmakers, 1999), 86

⁴ Brian Andrew Smith and Sarah Morgan Smith, “The Political Theology of the Declaration of Independence,” *Center for Christian Civics*, accessed May 9, 2020, <https://christiancivics.org/blog/2017-7-11-the-political-theology-of-the-declaration-of-independence/>

statement ‘In God We Trust’ found on the currency.”¹ Therefore, some enmity may still likely exist from the Americans towards Russia due to its previous religious intolerance.²

Many Ukrainians believe that Moscow robbed them of the opportunity to create a national identity after the Soviet demise, “while many Russians feel that Ukraine is now claiming as its own a land and history that belongs to them as well.”³ Moscow’s loss of Kiev is profound, both spiritually and emotionally. In Kiev, Aleksy II, the Russian patriarch, called it “the mother of Russian cities, a city from where Holy Orthodoxy began to spread through our land.” For Ukrainians, establishing church independence was crucial for strengthening their national identity and statehood. Constantinople's decision is likely to cause further friction in the Orthodox world. While Egypt and Greece recognized Kiev’s autonomy, Serbia has not.

UK Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston said in the nineteenth century that Russia would become “almost as great as the old Roman Empire.”⁴ Perhaps statements like these resonate with fear within the Anglo-American establishment. Sandovsky believes that Putin is trying to recreate a new super-state based on the ideals of Byzantium and gives numerous examples of his policies to support this viewpoint. He supports Putin’s

¹ Cultural Atlas, “American Culture,” accessed May 9, 2020, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/american-culture/american-culture-religion>

² House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, “*Religious Persecution in the Soviet Union, part two*,” Ninety-ninth Congress, Second Session, July 30th, 1986, accessed May 9, 2020, https://www.csce.gov/sites/helsinkicommission.house.gov/files/1986%252D07%252D10%2520hearing%2520religious%2520persecution%2520in%2520USSR%2520part%2520_0.pdf

³ Anne Barnard, “Slavic Rivals Embroiled in Church Rift,” *New York Times*, accessed May 8, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/30/world/europe/30ukraine.html>

⁴ Donald Read, *The Age of Urban Democracy England 1868-1914*, 6th ed. (London: Longman, 1994), 196.

behavior in the Middle East, Georgia, and Ukraine. He criticizes Western policy there, arguing that the “Russian-Byzantine relationship, based on intuition and understanding, is more preferable than the rigid western approach based on a black-and-white picture of the world.”¹ He further articulates that “Byzantism corresponds better to the necessity to construct a complex policy in a region abounding with ethnic, cultural, religious, national, and tribal groups, so as to stabilize it.”² On the other hand, some theorists criticize Putin for trying to revive the Byzantium Empire.³ An article in Britain’s *Observer* newspaper claims:

There is an undeniable ideological struggle between Vladimir Putin’s neo-traditionalist Russia and the post-modern West—one that prominent Russians talk about all the time. In the Kremlin’s imagination, this fight pits the godless, materialistic, doomed 21st-century West, too lazy to even reproduce, against a tough, reborn Russia that was forged in the murderous fire of 74 years of Bolshevism. The yawning gap between Russian and Western values can be partly explained by the fact that Communism shielded the former from the West’s vast cultural shifts since the 1960s. Living under the Old Left provided protection against the New Left. As a result, Russians are living in our past and find current Western ways incomprehensible and even contemptible. Andrei Konchalovsky, one of Russia’s top film directors (including some Hollywood

¹ David Sandovsky, “Putin Building a New Byzantine Empire,” accessed March 1, 2019, <https://southfront.org/putin-building-a-new-byzantine-empire/>.

² Ibid

³ Michael E. Stewart, “A New Justinian? Putin’s Reconquest” (n.d.), accessed March 1, 2019, http://www.academia.edu/6286854/A_New_Justinian_Putin_s_Reconquest. Please also see Alex Dugin, “Vladimir Putin and the Empire,” *The Fourth Political Theory*, last modified September 27, 2012, accessed March 1, 2019, <http://www.4pt.su/en/content/vladimir-putin-and-empire>.

hits), expressed his view plainly: “Thank God we live in a country where political correctness has not reached the point of absurdity.”¹

Putin has encouraged state officials to read works by numerous Orthodox philosophers from various political backgrounds, like Nikolai Berdyaev, a self-proclaimed Christian socialist. He also criticized specific western moral values that have encroached on Russian society.² According to some theorists, the latter is generally in line with Orthodox thinking too.³

Professor Paul Coyer described the relationship between Putin and the Orthodox Church as an “unholy alliance.”⁴ Patriarch Aleksii II praised him.⁵ Also, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow spoke warmly of him in 2018.⁶ He returned the church’s fondness, saying that Russia’s spiritual shield (meaning Orthodoxy) is as vital to the state’s security as its

¹ John R Schindler, “Putin Conducts Nuclear Exercises Amid Hying Russian Orthodoxy,” *Observer*, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://observer.com/2017/11/russia-conducts-nuclear-exercises-amid-orthodox-end-times-talk/>.

² David Remnick, “Vladimir Putin’s New Anti-Americanism,” *The New Yorker*, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/08/11/watching-eclipse>.

³ Owen Matthews, “Revealed: Putin’s Covert War on Western Decadence,” *The Spectator*, last modified October 1, 2016, accessed March 6, 2019, <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/10/revealed-putins-covert-war-on-western-decadence/>.

⁴ Paul Coyer, “(Un)Holy Alliance: Vladimir Putin, The Russian Orthodox Church And Russian Exceptionalism,” *Forbes*, accessed May 9, 2020, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/paulcoyer/2015/05/21/unholy-alliance-vladimir-putin-and-the-russian-orthodox-church/>

⁵ John Anderson, “Putin And The Russian Orthodox Church: Asymmetric Symphonia?,” *Journal of International Affairs* 61, no. 1 (2007): 185–201.

⁶ Christian Today staff writer Tue 20 Mar 2018 11:15, “Head of Russian Orthodox Church Lavishes Praise on Putin after ‘open and Honest’ Election,” accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/head-of-russian-orthodox-church-lavishes-praise-on-putin-after-open-and-honest-election/127628.htm>.

military strength.¹ The Kremlin passed a law in November 2010 concerning the restitution of church property, and legislation passed in June 2013 criminalized sacrilegious acts.

On the other hand, the Kremlin and the Church do not see eye to eye on some issues. While “church and state do collaborate in many areas—from promoting patriotism to organizing charity—they have diverging perspectives and interests. The relationship is complex and evolving.”² Nevertheless, Putin’s government is far more accommodating in comparison to the repressive nature of the Soviet state.³

Clearly, “culture is a vast and elusive concept which is embedded to different levels of human encounters (individual, group, ethnographic, societal).”⁴ Therefore, “conflicting cultural values create their own special obstacles and barriers to negotiation.”⁵ To complicate matters further, “about 80% of the population of contemporary Russia are Russians, {while} the remaining 20% are members of more than 180 other nationalities. Despite processes of ethnic assimilation throughout Russian history, many ethnic groups

¹ John R Schindler, “Putin Conducts Nuclear Exercises Amid Hying Russian Orthodoxy,” *Observer*, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://observer.com/2017/11/russia-conducts-nuclear-exercises-amid-orthodox-end-times-talk/>.

² Ibid

³ L P Morris, *Eastern Europe Since 1945* (London: Heinemann, 1984), 66.

⁴ Martin Johanson, Pia Eva Polsa, and Jan-Ake Tornroos, “Business Networks in Different Cultural Contexts Western - Russian - Chinese,” *University College* (1999): 3.

⁵ Osler Hampson and Michael Hart, *Multilateral Negotiations Lessons from Arms Control, Trade, and the Environment* (London: John Hopkins Press, 1995), 25.

{still) retain their cultural identities.”¹ As articulated by Professor Birken, even a definition of western civilization is not necessarily straight forward.² Countries like the UK, the US, and Canada are all different and have various ethnicities. Professor Sullivan’s description is practical:

An incredibly broad term used to describe the social norms, belief systems, traditions, customs, values, and so forth that have their origin in Europe or are based on European culture. America, for example, is firmly Western in culture. The East Coast of the United States was originally a British colony, and as America developed into its own independent nation, it carried with it many elements of European culture.³

An age-old question has always existed: whether Russia is western or not. Two historical thoughts exist. The first, led by Marquis de Custine, viewed Russia as innately Asiatic. Secondly, the writings by Baron von Haxthausen differ, seeing it as primarily European. These viewpoints became complicated by the mediæval school of thought inside Russia, which positioned Moscow as the ‘third Rome’ and the new moral center of European Christendom after the fall of Constantinople to Islam. Later, Russia's two new rival schools of thinking emerged: the Westernizers and the Slavophiles.”⁴ The former necessitated the belief that it was important for Russia to follow the nature of the West and pattern its socio-political system. At the same time, the latter supported a uniquely

¹ Leonid Limonov and Marina Nesena, “Regional Cultural Diversity in Russia: Does It Matter for Regional Economic Performance?,” *Area Development and Policy* 1, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 63–93.

² Lawrence Birken, “What Is Western Civilization?,” *The History Teacher* 25, no. 4 (1992): 451–461.

³ Nate Sullivan, “Modern Western Culture & Social Life - Video & Lesson Transcript,” *Study.Com*, accessed March 2, 2019, <http://study.com/academy/lesson/modern-western-culture-social-life.html>.

⁴ Matthew Franklin Cooper • Cooper, “Is Russia Part of Western Civilization?,” *Acton Institute*, accessed March 4, 2019, <https://acton.org/publications/transatlantic/2017/09/19/russia-part-western-civilization>.

Russian way of development.¹ Saint Ilya Fondaminsky adapted these views during the middle of the twentieth century, who hoped that Russia would combine both beliefs.² Canadian ex-Prime Minister Steven Harper once claimed that Russia does not share Western values.³ Indeed, on a one-to-one basis, there are minor differences between how Russian people and businesses interact compared to westerners.⁴ Nevertheless, much unites both cultures too.⁵ Borderline racist comments against Russia, Putin, and China have been made by various public western figures over the years, from UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson to the novelist and journalist Todd Wood, who claims:

Western governments should realize they are not dealing with the same type of person when sitting across the negotiating table. Russians play to win. If they need to act nice, they will. If they need to kill you to get what they want, they will.⁶

The latter comments hinder states' cordiality and only increase racism and mistrust on all sides. There are differences between countries regarding how they operate. Nevertheless, as many theorists note, it is hypocritical of western intellectuals and

¹ Sputnik News website, "The History of Slavophiles and Westernizers in Russia," *Sputnik International*, accessed March 4, 2019, <https://sputniknews.com/analysis/20100902160436673/>.

² Matthew Franklin Cooper, "Is Russia Part of Western Civilization?," *Acton Institute*, accessed March 4, 2019, <https://acton.org/publications/transatlantic/2017/09/19/russia-part-western-civilization>.

³ Todd Wood, "The Chasm Between Russia and the West," *RealClearWorld*, accessed March 1, 2019, https://www.realclearworld.com/blog/2015/09/the_chasm_between_russia_and_the_west_111423.html.

⁴ Iskender Mokenov, "Cultural differences in business: Russia vs. the US," *Russia Beyond*, accessed May, 9, 2020, <https://www.rbth.com/business/327759-cultural-differences-us-russia-business>

⁵ Quora website, "How Are Russian Values Different from Western Values?," *Quora*, accessed March 2, 2019, <https://www.quora.com/How-are-Russian-values-different-from-Western-values>.

⁶ Todd Wood, "The Chasm Between Russia and the West," *RealClearWorld*, accessed March 1, 2019, https://www.realclearworld.com/blog/2015/09/the_chasm_between_russia_and_the_west_111423.html.

politicians to make these insults. Especially when their governments have lied on many occasions to the public, ignoring international law, have been caught illegally testing psychedelic drugs on unsuspecting members of their society for military research, and participated in blackmail, threats, and organized political assassinations.¹

While Moscow receives western criticism for its alleged harassment of whistleblowers and critics, experts like Professor Karlstrom and Professor Manchanda agree that western intelligence services are operating a new form of COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program) to harass and monitor people. They claim the latter is a version of the Stasi's *Zersetzung*.² According to Oxford University physicist Dr. Katherine Horton, she suffered organized stalking, electronic harassment, and threats from British Intelligence.³ Dr. Rauni Kilde, the former Chief Medical Officer for Northern Finland, exposed these targeting programs in her book *Bright Lights on Black Shadows*.⁴

¹ Gore Vidal, *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace* (New York: Clairview, 2002), 11.

²Rahul D. Manchanda, "The Surreptitious Reincarnation of COINTELPRO with the COPS Gang-Stalking Program," *Modern Diplomacy*, August 22, 2016, accessed November 14, 2019, <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2016/08/22/the-surreptitious-reincarnation-of-cointelpro-with-the-cops-gang-stalking-program/>. Eric Karlstrom, "Gang Stalking, Mind Control, and Cults – Exposing and Defeating Organized Gang Stalking, Mind Control, and Cults," 2019, accessed October 26, 2019, <https://gangstalkingmindcontrolcults.com/>.

³ Katherine Horton, "About Dr. Horton – Stop 007," *Stop007.Org*, n.d., accessed October 13, 2019, <https://stop007.org/home/about/>.

⁴ Celia Harrison, "Part 1: Dr. Rani Kilde Wrote a Book That Included the Gangstalking Training Manual Which Describes What Is Happening to Me. Oh and Then She Died Soon After, of Course.," *Frozen Justice*, May 28, 2019, accessed October 26, 2019, <http://frozenjustice.blogspot.com/2019/05/part-1-dr-rani-kilde-wrote-book-that.html>.

The way most countries behave when dealing with conflict is often dependent on their cultural background.¹ Professor Cohen states that during political negotiation, the intercultural differences between Russians and the West sometimes cause talks “to break down in mutual bafflement and anger.”² In the business world, too, differences in styles are also evident.³ Studies suggest that a greater understanding of a different culture allows a significant opportunity to achieve a better outcome.⁴ According to Dr. Gordon’s findings:

Russia is a collectivist country with strong uncertainty avoidance. It means that people there tend to maintain social harmony and try to avoid conflicts since they are considered rather destructive. Also, Russian society is a high-context one; people there usually follow prescriptions and rules to keep social peace. In case of disputes, people are usually expected to put collective interests above individual ones and, therefore, avoid conflicts. In the United States, as a typical individualist country with weak uncertainty avoidance, conflict is not necessarily seen as a negative event. It also might be constructive and help facilitate situations.⁵

¹ Marina Gordon, “Cross-Cultural Negotiations: Cases of Russia and the United States” (Charles University, 2006).85

² Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating Across Cultures* (Washington DC: Institute of Peace Press, 1991), 13.

³ Team Twago, “Cultural Differences and International Co-Operations: Russian Negotiation Skills,” accessed March 4, 2019, <https://www.twago.com/blog/cultural-differences-and-international-co-operations-russian-negotiation-skills/>.

⁴ Wendi Adair, et al, “Culture and Negotiation Strategy,” *Negotiation Journal - Wiley Online Library, Vol 20, Issue 1*, last modified 2004, accessed March 4, 2019, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1571-9979.2004.00008.x>.

⁵ Marina Gordon, “Cross-Cultural Negotiations: Cases of Russia and the United States” (2006.): 40-41, https://dspace.cuni.cz/bitstream/handle/20.500.11956/5783/BPTX_0_0_11240_0_244719_0_54110.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

Dr. Gordon further opines that in the business sphere, Americans dislike formal settings, in contrast to Russians. While giving gifts is considered inappropriate in American culture, the Russians see it as acceptable. For Russians, Gordon claims it is imperative that they do not lose face during the negotiations, while Americans are not concerned about doing so. They are also more direct than Russians, who tend to be more tactful.¹

Some theorists maintain that new forms of civil society have developed post-Soviet, but still “maintain strong and dependent relationships on the state.”² Strict controls still exist on what type of civic activism is allowed, and these rules are often selectively applied and differ in the regions too.³ Experts claim, “Russian civil society organizations are in a constant struggle for the right to freely operate and continue their important work in the interest of Russian society. Faced with state restrictions, they are elaborating new

¹ Ibid, 73-74

² Sergej Ljubownikow, et al, “The State and Civil Society in Post-Soviet Russia: The Development of a Russian-Style Civil Society,” accessed March 3, 2019, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1464993412466507>.

³ Polina Aronson et al, “Beyond Bolotnaya: The Future of Russia’s Civil Society,” *OpenDemocracy*, accessed March 3, 2019, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/beyond-bolotnaya-future-of-russia-s-civil-society/>.

strategies to ensure the sustainability of their activities.”¹ The *Green Political Foundation* highlights several new laws which curtail individual freedoms.²

Particularly criticized is Putin’s 2012 foreign agent law. Its main feature requires independent organizations to register as foreign agents if they receive overseas money and engage in political activity. Defining what the government means by political activity is very vague and often results in controversy.³ On the other hand, some experts, like Almut Rochowanski, argue that civil society is improving:

As a result, after years of coverage about how the “foreign agent law” would spell the end of freedom of association in Russia, Russian civil society is actually growing, vibrant, visible, vocal, and confident. Activists and organizations facing pressure and persecution, of the kind that spur international outrage and campaigns, represent just a tiny minority of Russia’s civil society.⁴

From the Kremlin’s point of view, it is understandable to limit the amount of money sent to Russian pressure groups from foreign organizations, especially in light of the constant interference by the West in numerous countries. Indeed, as a former KGB officer, Putin is aware that foreign money sent to various organizations during the Soviet

¹ Global Governance Institute, “Shrinking Space for Civil Society in Russia: Challenges and New Strategies - Natalia Taubina, Public Verdict,” *Global Governance Institute*, last modified August 14, 2018, accessed March 3, 2019, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/global-governance/events/2017/may/shrinking-space-civil-society-russia-challenges-and-new-strategies-natalia-taubina>.

² Johannes Voswinkel, “Civil Society in Russia – Where External Support Is Vital,” *Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung*, accessed March 3, 2019, <https://www.boell.de/en/2016/09/13/civil-society-russia-where-external-support-vital>.

³ Human Rights Watch website, “Russia: Government vs. Rights Groups,” accessed March 3, 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/russia-government-against-rights-groups-battle-chronicle>.

⁴ Almut Rochowanski, “Despite Closing Space, Innovative Branches of Russian Civil Society Thrive,” *OpenGlobalRights*, accessed March 3, 2019, <https://www.openglobalrights.org/despite-closing-space-innovative-branches-of-russian-civil-society-thrive/>.

era was instrumental in the latter's demise. As one researcher states, perhaps the critical differences between Russia and the West, "lie in the fact that survival, social cohesion, economic equality, and physical security take precedence over the values of individual self-expression, sexual liberation, and tolerance of foreigners that have become normative in the West."¹ Many theorists claim "both Russian and Western elitism relies on values of humanism and rationalism as the two most important ideologies."² If this is so, a path should eventually be found for the two sides to accommodate both viewpoints.

b) Amercian Exceptionalism

The phrase 'American Exceptionalism' has regularly been publicized by US politicians.³ In his book *Democracy in America* (1835–1840), Alexis de Tocqueville first used the term 'exceptional' to describe the USA.⁴ Greene "traces the idea back to America's origin as a British settler colony."⁵ Most of its ideology contains a belief in democracy and individual freedom, resulting from the war of independence against British monarchical rule. Hence the term, according to Professor Mack, 'land of the

¹ Matthew Franklin Cooper, "Is Russia Part of Western Civilization?," *Acton Institute*, accessed March 4, 2019, <https://acton.org/publications/transatlantic/2017/09/19/russia-part-western-civilization>.

² Maria Rubtcova et al, "Cross-Cultural Differences of Elites in Russia and Europe: A Comparative Philosophical-Historical Analysis by Mariia Rubtcova, Oleg Pavenkov, Vladimir Pavenkov," *SSRN*, accessed March 3, 2019, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2919078.

³ A-Z Quotes, "TOP 25 AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM QUOTES," *A-Z Quotes*, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.azquotes.com/tag/american-exceptionalism>.

⁴ David Gordon, "The Roots of Tocqueville's American Exceptionalism," *The Institute for Faith and Freedom*, April 1, 2011, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.faithandfreedom.com/the-roots-of-tocqueville-s-american-exceptionalism/>.

⁵ Donald E. Pease, "American Exceptionalism - American Literature," *Oxford Bibliographies*, last modified 2018, accessed April 17, 2019, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199827251/obo-9780199827251-0176.xml>.

free.’¹ Stalin used the term sarcastically in 1929 to critically describe his western foe.² The word ‘exceptionalism’ does not mean that the USA is different or unique from other states. Countries, like people, are all different. Exceptionalism requires something greater.

It originates from the various usages relating to American historical development over time, which makes it different from other states, meaning it is hard to establish just one definition of this concept.³ It is a belief that the U.S. follows a path of history different from the laws or norms that govern other countries. That's the essence of American exceptionalism: The U.S. is not just a bigger and more powerful country — but an exception. It is the bearer of freedom and liberty and morally superior to something called "Europe. Never mind the differences within Europe or the fact that "the world" is bigger than the U.S. and Europe. The "Europe" versus "America" dichotomy is the crucible in which American exceptionalist thinking formed.”⁴ Citing Tocqueville’s early work, Wood states, "we Americans are a special people with a special destiny to lead the world toward liberty and democracy.”⁵

¹ Burton Mack, “A Brief History of American Exceptionalism,” Yale University Press Blog, last modified 2017, accessed April 18, 2019, <http://blog.yalebooks.com/2017/02/28/a-brief-history-of-american-exceptionalism/>.

² Uri Friedman, “‘American Exceptionalism’: A Short History,” *Foreign Policy*, 2012, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/06/18/american-exceptionalism-a-short-history/>.

³ CRAM, “The Origin Of American Exceptionalism,” Cram, last modified 2016, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://www.cram.com/essay/The-Origin-Of-American-Exceptionalism/F3HW8H9G6E4X>.

⁴ Ian Tyrrell, “What, Exactly, Is ‘American Exceptionalism’?,” *The Week*, last modified October 21, 2016, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://theweek.com/articles/654508/what-exactly-american-exceptionalism>.

⁵ Mark Liberman, “The Third Life of American Exceptionalism,” *Language Log*, 2012, accessed April 18, 2019, <http://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=3798>.

Former US Senator Mike Gravel claims it as a belief that Americans are superior to everyone else.¹ Former advisor to Hilary Clinton, Jake Sullivan, describes it as “the idea that the United States has a set of characteristics that gives it a unique capacity and responsibility to help make the world a better place.”² Roberts believes the most agreeable meaning for “American exceptionalism” is that the US came into existence under exceptional circumstances, and “as the blend of the Old and New Worlds just happened to occur in a perfect location with an abundance of natural resources, these conditions allowed for a new form of democracy and a way of life being spawned that was truly exceptional.”³ In reality, even these less arrogant definitions are still insinuating a belief that America is superior to other races. As Walt states, “most statements of “American exceptionalism” presume that America’s values, political system, and history are unique and worthy of universal admiration. They also imply that the United States is destined and entitled to play a distinct and positive role on the world stage. The only thing wrong with this self-congratulatory portrait of America’s global role is that it is mostly a myth.”⁴

Therefore, while descriptions vary to a certain extent, what makes America exceptional includes the following ideas: “the United States and its citizens are divinely

¹ Mike Gravel, “Going Underground” (London: RT News, November 5, 2019).

² Eric Levitz, “American Exceptionalism Is a Dangerous Myth,” *Intelligencer*, last modified January 2, 2019, accessed April 17, 2019, <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/01/american-exceptionalism-is-a-dangerous-myth.html>.

³ Darrell Roberts, “The Origins of American Exceptionalism,” *TheDR.World*, last modified February 2, 2018, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://thedr.world/2018/02/02/the-origins-of-american-exceptionalism/>.

⁴ Stephen M. Walt, “The Myth of American Exceptionalism,” *Foreign Policy*, last modified 2011, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/the-myth-of-american-exceptionalism/>.

ordained to lead the world to betterment; the United States differs politically, socially, and morally from the Old World of Europe; and the United States is exempt from the “laws of history” that lead to the decline and downfall of other great nations.”¹

The economist Adam Smith rated Britain highly, claiming it was “unique with respect to geography, scientific innovations, language, and government, and {if} Britain removed all the encumbrances that hinder free trade, then {it would} become more exceptional.”² Randerson states British Exceptionalism “stems from an island psyche, an imperial history, {and} repelling World War II occupation.”³ Bell concurs, claiming “this has given the nation a degree of overconfidence {and} often assume that we are the best at everything, and we will accomplish anything we set out to do.”⁴ Bryant states that UK elites “have also come to believe in British exceptionalism, the idea that Westminster is the mother parliament, and that the UK has a governing model and liberal values that set the global standard for others to follow, not least its former colonies.”⁵

¹ Donald E. Pease, “American Exceptionalism - American Literature,” *Oxford Bibliographies*, last modified 2018, accessed April 17, 2019, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199827251/obo-9780199827251-0176.xml>.

² Daniel Rothschild, British Exceptionalism in Adam Smith, SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, May 22, 2018), accessed April 19, 2019, <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=3183349>.

³ James Randerson, “British ‘Exceptionalism’ Drove Brexit, but EU Media Aren’t Buying It,” *POLITICO*, last modified 2019, accessed April 19, 2019, <https://www.politico.eu/article/brexit-europe-british-exceptionalism-drove-vote-but-eu-media-arent-buying-it/>.

⁴ Owen Bell, “The British Exceptionalism Delusion,” *Epicurus Today*, 2018, accessed April 19, 2019, <https://epicurus.today/the-british-exceptionalism-delusion/>.

⁵ Nick Bryant, “The End of the Anglo-American Order?,” June 9, 2017, sec. US & Canada, accessed April 28, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-40227270>.

Garton-Ash argues that “the exceptionalist vision, though late-Victorian in origin, {is} hugely influential right into our own time.”¹ Lis stated that “the British imperial imagination, however, is the one asset guaranteed to keep growing as Brexit approaches. It is, indeed, one of the root causes of Brexit. Long after the empire fell into history, the British exceptionalism it fostered, led {it} to resent membership of a European bloc, and resist even limited integration with it.”² Professor Boyle concurs, stating that “the trauma of lost exceptionalism, the psychic legacy of empire, haunts the English to the present day, in the illusion that their country needs to find itself a global role.”³

Theorists like Cowell suggest that “British exceptionalism, {opposes} the European Court of Human Rights, characterized by the belief that the UK’s domestic constitutional institutions are unique and superior to the European Convention on Human Rights, in part because of their historical provenance and longevity.”⁴

British and American Exceptionalism does present dangers. Despite the populist remarks from various American politicians over the years, several theorists have been

¹ Timothy Garton-Ash, “Is Britain European?,” *Prospect Magazine*, last modified 2001, accessed April 19, 2019, <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/isbritaineuropean../>

² Jonathan Lis, “To the Commonwealth, ‘Global Britain’ Sounds like Nostalgia for Something Else,” *New Statesman*, last modified 2017, accessed April 19, 2019, <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2017/02/commonwealth-global-britain-sounds-nostalgia-something-else>.

³ Nicholas Boyle, “The Problem with the English: England Doesn’t Want to Be Just Another Member of a Team,” *The New European*, last modified 2017, accessed April 21, 2019, <https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/the-problem-with-the-english-england-doesn-t-want-to-be-just-another-member-of-a-team-1-4851882>.

⁴ Frederick Cowell, “Understanding the Causes and Consequences of British Exceptionalism towards the European Court of Human Rights:,” *The International Journal of Human Rights*, last modified 2019, accessed April 21, 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13642987.2019.1597714?journalCode=fjhr20>.

critical of the phrase.¹ According to Buruma “the self-flattering notion that the Western victors in World War II are special, braver and freer than any other people, that the United States is the greatest nation in the history of man, that Great Britain — the country that stood alone against Hitler — is superior to any European let alone a non-European country has not only led to some ill-conceived wars but also helped to paper over the inequalities built into Anglo-American capitalism.”² Waldman criticizes the USA for its foolish belief that it has the right to attack and bomb any other state it desires and for misleading its citizens to believe it does so for moral reasons, such as removing brutal dictators.³ While Professor Lavelle describes US foreign policy as “the mentality of Empire.”⁴

Most international organizations like the World Bank and IMF commenced at the behest of Washington to promote the interests of itself and its allies.⁵ Until Trump, virtually all previous US presidents have welcomed even further EU integration.⁶ The

¹ David Roos, “How American Exceptionalism Works,” *HowStuffWorks*, last modified March 23, 2018, accessed April 17, 2019, <https://people.howstuffworks.com/american-exceptionalism.htm>.

² Ian Buruma, “The End of the Anglo-American Order,” *The New York Times*, last modified 2016, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/29/magazine/the-end-of-the-anglo-american-order.html>.

³ Paul Waldman, “Why American Exceptionalism Is a Dangerous Sham,” *Alternet.Org*, last modified September 18, 2013, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.alternet.org/2013/09/why-american-exceptionalism-dangerous-sham/>.

⁴ Peter Lavelle, “Crosstalk” (Moscow: RT News, March 11, 2019).

⁵ Bretton Woods Project, “What Are the Bretton Woods Institutions?,” *Bretton Woods Project*, last modified January 1, 2019, accessed May 12, 2019, <https://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/2019/01/art-320747/>.

⁶ Buruma, “The End of the Anglo-American Order.” *New York Times Magazine*, last modified May 2019, accessed May 8, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/29/magazine/the-end-of-the-anglo-american-order.html>

main schism between Trump and his predecessors is his hostility towards supranational institutions believing they threaten American interests.¹

The arrogant and opinionated belief of superiority spread by Anglo-American leaders has allowed them to manipulate their citizens into believing that their actions and behavior are always moral, even when they are not, such as in the 2003 Iraqi invasion. It has enabled them to cover up the inequalities in their system too.² If a country were to steal either Britain's or America's gold reserves, there would be uproar, yet in 2018 the Bank of England seized Venezuela's gold deposits. The mainstream UK media virtually ignored this action.³ The attempted assassination by MI6 of Colonel Ghadaffi in the nineties resulted in several civilian deaths.⁴ Also, what right do Washington and London have to tell North Korea and Iran that they can't obtain nuclear weapons when they own many? The UK and the US used atrocities committed by the Milosevic regime in Yugoslavia as a pretext for their invasion. Yet, the My Lai massacre in Vietnam conducted by American forces resulted in the murder of hundreds of civilians.⁵ The hypocrisy is astounding. What right does the West have to promote itself as a judge and

¹ Eamon Aloyo, "To What Extent Is Donald Trump a Security Threat to the U.S. and the World as a Whole?" (2017), accessed May 12, 2019, <https://www.academia.edu/35822432/>.

² Guy Standing, "Going Underground," (London: RT News, May 8, 2019).

³ The Daily Coin, "Italy Fears For Gold Reserves As UK Seizes Venezuelan Gold," *The Daily Coin*, February 28, 2019, accessed May 10, 2019, <https://thedailycoin.org/2019/02/27/italy-fears-for-gold-reserves-as-uk-seizes-venezuelan-gold/>.

⁴ Annie Machon, "'Spies, Lies and Whistleblowers' - the Gaddafi Plot Chapters," *Using Our Intelligence*, 2019, accessed May 10, 2019, <https://anniemachon.ch/spies-lies-and-whistleblowers-the-gaddafi-plot-chapters>.

⁵ BBC News website, "Hersh Recalls My Lai Massacre 50 Years On," *BBC News*, last modified 2018, accessed May 10, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-43417107/journalist-hersh-recalls-my-lai-massacre-50-years-on>.

jury on which government it decides it has the right to remove when it is equally guilty of committing horrendous crimes too?

It is hardly surprising that some people react in a retaliatory way to western arrogance by launching terrorist attacks against them. An act that does not usually target the guilty but endangers the lives of innocent western civilians instead. A former parliamentarian and ex-Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, recently opined that the “US & UK must stop interfering in other nations if they want to stop terrorism.”¹

A 2019 Pentagon study published by the US Special Operations Command cited US involvement in over forty coups since World War Two. Its author noted that “even presidents who, before their election, looked upon such activity with disfavor, found themselves compelled to use it after taking office.”² Critics of the report claim it is a Pentagon guide to overthrowing governments through disruption, coercion, and regime change. They also criticize US mainstream media for not quizzing senior politicians regarding its content.³

American journalist Suzy Hansen, who has lived in the Middle East for many years, wrote that, in the main, Americans seem unaware of their government's negative influence on other countries and criticize them for not wanting to know too. She cites that

¹ Ken Livingstone, “US & UK Must Stop Interfering in Other Nations If They Want to Stop Terrorism,” *RT International*, last modified 2019, accessed May 14, 2019, <https://www.rt.com/op-ed/457917-stop-terrorism-us-uk/>.

² RT USA News, “Welcome to Coup University: A Pentagon Scholar’s Guide to Overthrowing Governments,” *RT USA News*, last modified 2019, accessed May 14, 2019, <https://www.rt.com/usa/459238-special-forces-coup-guide/>.

³ Caleb Maupin, “RT” (London: RT News, May 14, 2019).

living abroad has made her question whether her western assumptions are correct and helps her to see how foreigners view the US. When asked about the idea of *American Exceptionalism*, she says:

It's not just about ourselves as a nation. It's about ourselves as individuals. I think that that was a little bit difficult to discover, which I did when I moved abroad, but there's something about it, this exceptionalism, which seems to suggest that we are somehow uniquely good in some way. This is very important to us to believe in, because otherwise we wouldn't be isolated from a lot of the past crimes and various things that we've done around the world. I think that the way that it extends to one's very personality is something that I hadn't really quite understood before.¹

Nevertheless, the manipulation and economic neglect of its citizenry may ultimately bring about the downfall of the Anglo-American system, especially in light of western economic stagnation. Rather than a perceived threat from Russia, China, or international terrorism, the population may decide to change their leader's behavior through pressure groups, strikes, and demonstrations. After all, Germany once thought it was an exceptional country, and the nationalistic fervor promulgated by the Nazis ultimately led to an international catastrophe.

c) The West and Islam

According to Schroeder, essential differences exist between Christianity and Islam, the main one being the difference between Jesus and Muhammad.² Professor Huntington

¹ Isaac Chotiner, "The Problem With Americans Thinking America Is, at Its Heart, Good," *Slate Magazine*, last modified August 16, 2017, accessed May 10, 2019, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2017/08/the-dangers-of-american-exceptionalism.html>.

² John Ross Schroeder, "Islam vs. the West: Why the Clash of Civilizations?," *United Church of God*, last modified December 30, 2011, accessed March 5, 2019, <https://www.ucg.org/the-good-news/islam-vs-the-west-why-the-clash-of-civilizations>.

argues “that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic, {instead} the dominating source of conflict will be cultural.”¹ He argues that “religion is a central defining characteristic of civilizations.”² The lion’s share of Huntington’s book, *The Clash of Civilizations*, concentrates on the West and Islam, demonizing the latter by suggesting a link between Islam and violence. Numerous experts have criticized his thesis.³

Ezell states that “instead of engaging in discourse with the religious forces that emerged to confront US foreign affairs, the State Department avoided the consideration of religious aspirations in the Muslim world by relying instead on “branding” America with a narrow foreign policy of exceptionalism.”⁴ Ex-National Security Association (NSA) head John Bolton believes Islamic states are backward-looking, suppressed by extreme religious values, governed by autocracies, and supportive of terrorism.⁵ Similar views occurred in a 2017 poll that found “half of United States adults believed that Islam

¹ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs*, June 1, 1993, accessed March 5, 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1993-06-01/clash-civilizations>.

² John Ross Schroeder, “Islam vs. the West: Why the Clash of Civilizations?,” *United Church of God*, last modified December 30, 2011, accessed March 5, 2019, <https://www.ucg.org/the-good-news/islam-vs-the-west-why-the-clash-of-civilizations>.

³ Swann criticizes Huntington for using statistics “that he feels substantiates his views,” (Darin Swann, “A Criticism of Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilizations,’” accessed March 6, 2019, http://www.academia.edu/1416654/A_Criticism_of_Huntingtons_Clash_of_Civilizations_). He is also criticized for inciting Muslim hostility, (Nicolas Richter, “‘The Clash of Civilisations’: Where Huntington Got It Wrong - Qantara.De,” *Qantara.de - Dialogue with the Islamic World*, accessed March 6, 2019, <https://en.qantara.de/node/17072>).

⁴ Darrell Ezell, “Diplomacy and US-Moslem World Relations: The Possibility of the Post-Secular and Interfaith Dialogue” (University of Birmingham, 2010).

⁵ The National website, “John Bolton: Radical Islamic Ideology Is a Threat,” *The National*, last modified 2018, accessed March 5, 2019, <https://www.thenational.ae/world/the-americas/john-bolton-radical-islamic-ideology-is-a-threat-1.777385>.

does not have a place in mainstream American society, almost half (44 percent) thought there was a natural conflict between Islam and democracy.”¹ However, Professor Mazrui states that the “measurement of the cultural distance between the West and Islam is a complex undertaking, and that distance is narrower than they assume.”² He further articulates that:

Islam is not just a religion, and certainly not just a fundamentalist political movement. It is a civilization and a way of life that varies from one Muslim country to another but is animated by a common spirit far more humane than most Westerners realize. Nor do those in the West always recognize how their own societies have failed to live up to their liberal mythology. Moreover, aspects of Islamic culture that Westerners regard as medieval may have prevailed in their own culture until fairly recently; in many cases, Islamic societies may be only a few decades behind socially and technologically advanced Western ones.³

In his book *The Strange Death of Europe*, Douglas Murray criticizes western political elites for allowing mass immigration into the EU, believing it is “committing suicide.”⁴ His overall thesis is that a post-imperialist guilt-driven Europe is acting irresponsibly with its modern values by allowing high levels of migration. Murray argues that the real problem is an influx of Moslems who cannot assimilate into western society.⁵ Gaby

¹ Asma T Uddin, “Opinion: The Latest Attack on Islam: It’s Not a Religion,” *The New York Times*, accessed March 6, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/26/opinion/islamophobia-muslim-religion-politics.html>.

² Ali A Mazrui, “Islamic And Western Values,” last modified 1999, accessed March 5, 2019, <http://www.alhewar.com/AliMazrui.htm>.

³ Ibid

⁴ Douglas Murray, *The Strange Death of Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 1.

⁵ John Gray, “How Deep Is the Decline of the West?,” *New Statesman*, last modified 2018, accessed December 15, 2019, <https://www.newstatesman.com/2018/07/strange-death-europe-douglas-murray-review>.

Hisliff berates his book for its racist undertones.¹ He lists numerous misdeeds committed by immigrants and asylum seekers as if it were only those who are guilty of crimes. Murray fails to mention that Germany, the country which received the most refugees during the peak of the crisis in 2018, published its lowest national crime statistics rate since 1992.² Brianna Rennix criticizes Murray for refusing to lay blame at the door of western nations for their recent invasions of Muslim states that promulgated regional instability and displacements of many thousands of people.³ Murray incidentally supported all these invasions.⁴ Almond argues that Murray fails to grasp that Europe's problems are primarily economic due to its acceptance of neoliberal economics, not migration issues.⁵

The EU does not discuss Christianity in any current or proposed treaty, prompting criticism from numerous circles.⁶ Pointedly referencing "Christianity or God was

¹ Gaby Hinsliff, "The Strange Death of Europe by Douglas Murray Review – Gentrified Xenophobia," *The Guardian*, May 6, 2017, sec. Books, accessed December 15, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/may/06/strange-death-europe-immigration-xenophobia>.

² Murtaza Hussain, "The Far Right Is Obsessed With a Book About Muslims Destroying Europe. Here's What It Gets Wrong," *The Intercept*, December 25, 2018, accessed December 17, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2018/12/25/strange-death-of-europe-douglas-murray-review/>.

³ Brianna Rennix, "The Death of Europe Has Been Greatly Exaggerated," *Current Affairs*, last modified 2019, accessed December 15, 2019, <https://www.currentaffairs.org/2019/01/the-death-of-europe-has-been-greatly-exaggerated>.

⁴ Murtaza Hussain, "The Far Right Is Obsessed With a Book About Muslims Destroying Europe. Here's What It Gets Wrong," *The Intercept*, December 25, 2018, accessed December 17, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2018/12/25/strange-death-of-europe-douglas-murray-review/>.

⁵ Ian Almond, "Misrecognising the Problem: Douglas Murray's The Strange Death of Europe," *Middle East Eye*, last modified 2017, accessed December 15, 2019, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/big-story/misrecognising-problem-douglas-murrays-strange-death-europe>.

⁶ Srdjan Cvijic and Lorenzo Zucca, "Does the European Constitution Need Christian Values?," ed. J. H. H. Weiler, *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 24, no. 4 (2004): 739–748.

considered too controversial in the face of furious opposition from secular France and Protestant northerners such as Sweden.”¹ Dissenters believe it would be erroneous to preclude other faiths, and it would be better to circumvent any religious citation. Highly secular states like France believe that any reference to God “would violate the principle of separation of church and state.”² The problem occurred because many European citizens saw Christianity as extremely divisive, particularly in Europe, where Protestants and Catholics fought numerous wars against each other.

Muslims are also unlikely to welcome any reference to Christianity in light of the Crusades. Church teachings on contraception, abortion, and homosexuality are unsatisfactory to numerous citizens. Therefore, many citizens hope that “religious thinkers have less influence, not more, on matters of social policy.”³ Murray asks why some young European people choose Islam but fail to reach out to Christianity. He believes “most branches of European Christianity have lost the confidence to proselytize.”⁴

¹ Ian Black, “Christianity Bedevils Talks on EU Treaty,” *The Guardian*, May 25, 2004, sec. World news, accessed December 18, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/may/25/eu.religion>.

² Pauline Chang, “No Mention of Christianity in EU Constitution,” *Christian Today*, last modified 2004, accessed December 18, 2019, <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/no.mention.of.christianity.in.eu.constitution/1014.htm>.

³ Joan Smith, “The EU Is Utterly Godless. Let’s Keep It That Way,” *The Independent*, last modified 2003, accessed December 18, 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/joan-smith/the-eu-is-utterly-godless-lets-keep-it-that-way-125545.html>.

⁴ Rod Dreher, “Europe Is Dying,” *The American Conservative*, last modified 2018, accessed December 17, 2019, <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/dreher/europe-is-dying-douglas-murray-italy-benedict-option/>.

Since the Soviet collapse, the West has attacked many countries with little regard for human life. Its imposition of democracy into other states remains a crucial policy. However, as noted by numerous theorists, imposing western-style democracy onto different cultures is not necessarily a wise and democratic idea.¹ Many experts concur, citing the recent examples of western intervention as “military agendas painted with secrecy, misplaced power, and Western cocksureness.”²

Islamic states receive criticism for using the death penalty, yet this sentence is also regularly used in the US. While Women’s rights in the Islamic world are problematic and justifiably scrutinized in a critical way, the situation is slowly improving. Iran, Turkey, and Syria have many females employed in senior positions, and even the most autocratic Muslim state, Saudia Arabia, has recently allowed females to drive.³ While the US has never had a female president, Turkey, Bangladesh, and Pakistan have all had prime ministers. Also, “in Iran's 2000 elections, reformist candidates captured nearly three-quarters of the seats in parliament, but a theocratic elite still holds the reins of power.”⁴ While criticizing Huntington's overall thesis, previous authors concede that the

¹ Scott Thompson, “Can Might Make Right? The Use of Force to Impose Democracy and the Arthurian Dilemma in the Modern Era,” *LAW AND CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS* 71 (2008): 184.

² Alyson A Ochs, “Impsing Democracy. Can It Be Done?” (Indiana, 2017).
<https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/14016/OchsReformattedCLEAN1.pdf?sequence=1>

³ Martin Chulov and Nadia Al Faour, “‘I Feel Free like a Bird’: Saudi Women Celebrate as Driving Ban Lifted | World News,” *The Guardian*, last modified 2018, accessed March 5, 2019,
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/24/saudi-arabia-women-celebrate-as-driving-ban-lifted>.

⁴ Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, “The True Clash of Civilizations,” accessed March 6, 2019,
<https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/162/27604.html>.

distinction between the West and Islam concerns “gender equality and sexual liberalization.”¹

Islamic states have been relatively resistant to a racist ideology that has violently permeated Germany, South Africa, and the US Christian states. The 2018 Windruff scandal in the UK was a blatant example of state-sponsored racism, resulting in numerous ruined lives and many suicides.² As Aruzi opines, “there are no Muslim equivalents of Nazi extermination camps, nor Muslim conquests by genocide on the scale perpetrated by Europeans in the Americas and Australia, nor Muslim equivalents of Stalinist terror.”³ Iran's active Jewish community allows them to worship and stand for parliamentary seats.⁴ Many thinkers argue that democracy is incompatible with Islam.⁵

President Trump has declared that “Islam hates us.”⁶ While Stephen K. Bannon, one of his ex-chief advisers, believes “we are in an outright war against Islam.”⁷ Bannon doubts

¹ Ibid

² Mental Health Today website, “Funeral Scheduled for First Suspected Windrush Suicide,” *MHT*, last modified 2018, accessed March 6, 2019, <https://www.mentalhealthtoday.co.uk/news/inequality/funeral-scheduled-following-first-suspected-windrush-suicide>.

³ Ali A. Mazrui, “Islamic And Western Values,” last modified 1999, accessed March 5, 2019, <http://www.alhewar.com/AliMazrui.htm>.

⁴ Kim Sengupta, “Iran’s Jews on Life inside Israel’s ‘Enemy State,’” *The Independent*, last modified March 16, 2016, accessed March 6, 2019, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/irans-jews-on-life-inside-israels-enemy-state-we-feel-secure-and-happy-a6934931.html>.

⁵ Bican Sahin, “Is Islam an Obstacle to Democratization in the Muslim World? The Debate of the Compatibility of Islam and Democracy Revisited,” *Bilig* 37, no. Spring (2006): 189–92.

⁶ David Decosimo, “Perspective What Islam Could Teach Donald Trump about Democracy and Freedom,” *Washington Post*, accessed March 7, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/03/08/trump-could-learn-a-thing-or-two-about-freedom-and-democracy-from-islam/>.

⁷ Ibid

whether Muslims that are Shariah-adherent can integrate into liberal democracies.¹ Are the likes of Trump and Bannon's black-and-white worldview necessarily the correct way forward? After all, substantial political and economic problems exist in the West. Many western citizens suffer marginalization through unemployment, low pay, and racial discrimination, and they are unlikely to feel that the US is a beacon of freedom and opportunity.

Van Reybrouck believes that the mass of ordinary western people plays a passive role in the electoral system.² In the US, "Americans do not control the nomination process because it is dominated by big banks and the institutions that grow around them. Americans only get to select from the puppets or paid actors (aka politicians) that the TV shows them."³

D'Mato believes the stifling limits of the two-party system shape most people's view of politics. Politics appears as something politicians do, which has little to do with us.⁴ Marx's opinion may be validated when he says the ruling class controls the "means of

¹ Jedediah Purdy, "The Anti-Democratic Worldview of Steve Bannon and Peter Thiel," *Politico Magazine*, last modified 2016, accessed December 19, 2019, <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/11/donald-trump-steve-bannon-peter-thiel-214490>.

² David Van Reybrouck, "Why Elections Are Bad for Democracy," *The Guardian*, June 29, 2016, sec. Politics, accessed October 26, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/29/why-elections-are-bad-for-democracy>.

³ Alex Callinicos, *The Revolutionary Road to Socialism*, 2nd ed. (London: Socialist Workers Party, 1984), 32.

⁴ Paul D'Amato, "Elections and the Marxist Tradition," *SocialistWorker.Org*, accessed March 7, 2019, <http://socialistworker.org/2016/04/26/elections-and-the-marxist-tradition>.

production.”¹ Therefore, the “dominant ideas in any epoch are those of the ruling classes.”²

Marx described religion as the opiate for the people.³ Therefore, “Marx, in dismissing religion as the opiate of the masses, acknowledged its power. Even if it is a false consciousness, it could be treated as an influential one.”⁴ Fox criticizes IR theory for failing to properly discuss the relevance of religion in IR matters, citing that “only 6 of 1,600 articles published between 1980 and 1999 included religion as a significant element.”⁵ It received greater prominence in world affairs after the 2001 New York terrorist attacks, primarily concentrating on the role of Islam.

Realists argue that the nation-state is the leading actor in IR, arguing that in the absence of a world government, relations between countries occur inside an anarchical international system, believing that “the uneven distribution of power means that the arena of international relations is a form of ‘power politics.’”⁶ They believe their theory best describes the representation of IR held by exponents of statecraft. Consequently, realism, more than any other, is continually employed in international politics. Its critics

¹ Duncan Hallas, *Trotsky's Marxism*, 2nd ed. (London: Bookmarks, 1984),76.

² Ibid

³ David Papke, “Karl Marx on Religion – Marquette University Law School Faculty Blog,” 2015, accessed April 24, 2020, <https://law.marquette.edu/facultyblog/2015/01/karl-marx-on-religion/>.

⁴ Jonathan Fox, “The Multiple Impacts of Religion on International Relations: Perceptions and Reality,” *Politique étrangère* Winter Issue, no. 4 (n.d.): 1059–1071.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Martin Griffiths, et al, *International Relations: The Key Concepts*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), xi.

argue that realism perpetuates the hostile world it describes by “assuming the uncooperative and egoistic nature of humankind and {in} the absence of hierarchy in the state system, realists encourage leaders to act in ways based on suspicion, power, and force.”¹ Experts like Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye believe the realist approach regarding 'power politics' is inappropriate for analyzing essential issues in IR.²

There is tension between the West's version of civil rights compared to the viewpoint of certain Muslim countries regarding the role of Islam in the state. It became an international issue during the 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan, regarding western concerns over women's rights there. Many Muslims see these complaints as western criticism of their culture, harking back to the old imperialist days, which, as stated by Folker, “can also lead to international rivalry and conflict.”³ The growth of radical non-state Islamicist groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS creates anxiety in the West, primarily because they desire to spread their ideology worldwide and show no respect for other forms of religious belief. Fox argues that:

Religious persuasion and legitimacy can be seen as alternative sources of power in realist paradigms of IR. The fact that religion can be a motivation as powerful as traditional realpolitik motivations is more problematic for neo-realism, but a classical and neo-classical realism which allows for motivations other

¹ Sandrina Antunes and Isabel Camisao, “Introducing Realism in International Relations Theory,” *E-International Relations*, 2018, accessed April 24, 2020, <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/02/27/introducing-realism-in-international-relations-theory/>.

² Martin Griffiths, *Fifty Key Thinkers In International Relations*, 5th edition, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 58.

³ Jennifer Sterling-Folker, *Making Sense of International Theory*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 201.

than material power would likely better reflect the complicated world we live in than a theory which only includes material concerns.¹

The Islamic State previously held large swathes of territory in Syria and Iraq. Therefore, the non-state actor developed tenets of statehood and even described itself as such.² To counter the threat, both the West and Russia used military force, a realist strategy, to recapture the lost ground. Therefore, “while transnational terrorism, such as that practiced by the Islamic State group, is a relatively new threat in international relations, states have relied on old strategies consistent with realism to deal with it.”³

Liberal democracies in the West generally allow freedom of speech and worship alongside free multi-party elections. Nevertheless, many problems occur with this mode of governance. Alongside the divisive nature of party election campaigns, nepotism is endemic, voter ignorance is prevalent, and those in power are often from elitist backgrounds⁴. Crime is widespread, and many people feel unsafe walking the streets, and elected politicians usually pay only lip service to democratic ideals.⁵

¹ Jonathan Fox, “The Multiple Impacts of Religion on International Relations: Perceptions and Reality,” *Politique étrangère* Winter Issue, no. 4 (n.d.): 1059–1071.

² Troy Jodok, “The containment of the Islamic State: A realist case to engage a hybrid actor,” *Contemporary Security Policy Journal*, July 22, 2019, accessed April 26, 2020, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13523260.2019.1641345>

³ Sandrina Antunes and Isabel Camisao, “Introducing Realism in International Relations Theory,” *E-International Relations*, 2018, accessed April 24, 2020, <https://www.e-ir.info/2018/02/27/introducing-realism-in-international-relations-theory/>.

⁴ Thomas Carothers, “Is Democracy the Problem?,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, accessed March 7, 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/01/16/is-democracy-problem-pub-78137>.

⁵ Jeff McMahan, *Reagan and the World Imperial Policy in the New Cold War* (London: Pluto Press, 1984), 6. William Blum, *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower* (London: Zed Books, 2001), 6.

Professor Chomsky opines that large, powerful corporations easily manipulate governments and electorates for their ends.¹ It is usually at the expense of the vast majority of citizens.² Many specialists argue that poverty, voter apathy, unemployment and lack of opportunity, and drug abuse are widespread in many liberal democracies, with workers having little or no rights.³ Research shows that the class divide is still rife in western democracies too.⁴ Therefore, as Cooper states, one can argue “that elections are not the basis of democracy.”⁵ A political system must incorporate other factors before a genuine democracy occurs. Directly electing a politician to represent a constituency in parliament or congress is not necessarily the be-all and end-all. A 2002 report by the UN Development Program states that “no society can achieve the desired state of well-being and human development, or compete in a globalizing world if half its people remain marginalized and disempowered.”⁶ Professor Bayoumi criticizes western politicians that

¹ Jennifer Gonzalez, “A Masked Reality- The Manipulation of the Minds by Big Corporations,” *Medium*, April 20, 2017, accessed March 7, 2019, <https://medium.com/@jgonz139/a-masked-reality-the-manipulation-of-the-minds-by-big-corporations-9fbd9ad0cfb6>.

² Lee Drutman, “How Corporate Lobbyists Conquered American Democracy,” *The Atlantic*, accessed March 7, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/04/how-corporate-lobbyists-conquered-american-democracy/390822/>.

³ Bob Hopkin, “Question Time” (BBC1, July 3, 2019).

⁴ Peter Sacks, “Tearing Down the Gates: Confronting the Class Divide in American Education,” *Association of American Colleges & Universities*, last modified August 2, 2009, accessed October 26, 2019, <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/tearing-down-gates-confronting-class-divide-american-education>.

⁵ Vincent Cooper, “A Bad Fit: Islam and Democracy at Home and Abroad,” accessed March 7, 2019, http://www.thecommentator.com/article/4269/a_bad_fit_islam_and_democracy_at_home_and_abroad.

⁶ Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, “The True Clash of Civilizations,” accessed March 6, 2019, <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/162/27604.html>.

accuse Islam of intolerance and homophobia while failing to address these problems in their domains.¹

In 2018, a June poll by *Morning Consult* showed that “white evangelicals are more likely to support religious business owners refusing services to L.G.B.T. individuals if the business owner is a Christian, Jew or Mormon — but less so if the business owner is a Muslim.”² Many researchers cite a recent rise in racism both in the UK, and the US.³ Experts claim a linkage to the 9/11 New York terrorist attacks.⁴ The US response to the latter “further widened the rift between the Muslim world and the West.”⁵

d) Iran and Israel

Western support for Israel and American threats to Iran does little to enhance Washington’s reputation in the Islamic World. The Palestine/Israel dispute is a critical fissure between the West and the Muslim world. When the UK abandoned its Palestinian mandate, widespread violence prompted the UN to partition Palestine between the Jews

¹ Moustafa Bayoumi, “How the ‘Homophobic Muslim’ Became a Populist Bogeyman,” *The Guardian*, August 7, 2017, sec. Opinion, accessed March 6, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/aug/07/homophobic-muslim-populist-bogeyman-trump-le-pen>.

² Asma T Uddin, “Opinion -The Latest Attack on Islam: It’s Not a Religion,” *The New York Times*, accessed March 6, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/26/opinion/islamophobia-muslim-religion-politics.html>.

³ Adam Ince, “The Rise of Extremism and Racism in the West,” *DailySabah*, accessed March 6, 2019, <https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2016/11/17/the-rise-of-extremism-and-racism-in-the-west>. Please see (Sharma Murari, “Racism in the West,” *Kantipurforum*, n.d., accessed March 6, 2019, <https://kantipurforum.wordpress.com/tag/racism-in-the-west/>.

⁴ Bryan D. Byers and James A. Jones, “The Impact of the Terrorist Attacks of 9/11 on Anti-Islamic Hate Crime,” *Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice* 5, no. 1 (February 1, 2007): 43–56.

⁵ Ingmar Oldberg, “Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations and Russia,” *Unibref* (2014): 6.

and Palestinians. The new state of Israel, created in 1947, received significant opposition from the Arabs.¹ Thousands of Palestinian residents had to leave their properties, seeking refuge abroad, prompting widespread criticism². However, no effective action is ever taken against Israel at the UN due to the US vetoing any measures against its ally, despite the numerous illegalities committed by the Zionist state.³

Voluminous reports of Israeli discrimination against non-Jewish citizens still occur.⁴ Nevertheless, the American and British governments remain virtually silent on the issue. Their muted response occurs for many reasons. Israel is a key western ally due to its geopolitical position. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) has immense lobbying power in the US.⁵ Evangelical pro-Zionist Christians in the US receive enormous support in Washington's political institutions. According to the Global Research Centre, "they work not only through the powerful AIPAC lobby but through their political influence in the majority of the states of the Union."⁶ Surprisingly (and publicized by former American Congress member Cynthia McKinney), all elected

¹ Jerry Landay, *Dome of the Rock: Three Faiths of Jerusalem* (London: Readers Digest, 1972), 132.

² IRIN website, "Palestine Refugees: Locations and Numbers," accessed March 8, 2019, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/89571/middle-east-palestinian-refugee-numberswhereabouts>.

³ Amnesty International website, "Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories 2017/2018," accessed March 8, 2019, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/report-israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/>.

⁴ IKathryn Shidah, "» Israel Is Not As Christian-Friendly As You Think," *IMEMC News*, 2017, accessed March 8, 2019, <http://imemc.org/article/75889/>.

⁵ Zack Beauchamp, "Why Are the US and Israel so Friendly? Why the US and Israel have had such a close relationship for so long," *Vox*, last modified November 20, 2018, accessed March 7, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080080/israel-palestine-us-alliance>.

⁶ Hans Stehling, "Christian Zionists in America," last modified 2017, accessed April 23, 2018, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/christian-zionists-in-america/5622131>.

Congress representatives are forced to swear allegiance to the state of Israel.¹ Also, many US politicians have dual Israeli/American citizenship.²

The fact that the US spends millions of dollars on aid to Israel and continuously gives them diplomatic succor understandably angers the Islamic world. Further fuel was added to the fire in 2018 when Washington officially recognized Jerusalem as the Israeli capital for its new Embassy opened there. The move prompted widespread international condemnation, anger, and violence, particularly in Gaza.³

Iran's relationship with the West has been contentious regarding various issues for decades.⁴ Tehran's nuclear program is one of them. The "US and some of its allies, especially Israel, have accused Iran of secretly trying to produce nuclear weapons."⁵ Tehran vehemently denies this, stating its program is for peaceful purposes only.⁶ A deal occurred in 2015 between Iran, the EU, and the five permanent members of the UNSC

¹ Edward Morgan, "The Zionist Pledge Every Member of Congress Has Taken," *Prepare For Change*, August 19, 2018, accessed March 7, 2019, <https://prepareforchange.net/2018/08/19/the-zionist-pledge-every-member-of-congress-has-taken/>.

² Edward Morgan, "89 of Our Senators and Congress Hold Dual Citizenship Citizenship with Israel," *Prepare For Change*, June 22, 2018, accessed March 7, 2019, <https://prepareforchange.net/2018/06/22/89-of-our-senators-and-congress-hold-dual-citizenship-citizenship-with-israel/>.

³ JTA agency, "Over 130 US Jewish Studies Scholars Criticize Trump's Jerusalem Decision," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, December 10, 2017, accessed March 9, 2019, <https://www.jta.org/2017/12/10/united-states/over-130-jewish-studies-scholars-sign-statement-criticizing-trumps-jerusalem-decision>.

⁴ Stefan Grobe, "A Rocky Ride: US-Iranian Relations since 1979," *Euronews*, accessed March 9, 2019, <https://www.euronews.com/2017/02/03/a-rocky-ride-us-iranian-relations-since-1979>.

⁵ Amin Saikal, "The Iran Nuclear Dispute," Vol 60 no.2, *Journal of Australian f International Affairs*., last modified 2006, accessed March 9, 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10357710600696118?journalCode=caji20>.

⁶ Patrick Wintour, "Iran Says It Will Never Build a Nuclear Weapon," *The Guardian*, last modified 2019, accessed November 15, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/25/iran-says-us-sanctions-on-supreme-leader-means-permanent-closure-of-diplomacy>.

that allowed the former to produce nuclear power for peaceful purposes only. Despite Israeli criticism, as of May 2018, there was a broad consensus that Iran has abided by the agreement. The election of Donald Trump proved a turning point for the resolution. To the dismay of their European allies, soon after his victory, Trump decided to leave the accord and impose new sanctions on Iran.¹ Islamicists viewed it as an American bias against Muslims since Israel has secretly produced nuclear weapons but has never been sanctioned by the West or the UN, despite their threats to wipe out their enemies.² Moscow criticized the American withdrawal from the treaty too.³

Numerous American government officials acknowledge Tel Aviv's nuclear weaponry.⁴ However, Israel is not a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and never endorsed the Biological Weapons Convention. It signed but never ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention too. Tel Aviv has severely criticized the nuclear deal with Tehran, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), making public threats to attack Iranian nuclear facilities.⁵ Unlike Iran, which

¹ Catherine Lucey and Josh Lederman, "Trump Declares US Leaving 'horrible' Iran Nuclear Accord," *AP NEWS*, last modified 2018, accessed March 9, 2019, <https://www.apnews.com/cead755353a1455bbef08ef289448994>.

² MEM, "Israel Threatens to Use Nuclear Weapons to 'Wipe out' Its Enemies," *Middle East Monitor*, last modified August 31, 2018, accessed March 9, 2019, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180831-israel-threatens-to-use-nuclear-weapons-to-wipe-out-its-enemies/>.

³ Charles Grant, "A Grand Bargain with Russia?," *Centre for European Reform*, last modified 2007, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://www.cer.eu/insights/grand-bargain-russia>.

⁴Former chief of staff to United States Secretary of State Colin Powell admits that the US is aware that Israel has nuclear weapons, (Laszlo Samuelis, "Going Underground" (London: RT News, April 3, 2019).

⁵ Arms Control Association website, "Arms Control and Proliferation Profile: Israel," *Arms Control Association*, last modified 2018, accessed March 9, 2019, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/israelprofile>.

has admitted to its program, because Israel “is not a signing party of the treaty, there is no legal obligation for Israeli nuclear facilities to be subject to regular inspections.”¹ The impasse angers the Muslim world. Why is Israel allowed to secretly maintain nuclear weapons, threaten its neighbors, yet receive no sanctions from the West? Therefore, they perceive this as western bias.

Washington’s assassination in Baghdad of Iran’s General Suleimani in January 2020 significantly escalated global tensions. Professor Morandi described it as “an act of war.”² Iran quickly retaliated, launching missile strikes on American bases in Iraq and abandoning cooperation with the international community over the nuclear enrichment deal. Tensions remain high, and any miscalculation from either side could lead to a significant confrontation.

e) Non-State Actors

According to research conducted by Alabama University, evidence suggests that racism and mistrust amongst races increased after the 9/11 and the 2007 London attacks, possibly due to mainstream media news reporting of terroristic events that probably fueled the flames too.³ Countering Huntington's thesis, studies show far more people in

¹ Ratislav Bilik, “Secrecy and Signaling: The Israeli Approach to Nuclear Weapons,” *The Strategy Bridge*, last modified 2017, accessed March 9, 2019, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/8/3/secrecy-and-signaling-the-israeli-approach-to-nuclear-weapons>.

² Kathy Newman, “US Cannot Carry out Act of War and Get Away with It’, Says Tehran University’s Mohammad Marandi,” *Channel 4 News*, last modified 2020, accessed January 12, 2020, <https://www.channel4.com/news/us-cannot-carry-out-act-of-war-and-get-away-with-it-says-tehran-universitys-mohammad-marandi>.

³ Emma Hanes and Stephen Machin, “Hate Crime in the Wake of Terror Attacks: Evidence From 7/7 and 9/11,” *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 30, no. 3 (August 1, 2014): 247–267.

the UK died in the Northern Ireland conflict in comparison to Muslim violence, with statistics revealing a steady terroristic decline there from 1975 onwards.¹ In the US, too, since 9/11, victims of Islamic terrorism have been minuscule, with approximately 100 deaths linked to Muslim extremism, quite similar to other forms of political and non-political violence.² A study from Max Roser also concurs with the latter.³ Indeed, in the EU, data shows “the risk in Europe is dramatically lower than just about anywhere else on the planet.”⁴

Based on Uppsala Conflict Data Project statistics, another survey showed no empirical evidence to support the clash of civilizations.⁵ Therefore, one must conclude that Muslim terrorism is not existential. Doubtlessly, some followers of these Islamic terrorist organizations represent a threat, but their support and membership are minimal. Ex-UK Foreign Minister Robin Cook suggested that Al Qaeda was not even a terrorist group but a database of international Mujaheddin and arms smugglers used by the

¹ Alex Nowrasteh, “The Chance of Being Murdered or Injured in a Terrorist Attack in the United Kingdom,” *Cato Institute*, last modified August 15, 2018, accessed March 12, 2019, <https://www.cato.org/blog/chance-being-murdered-or-injured-terrorist-attack-united-kingdom>.

² Albert Ford et al, “Part IV. What Is the Threat to the United States Today?,” *New America*, last modified 2018, accessed March 12, 2019, <https://www.newamerica.org/in-depth/terrorism-in-america/what-threat-united-states-today/>.

³ Max Roser et al, “Terrorism,” *Our World in Data*, 2018, accessed March 17, 2019, <https://ourworldindata.org/terrorism>.

⁴ Robert Muggah, “Europe’s Terror Threat Is Real. But Its Cities Are Much Safer than You Think,” *World Economic Forum*, last modified 2017, accessed March 12, 2019, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/06/europes-terror-threat-is-real-but-our-cities-are-much-safer-than-you-think/>.

⁵ Andrej Tuscisny, “Civilizational Conflicts: More Frequent, Longer, and Bloodier?,” *ResearchGate*, last modified 2004, accessed March 12, 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/249706317_Civilizational_Conflicts_More_Frequent_Longer_and_Bloodier.

intelligence agencies and Saudis to send mercenaries, weapons, and finance into Soviet-occupied Afghanistan.¹ The award-winning documentary *The Power of Nightmares* also confirmed the latter, claiming: “the group’s ability to commit acts of terrorism on a large scale have been grossly exaggerated, if not completely fabricated.”²

ISIS claims to be “the sole representative of true followers of Islam {but} has executed large numbers of Muslims whose understanding of the Koran differs from its own narrow interpretation.”³ According to a survey, it has very little support amongst Western Muslims.⁴ A 2011 Pew Research study in the Muslim world shows that only a tiny fraction of people questioned supported ISIS and believed violence committed against civilians in the name of Islam is unjustified. They were also as much concerned about Islamic terrorism as western people are.⁵ A 2015 survey by researcher Max Galka agrees with the latter, saying, “the reality is that Muslims around the world share an overwhelmingly negative view of the militant group.”⁶

¹ Pierre-Henri Bunel, “Al Qaeda: The Data Base,” *Global Research*, last modified October 16, 2018, accessed March 11, 2019, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/al-qaeda-the-database-2/24738>.

² Andrew Johnson, *9/11 Finding the Truth*, 3rd ed., 2011, 4.

³ The Week website, “How Did Isis Start?,” *The Week UK*, last modified 2018, accessed March 11, 2019, <https://www.theweek.co.uk/islamic-state/59001/what-is-isis-and-can-the-terror-group-be-stopped>.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Michael Lipka, “Muslims and Islam: Key Findings in the U.S. and around the World,” *Pew Research Center*, 2017, accessed March 11, 2019, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/09/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/>.

⁶ Adam Withnall, “One Chart That Shows What People in the Muslim World Really Think about Isis,” *The Independent*, last modified 2015, accessed March 11, 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/donald-trump-muslims-isis-one-chart-shows-what-people-really-think-about-a6765241.html>.

Therefore, the West's misguided policy of bombing Islamic countries into submission is bound to fail for numerous reasons. The vast majority of Muslims in the affected countries never had any sympathy for terrorist groups in the first place. The thousands of innocent civilians killed in these campaigns may have friends and relatives radicalized due to western intervention, creating a new spiral of violence and provoking some to seek revenge. Even pro-western Muslims living in the Islamic world are bound to feel anger when they see the western victimization of their counterparts. Rather than issuing threats and bombing, the better policy for the West is to support *Islamic Renewal*, which is "a growing social, political, and intellectual movement whose goal is profound reform of Muslim societies and polities."¹ It intends to counter the radical Islamic extremist ideology and instead draw upon the movement's humanistic beliefs. Professor Maghraoui believes that "the United States must engage moderate Islam because core aspects of the religion have an enormous moderating and modernizing potential that policymakers have overlooked."²

Huntington's theory of a Clash of Civilizations fails for numerous reasons. The first significant dispute after the Cold war did not occur between a Western state and a Muslim one but between two Muslim countries, Iraq and Kuwait. Huntington posits that Islam is not as unified as other civilizations. It, therefore, begs the question of how they will lead attacks against the West if the Islamic world is so fractured. Can a few ragtag members of ISIS or Al Qaeda destroy the West? Also, Washington and London, ever-

¹ Abdeslam M. Maghraoui, "American Foreign Policy and Islamic Renewal," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 05, no. 4 (2006): 26–40.

² Ibid

keen to remove secular Syria's President Assad, do nothing against their Saudi allies. Its Kingdom is "an absolutist monarchy, and Islamic theocracy which exports its intolerant Wahhabi brand of Islam, inspiring extremist groups around the world, {and} is feted as a staunch and loyal ally. Iran, another theocracy but one with greater democratic credentials, is vilified."¹ Therefore, if recent clashes were about "culture," as Huntington proposes, Saudi, not Syria, would be at odds with the West.

The vast majority of Muslims worldwide are against terrorism; therefore, a clash of civilizations seems unlikely and makes a mockery of the *War on Terror*, which according to Dr. Barrett, is a "big lie."² While a tiny majority sympathize with terrorism, only a fraction would succumb to violence even within this grouping. Therefore, this does not justify the rabid Islamic demonization by numerous western politicians and media outlets. It only serves bigots on both sides of the religious divide.

¹ Khaled Diab, "The Clash Inside," *The Guardian*, June 2, 2008, sec. Opinion, accessed March 12, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/jun/02/theclashinside>.

² Nick Kollerstrom, *Terror on the Tube: Behind the Veil of 7/7 an Investigation*, 3rd ed. (California: Progressive Press, 2012), 9.

GLOBALISM AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

a) Globalism

Though it has multiple meanings, it is “often used as a synonym for globalization, the system of global economic interconnection.”¹ Emphasizing “the cultural, social, and political effects of increased interconnectedness among different societies.”² According to Professor Castells, “at some point, the idea emerges that globalization also requires a global, cosmopolitan culture.”³

Many nationalists like Trump see globalism as a threat to American sovereignty. Whilst supporters claim it is a mechanism to benefit economies and help unify different cultures, arguing that its belief in the free market will reduce poverty and unemployment worldwide through competition and reduce consumer prices. Many theorists on the Left criticize globalism for its failings to bridge the gap between the rich and poor, arguing that it has failed the vast majority of people by allowing large corporations the freedom to shop around to find the cheapest source of labor.⁴ While many on the Right view

¹ Liam Stack, “Globalism: A Far-Right Conspiracy Theory Buoyed by Trump,” *The New York Times*, last modified 2016, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/15/us/politics/globalism-right-trump.html>.

² Mtholyoke website, “Definitions of Globalization,” *What Does Globalization Mean?*, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/nyt/definitions.htm>.

³ Manuel Castells, “Globalisation and Identity,” *University of California* 14 (2010): 89.

⁴ Mike Collins, “The Pros And Cons Of Globalization,” *Forbes*, last modified 2015, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/mikecollins/2015/05/06/the-pros-and-cons-of-globalization/>.

globalism as part and parcel of the NWO and link it to the secretive Cabal they believe is trying to create a one-world government.¹

Professor Fukuyama wrote that the demise of the USSR meant that no alternatives to Western liberalism could occur, believing that the universalization of Western liberal democracy is the final type of government.² Clearly, and according to numerous theorists, he is not correct here.³ Nevertheless, there has been a proliferation of liberalist governments since his writing.⁴

b) The NWO

The phrase traces back to around 1940 when author H.G. Wells used it for the title of a book about a one-world government. Late 1989 saw the Soviet system collapse and imminent war with Iraq. President George H.W. Bush, addressing Congress, stated the necessity “to press forward to cap a historic movement towards a new world order and a long era of peace.”⁵ While various researchers disagree on an exact definition for the

¹ Brian Levin, “Opinion: Brian Levin: How Globalism Became a Dirty Word in the Trump White House (and America),” *NBC News*, last modified 2018, accessed March 14, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/bannon-s-revenge-how-globalism-went-mainstream-ideology-far-right-ncna860221>.

² Francis Fukuyama*, “The End of History?,” last modified 2003, accessed March 13, 2019, <http://www.wesjones.com/eoh.htm>.

³ Srecko Horvat, “Where Are We 25 Years after ‘the End of History’?,” *Al Jazeera News*, last modified 2014, accessed March 17, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/06/francis-fukuyama-end-history-201461952122417201.html>.

⁴ George Monbiot, “Was the Rise of Neoliberalism the Root Cause of Extreme Inequality?,” *Economics*, last modified 2016, accessed March 17, 2019, <http://economics.com/rise-of-neoliberalism-inequality/>.

⁵ Diane West, “The World Order of George H.W. Bush (1924–2018),” *Epoch Times*, last modified 2018, accessed March 13, 2019, https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-world-order-of-george-h-w-bush-1924-2018_2729726.html.

phrase NWO, it generally constructs images amongst some readers of secret societies, a shadow government, and a desire by the ruling elites to create a fascistic one-world government.

What exactly did Bush mean by NWO, and how did he intend to create one? Possibly, he was reinforcing Fukuyama's belief that the American system will be prevalent, and they intend to do their utmost to spread it worldwide. Nevertheless, "to some, this may seem like an ominous term associated with Illuminati conspiracy theories and hegemonic tendencies."¹ Numerous New World Orders are theorized to have existed, despite many critics rejecting them.² Therefore, as many are, conspiracy theories should not be dismissed out of hand. It also begs the question of whether the government today is still involved in illegal conspirational behavior and covering up information that is harmful to the democratic process. Returning to the idea of whether some NWO exists, many may be surprised by Professor Quigley's research.

c) Professor Quigley's Discovery

Carroll Quigley was an esteemed university professor of History and wrote the book *Tragedy and Hope*. For many years it was suppressed but became available in 1966.³ Quigley, an insider and generally supportive of the group he researched for over twenty

¹ Anthony Zannella, "George H.W. Bush And The New World Order," *The Odyssey Online*, last modified December 27, 2018, accessed March 16, 2019, <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/george-hwbush>.

² Keaton Patti, "Rebunking Conspiracy Theories: New World Orders — Illuminati to Uber," *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, last modified 2015, accessed March 15, 2019, <https://www.mcsweeney.net/articles/new-world-orders-illuminati-to-uber>.

³ Michael Coffman, *Rescuing a Broken America*, (New York: Morgan James Publishing, 2010), 83.

years, accessed its primary sources for two years to aid his studies.¹ Founded in 1909, The Round Table Movement (RTM) evolved out of Lord Milner's Kindergarten group, an association of organizations promoting closer union between the UK and its self-governing colonies.

Quigley primarily concentrates on this cohort of British elites. Calling them the Milner Group, he traces their origins back to Cecil Rhode's desire to create a secret society encouraging worldwide Anglo-American domination.² Senior diplomat and businessman Alfred Milner was a trustee for the Rhodes Scholarships. He and a university professor friend, Lionel George Curtis, organized the RTM funded by Lord Rothschild.³

Rhodes was a freemason and occultist, acquiring his immense fortune from mining operations in South Africa. He believed in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race.⁴ In his will, he left his estate "to and for the establishment, promotion, and development of a

¹ Carroll Quigley, *The Anglo-American Establishment*, 2nd ed. (California:Dauphin Publications, 2013), xi.

² Steve Sailer, "Carroll Quigley's Conspiracy Theory: The Milner Group," *The Unz Review*, last modified 2015, accessed March 18, 2019, <http://www.unz.com/isteve/carroll-quigleys-conspiracy-theory-the-milner-group/>.

³ Modern History Project, "The Secret Cabal -- The CFR and the Rhodes-Milner Group," *Modern History Project*, last modified 2010, accessed March 18, 2019, <https://modernhistoryproject.org/mhp?Article=SecretCabal&C=1.0>.

⁴ Micca Hanks, "The Secret Society: How a 19th Century Politician Planned for a New World Order," *Mysterious Universe*, last modified 2016, accessed March 18, 2019, <https://mysteriousuniverse.org/2016/06/the-secret-society-how-a-19th-century-politician-planned-for-a-new-world-order/>.

Secret Society, the true aim and object whereof shall be for the extension of British rule throughout the world.”¹ In *Tragedy and Hope*, Quigley writes:

There does exist, and has existed for a generation, an international Anglophile network which operates, to some extent, in the way the radical Right believes the Communists act. In fact, this network, which we may identify as the Round Table Groups, has no aversion to cooperating with the Communists, or any other groups, and frequently does so. I know of the operations of this network because I have studied it for twenty years and was permitted for two years, in the early 1960s, to examine its papers and secret records. I have no aversion to it or to most of its instruments. I have objected, both in the past and recently, to a few of its policies...but in general, my chief difference of opinion is that it wishes to remain unknown, and I believe its role in history is significant enough to be known.²

. In 1918, a UK, US, and French military incursion inside Russia occurred, seizing the cities of Murmansk and Archangel to counter the Bolshevik threat.³ However, according to Dr. Bolton, after perusing the memoirs of General William S. Graves, leader of the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia, “it is apparent that whatever the Americans were doing in Russia during the Civil War, it was not for the purposes of fighting Bolshevism. Shortly before his execution by the Bolsheviks, Admiral Kolchak asked the same question as to what exactly the Allies had been doing in Russia?”⁴

¹ Steve Sailer, “Carroll Quigley’s Conspiracy Theory: The Milner Group,” *The Unz Review*, last modified 2015, accessed March 18, 2019, <http://www.unz.com/isteve/carroll-quigleys-conspiracy-theory-the-milner-group/>.

² Carroll Quigley, *Tragedy and Hope* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1966), 950.

³ Roger Parkinson, *Encyclopedia of Modern War* (London: Granada Publishing, 1979), 274.

⁴ Kerry Bolton, “The ‘Anglo-American conspiracy’,” accessed May 7, 2020, <https://www.kerrybolton.com/the-anglo-american-conspiracy/>

Powerful western elites embedded in the RTM were funding the same Marxist revolutionaries the official western governments opposed.¹ Following the February 1917 Revolution that overthrew the Russian Czar, journalist George Kennen wrote a New York Times article stating that the New York banking elite funded the Bolshevik movement.² Oxford University scholar Dr. Joseph Farrell also concurs.³

When Leon Trotsky, accompanied by Wall Street financiers, left New York in 1917 to return to Russia, he was arrested en-route in Canada with today's equivalent of nearly \$200 000 worth of gold in his possession and a passport issued by President Wilson.⁴ In his book *My Life*, Trotsky states that he was given a significant loan by a wealthy UK financier repayable after the overthrow of the Tsar. Russian General Arsene de Goulevitch identified Trotsky's benefactor as British Imperialist Lord Milner.⁵ The amount was approximately eleven million US dollars.⁶

¹ Berdj Kenadjian, *From Darkness to Light*, (Texas, Synergy Books, 2006), 87.

² Iain Davis, "New World Order War Profits," *In this Together*, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://in-this-together.com/new-world-order-war-profits/>

³ Joseph Farrell, "Dark Journalist And Dr. Joseph Farrell Deep State Genesis Revealed! UFO File FDR JFK Trump McCarthy," accessed May 4, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KyneaS2MXzA>

⁴ Iain Davis, "New World Order War Profits," *In this Together*, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://in-this-together.com/new-world-order-war-profits/>

⁵ The Duran, "The West has always sought Russia's destruction," 2016, accessed May 3, 2020, <https://theduran.com/heres-how-the-west-has-always-sought-russias-destruction/>

⁶ KP-TTS, "Who helped Lenin make a revolution. Who financed the October Revolution? All buy to establish a new order," KP-TTS, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://kp-tts.ru/en/kto-pomog-leninu-sdelat-revoljuciyu-kto-finansiroval.html>

Around the same time as Trotsky's return, Lenin, who was in exile in Switzerland, also received financial backing from the German Kaiser to travel back to Russia.¹ The German politician who approved his journey was Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, a descendant of the Bethmann banking family, which achieved immense wealth during the pre-First World War years.² Chairman of the 1917 Russian Provisional Government, Alexander Kerensky, claims Lenin received 80 million gold marks from the Kaiser. Lenin never denied that he received money from the Germans.³

Years after the revolution, the grandson of Jacob Schiff, head of the investment banking firm of Kuhn, Loeb, and Company, "admitted that his grandfather had given about \$20 million for the triumph of communism in Russia."⁴ Delphine Slotten's thesis cites a document from the Army Intelligence Bureau in the US Department of State's Archive (Decimal File No. 861.4016/325), stating its belief that Jacob Schiff helped Trotsky to bring about a revolutionary change in Russia.⁵ William Boyce Thompson, a director of the New York Federal Reserve, also organized and significantly funded a so-

¹ Anne Applebaum, "100 years later, Bolshevism is back. And we should be worried," *Washington Post*, accessed May 3, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/bolshevism-then-and-now/2017/11/06/830aeaa-bf41-11e7-959c-fe2b598d8c00_story.html

² Anthony Sutton, "Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution," accessed May 3, 2020, https://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/Sutton_Wall_Street_and_the_bolshevik_revolution-5.pdf

³ KP-TTS, "Who helped Lenin make a revolution. Who financed the October Revolution? All buy to establish a new order," KP-TTS, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://kp-tts.ru/en/kto-pomog-leninu-sdelat-revolyciyu-kto-finansiroval.html>

⁴ Jim McGregor and Jerry Docherty, "The Rape Of Russia 3: Trotsky's Secret Benefactors," *First World War Hidden History*, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://firstworldwarhiddenhistory.wordpress.com/2017/10/31/the-rape-of-russia-3-troskys-secret-benefactors/>

⁵ Delphine Slotten, "Why did Jacob H. Schiff decide to financially sponsor the Russian Revolutions of 1917?" 2010, accessed May 4, 2020, <https://www.schiffnaturepreserve.org/JacobSchiffEssay.pdf>

called Red Cross Mission to Russia, by which further funding came from the US company International Harvester, donating \$200,000. Thompson's assistant, Cornelius Kelleher, said it was "nothing but a mask for business interests."¹ Professor Sutton states, "the Wall Street project in Russia in 1917 used the Red Cross Mission as its operational vehicle."²

In the 1934 *Congressional Record*, Congressman Louis McFadden, the former Chairman of the Banking and Currency Committee for more than ten years, stated that New York financiers "fomented and instigated the Russian Revolution."³ According to Griffin, Round Table agents were everywhere in Russia during and before the revolution. He cites one report stating that:

British agents were seen handing out 25-rouble notes to the men at the Pavlovski regiment just a few hours before it mutinied against its officers and sided with the revolution. The subsequent publication of various memoirs and documents made it clear that this funding was provided by Milner and channeled through Sir George Buchanan, who was the British Ambassador to Russia at that time.⁴

Professor Quigley wrote, "it must be recognized that the power of these energetic Left-wingers exercised was never their own power or Communist power but was

¹ Kerry Bolton, "Wall Street & the November 1917 Bolshevik Revolution," *Counter-Currents Publishing*, accessed May 3, 2020, <https://www.counter-currents.com/2013/10/wall-street-and-the-november-1917-bolshevik-revolution/>?

² Anthony C. Sutton, "Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution," accessed May 3, 2020, file:///E:/Sutton_Wall_Street_and_the_bolshevik_revolution-5.pdf

³ Louis McFadden, "Congressman McFadden on the Federal Reserve Corporation Remarks in Congress, 1934." Reprinted by permission 1978 Arizona Caucus Club, accessed May 5, 2020, <http://home.hiwaay.net/~becraft/mcfadden.html>

⁴ G. Eedward Griffin, *The Creature from Jekyll Island*, 3rd edition (California: American Publishing, 1998), 274

ultimately the power of the international coterie.”¹ Nazism also received funding from Anglo/American financiers. According to the author John Strausbaugh, the Bank of International Settlements (BIS), “assisted by Wall Street Bankers, played a major but little-known role in funding the Nazi Wehrmacht.”² The UK *Guardian* newspaper “obtained confirmation from newly discovered files in the US National Archives that a firm of which Prescott Bush (grandfather of President George W. Bush) was a director, was involved with the financial architects of Nazism.”³ According to Dr. Rubstov, “the close financial and economic cooperation of Anglo-American and Nazi business circles was the background against which, in the ’30s, a policy of appeasement led to World War II.”⁴

A former World Bank Senior Counsel, Karen Hudes, corroborates much of Quigley's findings. She claims that the entire world financial system is controlled “by a small group of corrupt, power-hungry figures centered around the privately owned U.S. Federal Reserve. The network has seized control of the media to cover up its crimes, too.”⁵ Whistleblower John Perkins makes similar claims to those of Hudes in his book

¹ Carroll Quigley, *Tragedy and Hope* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1966), 954.

² Anthony Isola, “Hitler’s Bankers,” *Tony Isola*, accessed May 3, 2020, <https://tonyisola.com/2019/02/hitlers-bankers/>

³ Duncan Campbell, “How Bush's grandfather helped Hitler's rise to power,” *The Guardian*, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/25/usa.secondworldwar>

⁴ Yuri Rubstov, “History of World War II: Nazi Germany was Financed by the Federal Reserve and the Bank of England,” *Centre fo Research on Globalization*, accessed May 6, 2020, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/history-of-world-war-ii-nazi-germany-was-financed-by-the-federal-reserve-and-the-bank-of-england/5530318>

⁵ Michael Snyder, “World Bank Whistleblower Reveals How the Global Elite Rules the World,” *Centre For Research on Globalization*, accessed May 7, 2020, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/world-bank-whistleblower-reveals-how-the-global-elite-rule-the-world/5353130>

Confessions of an Economic Hitman.¹ Trump's adumbrations about a deep state plot to undermine him are somewhat vindicated after former Acting CIA Director John McLaughlin indicated in a 2019 interview "that he was grateful for the "deep state's" role in prompting the impeachment inquiry into President Trump."²

Professor Sutton believes that "these wealthy people are installing communist and fascist dictatorships because they are simple to manage in a global government. The synthesis sought by the Establishment is called the New World Order. Without controlled conflict, this New World Order will not come about."³

To summarize, the secret society founded by Rhodes eventually morphed into the Round Table Groups. It included an association of the leaders from the central banks of numerous countries who formed the BIS. Perhaps President JFK was trying to warn people about its existence in his speech before his murder.⁴ Recently deceased banker David Rockefeller was a globalist and supporter of a one-world government. During a speech in 1991, he articulated:

We are grateful to the Washington Post, The New York Times, Time Magazine, and other publications whose directors have attended our meetings and respected their promises of discretion for almost forty

¹ John Perkins, *The New Confessions of an Economic Hit Man: How America Really Took over the World*. (London: Ebury Press, 2018), 2.

² Sam Dorman, "Ex-acting CIA boss expresses gratitude for 'deep state' involvement in impeachment inquiry," *Fox News*, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://www.foxnews.com/media/mclaughlin-deep-state-impeachment>

³ Mark Rich, *The Hidden Evil The Financial Elite s ' Covert War Against The Civilian Population*, 2nd edition, (Morrisville: Lulu Enterprises, Inc., 2008), 39.

⁴ JFK Library, "The President and the Press: Address before the American Newspaper Publishers Association, April 27, 1961," accessed March 18, 2019, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/archives/other-resources/john-f-kennedy-speeches/american-newspaper-publishers-association-19610427>.

years. It would have been impossible for us to develop our plan for the world if we had been subject to the bright lights of publicity during those years. But the world is now more sophisticated and prepared to march toward a world government. The supranational sovereignty of an intellectual elite and world bankers is surely preferable to the national auto-determination practiced in past centuries.¹

In his 2002 memoirs, Rockefeller also admitted involvement in a secret cabal working towards a one-world government.² As noted by many experts, the latter appears to be the same one-world government that Rhodes and the RTM ideologues have desired.³ The goal to achieve a NWO amongst numerous elites may not necessarily be the stereotypical view of a secret cabal of power-hungry individuals plotting behind the scenes, although no-one can be sure. Instead, it will likely be the networking of influential like-minded people in high places seeking to achieve a common goal.⁴ They do not have absolute power, too, as many conspiracy theorists claim; otherwise, we would not see the current dispute between Russia and the West. President Putin seems to be against the idea of world government.

¹ Calee Brown, "David Rockefeller's Chilling 1991 Speech At A Bilderberg Meeting," *Collective Evolution*, last modified 2016, accessed March 19, 2019, <https://www.collective-evolution.com/2017/03/21/the-new-world-order-david-rockefellers-chilling-1991-speech-at-a-bilderberg-meeting/>.

² Open Government Brainstorm, "What Do You Think of This Idea? 'David Rockefeller's Book 'Memoirs' Admits Secretly Conspiring for a NOW," *Ideascale, OpenGov - Open Government Brainstorm*, last modified 2008, accessed March 19, 2019, <https://opengov.ideascale.com/a/dtd/David-Rockefeller-s-book-Memoirs-admits-secretly-conspiring-for-a-NWO/4007-4049>.

³ Jim Macgregor and Gerry Docherty, "The Secret Elite & the Origins of the New World Order," *New Dawn : The World's Most Unusual Magazine*, April 23, 2016, accessed March 19, 2019, <https://www.newdawnmagazine.com/articles/the-secret-elite-the-origins-of-the-new-world-order>. Please also see, (Via Jesse, "Cecil Rhodes and the Dream of a New World Order Presided Over by an Anglo-American Establishment," *The Burning Platform*, May 11, 2017, accessed March 19, 2019, <https://www.theburningplatform.com/2017/05/11/cecil-rhodes-and-the-dream-of-a-new-world-order-presided-over-by-an-anglo-american-establishment/>).

⁴ D.L. Cuddy, "D.L. Cuddy: Chronological History of the New World Order," *Constitution Society*, last modified 2019, accessed March 19, 2019, https://www.constitution.org/col/cuddy_nwo.htm.

d) Is Russia a Bulwark Against the NWO?

In a documentary interview with film director Oliver Stone, Putin expressed his disdain for the American neocons, informing him that whoever won the 2016 Election, nothing significant would change regarding Washington's foreign policy.¹ He has made numerous critical statements about the West. Putin said, “the unipolar world refers to a world in which there is one master, one sovereign, one center of authority, one center of force, one center of decision-making. This is pernicious - at its basis, there can be no moral foundations for modern civilization.”²

Russia has tolerated NATO expansion on its western fringe and the spread of American culture in many of its regions. Compared to the West, its economy is relatively weak, but with its vast nuclear arsenal and permanence on the UNSC, it can punch above its weight.³ Titles like ‘liberal authoritarianism’ and ‘managed democracy’ are western narratives for the system that Putin is trying to create. Theorists describe the latter as managed capitalism against a backdrop of Russian nationalism.⁴ In 2017, Russian

¹ Ken Rapoza, “In Latest Interview With Oliver Stone, Putin Airs It Out On Neocons, Hillary,” *Forbes*, last modified 2017, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2017/06/14/in-latest-interview-with-oliver-stone-putin-air-s-it-out-on-neocons-hillary/#31c4a4393d95.kj>

² Michael S King, “The Talented Mr. Putin,” n.d., https://library.abundanthope.org/index_htm_files/The-Talented-Mr-Putin-Sample3.pdf.

³ Russian military spending is only equivalent to one-tenth of Washington’s in real terms and its GDP in 2016 was approximately 10 per-cent of the US too, (Jacob L Shapiro, “A Tale of Two Economies: Russia and the US,” *Geopolitical Futures*, last modified 2016, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://geopoliticalfutures.com/a-tale-of-two-economies-russia-and-the-us/>).

⁴ Mike Hayes, “Russia: Putin’s Place in the New World Order,” *Socialist Review*, last modified 2005, accessed March 21, 2019, <http://socialistreview.org.uk/296/russia-putins-place-new-world-order>.

Foreign Secretary Sergei Lavrov said: “I hope that [the world] will choose a democratic world order – a post-West one – in which each country is defined by its sovereignty.”¹

On the other hand, the idea of a one-world government may not necessarily be a bad thing. Environmental issues, trade tariffs, etc., are many issues that could benefit if a uniformed worldwide policy existed. However, a significant danger may exist, as massive power will rest with those controlling it. Therefore, mechanisms are required to enhance the democratic process, enabling citizens to control their elected representatives strictly, perhaps through instant recall or limited terms in office.

Russia seems aware of the globalist challenge and is acting as a buttress against it. There is broad agreement in western political and journalistic circles that Moscow intends to undermine the US-led liberal international order.² Western analysts criticize the Kremlin for promoting conservative values on ideas such as same-sex marriage.³ Nevertheless, the West should not necessarily see this as threatening, as this social conservatism is, in essence, only a means: something that Moscow uses, not something it considers crucial as an end in itself. Social conservatism is not to Putin’s Russia in 2017

¹ Al Jazeera News, “Sergey Lavrov: I Hope World Chooses Post-West Order,” *Al Jazeera News*, last modified 2017, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/sergey-lavrov-hope-world-chooses-post-west-order-170218134909381.html>.

² Al Jazeera News, “Sergey Lavrov: I Hope World Chooses Post-West Order,” *Al Jazeera News*, last modified 2017, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/sergey-lavrov-hope-world-chooses-post-west-order-170218134909381.html>.

³ Brian Whitmore, “Vladimir Putin, Conservative Icon,” *The Atlantic*, last modified 2013, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/12/vladimir-putin-conservative-icon/282572/>.

what Communism was to Lenin's Russia in 1917, and World Revolution is not the ultimate goal.¹

The Kremlin's imperialistic past gives ammunition to anti-Putin critics that claim Russia is a revanchist power, basing their arguments on "a confluence of historical, cultural, and domestic political factors {driving} Russia's revisionist attitudes and actions."² Many western commentators believe this, referencing Russian policies in Ukraine and Georgia. They perceive Moscow as a disruptive power, trying to sow destruction in Western-led institutions like the EU through various media outlets like RT News and by allegedly interfering in western elections. Theorists like Krauthammer criticize Russia for forging strong alliances with what they perceive to be anti-democratic countries like China, Iran, Venezuela, and Syria, viewing this as a type of neocolonialism.³ Experts like Kagan accuse Putin of restoring the old Soviet empire and criticize Western impotence for not acting stronger against him.⁴ Those who hold the revanchist theory believe the West must take more robust action against Moscow through diplomatic isolation and economic sanctions to curb Russian power.

¹ Kadri Liik, "What Does Russia Want?," *European Council on Foreign Relations*, last modified 2017, accessed March 23, 2019, https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_what_does_russia_want_7297.

² Elias Gotz, "Russia and the Question of World Order," *European Politics and Society*, last modified 2018, Vol 20, No 2, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23745118.2018.1545181>.

³ Charles Krauthammer, "The Price of Powerlessness," *National Review*, August 18, 2016, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.nationalreview.com/2016/08/foreign-policy-russia-iran-challenge-united-states/>.

⁴ Robert Kagan, "Robert Kagan: Russia Was Weakening the World Order Long before 2016," *Twincities.Com*, last modified 2018, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.twincities.com/2018/08/13/robert-kagan-russia-was-weakening-the-world-order-long-before-2016/>.

Other experts like Professor Cohen differ from the revanchist viewpoint, believing that Putin's actions are purely defensive and explained by numerous external factors that drive the Kremlin's behavior, such as NATO expansionism, citing the West's aggressive behavior that forces these confrontations between the superpowers.¹ Since the Soviet demise, many senior Russian officials were hopeful that a new era of cooperation with the West would occur. However, due to Western intransigence, Moscow rescinded the hope of building a cooperative relationship with the West.²

Another group of scholars like Krastev & Holmes describes the Kremlin's policy as "aggressive isolationism."³ Due to economic weakness, Moscow finds it challenging to override global institutions like the EU and their various international arrangements. Although Russia does not want to promote a particular ideology on anyone, this does not necessarily entail that it will ingratiate itself into the current global system but become somewhat of a spoiler instead. Russian elites fear that further westernization and political reform could undermine their power. Therefore, the ultimate aim is to inoculate themselves from Western influence.⁴

¹ Geoffrey Roberts, "War with Russia? By Stephen Cohen Review: A Stern Warning," *Irish Times*, last modified 2019, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/war-with-russia-by-stephen-cohen-review-a-stern-warning-1.3738513>.

² Elias Gotz, "Russia and the Question of World Order," *European Politics and Society, European Politics and Society*, last modified Vol 1, No 2 2018, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23745118.2018.1545181>.

³ Ivan Krastev and Steven Holmes, "Russia's Aggressive Isolationism," *The American Interest*, last modified 2019, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2014/12/10/russias-aggressive-isolationism/>.

⁴ Elias Gotz, "Russia and the Question of World Order," *European Politics and Society, European Politics and Society*, last modified Vol 1, No 2 2018, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23745118.2018.1545181>.

Thus, Russian geopolitical adventurism is “driven largely by its leadership’s deep anxiety about the country’s domestic weaknesses.”¹ Some commentators even argue that the Syrian and Ukrainian incursions were aggressive nationalistic actions intended to serve as a public distraction against Russia’s troubles at home.² Nevertheless, there seems to be little justification for these arguments. Russia has multiple pro-western liberal-type parties that have fielded electoral candidates with little success.³ Therefore, we can surmise that most of its citizens support the status quo and reject further westernization.

Evidence suggests that Moscow prefers to work within the existing structures to solve problems, an approach we see on many issues, such as Syria, where it has continuously tried to use diplomatic means and repeatedly refers to the West as its partner. Nevertheless, Moscow visualizes itself as a superpower and wishes to have its standing as a Great Power accepted internationally.⁴ Therefore, it does not relish Western disrespectfulness and feels it has a right to be involved in crucial decision-making processes.⁵ Putin said he believes Washington sees Russia as a threat because it is an

¹ Ivan Krastev and Steven Holmes, “Russia’s Aggressive Isolationism,” *The American Interest*, last modified 2019, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2014/12/10/russias-aggressive-isolationism/>.

² Lilia Shevtsova, “The Kremlin Is Winning,” *The American Interest*, February 12, 2015, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2015/02/12/the-kremlin-is-winning/>.

³ BBC News website, “Russia Parliament Elections: How the Parties Line Up,” last modified 2012, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15939801>.

⁴ Hanna Smith, “Russian Greatpowerness: Foreign Policy, the Two Chechen Wars and International Organisations” (Helsinki, 2014), accessed January 3, 2018, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/33724422.pdf>.

⁵ Robert L. Strauss, “McFaul and Putin: The Backstory,” *Stanford Magazine*, July 19, 2018, accessed March 22, 2019, <https://medium.com/stanford-magazine/the-backstory-of-stanford-political-scientist-michael-mcfauls-ambassadorship-to-russia-26dc368870c>.

economic competitor and argues that this view is mistaken because a strong Russian economy would benefit the world economy.¹

Putin, as a nationalist first and foremost, obviously prioritizes Russian interests irrespective of any political ideology. Therefore, we can say that in this respect, Moscow is a barrier to globalism and the NWO. His authoritarian patriarchy was a necessary antidote to the turbulent Yeltsin years that left Russia in tatters and engulfed by western propaganda.² While Putin is hostile to many Western policies, Moscow probably does not want to destroy the existing globalist system but significantly reform it instead, hoping to push the West into a moderate stance on numerous issues. Emanating from the historical baggage associated with the Cold War, Moscow is bound to be suspicious of any form of ideology that the West propagates.

¹ Steve Gutterman, "Putin Bullish On Russian Economy, Blasts West In Q&A Session," *Radio Free Europe*, last modified 2018, accessed March 22, 2019, <https://www.rferl.org/a/putin-hold-annual-question-and-answer-session-june-7/29277401.html>.

² Anne-Marie Slaughter, "Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin Want to Create a New World Order," *Financial Times*, 2018, <https://www.ft.com/content/a5762736-8c01-11e8-affd-da9960227309>.

IS CHINA AN IDEOLOGICAL THREAT?

a) China's Economy

In 2019, journalist Ron Insana stated that a new Cold War was already occurring between the US and China.¹ Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is an economic development campaign to boost trade and trigger economic growth across Asia, Africa, and beyond. Numerous theorists criticize it as "a state-backed campaign for global dominance."² A report by the Standard Charter Bank predicts that Beijing will soon supplant the US as the world's biggest economy and exporter.³ Many analysts believe its growth threatens numerous US business sectors, particularly in manufacturing, seeing it as a competitive threat blamed for western wage stagnation, bankruptcies, and unemployment. China's inexhaustive supply of cheap labor is allegedly causing firms to relocate to China. It also receives criticism for adopting unfair trade practices at the

¹ Ron Insana, "Ron Insana: The Market Doesn't Realize This Is More than a Trade War — It's a New Cold War," *CNBC*, last modified May 24, 2019, accessed October 25, 2019, <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/05/24/ron-insana-the-market-doesnt-realize-this-is-more-than-just-a-trade-war-its-a-new-cold-war.html>.

² Lily Kuo and Niko Kommenda, "What Is China's Belt and Road Initiative?," *The Guardian*, last modified 2020, accessed January 12, 2020, <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/ng-interactive/2018/jul/30/what-china-belt-road-initiative-silk-road-explainer>.

³ Stephen Johnson, "China to Overtake U.S. as World's Top Economy in 2020," *Big Think*, last modified 2019, accessed November 20, 2019, <https://bigthink.com/politics-current-affairs/china-worlds-biggest-economy-2020>.

expense of its competitors. Its growth has also put pressure on the world's depleted energy reserves, helping to increase the price of oil.¹

A report in 2018 by the Whitehouse Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy states that “the Chinese government is implementing a comprehensive, long-term industrial strategy to ensure its global dominance. Beijing’s ultimate goal is for domestic companies to replace foreign companies as designers and manufacturers of key technology and products first at home, then abroad.”² China’s economic policy, according to a CFR report, “relies on discriminatory treatment of foreign investment, forced technology transfers, intellectual property theft, and cyber espionage.”³

In 2018, both Beijing and Washington exchanged themselves in a series of tit-for-tat trade tariffs, with the WTO and International Monetary Fund (IMF) warning that this may create a global trade crisis.⁴ A year later, “the Trump administration made good on its threat to raise tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese exports from 10% to 25%,”

¹ Craig K. Elwell and Marc Labonte, “Is China a Threat to the U.S. Economy?,” *ChinaFile*, last modified January 13, 2007, accessed May 14, 2019, <http://www.chinafile.com/library/reports/china-threat-us-economy>.

² The Whitehouse, “How China’s Economic Aggression Threatens the Technologies and Intellectual Property of the United States and the World,” *White House Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy* (2018), accessed March 3, 2019, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/final-China-Technology-Report-6.18.18-PDF.pdf>.

³ James McBride and Andrew Chatzy, “Is ‘Made in China 2025’ a Threat to Global Trade?,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, last modified 2019, accessed May 14, 2019, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/made-in-china-2025-threat-global-trade>.

⁴ BBC News website, “A Quick Guide to the US-China Trade War,” May 14, 2019, sec. Business, accessed May 14, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-45899310>.

marking a sharp escalation in tension between the world's two largest economies.”¹ China retaliated with new sanctions on Washington in June 2019.²

Professor Mahbubani claims, “China’s successful economic development has not been accompanied by the liberal democratic reform Western governments, and particularly the United States, had expected; and that China has become too aggressive in its dealings with other nations.”³ Is there any truth in the allegations of a Chinese economic threat?

Beckley argues there is not because it “is developing in a far more challenging international environment; as a result, its economy will remain more compatible than competitive with America's for the foreseeable future.”⁴ Businessman David Moon concurs, arguing that the threat is overblown.⁵ Professor Wolf blames the US for the tension with Beijing. He claims that the Whitehouse is trying to force the Chinese to make fundamental changes to their economy, which they will not do.⁶

¹ Rishi Iyengar, “US Tariffs Are Reigniting the Trade War with China. What Happens Next?,” *CNN*, last modified 2019, accessed May 14, 2019, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/10/economy/us-tariffs-china-trade-war/index.html>.

² BBC News website, “China Hits Back in Trade War with US,” May 14, 2019, sec. Business, accessed May 15, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-48253002>.

³ Kishore Mahbubani, “Criticism What China Threat?,” *Harper’s Magazine*, last modified 2019, accessed May 15, 2019, <https://harpers.org/archive/2019/02/what-china-threat/>.

⁴ Michael Beckley, “How Big a Competitive Threat Is China, Really?,” *Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs*, last modified 2012, accessed May 14, 2019, <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/how-big-competitive-threat-china-really>.

⁵ David Moon, “China’s Economic Threat Is Misunderstood,” *Knoxnews*, last modified 2018, accessed May 15, 2019, <https://www.knoxnews.com/story/money/business/2018/12/13/david-moon-china-economic-threat-misunderstood/2292649002/>.

⁶ Richard Wolf (London: RT News, October 5, 2019).

Professor Beinart criticized Trump's approach to China, arguing it places too much blame for the trade war on Beijing rather than Washington. He believes the political pressure to punish China comes from Democrat and Republican parties and others. Senior politicians like Bernie Sanders, Mike Pence, Marc Rubio, and Elizabeth Warren have frequently criticized Beijing.¹ Beinart also says:

The "painful adjustments" that America must make to accommodate China are more painful because the United States government has done so little to cushion Americans from the dislocation caused by China's economic rise. If Americans who lost their jobs didn't also lose their health care; if they had access to generous government wage subsidies, retraining programs, and even guaranteed federal jobs; if paying for college didn't plunge them and their children into debt—then the political incentive to scapegoat Beijing might not be as great. Over the past two decades, American politicians have not proved weak and inert in responding to China's real and imagined misdeeds. They have proved weak and inert in responding to their own citizens' needs. The reckoning Washington requires is not with China. It's with itself.²

US debt to China in February 2019 amounted to \$1.13 trillion, making Beijing Washington's biggest creditor.³ It would be naive to think that no element in the Chinese ruling class are not keen on the West and would like to see the dollar replaced by the Yuan as the world's reserve currency.⁴ Nevertheless, if China wanted to hurt the US, it

¹ Peter Beinart, "U.S. Trade Hawks Exaggerate China's Threat," *The Atlantic*, last modified 2019, accessed May 14, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/04/us-trade-hawks-exaggerate-chinas-threat/587536/>.

² Ibid

³ Kimberly Amadeo, "How Much Does the US Owe China?," *The Balance*, last modified 2019, accessed May 15, 2019, <https://www.thebalance.com/u-s-debt-to-china-how-much-does-it-own-3306355>.

⁴ BBC News website, "China's Dilemma over US Debt Holding," *BBC News*, last modified 2019, accessed May 15, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/business-24559267/china-s-dilemma-over-us-debt-holding>.

could ask for repayment, but doing so would cause the dollar to crash and significantly damage both the world economy and itself.¹

Therefore, seeing an American collapse is not really in China's interest. This, in itself, is a good reason to suggest that China is not an imminent threat. It, too, is not necessarily immune from the problems of western free-market economics. Its economy has slowed recently, and according to Professor Rogoff, in 2016, it was not in good shape.² It reached a standstill in early 2020, and the Covid-19 situation likely exacerbated its economic problems. Therefore, China is in no position to threaten the West in the short-term, seeing itself as merely a competitor. On a positive note, Washington and Beijing signed phase one of their trade deal in January 2020.

Theorists like Morgenthau argue that a rising economic power will naturally wish to challenge the existing state of affairs. In contrast, instead of concentrating on power trajectory, Huntington sees a potential clash with Beijing from a cultural standpoint.³ On the other hand, Keohane's theory of complex interdependence suggests that China's integration into the world economy increases the likelihood of it wishing to cooperate with other states instead of relying on military force. Recently, Chinese theorists have

¹ Karen Yeung, "Will China Use Its US\$1.2 Trillion of US Debt as Firepower to Fight the Trade War?," *South China Morning Post*, last modified 2019, accessed May 15, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3009752/will-china-use-its-us12-trillion-us-debt-firepower-fight>.

² Ben Chapman, "Harvard Professor Explains Why We Should Be Worried about China," *The Independent*, last modified September 26, 2016, accessed May 15, 2019, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/china-economy-slowing-debt-bubble-biggest-threat-harvard-professor-ken-rogoff-a7330326.html>.

³ Baogang Guo "China's Peaceful Rise: Peace Through Integration," accessed May 3, 2020, https://www.academia.edu/4105706/Chinas_Peaceful_Rise_Peace_Through_Integration

postulated the importance of incorporating traditional Chinese thinking into mainstream IR theory, “which is seen as privileging a Western-centric reading of international affairs.”¹

Any conflict between the West and Beijing would be catastrophic for both sides. As stated by Guo, IR theories typically “share a common belief that a nation will be more willing to use peaceful means to resolve conflicts with other nations if it sees that it is in its national interests to cooperate.”² Since the collapse of the USSR, China has relied on its use of ‘soft power’ concerning its financial investments in third-world countries. Unlike the West, it has not used military force against another state. Numerous theorists argue that the more significant threat is not the rise of China but the Western reaction to its elevation. As stated by Martin Jacques:

The rise of illiberalism in America is not an accident. It coincides with the dawning recognition of American decline and a desperate desire to prevent it. It should be remembered that the heyday of Western democracy corresponded with the zenith of Western hegemony. But can the West’s democracy survive the decline of Western global dominance? If the West is able to retain and renew its best values, in a world in which it enjoys a much diminished role and China is predominant, such a world will be the better for it.³

In 2017, China asked some new countries to join BRICS and pledged a massive cash injection to the project. The founding of BRICS in 2009 occurred “in the context of

¹ Benjamin Tze Ern Ho, “Chinese Thinking about International Relations From Theory to Practice,” *NBR*, accessed May 3, 2020, <https://www.nbr.org/publication/chinese-thinking-about-international-relations-from-theory-to-practice/>

² Baogang Guo “China's Peaceful Rise: Peace Through Integration,” accessed May 3, 2020, https://www.academia.edu/4105706/Chinas_Peaceful_Rise_Peace_Through_Integration

³ Martin Jacques, “Can the West’s democracy survive China’s rise to dominance?” *The Economist*, accessed May 3, 2020, <https://www.economist.com/open-future/2018/06/14/can-the-wests-democracy-survive-chinas-rise-to-dominance>

a real and continuing power shift in the international system from the developed industrialized world towards emerging market economies.”¹ According to some theorists, BRICS signals a “growing disgruntlement among developing nations with the largely US-dominated policies applied by both the IMF {International Monetary Fund} and the World Bank.”² It ultimately desires “to develop a worldwide economic system that does not depend on the US dollar, {and} to be independent of the IMF and the World Bank.”³ Not since the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement “and its demand for a New International Economic Order in the 1970s has the world seen such a coordinated challenge to western supremacy in the world economy from developing countries.”⁴

Ambassador Ivashentsov stated, “BRICS members believe that the absolute monopoly in world political and economic decision-making (whoever has it – the West or the East) would only lead to global degradation and deterioration. In order for the world to follow the development path, we need, on the one hand, competition and, on the other, the cooperation of all international actors. That is what the BRICS push for – building a

¹ Leslie Maasdorp, “As the BRICS New Development Bank Turns Two, What Has It Achieved?,” *World Economic Forum*, last modified 2017, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/09/brics-new-development-bank-turns-two-what-has-been-achieved/>.

² J. Gurbag Singh, “Is the BRICS a Threat to United States Supremacy in the World? Why Is a BRICS Bank a Good Alternative to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank?” *Quora*, last modified 2016, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.quora.com/Is-the-BRICS-a-threat-to-United-States-supremacy-in-the-world-Why-is-a-BRICS-Bank-a-good-alternative-to-the-International-Monetary-Fund-IMF-and-the-World-Bank>.

³ Alexander Wolfheze, “Why Does the West Hate Putin?,” *Geopolitica.RU*, last modified March 9, 2015, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://www.geopolitica.ru/en/287-why-does-the-west-hate-putin.html>.

⁴ Radhika Desai, “The Brics Are Building a Challenge to Western Economic Supremacy,” *The Guardian*, last modified 2013, accessed April 14, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/02/brics-challenge-western-supremacy>.

polycentric, more democratic, fair and, consequently, a safe world.”¹ Washington perceives BRICS as a threat because it interferes with the current balance of forces and reduces the power of similar pro-Western institutions like the World Bank and IMF.

b) China/Russia Alliance

In 1997, President Carter’s National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, said that long-term US interests would be most threatened by a “grand coalition” of China and Russia united not by ideology but by complementary grievances.² In 2007, Russian and Chinese officials described their relationship as the best it had ever been.³ Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (1998–2004) Igor Ivanov claimed in 2018 that the two nations were continually developing closer ties and cooperating on several issues.⁴

Rolland states that despite their suspicions, “over the medium term, a Sino-Russian condominium over Eurasia will probably continue to take shape.”⁵ Nevertheless,

¹ Ksenia Zubacheva, “The BRICS and the West: Partners or Rivals?,” *Russia Direct*, last modified 2015, accessed April 15, 2019, <https://russia-direct.org/debates/brics-and-west-partners-or-rivals>.

² James S. Dorsey, “The Future of the China-Russia Alliance,” *Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies*, last modified April 24, 2019, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://besacenter.org/perspectives-papers/future-china-russia-alliance/>.

³ Bjoern Alexander Deuben, “China-Russia Relations after the Cold War: The Process of Institution-Building and Its Impact on the Evolution of Bilateral Cooperation” (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2013).

⁴ Igor Ivanov, “Russia, China and the New World Order,” *RIAC*, last modified 2018, accessed May 13, 2019, <https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytcs-and-comments/analytcs/russia-china-and-the-new-world-order/>.

⁵ Nadege Rolland, “A China–Russia Condominium over Eurasia,” *IJSS*, last modified 2019, accessed May 18, 2019, <https://www.ijss.org/publications/survival/2019/survival-global-politics-and-strategy-februarymarch-2019/611-02-rolland>.

according to Aron, “reports of a Russian-Chinese alliance have been greatly exaggerated.”¹ Jim Mattis, ex-US Defense Secretary, differs from Brzezinski’s 1997 comments, believing that “China has more in common with Pacific Ocean nations and the United States and India than they have in common with Russia.”² Even some senior Chinese officials share Mattis’ viewpoint too.³ After speaking with numerous Chinese and Russian officials, Gabuev argues that the relationship between China and Russia will likely become closer, and Moscow’s dependency on Beijing will increase. He believes China is keen to keep Putin’s regime in place to allow cover for its confrontation with the West, and Moscow is eager to trade with China to reduce its trade dependence on the EU.⁴

Since World War Two, the Russian/Chinese relationship has been tense for many reasons.⁵ One expert believes that the most significant dilemma for the Whitehouse is the increased security cooperation between Moscow and Beijing because the US military already worries over its potential to fight on its own, either in Europe or Asia. A war

¹ Leon Aron, “Are Russia and China Really Forming an Alliance?,” April 4, 2019, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-04-04/are-russia-and-china-really-forming-alliance>.

² James Dorsey, “Eurasia’s Great Game and the Future of the China-Russia Alliance,” *LobeLog*, last modified April 17, 2019, accessed May 18, 2019, <https://lobelog.com/eurasias-great-game-and-the-future-of-the-china-russia-alliance/>.

³ Ibid

⁴ Alexander Gabuev, “A Soft Alliance? Russia-China Relations After the Ukraine Crisis,” *ecfr.eu* (2015), accessed February 2, 2019, https://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR126_-_A_Soft_Alliance_Russia-China_Relations_After_the_Ukraine_Crisis.pdf.

⁵ Anatoly Karlin, “A Very Brief History of China-Russia Relations,” *Anatoly Karlin*, last modified May 30, 2014, accessed May 19, 2019, <https://akarlin.com/2014/05/a-very-brief-history-of-chinese-russian-relations/>.

with both at once would prove incredibly difficult.¹ At the moment, there is no official alliance between Moscow and Beijing.² However, believing their strategic partnership will fail due to their complicated history is to argue from a preconceived opinion rather than fact.³ Western threats to Russia, China, (and others) will likely heighten cooperation between the two, something that Washington fails to understand. Dorsey says, “the official Russian assessment would counter Mr. Mattis’ thesis and support Mr. Brzezinski’s fears that continue to have a significant following in Washington.”⁴ The former Director of National Intelligence, Daniel R. Coats, believes China and Russia present numerous economic, political, and military challenges to the West. He believes that they will collaborate to counter western objectives, taking advantage of rising doubts in some places about the liberal democratic model.⁵

Michael Klare offers skepticism regarding claims that Beijing and Moscow intend to undermine the existing world order. Instead, he feels they wish to make it less American-centric. Irrespective of Russia and China’s policies, Klare states that Washington is

¹ Peter Apps, “As the Western Alliance Crumbles, Russia and China Are Moving Closer Together,” *The New Statesman*, last modified 2019, accessed May 19, 2019, <https://www.newstatesman.com/world/asia/2019/04/western-alliance-crumbles-russia-and-china-are-moving-closer-together>.

² Pavel K. Baev, “China-Russia: A Pseudo-Alliance in Limbo,” *Policy Forum*, January 9, 2019, accessed May 19, 2019, <https://www.policyforum.net/china-russia-a-pseudo-alliance-in-limbo/>.

³ Anatoly Karlin, “A Very Brief History of China-Russia Relations,” *Anatoly Karlin*, last modified May 30, 2014, accessed May 19, 2019, <https://akarlin.com/2014/05/a-very-brief-history-of-chinese-russian-relations/>.

⁴ James Dorsey, “Eurasia’s Great Game and the Future of the China-Russia Alliance,” *LobeLog*, last modified April 17, 2019, accessed May 18, 2019, <https://lobelog.com/eurasias-great-game-and-the-future-of-the-china-russia-alliance/>.

⁵ Ibid

committed to “a three-front geopolitical struggle to resist Chinese and Russian advances in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.”¹ Karaganov & Suslov believe that “Russia, China, India, and the other so-called new powers are not engaged in ideological expansion and are generally content with the direction in which the international system is evolving. They are powers of an emerging new status quo being repulsed by old powers.”²

¹ Michael Klare, “The Pentagon Is Planning a Three-Front ‘Long War’ Against China and Russia,” *Foreign Policy In Focus*, last modified April 4, 2018, accessed May 19, 2019, <https://fpif.org/the-pentagon-is-planning-a-three-front-long-war-against-china-and-russia/>.

² Sergei Karaganov and Dmitry Suslov, “A New World Order: A View from Russia,” *Russia in Global Affairs*, accessed May 4, 2020, <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/a-new-world-order-a-view-from-russia/>

CONCLUSION

The US establishment is reluctant to accept that its unipolar moment after the collapse of the Soviet Union is over. Its readiness to use force and violate international law generates criticism from numerous quarters. It seems unwilling to cooperate with countries that opine a different opinion. With its spectacular economic growth over the last two decades, China appears to be more of a long-term economic threat to the West than a military one. The signing in January 2020 of phase one of the trade deal between the US and China helped to reduce tensions. However, the anxiety between Beijing and Taiwan and the Chinese land reclamation policy in the South China Sea, which contains vast oil reserves, may produce future flashpoints.

Radical Islam (comprising of non-state groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS), rather than Islam in general, presents dangers to western resources through acts of terrorism. However, it is overblown to describe those entities as an existential threat. Moscow's military intervention in the Syrian conflict dealt a huge strategic blow to ISIS, significantly reducing its power. The Israeli/Palestinian dispute continually exacerbates tension in the Middle East, and an independent peace conference to settle this conflict is an essential prerequisite for peace in that region.

Russia, under Putin, appears to be a buttress to western dominance and would not bow down to any American threats. It frequently receives criticism from most western politicians and mainstream media outlets for its Ukraine and Syrian interventions and alleged interference in the 2016 US Election. Propaganda emanating (and continuing)

from the first Cold War makes Moscow an easy target for the US. It allows the American deep state, comprising the intelligence services and the military/industrial complex, to paint Russia as the bogeyman to justify its vast budget. It provides substantial public relations dividends for western politicians, aware that large portions of their electorate are always suspicious of Russian motives.

From Moscow's viewpoint, a justifiable fear of NATO encirclement exists. The Ukrainian conflict has increased tensions between the West and Russia to that of previous Cold War levels. Professor John Mearsheimer blames Washington for exacerbating that crisis, arguing that Russia's intervention in the civil war and its annexation of Crimea were merely responses to NATO expansionism. Western eagerness for Ukraine and Georgia to become NATO members created severe anxiety in Moscow. A European collective security agreement between NATO, Moscow, and Kyiv appears to be the only way to secure stability and maintain an acceptable balance of power between Russia and the West.

By failing to scrap NATO and allowing the latter to admit former Warsaw Pact members, the West missed the chance to create an alliance between themselves and Russia on an equal partnership basis regarding security issues after the first Cold War. Instead, NATO expansionism created mistrust and anxiety in Moscow, and NATO's attack against Russia's ally Yugoslavia in 1999 increased Moscow's concerns further.

A combination of vested interests operating within the US state, and other entities exerting influence on it from outside, alongside Washington's fear of losing its unipolar moment since the collapse of communism, are promulgating its aggressive realist approach to foreign policy. Liberalism is the substructure of the American political

system. Unfortunately, it is being circumvented by its behavior abroad, which, according to numerous experts, is resulting in unconstitutional laws at home, like the Patriot Act, violating its citizenry's individual rights.

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