Journal of **Global Politics** and **Current Diplomacy**

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GLOBAL POLITICS AND CURRENT DIPLOMACY (JGPCD)

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ISSN 2344 – 6293 ISSN–L 2344 – 6293

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How the Increased Destructive Power of Man-Made Threats and Attendant Consequences Could End the Continuum of the Growing Importance of Diplomacy

Tom JOHANSMEYER [*]

Abstract. The threats mankind faces have grown profoundly since the dawn of diplomacy 600 years ago. Through this period, the importance of diplomacy has grown in lockstep with the complexity of society and the escalation of threats mankind poses to itself. However, the scale and scope of how humanity can damage itself – from nuclear war to climate change – has become so profound that the failure of diplomacy could lead to its future irrelevance. This article explores the factors that led to increased societal complexity through the evolution of modern diplomacy and how that escalation forms a continuum of ongoing increasing importance of diplomacy. Specifically, the dynamic means that diplomacy is never more important than it is at the current day. However, the rapid escalation of threats to mankind's existence through the ongoing growth of societal complexity could terminate the continuum, or at least set it back for centuries.

Keywords. diplomacy, risk management, future of diplomacy, technology, PEST

Introduction

THE POTENTIAL FOR SELF-INFLICTED HARM BY HUMANITY has become so great as to be existential. Advances in technology, growing populations, and the faster flow of information (from faster travel to the transmission of information faster than people can be carried) have made it possible for humanity to expose itself to truly existential risks. The continued escalation of such man-made threats has, consequently, increased the importance of diplomacy. After all, diplomacy is intended to prevent conflict between states, and given the scale

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and destructive power of today's man-made risks, such conflicts, in some cases, could very well become existential threats to the human race.

Humanity faces natural and man-made threats on an unprecedented scale that requires cross-border and cross-cultural collaboration for remediation. The most pressing challenges faced – among them, climate change, nuclear weapons proliferation, political violence, and data-related threats – cannot be addressed with single-state solutions or even the cooperation of only a small cohort of close allies. A multi-state environment relies on diplomacy for the problems that affect many states, particularly those problems that are existential in nature, and the threats states face today are indeed existential.

The importance of diplomacy today represents the latest iteration of a continuum along which diplomacy has been more important than ever before, with diplomacy in the twenty-first century merely the latest "most important." The existential threats of the current global environment may be many, varied, and more menacing than those of the past, but the same could be said of those faced in the twentieth century relative to all prior historical ages – and the nineteenth, and so on. The twentieth century, for example, faced the advent of the nuclear age and before it two world wars that came in rapid succession. In the nineteenth century, the interrelated threats of population growth, resource availability, and economic volatility were noted. After all, "history is full of people who sincerely believe that they battled misfortunes the likes of which had 'never been heard in human history'" (Parker 2008: 1058).

The emergent complexity in society that ultimately impacts the importance of diplomacy evolves along political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) dimensions. Each dimension gains greater complexity from one generation to the next, they build on the prior age's advances. The evolution of society along PEST factors increases complexity, with each factor's advances feeding the others, in the "organic" sense offered by Oswald Spengler (Frye 1974). Diplomats, consequently, face greater and greater challenges, including interacting with more states than they have in the past, doing so, and navigating increasingly nuanced relationships. Complexity itself does not correspond to importance, but complexity and the magnitude of the stakes, together, do. The threats humanity faces today are truly existential. What could have been perceived as world-shaping catastrophe several hundred years ago was generally only regional.

In the earliest days of diplomacy, at the end of the fifteenth century, high-stakes threats were distinctly regional, with regions rather tightly defined. As states found themselves engaging more frequently with other states further away (and possibly historically unreachable, or at least reachable only on an irregular basis), threats and opportunities became larger, trending with increased

PEST complexity, such as deeper trade interdependence fuelled by new tools and methods (i.e., technology). Generally, the stakes rose ever higher.

In the twenty-first century, the high stakes associated with diplomacy show a tangible threat to the continuum of its increasing importance. The only reason why diplomacy could become less important from one age to the next is a breakdown in the global community that isolates regions from each other and reduces the scope of global interaction – among states and people. Political violence, nuclear threats, climate change, and other self-inflicted ills could set humanity back centuries – or even end it completely.

The prevention of such humanity-altering events requires scientific, social, and economic solutions. However, the collaboration to drive such solutions and the steps necessary to attain sufficient worldwide adoption come down to diplomacy. Increased PEST complexity virtually guarantees that what each age's diplomats face will involve larger population bases, greater destructive power, and most of all higher stakes – at least until humanity experiences the sort of natural or self-inflicted global catastrophe that would fundamentally alter its presence on earth.[1] Essentially, the fact that man-made threats could end the human race has led to the great importance of diplomacy today. If such an existential threat were to be realized, though, humanity could lose its importance entirely – either for centuries or, in the case of an extinction event, permanently.

The continuum that makes diplomacy important during any period in history

Diplomacy in its modern form has only existed for around six centuries. During this relatively short period, the practice of diplomacy has clearly gained importance continually. What ultimately makes diplomacy matter (and by extension important) is that (a) diplomacy is how states communicate and interact with each other, short of armed conflict and (b) states are sovereign entities, which means they have no higher authority and no place to appeal except either mutual conversation or armed conflict (Meerts 2015: 57). Diplomacy is important during any period, therefore, because at a minimum, it offers the last alternative to armed conflict. Of course, this comes in addition to the many advantages of lower-stakes and day-to-day diplomacy. Frankly, daily, continual

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[1] This is an important caveat. Human progress is not necessarily destined to continue without impediment, and a self-inflicted setback remains possible. Such a setback would potentially represent a decline in the importance of diplomacy, although the humanity would likely have more pressing problems.

diplomacy, as Richelieu envisioned, is easier, more productive, and more efficient than last-ditch efforts to avoid armed conflict (Richelieu 1688: 94-102).

What makes diplomacy more important in the twenty-first century than ever before is the same as what made it more important in the twentieth century than ever before, and in each previous historical period, as well. The higher stakes resulting from greater complexity – powered by a larger global population and more frequent interaction (e.g., trade) – have led to a condition where the collapse of diplomacy would have profound global consequences. In addition to grim end-of-humanity possible outcomes, even simple failures could have disproportionate ramifications. Diplomatic strain between frequent and unfriendly trading partners could result in shortages of consumer staples, which could influence elections, or in extreme cases, lead to civil unrest. Simply, complexity increases the stakes, which heightens risk, which makes diplomacy more important. Getting it wrong, over time, has more menacing consequences.

A grasp of societal (i.e., PEST) complexity is the key to understanding the increasing importance of diplomacy over time. The diplomat as generalist necessarily lacks the ability to understand, discuss, and resolve the matters involving the most important inter-state issues and threats in the world, requiring access to deep domain expertise, the management of incredible complexity, and the acceptance of severe consequences if negotiations fail. Today, one would have to be an expert on potable water, energy (fossil fuel and renewable), political violence and its causes, climate change, statistics (including various forms of modelling), and the wide array of disciplines ultimately lumped together as "technology."

Various drivers of complexity have contributed to the higher stakes of diplomacy in each successive age. Social Darwinism, explored in the nineteenth century, most effectively shows how the risks and complexity associated with historical periods drive complexity. The school of thought can be used to trace the concept of "survival of the fittest" through what is effectively PEST volatility, and the thinking can be applied to diplomacy just as easily as to economics or other social science disciplines. An early contributor to what would later be known as Social Darwinism, Thomas Robert Malthus saw societal progress unfolding through a future of severe boom/bust dynamics would be fuelled by:

- Population growth during times of plenty

- Population growth reaching the point where society could not sustain the population

- Subsequent periods of strain, during which "the superior power of population growth cannot be checked without producing misery or vice" (Peura 2013: 314)

The recognition of this perpetual boom/bust dialectic offers a useful focal point for understanding the continuum of the ongoing increasing of importance of diplomacy across historical ages. The pattern can be traced backward and forward through time within the context of the evolution of diplomacy to show the continuum of ongoing "most importance."[2]

Diplomacy's importance continuum relies on the Hegelian concept of historical repetition as the foundation of progress. In repeating itself, history cements the repeated element into the status quo and provides the foundation for the next such iteration (Hegel 1857: 285). The dynamic is not cyclical, even though cyclicality can be inferred from repetition. Rather, repetition provides affirmation of a new condition. "Clearly, Hegel sees repetition in world history as a mark of ratification," with that ratification becoming a mark of advancement (Mazlish 1972: 335). Repetition solidifies what may have initially been, according to Hegel, "a matter of chance and contingency" and establishes it as the next element in an ongoing continuum, rather than as a fresh starting point.

As a result, Malthusian boom/bust cycles manifest as an uncanny manifestation of Hegel's repetition and affirmation in the continuum of human history. Applied to understanding the importance of diplomacy, the Hegelian model underlying Malthusian observations demonstrates the continued increase of societal complexity from one age to the next, which brings a corresponding increase in the importance of diplomacy, because complexity with scale raises the stakes of diplomatic activity. More people, more communication, and more interaction lead to more population, more demand for resources, more conflict, and more scale for damage. Taking a view strictly on the trajectory of the stakes involved in diplomacy, and the consequences of getting it wrong, the latest age would always be the one in which diplomacy is most important – until an existential threat to humanity is realized.

Understanding complexity and its impact on the relative importance of diplomacy

The continuum that establishes and reinforces the ongoing escalating importance of diplomacy relative to all prior historical ages derives from increases in social complexity that correspondingly raise the stakes of diplomacy, as

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[2] The use of the expression "boom/bust dialectic" offers a nod to the philosophy of history advanced by Georg W.F. Hegel, which has roots in the thinking of Immanuel Kant, which was formulated at around the same time Malthus wrote.

humanity edges closer and closer to the threats that could set back or profoundly and negatively alter its existence. Tightly intertwined with each other, the four fundamental components of society –political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) – reveal the organic nature of society as it evolves (Frye 1974: 5).

Many definitions of diplomacy characterize it as negotiation among states, but any practical attempt to understand diplomacy requires context. To that end, one can construe diplomacy in its earliest ages – from inception in the late fifteenth century through the precedent-setting tenure of Richelieu – as having the objective of anticipating and executing the will of the monarch in representing that monarch to other states (usually to other monarchies).[3] Richelieu and Chavigny, for example, went to great lengths to demonstrate their loyalty and service to Louis XIII, particularly by working to protect each other from the "*mauvaises humeurs*" of the monarch (Ranum 1963: 80).

The transition from monarchical leadership to representative democracies, coinciding with the Enlightenment, did test whether each successive era rightly sees diplomacy as more important than ever before, perhaps counterintuitively. The utopian ideals among the *philosophes*, in particular, held that the "future of diplomacy would be the reverse of the diplomacy of the past" (Gilbert 1951: 14). Essentially, Enlightenment thinkers did not see the importance of diplomacy and thus saw a world without diplomats, because states would not need them. They would be able to work together somewhat harmoniously. Had it been realized, the *philosophes'* triumph over diplomacy would have constituted diplomacy in itself and would have been possible only as a result of diplomacy prior to reaching their desired end state, which in itself would take diplomacy to maintain. Of course, the contradiction embedded in the thinking of the time never required a serious challenge, since their utopian dream was never realized.

The formation of new states through the end of the Enlightenment and across the nineteenth century and the rapid increase through the end of World War I required both broader and deeper diplomatic engagement (Harris 1993: 301). For states still ruled by monarchs or other authoritarians, negotiations would necessarily involve counterparties with democratically elected leadership, which would increase volatility through the peaceful handoff of power after elections, a pace of power change far more frequent than generally seen in monarchies. Even for the authoritarian rulers of the twentieth century, diplomacy remained a commitment and ongoing effort, made more challenging by

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[3] It is difficult to give monarchs absolute characteristics, given that they faced threats or influence from religious bodies (such as the Catholic Church) and faced the threat of insurrection or other forms of rebellion, as demonstrated in France in 1789.

having to negotiate with representatives for whom the end will of the people was a moving target.

In addition to increases in the pace of change in diplomatic partners and practitioners through the broader adoption of representative democracy, economic and technological change increased the scope of potential diplomatic engagement and the speed at which it could progress. Improved and faster maritime travel shrank the globe for diplomats from the sixteenth century for the next three hundred years. Long distances became easier to traverse, which in turn expanded the scope of diplomacy. States far from each other began to have more frequent encounters, particularly through trade.

Maritime commerce raised the stakes for diplomats even faster than the increased speed of communication resulting from improved maritime transportation. The transfer of money can be far more compelling than the transfer of the written word. "The first and most extensive compilation of quantitative material was made during a balance of trade scare of the early 1560's," According to Lawrence Stone, "when a serious attempt was made to discover the precise nature of English commerce" (1949: 34). This early tabulation represents an early effort to understand and prepare for trade diplomacy, an activity which today is crucial to the interaction and negotiation of states. Stone adds, "For a statesman whose country is on the brink of open war, it was absolutely essential to assess the economic dislocation liable to be caused by a complete commercial rupture with the enemy" (1949: 34).

The stakes involved in the practice of diplomacy soon went higher, fuelled by the rapid increase in transatlantic maritime traffic. According to the National Humanities Center, the "number of ships crossing [the Atlantic Ocean] each year from Britain tripled from 500 in the 1670s to 1500 by the late 1730s" (National Humanities Center [no date]). Further, the voyages quickly became faster. It took the Mayflower 66 days to traverse the Atlantic Ocean in 1620 (Ridley 2020). Within two centuries, the average crossing time fell to only 21 to 29 days (Royal Museums Greenwich [no date]). By the twentieth century, the introduction of air travel closed the gap even further; an average of 1,736 transatlantic flights entered or left Europe daily in 2018 (Eurocontrol 2021).

Faster maritime vessels may have increased the scope of diplomacy – and even accelerated it – but the speed of communication remained a problem, even if diplomats eventually resisted improvements (Standage 2007: 158). The Crimean War according to Standage, was "the first in which the telegraph played a strategic role," but the Battle of New Orleans, coming shortly after the end of the U.S. War of 1812, remains the classic example of how slow communication could do so to negative effect (Standage 2007: 155). Because news of the Treaty of Ghent, signed December 24, 1814, failed to reach New Orleans in time, one last battle was

fought January 8, 2015. The battle itself did not change the outcome of the war or even result in the need for further negotiation. However, the fact that the speed of the message was limited certainly offered the potential for the resumption of hostilities. The commercial adoption of the telegraph around 1845 provided a foundation for the movement of diplomacy at a faster pace than human-carried messages, ultimately enabling diplomats to represent their states more effectively, invest more time in strategy and collaboration, and take advantage of pooled or centralized expertise, which became increasingly important because of the escalation of threats across borders and to humanity as a whole.

Despite the benefits of improved and accelerated communications, particularly over the past 200 years, diplomats have shown considerable resistance to technological advances, even with cases like the Battle of New Orleans to illustrate the salient value in moving the message along faster. The latest incarnation of communications advancement, social media, remains an area of scepticism (Berridge 2015: 201). This is certainly consistent with early diplomats' views on the telegraph, which involved "officials in distant countries who found their independence from central government was undermined by the telegraph," leading them to see the new technology, according to Standage, as "a curse" (2007: 159). Nonetheless, their use in diplomacy eventually came, due in large part to its adoption in commercial matters, showing the same pattern of influence seen in the impact of increased maritime commerce on diplomacy.

The direct impact of interrelated economic and technological advancements on the importance of diplomacy has been significant but has paled in comparison to those that have been indirect. Recently, the development, approval, manufacturing, transportation, and sharing of COVID-19 vaccines has shown itself to be a triumph of diplomacy. The speed with which vaccines were developed and manufactured required considerable cross-border diplomacy-enabled commercial collaboration. Further, the success of the diplomatic, scientific, and commercial work on COVID-19 spawned a new wave of diplomatic concerns. San Marino's eschewing the European Union, for example, made the country a destination for travellers seeking vaccines not accepted by the EU (Washington Post 2021). By remaining independent, the country was able to secure and distribute to its citizens doses of Russia's Sputnik vaccine, while diplomats from across the European Union negotiated for access to approved resources.

Whether it is technology used by diplomats or other officials in the states they represent or its indirect impact on the practice of negotiation among sovereign entities, perhaps its most subtle impact on the importance of diplomacy is the unknown. Oswald Spengler observes, "The effect of a 'technical achievement of mankind' is never foreseen," and as an example, he offers, "[T]he electrical transmission of power and the discovery of the possibilities of energy from water have depreciated the old coal areas of Europe *and their populations*

[emphasis in the original]" (1931: 67). Technology has consequences, and few can forecast their full extent accurately. The Wright brothers never expected to see more than 1,700 flights a day between Europe and the United States. The technology behind increased longevity, could not have foreseen the world's population swelling from a mere 900 million in 1800 to 7 billion today (Peura 2013: 311).

Larger populations with longer lifespans, greater mobility among the world's people (and its representatives of sovereign entities), and improved manufacturing and distribution provide a natural foundation for the continued exponential growth of commercial activity, deepening connects among states, some of which may have uneasy diplomatic relationships with each other.[4] Improved transportation through the twentieth century made this dynamic more common, and in the twenty-first century, the PEST interdependencies of such relationships have led to the careful application of diplomacy in the face of trading relationships.

The "McDonald's Peace Theory" tried to capture explain the careful balancing act involved when trading partners have difficult diplomatic relationships with the rosy claim that mutual economic success would be deemed not worth jeopardizing by going to war (Musgrave 2020). Essentially, two countries with McDonald's restaurants would not risk armed conflict with each other. Whether because of the fast-food chain's ability to expand globally or because of deficiencies in the theory itself, there have been cases to prove the contrary; Musgrave notes visiting one in Belgrade in 1988 (2020). The theory does hint at the influence that deep trading relationships can have on diplomacy, and there is perhaps no better example of diplomatic challenges among trading partners than the United States and China. The United States is China's largest export market (World Bank 2021). And, the China is the United States' third-largest export market, following Canada and Mexico, with which it shares borders (U.S. Census 2021).

A tweet of support in 2019 for anti-government protesters in Hong Kong from Daryl Morey, general manager of the Houston Rockets, a National Basketball Association (NBA) team, upset China and led to diplomatic engagement, including a statement from the Chinese consulate in Houston (Perper 2019).[5] NBA commissioner Adam Silver even characterized the issue as diplomatic in nature, stating, "I'm still a believer in soft power" (Helin 2021). The efforts of a state actor to limit the rights of a citizen and an organization in another sovereign territory is just the latest example of the greater role for diplomats in the current age. The NBA, China,

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[4] Increased manufacturing output through improved efficiency began with Samuel Slater in the late nineteenth century and set what would become the Industrial Revolution in motion (Tucker 1981: 297).

[5] The *Business Insider* article is useful for a broad narrative of the disagreement between the NBA and China.

and the United States continue to work through the episode two years later. While the slow progress may indicate the lack of trust involved among some of the parties, it also demonstrates the commitment to work through the event, which comes as no surprise given the economic stakes involved.

Human nature may not change, but the scale on which it can act certainly evolves. Increased PEST complexity throughout the six-century existence of diplomacy has generally raised the stakes in inter-state interaction and negotiation in ways likely never imagined by the likes of Machiavelli, Guicciardini, or Richelieu. The invention of the telegraph offered an end to battles unnecessarily fought after the declaration of peace. Trade has gained such importance that an entertainment body (the NBA) has been forced to engage with a state actor on a matter of multi-billion-dollar importance. There are countless examples showing how higher stakes through increased societal complexity make diplomacy in each age more important than in any age before it. The only threat to the continuum of the ongoing increasing importance of diplomacy would be a high-stakes failure of diplomacy on a scale that constitutes an existential threat – or at least a profound setback – to humanity.

Threats to the continuum, threats to society

Albert Einstein reportedly lamented, "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones" (Carr 2015: 120). The implied end of civilization shows a possible outer boundary for the continuum of the increasing importance of diplomacy from one period to the next. If something bad enough happens, the whole thing goes backward. The continuum is not assured to be infinite, and its duration is ultimately up to the human race. Diplomats stand to play a disproportionate role. A continuum of this sort would of necessity be agnostic to its underlying characteristics, and thus a cataclysmic development affirmed in the Hegelian view, would just be another outcome, and an existential setback would of course be affirmed through repetition and provide a new foundation for what would be characterized as a rebuilding, although again, the dialectic would be agnostic to that concept, as rebuilding requires a human perceptual reference.

Speed, scale, and complexity are more prevalent in the twenty-first century than they were in the past, and the consequences of diplomatic action are thus greater than at any point in history. In looking at past catastrophes and crises, it becomes evident that the lack of speed, scale, and complexity prevented them from becoming truly global. Take the "General Crisis" of the middle of the seventeenth century (Parker 2008). It can only be described as awful; the

world had "more cases of simultaneous state breakdown around the globe than any previous age" (Parker 2008: 1053). Specifically:

- From 1635 to 1666, Europe experienced 27 revolts, with seven in the Americas and 15 in Asia and Africa – 45 percent involved regime change.

- Increases in armed conflict only exacerbated the General Crisis: "War had become the norm for resolving both domestic and international problem."

- Increased population density of "unprecedented and sometimes unsustainable levels" only served to exacerbate the problem.[6]

The breakdown of diplomacy during this period shows its salient importance – and what happens without its competent practice. Further, it allows for the speculation of what such simultaneous civil unrest – particularly when paired with natural/weather disasters and pandemic, noted by Parker as well) – could entail in the twenty-first century. While there have been similar events in the same absolute period (approximately 30 years), mitigating factors have helped, along with the contributions of diplomacy. Thirty-one years is a wider gap now than it was in the seventeenth century, which is why the fact that so much disaster in the same period may not mean as much now as it did 500 years ago. However, the fact that the present day shows similar characteristics to the General Crisis should certainly give one pause. Civil unrest, the breakup of nations and formation of new ones, and natural disasters have been common over the past three decades.

Since 1990:

- Fourteen European states came from the fall of the Soviet Union alone, including the breakup of Yugoslavia (Harris 1993: 318).

- More came along Russia's Asian border (Kuzio 2000:83).

- Severe natural disasters have become fairly frequent, such as: Typhoon Mireille (1991), Hurricane Andrew (United States 1992), Northridge Earthquake (United States, 1994), Aceh tsunami (Indonesia 2004), Hurricane Katrina (United States 2005), the Tohoku earthquake (Japan 2011), and Hurricane Dorian (Caribbean 2019).[7]

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[6] For all examples above, see Parker 2008: 1055-1059.

[7] This author is an established expert on worldwide natural and manmade catastrophe events. The information referenced here comes from having engaged in the development of industry-wide insured loss estimates for the events noted as the head of PCS, a Verisk business (http://www.verisk.com/pcs).

The worst pandemic in a century continues to evolve, after 18 months of impact (as of this writing).

Just as society did not collapse during the General Crisis, it is unlikely to do so today. Post-crisis event remediation, inter-state aid, and other positive uses of the speed and scale of societal complexity may serve as neutralizing forces against widespread unrest and natural threat. While scale works to humanity's advantage in this regard, though, a change in fortune remains possible.

There are more ways to deal humanity an existential setback in the twenty-first century than there were just 50 years ago, let alone several centuries ago. While Rudin's ruminations on the nuclear threat in 1956, for example, certainly had merit, today, his perception of the major global risk would be joined by greater and less salient forces that could nonetheless fundamentally alter humanity. Examples include climate change, the relativization of truth (colloquially, "fake news"), climate change, and the wide range of issues related to "big data" and artificial intelligence." Moreover, they come in addition to the existential threats of the twentieth century that continue to linger.

The challenge remaining is profound. The continuum of societal complexity and increased importance of diplomacy promises higher stakes in the face of larger risks, leaving diplomats with heavier responsibility that compounds frequently. Relief from that burden, of course, comes at an even greater price. If we face, as Bonciu suggests, "realities that we thought to be unthinkable,'" then humanity can only hope for the continuum to hold (2019: 53).

Final Remarks

Diplomacy could forever be more important than it has ever been before, which means that diplomacy is at its historical peak importance in the twenty-first century, but only for now. As time passes, the historical peak of the importance of diplomacy will progress alongside it. The importance of diplomacy follows a continuum that is driven by the underlying complexity of society, a mix of organic, self-feeding PEST factors that ultimately makes diplomacy more difficult, relevant, and indeed important.

The PEST characteristics of society show, over more than six centuries, that a range of technological, cultural, and economic innovations have mixed with advancing political and philosophical thought to make the world a smaller place consisting of ever larger populations. Diplomacy, once focused on a smaller number of states with which one shared land borders or could be reached via fairly short journeys by land or sea, now has to contemplate a much larger set of nations. Even smaller states, as evidenced by San Marino, can quickly find themselves intertwined in global power struggles. Diplomacy has become a truly global affair, from microstates to the largest and most populated.

Routine diplomatic engagement itself would not be sufficient to drive ever upward (for now, at least) the continuum of diplomacy's increasing importance. Instead, the volume of diplomatic engagement has come with higher stakes. The diplomacy associated with occasional trading with distant lands for goods largely destined for upper classes requires much less effort than decades-old commercial ties between states with vastly different government systems and long-simmering mutual distrust. Further, the risk of rapid escalation to armed conflict could entail such consequences that diplomatic solutions remain far preferable, given the recognition that winning at all costs eventually turns into losing for everyone.

Ultimately, the continuum may bring the importance of diplomacy ever closer to its own irrelevance. If societal complexity and stakes can continue to increase *ad infinitum*, then then human race may see massive change over long periods of time but also develop the mechanisms by which to manage the higher stakes. In fairness, humanity's recent track record with climate change and the responsible use of big data leave little room for optimism. Alternatively, human life could be destined to trigger a cataclysmic change to humanity, fulfilling Einstein's lament and rendering not just diplomacy but the concept of the state meaningless for years (maybe even centuries) to come. If diplomacy fails – if the human race just gets it wrong – at least there is the possibility that nobody will be left to bear the burden of blame.

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Why Vietnam is being emphasized as the main subject of the acceleration of vaccine diplomacy from leader countries?

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Abstract. The Covid-19 outbreak has poses a global health crisis to the world regarding the global economy, trade relations and polarization of globalization. This pandemic also demonstrates the high rate of vulnerability of the international community. From this moment, leadership and crisis management are being challenged towards world leaders and heads of state. Several countries are symbols for the Covid-19 pandemic contamination. On the contrary, some are put under big question mark for their leader capability due to failed policies. The US, one of the great economies and market leaders, was struggling difficultly to handle the pandemic. Although, the time was hard, but the vaccine development race had been launched since the first outbreak. Vaccine diplomacy shall be based on sharing and sympathy. This step means that vaccine, drug, and medical equipment will be equally distributed to less developed and developing countries in need, which do not have the technologies and capability to produce their own vaccine. Eventually, vaccine diplomacy is also used as a sub-element of public diplomacy of soft power which is to gain more influence in a specific targeted region and to enhance national branding. Vietnam is being one of the countries receiving the largest batches of vaccine from the United States (the US), European countries, Japan, and China. Why the two countries in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue group are donating tremendously to Vietnam? How will Vietnam diplomatically tackle this "Sinophobia" while China pledges to support the country in the future right after the visit of the US's vice president Kamala Harris and during the visit of Japanese Minister of Defense Kishi Nobuo? This article will dig deeper into the implication hidden behind the tremendous generosities from leader economies.

Keywords: Vietnam, Covid-19, Vaccine diplomacy, global health, politicization

Introduction

"HEALTH IS GLOBAL". This is a strategy of the UK's government implying the intersection of global health and interests of foreign policy. It (UK Department of

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Health 2008) set out the framework for every related governmental department operating as an international cohesion for the health of the UK and oversees. And this strategy would implement in three areas of action: "Global health", "International Development" and "Trade for better health". The level of international cooperation is raging from the partnership between government and non-governmental institutions to bilateral and multilateral relationships. And the term "global health" was remarked that a new term needed to be attached to the foreign policy of each nation when international negotiations implemented among nations. From there, global health diplomacy will be prioritized and launched on every occasion of the emergence of a global pandemic or avian. In the Covid-19 pandemic, vaccine diplomacy is fully taken spotlight by countries developing vaccines via vaccine race. All other nations, who do not have the access to vaccines, would be subjected to public diplomacy and the development of national brands via vaccine donation operations implemented by big countries such as China, the US, Russia, etc. And Vietnam is not behind the trend. Questions were raised by the public and the press as Vietnam is being a priority of vaccine donation operations with a large number of vaccine doses distributed. Those questions are related to the Vaccine diplomacy is implemented tremendously in Vietnam by the EU, the US, China. Recently, Vietnam is facing the surging cases of Covid-19, which has put the country under full lockdown. As a small power country aiming to become medium power country in close future. The country has proved its capacity on achieving that desire by firstly symbolizing it as a successful model of fighting the covid. Before this heavy outbreak in April, the active cases were under 3000 cases, and most of the cases were detected during the quarantine period after entering from abroad. Vietnam has tightened the country entering rules for foreigners and only a few rescue flies could operate. From that point, the country kept the number of cases lower than most western countries but with a high proportion of the population. Many countries, even those from the super and middle power considered Vietnam as a model. Nevertheless, the number of positive cases is soaring. As consequence, Hanoi must put the country's largest economic hub, which is Ho Chi Minh city, under extreme sanitary measures. At that time, the western countries have been making their efforts to accelerate vaccine donation to countries with low vaccination rates which Vietnam is standing among them. This vaccine donation initiative, either through COVAX Facility or bilateral agreement, is so-called vaccine diplomacy. EU and the US are rushing to transfer a large portion of vaccines to Vietnam and other ASEAN countries under the COVAX scheme or bilateral relations, especially the US. This vaccine diplomacy is another key strategy nowadays for one country could gain influence in the international arena.

This research will be studying the current position of Vietnam and try to answer the question: "what is the vaccine diplomacy?", "what makes Vietnam vital that the EU, the US, and China must donate their vaccine without lucrative returns to save this market?". And furthermore, the author might get deeper insight from

political and economic standpoints, what is the implication of Vietnamese advocacy activities for getting the priority of the large supplier countries?"

Redefining the Position of Global Health Diplomacy in the International Relations

Vaccine and medical aids assistance have been uprising activities during the pandemic. The term "vaccine diplomacy" is coined during the pandemic where powerful states help other less strong states to get access to vaccines, or sources of vaccine. This type of diplomacy is quite controversial regarding the coordination between the political agenda and the global health crisis. Vaccine diplomacy and its activities are only deployed promptly in the period of a global health crisis. In the time of pandemics, vaccine diplomacy is playing a prominent role in the establishment and enhancement of diplomatic relations. The Covid-19 pandemic has torn the world apart, making countries alter the direction of diplomacy and international relations. If any state could access fully to vaccine resources, it would possess a high influential power impacting on other countries. And capable states have responded to the pandemic with the Covid-19 vaccine, which would an effective player in the international arena. Nevertheless, in order to gain that tool punctually, a vaccine race between capable countries must occur in the time of crisis. In such an emergency time, the redistribution of vaccine doses is often prioritized to those in need, but diplomacy's nature has to launch its role as a political tool to express domestic interests. The political choice would be obvious at that time. The UK's government weighed deeply the importance and the density of Global Health via the strategy of "Health is Global" in 2008 in the structure of international relations. The area of global health is emphasized partly transitions in the study of international relations. Sara E. Davies, Stefan Elbe, Alison Howell, and Colin McInnes defined three changes.

Where does vaccine diplomacy stand in the international relations?

In a broader sense, vaccine diplomacy is categorized as one tool of medical diplomacy or health diplomacy. In 1978, Peter Bourne (Bourne 1978) introduced medical diplomacy as a term where health and medicine could have

played an important role as a manner for maintaining good international relations. Especially several humanitarian and health issues could be the basis for establishing a dialogue for levering diplomatic barriers. Harley Feldbaum and Joshua Michaud discussed in their research that the public health community has a wide range of definitions concerning health diplomacy which is driven by globalization including state and non-state actors, health negotiations. Furthermore, they also mentioned that the highest governmental goal of health diplomacy is to navigate proper foreign policy for the purpose of supporting global health. International cooperation for the purpose of infectious diseases contamination has come to existence for a long time, we should see that global health is a priority as it is connected to economic development, national security, and foreign policy interest. For example, the infectious disease of HIV/AIDS has been always a hot topic in global health, the key international institutions such as G8 or WHO, United Nations seek together solutions to tackle global health issues. UNAIDS and Global Fund were formed with the international coordination of GAVI Alliance to seize and slow down HIV/AIDS. The past pandemics such as the SARS and two Influenza H5N1 and H1N1, putting the world at great stake, called out all international efforts to contain the diseases.

The Influenza pandemic actually reflexes another side of health diplomacy or medical diplomacy which is political dynamics and unequal distribution of vaccines. Firstly, In the larger concept of diplomacy, medical diplomacy is conceptualized into Global Health Diplomacy (GHD) as an international norm when the world is attacked by any worldwide disease. Sara E. Davies, Stefan Elbe, Alison Howell, and Colin Mcinnes clarified in their research regarding the global health in the system of international relations that the health challenges would be pushed to surpass any national borders and require any political demands in order to respond internationally for the sake of the human and societal well-being. And that could be equal to any environmental issue it is put on the international stage (Davies 2014). Coming back to the downside of the GHD, David P. Fidler highlighted the inequality in health diplomacy and the real face of developed countries' foreign policy (DP 2008) that "fears about avian influenza's spread and the emergence of pandemic influenza highlighted the weakness of international efforts to increase vaccine availability in developing countries. The resolution attempts to build a multilateral process to address the lack of fair and equitable access for developing countries to pharmacologic benefits derived from the sharing of influenza virus samples". This statement is coordinated with the statement of Sara E. Davies, Stefan Elbe, Alison Howell and Colin Mcinnes that in other conceptions of health diplomacy, it could have been deemphasized at both phases as negotiations and the primary role of global health. States would enhance their efforts to improve health within the of supporting state interests (Davies 2014). The vaccine diplomacy has been coined since the GAVI Vaccine Alliance as mentioned above for the purpose of

establishing the fair sharing and distribution of vaccine to the poorer countries. Hotez identified vaccine diplomacy consisting of almost every aspect of global health diplomacy that relies on the use or delivery of vaccines and navigate the vital work of the Gavi, which is the Vaccine Alliance, with WHO, the Gates Foundation, and other important international organizations" (Hotez 2014). Moreover, he also determined vaccine diplomacy as a branch of global health diplomacy promoting the use and delivery of vaccines to achieve objectives of global health and shared foreign policy interests. The pandemic of Covid-19 amplified clearly the political pressure of countries possessing Covid-19 vaccine aligned with economic development, production technologies, and vaccine technology. The mRNA is a newly emerged technology that is exclusively developed by two grant American medical enterprises. This tech was used for advancing and revolutionizing the vaccine against the Covid-19, which make the stock price of the two enterprises skyrocket. And the vaccine race has been launched for a political dynamic, where the vaccine serves as a tool for economic and public diplomacy as the US and China. But this tool is still utilized for hidden political purposes in the case of Vietnam when it is visited by two important political figures representing China and the US. Vaccine and vaccine diplomacy are on the debate table as they are used for assuring global health or achieving political propaganda rather than prioritizing global health.

Covid-19 vaccine as a debatable tool

With the regard to the domestic approach, the Covid-19 vaccines and vaccine distribution are recently considered the political tool for the ruling party to prove their effectiveness of crisis preparedness and management. From this point, the party shall have a significant advantage from the vaccine rollout operation. The most memorized example for this case is Hungary while the Hungarian Prime minister Orbán Viktor announced at the beginning of February 2021. The approval of Hungary's National Institute of Pharmacy for the use of the eastern vaccines, which are Sinopharm of China and Sputnik Russia, have caused critical debates among EU countries. EU authorities and Hungarian opposition parties claimed the Hungarian PM for the politicization of the eastern vaccine over public health. According to the statement of German Chancellor Angela Merkel on German public broadcaster ARD that all vaccines would be welcomed to use in the EU once they had been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) (DW 2021). Obviously, EMA has not approved these types of vaccine just yet. Apparently, the Chinese Sinopharm is facing challenges of controversy and confusion between China and the world when this country was

under investigation of Covid-19's origin. And the Russian Sputnik was not in any better condition due to the lack of data regarding the vaccine's effectiveness. Hungarian PM also clapped at the entire EU when he answered to the public radio that "I will wait my turn and when the time comes, I will choose the Chinese vaccine" (Daventry 2021). This issue arose when Hungary was the most hit hard among EU countries with the high death toll and extreme rate of infection, but the population is small with more than 10 million people. The decision of approval was taken in the context where the EU bodies were facing criticism about the slow vaccine rollout. Eventually, WHO Europe chief Dr. Hans Kluge blasted the EU regarding this unacceptable operation in an interview with BBC. The reasons behind this slow vaccine delivery are comprehensible, but it was clear that the politics played a most part in it. Unfortunately, the slow negotiation with the vaccine manufacturers is contemporary in the case of Vietnam also as its government did not have strong access to those sources.

**Chart 1:** Daily new cases in Hungary from February 25th to June 21st, 2021
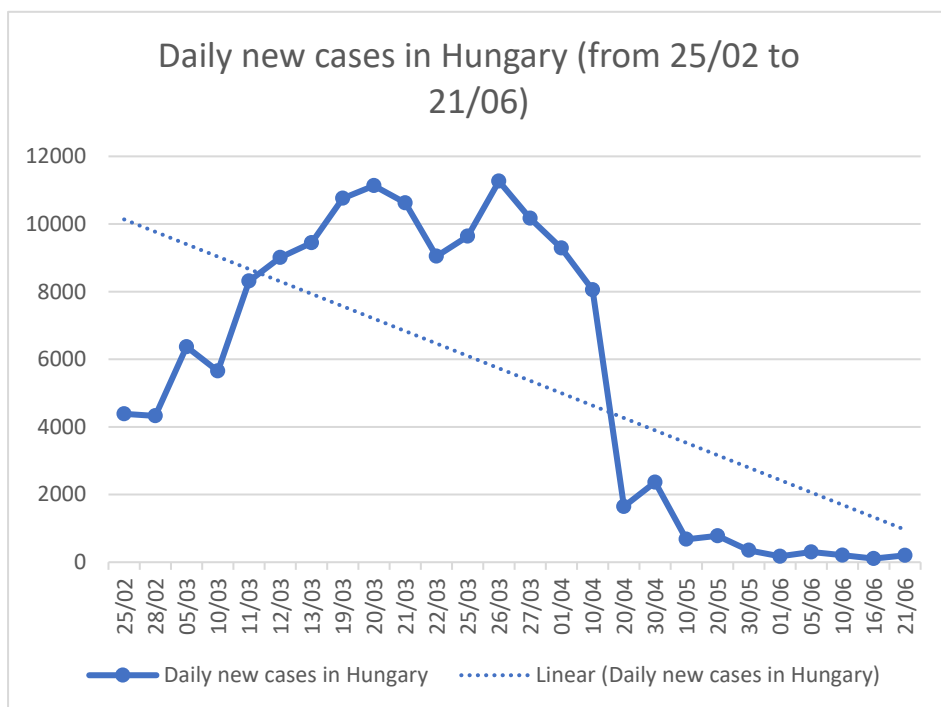
Source: Worldometers

From the chart above, we could see the trend of confirmed cases was rising significantly from February 25th, marking the urgent need for vaccine rollout

operation. The Hungarian medicine authority had approved two types of eastern vaccine. The Hungarian government has done its job well in crisis management with the diversification of vaccine sources and types despite the criticization from the EU body. The vaccination operation has been well organized including the communication strategy since the beginning as Hungary is always classed among the countries that have the highest rate of vaccination. Ironically, from the cases of Hungary and the EU, the access to vaccines is still on the political debate table and it will change fundamentally the system of international relations. The case of Vietnam could be regarded as another case of political influential expansion. Vietnam is having a very low rate of vaccination as it relies heavily on the COVAX Facility of WHO, which is sluggishly providing vaccines to other countries in need. But another reason is brought out to defend Vietnam's lagging behind in the vaccination rollout. This would be discussed deeply in the below session.

Chart 2: Number of COVID-19 vaccine doses by type administered in Hungary as of June 27, 2021
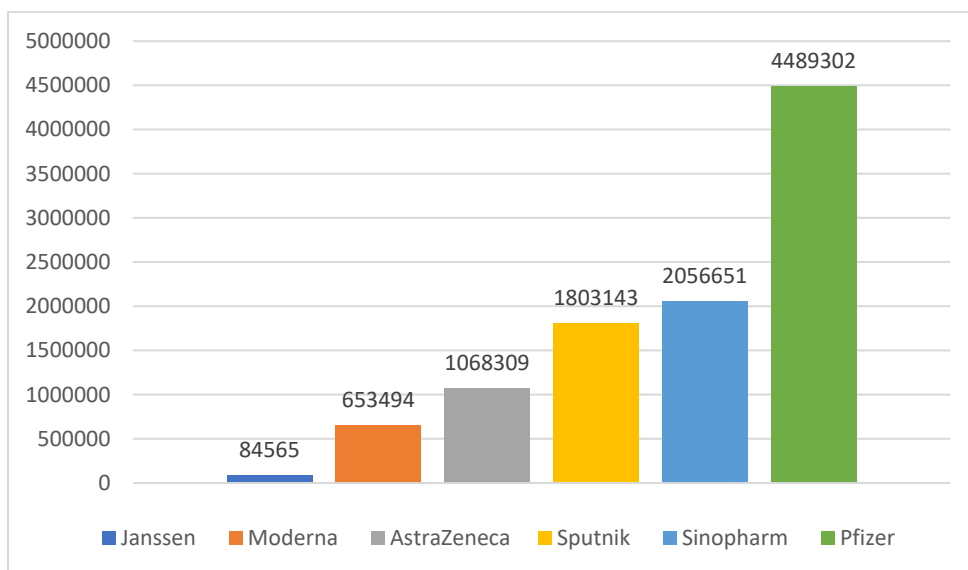
The government has proved the effectiveness of the vaccine since the Sinopharm doses were used mostly after Pfizer and Sputnik followed. The newly infected cases were dragged dramatically down to a very low level, allowing the country to re-open most businesses sector and surrounding disciplines. Moreover, it is classed second place among countries having the high rate of Covid recovery rate in the chart elaborated by Nikkei. Ironically, Hungary is being placed after China (Li 2021). It seems that the Chinese vaccine diplomacy has separated

the EU when many EU states approved its vaccine. And the creditability of China even increases when the World Health Organization approved the two vaccines Sinopharm and Sinovac for emergency use (World Health Organization 2021). As word given by the French Emmanuel Macron that this vaccine diplomacy of China is a "clear diplomatic success" regarding the maintaining diplomatic relations and expanding the geopolitical influence and "a little bit humiliating for us" as in the country's ability of vaccine's mass production and export (Nussbaum 2021). This is a move of China that has been evaluated as a thriving strategy when it comes to national branding and public diplomacy.

THE CRUCIALITY OF GLOBAL VACCINE DIPLOMACY TOWARDS VIETNAM

Before the outbreak of the fourth wave, which had a huge impact on Vietnam's economic and societal development, Vietnam was considered as a successful model of putting out the pandemic inside the country alongside another Asian country. In the previous three waves, the Vietnamese government had launched very strict manners of infectious contamination from the inside and outside of the country. This method seemed to be very extreme, but they were fully granted with the consent of citizens. The task of propaganda regarding the pandemic around the world and restrictions of government had been effectively communicated to its citizens. And the citizen obeyed these restrictions with full consent and no questions asked. The credibility of Vietnam was increasing, which made the Vietnamese business environment more attractive. At the same time, the world was waiting for the result of the investigation of the virus's origin from China led by the World Health Organization (WHO). Conflict regarding the act of hiding the virus origin has arisen between China and other world-leading economies such as the US and Australia and some EU countries etc. "Moving out of China" is considered as a meta-trend of the world of many big companies' factories residing in China. Those big enterprises regarded two top destinations, which were India and Vietnam. These mentioned above reasons to form the massive foreign aids to Vietnam for striking the pandemic. This session would serve to analyse the context of Vietnam before and during the fourth wave in order to apprehend the implication behind this international assistance to Vietnam.

Before the fourth wave

The Vietnamese economy had a very bright side although the GDP stood at 2.9%. But when it was compared to other Asian economies, Vietnamese GDP was deemed to be classed among other GDP positive growth. According to the

economic report carried out by Yen Nee Lee of CNBC (2021), Vietnam had been ranked first place in the 2020 GDP growth of major Asian economies. And China obviously followed with second place due to its strict lockdown during previous waves since the first infected case. Moreover, China had the privilege of accessing first-hand the data of the pandemic as the virus was first detected in this country, China hence could invest heavily in the development of vaccines. However, China was being investigated for the act of hiding the origin of the virus, and the country was recently facing challenges of losing its stand in the international arena. In addition, the conflicts between China and other nations have basically existed for quite some time, and this event deepened it. The trade war between China and the US is the most remarkable memory of the world before the pandemic as it has provoked several serious changes in the world international logistics and fates of big companies who are having factories situated in China. Before the outbreak, the trade war between China-the US forces many multinational companies (MNCs) to pull their factories and branches out of China (2019), reporters of Nikkei Asia, identified numerous companies moving out as:

Table 1: List of companies considering moving away from China

No	Company	origin	Target country	Notes
1	Pegatron	Taiwan	India	May also relocate to Vietnam
2	Skechers USA	U.S.		
3	Apple			
4	Iris Ohyama	Japan	South Korea	
5	Komatsu		Japan	
6	Toshiba Machine			
7	Keihin			
8	Sumitomo Heavy Industry			
9	G-Tekt			
10	Mitsubishi Electric			
11	Casio Computer		Thailand	
12	Ricoh			
13	Citizen watch			
14	Panasonic			
15	Asutek Computer	Taiwan	Taiwan	
16	Compal Electronics			
17	HP	U.S.		May also relocate to Vietnam
18	Dell			
19	Mitsuba	Japan	U.S.	Partly relocated to Vietnam
20	Asics		Vietnam	
21	Kyocera			
22	Sharp			
23	Nintendo			
24	TCL	China		

No	Company	origin	Target country	Notes
25	GoerTek			
26	Brook Sports	U.S.		
27	Nidec			
28	Funei Electric	Japan	Mexico	
29	GoPro	U.S.		

Source: Nikkei Asia

From having picked some examples of companies relocating, we could understand Vietnam is the most wanted destination for big companies, especially in the sectors of garments, shoes, and electronic devices. The US companies also were considering Vietnam as their destination of company's relocation. It means that Vietnam weighted it as a popular economic hub for industrial sectors and big companies. The credibility of Vietnam had been enhanced internationally when its GDP growth was ranked 1st place with a positive rate among other strong economies.

Chart 3: GDP Growth in 2020 in percentage of specific countries

Source: World bank

2F2F
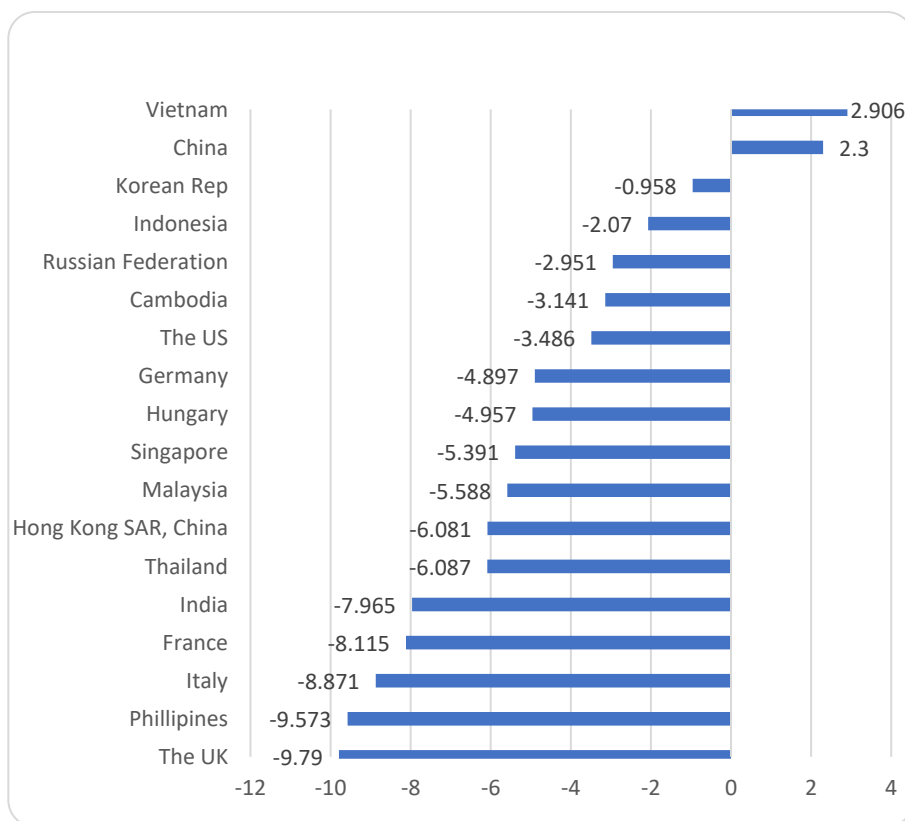
This chart showed the implication behind the global transition of companies away from China to Vietnam. Before the fourth wave, Vietnam symbolized the successful national image in containing the pandemic at a very low level with no infection in the society. The credibility and leadership of Vietnam have been augmented on the international stage, drawing more FDI and projects into Vietnam.

During the fourth wave

The fourth wave of the pandemic has been marked as the real wave of Vietnam since the first outbreak began. Unfortunately, this dreadful situation comes for Vietnam with the hit at the biggest economic city which is Ho Chi Minh city. Vietnamese government put the whole extensive economic hub into full and restricted lockdown.

Chart 4: Daily new Covid-19 cases in Vietnam from May 15th to September 30th, 2021
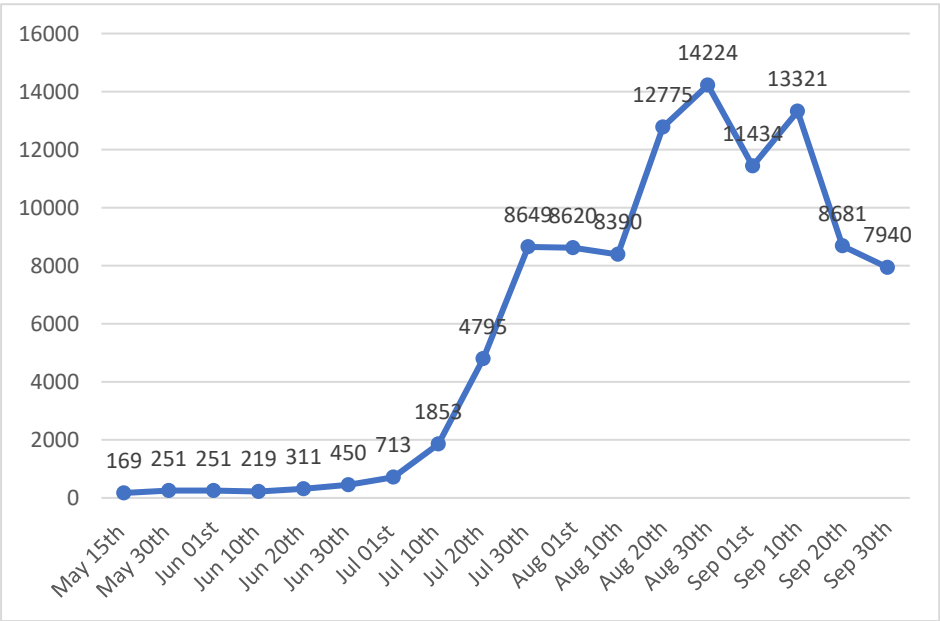
Source: Worldometers

This chart drew a severe picture of Vietnam regarding the sky rocking number of daily cases. The cases had been jumping from 169 to 14,224 cases per day since the fourth wave started. Therefore, the government had to impose

restrictions as soon as possible. The government seems to avoid using the term "lockdown" and "restriction" is the term to use. This doing is to evade the massive panic-purchase and to reduce the public pressure on the government's policy, logistics, and supply chain of essential goods for citizens. The government set the objective to limit the virus spreading in a two-week endeavour and pursued the "no Covid-19 transmission" goal. However, the combination of the new Delta variant spread and strict measures has put the whole country at stake with 4 months of lockdown. The spread at the high speed of this new variant poses inevitable enormous threats to the country's economic and societal security. At first, we must understand the "zero COVID-19" strategy of Vietnam that helps the country effectively clash with the three previous waves. This policy emerged from China in the early of the break-out. Wuhan was the first battlefield and the prestigious experience for neighbouring countries as Thailand and Vietnam. The government seems to take every extreme measure to contain the virus spreading including people must stay at home 24/7 and only go out for essential needs, if breaching the law, the price is too high to pay. There was almost no loophole to exploit as the police checking bots were set up everywhere throughout the country. Furthermore, aggressive testing and tracing policy was imposed fully at every corner of the country. The entry for foreigners was limited to only exceptional cases with guaranteed acceptance from the local government. Most cases are experts or vital employees affecting the country's economic development. Vietnam was once the most thriving case prevailing waves of covid-19 by using this policy. This policy was regarded as an effective measure for a central government with the example of China, Taiwan, Singapore, or Vietnam. Western countries were not in full capacity to deploy such a policy. But the emergence of the delta variant, the government has reconsidered to shift away from this strategy as the virus is dominant. Moreover, as a developing country, four months of lockdown were too much for this country to handle. The economy is on the brink of collapse as the GDP is immensely decreasing during the lockdown. According to General Statistics Office, Vietnam's Ministry of Planning and Investment, the GDP growth shrink negative 6.17 in the third quarter of 2021 (Davies 2021). In addition, the impact of COVID-19 on businesses was vast as the report of the General Statistics Office (An 2021) estimated that the withdrawal of businesses from the market was accounted for 90,000 businesses. In that statistic, the number of enterprises suspending business for a definite time stood at 45,100 enterprises, and 32,400 enterprises stopped operating and waited for dissolution procedures. On average, approximately 10,000 businesses withdraw from the market. The economic vision of Vietnam was darkening because of the consequence of the "zero Covid-19" policy. Many factories must stop their manufacturing operations accordingly to governmental measures. Working from home or remote working is more suitable for the digital economy and administrative tasks. Vietnam is heavily industrialized with the advent of many factories moving

out from China as mentioned above. Therefore, the closure of factories for many months is difficultly achievable. Although, the government has updated its measure for factories as employees must stay at designated factories for assuring the continuality of operation. But the result turns out to be negative because many enterprises considering moving out of Vietnam. Actually, the other symbols have also highlighted the efficiency of the "zero Covid-19" policy such as China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan. The common feature among these countries is that this measure must come with the high rate of vaccination which Vietnam did not possess at that time. Vietnam's government was aware of the situation of vaccine distribution inequality throughout the world. This might be considered as one motivation for the international aids of Vietnam towards countries in need of supports. These advocacy activities will be discussed in the below section.

Vietnam assistance to the world as the first lobbying step

The equitable Covid-19 vaccine distribution has raised an obvious concern since the emerge of the vaccine opportunity. The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned multiple times of the unequal Covid-19 vaccine distribution. The WHO chief has posed the challenge of unequal distribution of vaccines since the vaccine distribution started among big economies such as the UK, the US, or within the EU (Higgins-Dunn 2021). At the press briefing in Geneva, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus clearly stated that "low and most middle-income countries" had not been receiving the vaccine yet. Eventually, Vietnam was not an exceptional case in this regard. This statement was made in the context that all developed and advanced emerging economies were rolling out their initial vaccine doses at a high rate and high speed. Even on June 7th, 2021, the WHO general director must, once again, express this major concern on his Twitter. This was to happen if the vast majority of countries have the intention to ease restrictions. This is an unavoidable issue that Vietnam has noticed. Access to the vaccine resource is very limited sources. The government is relying heavily on the COVAX Facility Program. This program is implemented by the WHO and co-led by GAVI-vaccine Alliance, UNICEF, and Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) for the purpose of assuring equitable vaccine access and distribution. But the process is still facing challenges from political pressure. From this foreseeable vision, Vietnam, as the successful case of isolating waves of covid, must launch the advocacy activities beforehand. The second reason for the delay in vaccine negotiation is that Vietnam is also a player

in the vaccine development race as the country is possessing 2 potential candidates which are Nano Covax in phase 3 of the experiment process and COVIVAC in phase 2 of the experiment process. It is expected that the first vaccine candidate would be approved at the end of 2021. In addition, the price is predicted at 120,000 VND (approximately 5,5 USD)/dose, which means this vaccine is classed as among the cheapest vaccine in the world. From an academic standpoint, the success of the Nano Covax will be strong leverage for raising Vietnam's economic competitive capacity. Secondly, this vaccine will increase Vietnam's position and national image on the international stage. Thirdly, the possibility of covid vaccine commercialization with opportunities of fuelling the economy, opening another competitive business sector for Vietnam. The state has contested the inequality in vaccine distribution that those initial batches of the vaccine were likely to be delivered firstly to large economies and advanced markets. During the first and second quarters of 2020, Vietnam implemented a series of international aid to countries that were in need, showing the tremendous contribution to the global attempt of fighting the pandemic. These contributions included masks and standard medical equipment, medical experts, or ventilators which were produced by Vietnam with high quality. Especially, at the beginning of 2020 when the world was facing an immense shortage of personal protective equipment. At that time, WHO had raised this issue at the global level as demand surged (Chaiz 2020).

Table 2: Vietnam's aids portfolio towards specific countries

	Countries	**Products**	**Date of announcement**
1.	Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the UK	550,000 masks.	07/04/2020
2.	Indonesia	500 Covid-19 test kits.	06/04/2020
3.	Myanmar	50,000 USD.	10/04/2020
4.	Brazil	10,000 masks.	11/05/2021
5.	Cuba	5,000 tons of rice and medical supplies.	20/09/2020
6.	China	Medical supplies including ventilators, antiseptic clothing, gloves and medical masks with a total value of 500,000 USD.	30/01/2020
7.	Cambodia	300,000 USD.	23/04/2020
8.	Laos	35 medical staff and experts, 500,000 USD, 2 million medical masks, 200 ventilators and 10,000 kg of Chloramine B disinfectant.	04/05/2020
9.	France	Vietnamese army to French army: 20,000 3-layers antibacterial masks; 2,000 bottles of hand sanitizer; 20,000	- 27/05/2020 - 01/10/2020

	Countries	Products	Date of announce-ment
		AKD08 antibacterial silver nano masks and 20,000 face shields.	
10.	USA	- 420,000 medical masks, including 120,000 masks of the Vietnam Red Cross Society and 300,000 masks of the Hanoi Vietnam United States Alumni Club (VUSAC Hanoi). - 450,000 sets of Dupont protective clothing made in Vietnam - 200.000 masks. - 3.500 masks donated from Vietnam to Washington. - 10.000 masks donated from Vietnam to Maryland.	- 29/04/2020 - 08/04/2020 - 16/04/2020 - 01/07/2020 - 07/07/2020
11.	Japan	- Supporting pack which is 100.000 USD in total including masks and medical supplies made in Vietnam. - 50,000 medical masks donated to the Cabinet Office of Japanon behalf of The Prime Minister. - 140,000 medical masks and medical supplies for the second time	- 16/04/2020 - 04/05/2020
12.	Sweden	100,000 masks.	17/04/2020
13	South Africa	Vietnamese Ministry of Police donated 20,000 masks to Ministry of State Security and Ministry of Police of the Republic of South Africa.	22/07/2020
14	Russia	150,000 masks.	13/04/2020
15	Hungary	20,000 3-layers antibacterial masks; 2,000 bottles of hand sanitizer; 20,000 AKD08 antibacterial silver nano masks and 20,000 face shields.	01/10/20202
16	South Korea	20,000 3-layers antibacterial masks; 2,000 bottles of hand sanitizer; 20,000 AKD08 antibacterial silver nano masks and 20,000 face shields.	01/10/2020
17	Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.	the supporting pack's value is 420.000 USD in total, including antibacterial cloth masks, medical masks, protective suits for prevention and SARS-CoV-2 testing kits made in Vietnam.	18/05/2020
18	India	A supporting pack's value is nearly 14 billion VND including 100 ventilators and 50 oxygen generators from the Buddhist Sangha of Vietnam.	12/05/2020

Source: Compiled by author, based on public sources

Vietnam as the prioritized state for vaccine aids

The Fourth wave has been a catastrophe for the country in terms of economic development and societal security. The state of Vietnam has been evaluated as severe in the context that the national vaccine candidate has not been ready yet for the vaccine roll-out operation. Additionally, the lack of vaccine and the inequitable vaccine distribution is still stinging issues of the globe despite the warning and the call for unity of the WHO general director. This situation is comprehensible as when it comes to disaster management, nationalism, the closure of borders, and the notion "protection of citizens" must be prioritized. Even the EU, the supreme symbol of unity and globalization, was somewhat polarized because of disagreement and division in lockdown and response policies of the whole bloc. Furthermore, disease prevention and control are very urgent while the world's vaccine resources are scarce. Therefore, vaccine diplomacy is regarded as a very important battlefront. And the objective of campaigning for obtaining a vaccine is the first step that determines the successful implementation of the vaccine strategy.

The task force, which is in charge of deploying vaccine diplomacy has been established accordingly to the Government Decree. This task force, which is the biggest cooperation among designated ministries, aims at the promotion of vaccine diplomacy for accessing the various numbers of vaccines, treatment drugs, and medical supplies in the shortest of time. This mission is a top priority for all Vietnamese representative bodies from all over the globe such as ambassadors. It seems that the strategy of vaccine diplomacy would focus on three approaches. Firstly, the implementation of commitments under contracts of vaccine supply which are ratified by the Government with medicine enterprises such as AstraZeneca, Pfizer. Second, the bilateral and multilateral diplomatic channels will be exploited. Moreover, the Working Group will take advantage of its relationship with crucial partners of Vietnam for the purpose of accessing vaccines from these countries in various forms such as aids, commercial acts, lendings, etc. Finally, the purchase of new vaccines with major companies as third parties. And vaccine production in the country is needed to have a stable and long-term supply.

Table 3: Vietnam's Covid-19 Vaccine Portfolio

No.	Country	Vaccine	Quantity (dose)	Date of announce-ment	Note
1.	Australia	AstraZeneca	400,000 300,000	August 26th, 2021 October 06th, 2021	Bilateral channel
2.	Belgium	AstraZeneca	100,000	September 12nd, 2021	COVAX Facility
3.	China	Sinopharm	500,000 200,000 2,000,000 800,000	June 23rd, 2021 August 23rd, 2021 August 24th, 2021 September 14th, 2021	Bilateral channel
4.	Czech Re-public	AstraZeneca Modena	210,000 40,800	August 30th, 2021	Bilateral channel
5.	France	AstraZeneca	672,000	September 14th, 2021	COVAX Facility
6.	Germany	AstraZeneca	2,500,000 852,480	September 05th, 2021 September 16th, 2021	COVAX Facility: 852,480 doses Bilateral acts: 2,500,000 doses
7.	Romania	AstraZeneca	300,000	August 25th, 2021	Bilateral channel
	Russia	Sputnik	1,000	March 17th, 2021	Bilateral channel
8.	Italy	AstraZeneca	812,060 2,021,360	September 14th, 2021 October 15th, 2021	COVAX Facility
9.	Poland	AstraZeneca	501,600 890,000	August 20th, 2021 October 13rd, 2021	Bilateral channel
10.	USA	Moderna Pfizer	2,000,000 1.499.960 1.500.100 1,000,000 1,499,940 1,999,530	July 09th, 2021 July 24th, 2021 July 25th, 2021 August 26th, 2021 October 04th, 2021 October 7, 8, 13	COVAX facility
11.	Hungary	AstraZeneca	100,000 100,000	September 23rd, 2021	
12.	Slovakia	AstraZeneca	100,000	September 12nd, , 2021	
13.	United Kingdom	AstraZeneca	415,000	August 03rd, 2021	Bilateral channel
14.	Japan	AstraZeneca	3,000,000	June 16th, 2021 July 02nd, 2021 July 16th, 2021	Bilateral channel

Source: Compiled by author, based on public sources

Eventually, the creation of the Working Group on Covid-19 vaccine diplomacy is bringing fruitful outcomes contributing to the contamination of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the high demands and shortage of supply, especially the inequality of vaccine distribution, the highly developed economies are donating vaccine doses to Vietnam. Not only the vaccine doses are sent, treatment drugs and medical supplies also are supplied with a tremendous amount of money. The form of vaccine transfer which is from the surplus of vaccine stock

of several countries is also considered, the purchase of vaccine from those sources will be on a non-lucrative basis at the governmental level. According to the report regarding COVAX vaccine rollout from GAVI -The vaccine alliance, Vietnam is classed among the largest vaccine recipients, standing with the less developed countries (Gavi - The vaccine alliance 2021). Since the Working Group on Covid-19 vaccine diplomacy was established in the middle of August, Vietnam has received massive generous donations along with various treatment drugs and medical equipment for disease prevention and control. As the gateway to Southeast Asia, Vietnam is defined as the geopolitical and economic key strategy for the EU, China, and the US. The table is proving the vaccine rollout race among countries to Vietnam, especially between the US, China, and Japan. The EU had been lagged behind in the vaccine diplomacy in Asia due to its orientation towards the African countries, and non-EU European countries with the spread of Chinese vaccine and influence in the region. Later on, the EU recognized the role of Vietnam in the EU economic market expansion and regain of influence in the Southeast Asian region. Many pledges are likewise to be given with a significant number of vaccine doses coming to Vietnam to the end of 2021.

Table 4: Pledges for vaccine aids towards Vietnam

No.	Countries	Vaccine	Quantity (Doses)	Time
1.	Australia	Astra Zeneca	400,000	To the end of 2021
2.	China	Sinopharm	3,000,000	To the end of 2021
3.	Russia	Sputnik V		
4.	Korea	Astra Zeneca	1,600,000	October
5.	Italy	AstraZeneca	1,225,440	To be defined

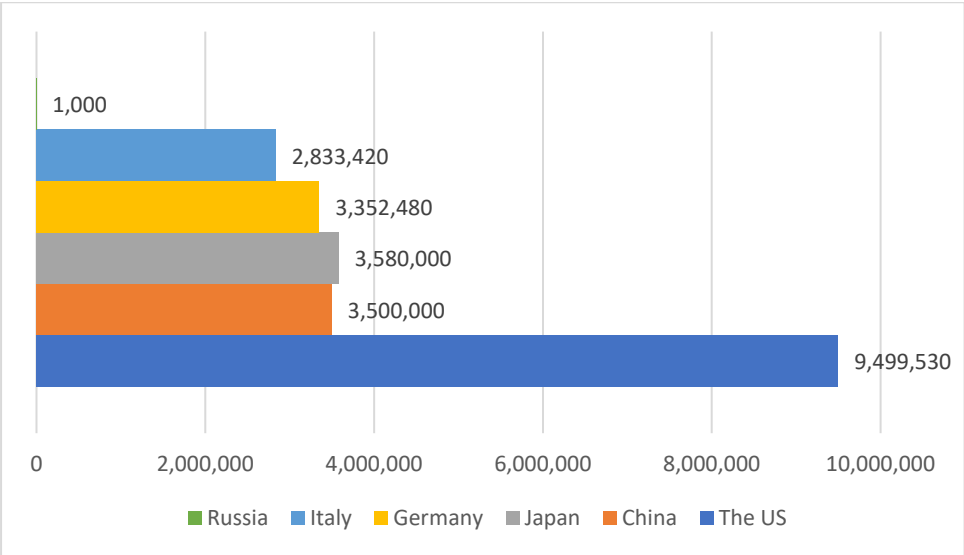Source: Compiled by author, based on public sources

These figures emphasize the geopolitical standout and position of Vietnam have been enhanced in the international arena as many powerful economies donate large number of vaccine batches. Comparing to other countries receiving vaccine donations, Vietnam might be at first rank with bilateral and multilateral diplomatic channels and COVAX facility.

Implication behind acceleration of vaccine supplies to Vietnam

Recently, the world is witnessing a large number of Vaccines donated to Vietnam by leading economies. The question mark is set to the real meaning behind these diplomatic activities to the Indo-Pacific region in general and Vietnam in

particular. Especially, The US is leading this vaccine race ahead of China while China pledged big support for Vietnam in the future. European countries do not stand behind this trend as their economics are being somewhat threatened by the lockdown of Vietnam.

Chart 5: Quantity of vaccine donation by country

Source: Compiled by author, based on public sources

The U.S. vs China

The vaccine donation race is speeding at high speed. Vietnam is. The US is currently dominated in the vaccine donation race with 9,499,530 doses. The rate of vaccine donation of the US is accelerated right after the official visit of the Vice President Kamala Harris to the Indo-Pacific region. This visit and the 1,000,000 hot vaccine delivery to Vietnam has engaged a new commitment of the world leader. Recently, the trade war between the US and China have been aggressively occurring and affecting the world. This step of vaccine donation is not only implying to the enhanced engagement of health cooperation to Vietnam, but also Vietnam was chosen to launch the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Southeast Asia Regional Office (CDC) in Hanoi, Vietnam. The open ceremony was attended by representatives from eleven ASEAN countries. This step coincidently occurred in the context after the army withdrawal of the US in Afghanistan denoting the shift in concerned pivot to Indo-Pacific region. Especially, the US turns absolute focus to its utmost rival which is China when the Vice President called on putting more pressure on China regarding the South China sea dispute. Secondly, the US seems to aim at resuming its lead role in the

Southeast Asia region where is influenced immensely by Chinese FDI. Vietnam has the diplomatic style which is check and balance making the country establish and maintain friendly and cooperative relationships with neighbouring countries. As leading country of ASEAN and gateway to other member countries, the US apparently recognizes the need for a deep coalition with Vietnam, which has been jeopardized by the US's withdrawal from CPTPP under the Former President Trump's era. The US hiddenly confirms its aim to become an important part of Vietnam's foreign policies including the reinforcement of the US role and diversification of cooperation. The talk about the possibility of America's reconciliation with Vietnam is quite well acknowledged by political experts and researchers. Florian Constantin Feyerabend (2021) realized that the official visit of Kamala Harris was "a foreign policy signal to the geopolitical competitor in Beijing" as the rapidly expansive presence People's Republic of China is influencing the whole Indo-Pacific and European regions. He also mentioned that from the US American perspective, Vietnam is playing a crucial "strategic component of its Indo-Pacific strategy" than "its allies of the Philippines and Thailand or Indonesia". Vietnam is an explicit object which was remarked in the "Interim National Security Strategy Guidance", a foreign policy guide under the Biden administration. The guide pledges to address "common challenges, share costs, and widen the circle of cooperation". Furthermore, the US is undertaking the enhancement of deep partnerships with India, New Zealand, as well as Singapore, Vietnam, and other ASEAN member states for the purpose of achieving the above referred objectives (President Joseph R. Biden 2021).

On the other side of the battle, China would not stand still when Vice President Harris was paying a visit to Vietnam. Three hours before the arrival of Vice President Harris, China took advantage and sent its diplomat to Prime Minister for the sake of offering two million doses of Sinopharm (Mahtani 2021). These steps paved the way for the emergence of the "Sinophobia". The trust in Sinopharm vaccine is very low in Vietnam lately as its citizen opted for the Western vaccines rather than the Chinese ones. China donated its Sinopharm vaccine to Vietnam very soon in June with 500,000 doses. These initial doses had been administered to those specific people only: Citizens of the People's Republic of China working in Vietnam; Vietnamese people pursuing to study, work and do business in the People's Republic of China; Vietnamese people living in localities near the border with the People's Republic of China. This was the pledge of the Vietnamese government to the Chinese government as a policy for protecting Chinese people and Vietnamese involving Chinese affairs. The Vietnamese government did not clearly define its stand with China, but we could infer the check and balance policy of Vietnam from the roll-out operation of Sinopharm.

Furthermore, the Chinese vaccine diplomacy is being referred to a tool of Economic diplomacy and plays insignificant role in public diplomacy. Chinese

public diplomacy is a strategy of extending national branding on the international stage. For this country, national branding is a broad term for cultivating the national image, economy and culture to enhance competitiveness. Competitive Identity, as Anholt Simon defined (2007), "has more to do with national identity and the politics and economics of competitiveness than with branding as it is usually understood in the commercial sector". Seow Ting Lee (2021) recognized the Chinese Vaccine Diplomacy as a tool for "not only for image repair and for expanding Beijing's great power ambitions, but also to reinforce and leverage existing soft power programs, and to capitalize on new economic and geopolitical opportunities". The reason behind the hesitation and delay in purchasing Sinopharm is comprehensible. Vietnam places the two big economies under the check and balance policy. Currently, Vietnam could not unilaterally cooperate with the US or China. China is the closest country to China in terms of geoeconomics and geopolitics. The strict border with China makes it hard for Vietnam to establish unilateral cooperation with the US regarding the enhancement of South Chinese Sea's security. Vietnam is presently classed as a major trading partner with China concerning exportation and importation. According to data of The Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), exporting from Vietnam to China is worth $40.3 billion, and exporting from China to Vietnam is worth $91.1 billion. Vietnam becomes the 6th largest trading partners for China. Therefore, Vietnam has a high rate of economic dependency on China. This is not to mention that the two countries share the common ideology of communism, making them even closer. This pandemic and the vaccine favourable step towards Vietnam are the opportunity for the US to upgrade the relations with this country.

European Countries

The question mark is also set for the European countries in terms of donating various numbers of vaccine to Vietnam as these countries are on the list of the vaccine donation race toward Vietnam. Germany and Italy are close together right after Japan. The motivation behind this step from the leading economies of the European region and the EU in particular is by far a vague to identify. The lobbying activities of the Vietnamese government implemented in August have exploited fruitful results. In fact, having deprived data from Table 2 regarding the Vietnamese aids towards the European countries, this step is referring to the payback of those countries as Vietnam has helped those countries in the context that the shortage of medical equipment was the warning label. It is considered a beautiful gesture of Vietnam contributing to the unity of the international community as a value of the EU. The major driving force might be the economic viewpoint as the EU-Vietnam Free trade Agreement (EVFTA) was effective from August 01st. the President of the EU Commission stated that "The European economy needs now every opportunity to restore its strength after

the crisis triggered by the coronavirus. Trade agreements, such as the one becoming effective with Vietnam today, offer our companies a chance to access new emerging markets and create jobs for Europeans" (Leyen 2020). These words have confirmed the major role of Vietnam in the contribution to the world recovery after the pandemic. Several companies including European companies are threatened to find other markets if the lockdown is still in force. For the European countries, Vietnam is an emerging market with many potential growths for both sides.

Japan

The implementation of Vaccine diplomacy of Japan is another case of donating largely to Vietnam. The goals of Japan in this regard are the same as the US with the extension of influence to the Indo-Pacific region. Japan donates a large amount of vaccines to Southeast Asian countries including Vietnam where China is dominated in vaccine distribution. As a leading country in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue alliance, the country is proving that it is "a dependable partner for Southeast Asian countries, leading to more comprehensive security cooperation" (Beaty 2021). Japanese vaccine diplomacy is a strategy countering the Chinese vaccine diplomacy. Japan might be the only stronghold as there are many signs of concession of the Quad with China. The influence of the Quad is on the verge of collapse as the US President Joe Biden made a statement regarding abiding Taiwan agreement with China's Xi Jinping and the approval of Sinovac of the Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison. Vietnam is somewhat not the only targeted country but the whole Southeast Asia.

Final Remarks

A large amount of vaccine doses donated to Vietnam from big economies bear a foreseeable meaning. The step-in and extension of the influence of the Quad in the Indo-Pacific region pose a challenge toward China, and Vietnam is playing as a geopolitical and antagonistic strategic base going against China in the South China Sea. This is the consequence of the deep and direct involvement of Vietnam with China in the South China Sea dispute. The official visit of the US's Vice President Kamala Harris and her statement about the call for Vietnam's stricter opposition to China's bullying action in the region. Vietnam plays the check-and-balance policy when this country welcomed the two strategic partners at the same time: Japanese Minister of Defense Kishi Nobuo and Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi. The official visit of Kishi Nobuo to Vietnam promotes stronger defence-

security cooperation between Japan and Vietnam in the context that regional security must be enhanced due to many complicated disputes in the South China Sea, especially disputes from China. It is not difficult to realize the essence of this visit to Vietnam by Mr. Wang Yi. The Tendency of China to entice Vietnam to move away from the US's influential regaining strategy in the Indo-Pacific region for the purpose of expanding globally with the strategy so-called "the belt and road initiative. In the context of a pandemic across the globe, vaccine diplomacy is a tactic to increase China's soft power to serve its expansion strategy. Not only increase the support in the vaccine distribution, but Mr. Wang Yi also brings the promise of supporting Vietnam in many aspects. The threat from China might be considered by many sanctions regarding economics, trade, etc, in this visit if Vietnam has any tendency of moving unilaterally towards becoming a strategic partner of the US. Since July 2021, Vietnam welcome Minister of Defence of the US and Japan respectively have posed hidden but obvious challenges to China. The policy of diversification and multilateralization in that direction is wise and needs to be continued. The US will continuously donate more vaccine doses to Vietnam as its public diplomacy in implementing soft power to regain its influence in the Indo-Pacific region. In the meantime, China should apprehend Vietnam's "four-no" policy. In the case that the dispute in the South China Sea is escalated with China, Vietnam could completely call on other partners to support and protect its national sovereignty.

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External Intervention and the Arab Spring: Implications for the region

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Abstract: This paper looks at the effect of external intervention in the Arab Spring. The paper goes over the history of external intervention in the region of Middle East. It then goes on to give a brief overview of the events of the Arab Spring in every country involved. It then looks at case studies involving 6 countries, three in which substantial intervention took place, and another three in which substantial intervention did not take place. It draws certain conclusions, namely that external intervention often worsened the intensity of the conflict, and that while intervention on one side proved decisive, intervention on both sides only dragged on the conflict instead of providing a quick resolution. Next, it predicts why intervention would be a continuing feature of Middle Eastern geopolitics through the prism of Game Theory. Finally, the paper seeks to provide a possible resolution for the problem through an international agreement.

Keywords: Middle East, Arab Spring, External Intervention, Geopolitics, Game Theory

Introduction

IT WAS A SINGLE ACT – self-immolation by a disgruntled and helpless vegetable vendor in Tunisia – which sparked the fire of change and revolution throughout the Islamic world in Middle East and North Africa. This phenomenon, quickly named as the Arab Spring, was caused by the pent-up frustration of millions of common people facing regular oppression at the hands of an uncaring political elite and a repressive and authoritarian state. While the causes for the uprisings in the various countries in the Arab World were quite similar, the effects were quite different. While in some countries, like Tunisia and Egypt, regime change did occur, others descended into a still-ongoing civil war, while in yet others the rulers maintained their position despite domestic opposition.

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What could explain the differing outcomes in the various countries? There could be several possible reasons, including different levels of entrenchment of the present ruling elites and different local situations. This paper, however, would argue that one large reason was that of external intervention following the onset of Arab Spring. Both who intervened and what was the extent of intervention are important factors that could explain how the Arab Spring played out the way it did in the various countries of Middle East and North Africa. Finally, the paper would make a judgement call as to whether external intervention was a helpful or a harmful factor in achieving the originally intended goals of the Middle East.

External Intervention in the Middle East

External intervention is not a new phenomenon in the Middle East. In fact, the current strain of intervention can be traced back to the end of the First World War, when the Western powers got involved in the Middle East for the first time. With the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the power hitherto controlling the region, it came under the hand of Britain and France under the mandate system. (Barr 2012) While theoretically it was supposed to be a trusteeship, the mandating powers used the mandated countries for their own benefit. Oil was not yet a very important resource, and it was mostly the strategic location of the region, sandwiched between the three continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe, which made it so important.

With the Second World War, two new considerations entered the calculus of foreign powers interested in this region. The first was that of oil, which had now become an important source of energy in the world and was the raw material for many industrially important materials. Oil was plentiful in this region, and thus became a priority for the external powers. However, the second consideration was the spirit of decolonization, which meant that the mandate system had to end, and the powers could no longer control the region directly. Thus, they sought to indirectly control and influence the region by supporting the governments or employing subterfuge to engineer regime change and bring in friendly governments.

The most blatant example of this was the deposition of Iran's democratically elected Prime Minister, Mossadegh, by British and American intelligence. In his place, the Shah of Iran was installed as a government that would be friendly to Western interests. The Shah was very modernist and tried to introduce Western customs in his country. However, he was deeply unpopular among his people since they were largely conservative and traditional. He also most of

the oil revenues on funding arms purchases from the US, at a time when a large section of his population was in dire poverty. The intervention ultimately back-fired in 1979 as the Iranian Revolution removed the Shah and the consequent revolutionary government has been vehemently anti-West ever since.

Another early example of intervention was an attempt by UK and France, in conjunction with Israel, to capture the Suez Canal. The Suez was hitherto owned by a British company, and the revenue derived from it was sent to UK, depriving Egypt of the same. Nasser, an Arab nationalist and socialist, national-ized the Suez Canal because of the revenues were derived from its strategic lo-cation, which lay in Egyptian territory. To prevent this nationalization, UK and France tried to capture the Suez by sending paratroopers. This was unsuccessful as this intervention was not liked either by the US or the USSR, and immense pressure was put on the UK and France to withdraw.

During the Cold War period, it was in the interest of the United States to maintain support to government's friendly to it and prevent the USSR from in-creasing its influence in the area. It mainly did this through financial aid and arms sales to its client governments. One of these was Iran, but there were others as well like Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, etc. It also engineered coups in other coun-tries, like Iraq in 1961 which ultimately led to the assassination of its leader Ka-rim Qasim in 1963 (whether the assassination can be attributed to US' coup ef-forts is debatable, but the US did try to plot a coup after Qasim nationalized Iraq's oil reserves).

As the Cold War was ending, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait necessitated a multilateral response, led by the US, to free the country. While this intervention was indeed one that was required to uphold the sovereignty of Kuwait, what followed was a decade long campaign of aerial bombings and crippling sanctions on Iraq by the US, which completely destroyed the country's infrastructure and economy. This was ultimately followed by the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, on the (later found misleading) accusation of Iraq manufacturing Weapons of Mass De-struction, and funding and training the assailants of 9/11.

Thus, there is a very long history of intervention in the Middle East in the lead up to the events of the Arab Spring. Historically, most of the inter-vention has been for the geopolitical priorities of the intervening country, and there has not been much of an attempt to mask it as such. There was a pretence, that of democratization, presented in the case of the invasion of Iraq, but it was pushed much later after no WMD's were found in Iraq. Thus, intervention for (or at least pretending to be for) benevolent causes is a rel-atively new phenomenon in the Middle East.

While the misdeeds of previous interventions can be blamed on the fact that the interventions were never meant to be doing anything good, and solely

served the ends of the interveners. The Arab Spring was different, and the interventions were supposedly for a good cause – democracy and popular representation. As such, they must be judged keeping this in mind.

The Arab Spring

The Arab Spring was a radical event in the Middle East, for chiefly two reasons. It was for the first time when people revolted against their authoritarian regimes for misgovernance, and they did it in waves in almost every country. While the intensity varied across the countries, the people in almost every country in the Middle East agitated against their respective governments. Parallels have been made with the revolutions in the Eastern European countries following the dissolution of the Soviet bloc (and later, the Soviet Union itself) in the late 1980's till 1991. Comparison has also been made with the colour revolutions, which happened a few years before the Arab Spring. Some have gone so far and bold as to proclaim the Arab Spring as the Fourth Wave of democratization, but unfortunately such proclamations have been proven to be premature and rather erroneous.

The event which triggered these massive waves of protests happened on 17th December 2010. A vegetable vendor, Muhammad Bouazizi, had gone to ply his trade in the provincial town of Sidi Bouzid. An unemployed graduate, he was forced into this profession just to make ends meet, because there were no jobs available matching his qualifications. Unfortunately, he lacked a proper license to sell vegetables, and had his cart and supplies confiscated by the police. Not only this, but the police also mistreated him and verbally and physically abused him. Denied an opportunity to lodge a complaint and feeling humiliated and infuriated, Bouazizi immolated himself in front of the municipal headquarters. (McKay 2011)

This act of immolation got extensive media coverage. While Bouazizi unfortunately succumbed to his wounds, his act started a massive wave of protests throughout the country. Dubbed the Jasmine Revolution by the local media, it was a grassroots movement against the state of economy and general governance by the despotic ruler of Tunisia, Ben Ali. While the Tunisian government attempted to end the unrest by offering political and economic concessions and also by using violence against street demonstrations, protests soon overwhelmed the country's security forces and compelled President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali to resign and flee the country on 14 January 2011.

Shortly, the winds of the movement spread to Egypt. The Egyptian protests began just a few days after the resignation of Tunisian President Ben Ali, on 25th of January 2011. The misgovernance and police brutality were major reasons behind the protest, and the Egyptian authorities responded through the

only way they knew: force. After many days of huge popular demonstrations and clashes between protesters and armed forces in Cairo and throughout the country, a turning point came at the end of the month when the Egyptian army announced that it would refuse to use force against protesters. Mubarak knew that his time was up, and he resigned too in February 11.

A major factor in the Egyptian case was the widespread use of social media by the protestors. Effective censorship of social media had not been developed by then, and governments in the Middle East were yet not as tech savvy as the youth. Thus, the popular protests were often organized around such social media sites as Facebook and Twitter, which were also used to disseminate information about the protests. This was one of the first examples of "digital activists" participating in such protests. (Diamond 2010)

Like Egypt, protests in Algeria started shortly after they did in Tunisia. However, the outcome in the Algerian case has been diametrically opposite to that of both Egypt and Tunisia. What has been common is the cause for the protests – widespread misgovernance and corruption, making life difficult for the common citizenry. That being said, the method in which the protests were being held are very different. Protests in Algeria were largely localised, instead of being concentrated in the large cities. Also, they were conducted on the exact point of grievances – council houses and toll booths – rather than more general settings like town squares. What this meant is that they were after specific grievance redressal, rather than regime change.

The Algerian regime was thus able to secure itself from being dislodged and remains in power. The widespread protests soon petered out, and apart from the first few days the number of protestors has remained relatively low. The police and security forces were easily able to control the protests, and the whole thing blew over within a couple of weeks. The government did give some symbolic concessions, such as the lifting of the 19-year state of Emergency, promising to give the opposition greater airtime, and a new job-creation scheme for the youth. These were counterbalanced, however, by the adoption of new antiterrorism laws which granted the security forces extensive freedom of action with regards to any matter that they deemed as a "threat to the nation". (Volpi 2013)

Jordan is a unique case in that it is the only constitutional monarchy in the region. Interestingly, the protests in Jordan were never against the Monarch, the ruling dynasty, or the Institution of Monarchy. Instead, they were against the misgovernance of the democratically elected rulers. The Parliament was a very weak institution, and power was concentrated in the hands of few powerful politicians. These politicians initiated privatisation in a self-serving manner and got very rich of it. As a result, corruption reached an unprecedented point, and the

people were left with no choice but to resort to the street to express their dissatisfaction and bitterness about the economic and political situations.

The response of the Monarch has been to dismiss the Prime Ministers and replace them with another. This happened thrice in two years. The main objective was to carry out reforms that would improve the economy and the people's lives. The protests were never very severe or violent, and never called for any kind of regime change. Both the king, as well as his reforms, remain popular with the people. Thus, the Arab Spring again only had a minor impact on Jordan and did not change the political system in any fundamental way. (Barari & Satkowski 2012)

The protests in Oman resemble in certain degrees to those in Jordan. Both began around the same time, and both were largely peaceful (some protests in Oman did turn violent, especially in February 2011). However, they were largely specific grievances being aired, than a more general request for socio-political reforms. Much like in the case of Jordan, there were no calls for the abdication of the Sultan, who remained very popular. The Omani Sultanate was more or less able to manage the situation through a shuffling of the cabinet, piecemeal economic concessions, and empowering the elected legislature. More fundamental changes did not take place, and nor were they demanded. (Worral 2012)

The protests in Saudi Arabia, which also began in January of 2011, were of a far less scale than in the other Middle Eastern countries. This is chiefly due to two reason – the pact between the House of Saud and the Saudi clergy, granting them religious legitimacy, and the good economic condition of most of the people of Saudi Arabia. Thus, domestic protests in Saudi Arabia have been of relatively lesser concern. Most of the literature of the Saudi role in the Arab Spring has been of its intervention in other countries, which would be discussed in the next section.

The Arab Spring had a much more violent end in Syria and Libya. In Libya, protests began on 15th February 2011, a couple weeks after they had in the rest of the Middle East. The Security forces of Libya almost immediately responded to it with violence by firing into the protesting crowds. As violence begets violence, the protests turned violent and soon gained the status of a Revolution. The rebels united under the banner of the National Transitional Council and fought Gaddafi's forces.

It was during this time that Western External intervention began trickling in Libya. On 26th of February 2011, the UN Security Council passed a Resolution freezing the assets of Gaddafi and his inner circle and restricting their travel. Another UN Resolution, passed on 17th of March 2011, asked member states to enforce a no-fly zone to prevent Gaddafi's forces from harming civilians. This soon turned into a NATO-led bombing of Libya, weakening Gaddafi's forces. The rebels had an upper hand by now, and all major cities were captured by August

2011. Gaddafi himself was only captured by 20th October, when he was executed by the rebels. The post-Civil War reconstruction of Libya was very painful, and the country soon plunged into another civil war which still continues.

While the ultimate result in terms of violence was quite similar in case of Syria and Libya, the two countries had quite different backgrounds. While Gaddafi had systematically destroyed any democratic framework in the country in his 40 years of rule, Assad was actually quite progressive by Middle East's authoritarian standards. In his first few years of taking office, he instituted reforms in the economic, societal, and political spheres. The pace of these, however, took him aback and he was forced to retrench on these reforms. Still, he thought he was one of the more liberal rulers of Middle East and was quite surprised when the Arab Spring protests started in Syria in February 2011. (Lesch 2012)

As a result, the regime was unprepared to face the protests, and started a violent crackdown. This was no different than the crackdowns that were quite a routine response to the Arab Spring protests in Middle East. The violence that occurred in Syria cannot fully be explained thus. In later sections, we would see how external intervention, in the form of Western support to the opposition and Russian and Iranian support to the government.

The case of Iraq was a unique one in multiple ways. It was one of the youngest governments in the region, having been established less than a decade ago by the United States post their invasion of the country. One wonders how different things would have gone if Saddam Hussein was still in power when the Arab Spring protests began. It might suffice to say that ISIS would not have been able to use the power vacuum to capture large parts of its territory in the creation of an Islamic Caliphate.

The protests in Iraq were against the ineffective governance of the Iraqi government. They demanded the resignation of then PM Nouri Al-Maliki. He in turn announced that we would not be contesting the next elections after the completion of his term but refused to resign. The citizens organized themselves around online media, and massive protests raged in Iraq. Maliki tried to paint the protesters as anarchists and supporters of Saddam, and managed to give it sectarian colours. It is this sectarianism that ultimately enables the assault of ISIS, which started a new civil war in Iraq.

Sectarianism also played an important role in the Arab Spring protests in Bahrain, and the ruling monarchy was able to successfully play the Sectarian card to ensure their continued rule. While Bahrain has a Shia majority population, the ruling class in Sunni and gives preferences to Sunnis in every sphere of governance. The protests by themselves were non-sectarian; the protesters were mostly Shias but also had several Sunnis in them. Their main demands were better job opportunities and political reforms. The Bahraini monarchy reacted

by violence, and few protestors were killed as a result. This merely stoked the flames of opposition, and the Bahraini monarchy felt an existential threat.

At this point, the Bahraini Monarchy played the Sectarian card. He framed the protests as a Shia conspiracy to topple his throne, aided and funded by Iran. He also asked the GCC for assistance, and the GCC led by Saudi Arabia was glad to. With Saudi help, the Bahraini monarchy was largely able to subdue the protests. The framing of the protests in sectarian lines ensured the withdrawal of non-sectarian demands and enabled greater sectarianism, which played to the hand of the monarchy. (Al-Rawi 2015)

Lastly, we come to Iran. Iran is not part of the Arab world, thus using the term Arab Spring to describe protests in Iran would be misleading. However, there were protests in Iran in 2011, and one cannot deny that these protests were inspired by the larger Arab Spring protests in the region. The government, however, was able to effectively deal with these protests. They never got to the size and scale in other Middle Eastern countries, and never threatened the regime.

Iran's role in the Arab Spring was largely that of influencing the protests. Initially, Iran was overjoyed at the news of the protests. Most of the regimes that the protests struck were opposed to Iran, and thus Iran was encouraging the protests to try and engineer regime changes. However, this did not go all to plan, and Iran was left in the end trying to prop up regimes friendly to it. Iran's role as an external intervener would be analysed in the next section.

External Intervention in the Arab Spring

External intervention in this context refers to intervention by one country in the other affairs of another. This is not a regional concept; we would not be limited to extra-regional intervention. A Middle Eastern country interfering in the internal affairs of another middle eastern country would count as external intervention for our purposes and would be under the purview of this study. We would also not be making a distinction between intervention by a friendly or hostile government, or between solicited and unsolicited intervention. For example, both Western and Russian intervention in Syria would count as external intervention, even though the former was unsolicited while the latter was requested for by the Syrian government.

The intervention in Arab Spring could be divided into roughly three categories – Western (comprising of US and EU countries, often operating under NATO banner), Russian/Irani (both have often found their interests to be aligned), and Saudi/GCC (Saudi Arabia, while being a western ally, has separate

interests and agenda in the Middle East). Often, interventions of different categories are simultaneously operating in a single country and are moreover operating against each other. We would be looking into all this as well.

Control Group

Firstly, a control group is needed. This would be a group of countries where external intervention was either absent, or negligible. The best case for this is Tunisia. The biggest reason for why external intervention was absent in Tunisia was because of its spontaneity – no one really saw it coming. Things unfolded much faster than anyone could intervene, and Ben Ali's resignation came within a month of the first protests in Tunisia.

Another such country where external intervention was minimum was Jordan. The only instances of activities that can be deemed as foreign intervention was a gentle suggestion by the US to the Jordanian monarchy to consider democratisation, and Saudi economic aid to help the Jordanian regime. There is not much evidence to consider that either affected the result of the Arab Spring in Jordan, and as such do not meet the required threshold for us to consider it as substantial external intervention.

The other case that we would include in the Egyptian example is a strange one – early Egypt. This would mean from the period of initial protests to the military regaining power. Since the military has regained power in Egypt after deposing democratically elected PM Morsi, Egypt has seen substantial external intervention. But till that time, it did not see any substantial intervention from abroad. This was strange because Egypt under Mubarak was a staunch American ally. But perhaps the US was caught between its two priorities of democratisation and supporting its allies, and ultimately decided to do nothing.

From all our three examples, we can discern certain similarities, as well as some differences. In all three examples, the protests were relatively non-violent. While security forces did use violence on certain occasions, by and large the protests stayed non-violent. More importantly, the Arab Spring protests did not devolve into a civil war or civil war-like situation. However, it is also important to take note of the differences. The results in all three cases were quite different – two of these resulted in regime change (Tunisia and Egypt), one of them reverted back to an autocratic regime (Egypt) and one had no regime change (Jordan).

Thus, lack of foreign intervention neither guaranteed nor denied success for the Arab Spring protests. Rather it made sure that the protests remained largely non-violent, even in the face of government violence. Now that we have seen how countries where no substantial external intervention took place, we would examine the countries where intervention did take place.

Libya

Libya is perhaps the clearest example of external intervention in the Arab Spring protests. Two things made the intervention in Libya stand out. Firstly, it was legal and authorized by UN Security Council Resolutions (1970 and 1973). Secondly, it did result in regime change. As such, at least as far as removing a brutal and despotic dictator is concerned, the Arab Spring protests were successful, and foreign intervention can take credit for it. Unfortunately, the removal of Muammar Al-Gaddafi did not result in democratization of Libya, and instead plunged the country into a state of civil war that continues to this day.

A careful examination of the events chronologically would show that the violence preceded external intervention. The protests in Libya began on 15th February 2011 in Benghazi against the arrest of a human rights lawyer, Fethi Tarbel. The protesters called for Gaddafi to step down and for the release of political prisoners. The government responded in the usual fashion of the Middle East: violence. Protests spread across Libya as protestors virtually took control of Benghazi and threatened to take over Tripoli. The embattled Gaddafi regime responded by upping the level of violence.

This was not acceptable to many even within the regime, and as a result numerous defections took place. The most prominent was the Libyan Permanent Representative to the UN, Ibrahim Dabbashi, who called on the international community to take action against the barbarism of the Gaddafi regime. The tides turned for the regime when many in the military defected to the opposition, and the protests had turned into a full-blown rebellion. Libya had descended into a state of Civil War before any concrete foreign intervention had happened.

Seeing the situation in Libya deteriorate, the international community decided that the time to act had come. The UN Security Council passed resolutions imposing sanctions on the Gaddafi regime, froze Gaddafi family's assets, and imposed a travel ban on prominent leaders in the regime. The rebels had by now grouped together under the banner of the Transnational National Council (TNC) and was now governing the areas it controlled. A stalemate had been reached between rebels and pro-Gaddafi forces. But soon, Gaddafi mounted a fresh offensive on rebel-held areas.

Sanctions were not working, and bloodshed had only worsened. The US and EU wanted to undertake military action against the Gaddafi regime, but countries like Russia, China and India were more sceptical. Finally, on 17th March a UN Resolution was passed which authorised the creation of a No-Fly zone over Libya. NATO took the lead in enforcing the No-Fly zone, and to this effect attacked Libya's Air Force and Air Defence installations. This soon turned into a

general air campaign on the Gaddafi forces, and under its cover the rebels were quickly able to advance into Gaddafi-held areas. (Zeidan 2021)

It was a matter of huge debate as to whether NATO had the mandate to conduct a general campaign against Gaddafi. The original resolution had only specified a No-Fly zone, and it was clear that NATO was going above and beyond that. NATO was actively helping the rebels oust Gaddafi. Progress from rebels' side was slow though, and it took many months before Gaddafi was ousted and killed. Western intervention was finally successful, and they had managed to achieve regime change in Libya.

Unlike in Iraq, the Western powers did not participate in the post-conflict nation-building process. While the democratisation process was underway, armed groups remained fragmented and active. Elections for the General National Congress (GNC) were held in 2012, with the National Forces Alliance winning the contest and Mahmoud Jibril becoming the Prime Minister. However, the GNC government were widely criticised for being unable to return peace and security to Libya, and for violating the democratic principles by unilaterally extended their mandate.

In 2014, elections were held to the Libyan House of Representatives, a body rival to the GNC. Libya now had two competing Parliaments, each with armed groups backing them. Libya was sliding back into Civil War. To prevent this, UN-mediated negotiations were held between the two rival bodies to agree on a power-sharing arrangement, resulting in the Skhirat Agreement. The GNC now became the Government of National Accord (GNA), and the House of Representatives would continue as a separate advisory body. Gen. Khalifa Haftar, then leader of the Libyan National Army, sided with the House of Representatives. The GNA thus expelled him from the post as Chief of Army Staff, and the Libyan Army was effectively split.

Thus, the second Libyan Civil War had begun. (Fraam 2019) For the second time in Libya, foreign intervention had happened. This time, it was from a rather unlikely source – Turkey. Turkey supported the GNA faction, arming it with modern weapons to withstand the onslaught of Haftar's forces. Haftar faction, on the other hand, was supported by Russia. One cannot say that it was this intervention which brought violence back to Libya; it was already there. But one cannot also deny that it was foreign import of advanced weaponry which vastly increased the scale of violence in Libya.

Syria

The case of Syria is not very different from that of Libya. In both cases, the demands initially made were for democratisation, i.e., direct regime change,

unlike in other countries where demands were mostly socio-economic and issue-specific. The regime's response was also typical – ordering security forces to fire into the protesting crowd. However, it was not until 15th March that the protests turned into a general uprising. The opposition groups were now determined to remove Assad from power, and to use violence if necessary. By July 2011, they had united under the banner of Free Syrian Army (FSA). The Arab Spring protests in Syria had now turned into a Civil War. By 2012, the rebels were launching attacks to take over Aleppo and Damascus, two of the biggest cities in Syria.

The Syrian conflict was not just about democracy, but also about sectarianism. Most Syrians are Sunni Muslims, but Syria's ruling establishment has been dominated by members of the Alawi sect, of which Assad is a member. However, Assad has so far ruled a mostly secular government and has not tried to oppress the majority Sunni population. But in a region where majoritarian opposition is the norm, even secularism by minority ruling class would feel like oppression to the Sunni majority. Thus, the Sunnis want Assad out of power, and want themselves to form the ruling class.

The conflict in Syria is more complicated than any other in the Middle East arising as an aftermath of the Arab Spring. It has more internal and external actors compared to any other party. In some ways, it is a quadrilateral conflict, with the 4 different parties being the Syrian government headed by Assad, the non-Islamist opposition (initially operating under the banner of the FSA), the Islamist opposition (initially under the Nusrah Front, but after the fall of ISIS it became the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham or HTS), and the Kurds. It also has 4 major external participants – the US, Iran, Russia, and Turkey.

External intervention in the Syrian conflict has been of varying degrees. Unlike in the Libyan case, American intervention in Syria has been of a mostly indirect nature. The US has been training and supplying the non-Islamist opposition, as well as the Kurdish fighters. While the initial goal of the US was regime change in Syria and bringing a transition to democracy, the rise of ISIS meant that US was forced to change its priorities. Currently, it no longer sees regime change as feasible and is only trying to protect the Kurdish sovereign territories.

The main ally of the Syrian regime under Assad has been Iran. There is certainly a sectarian angle to it, Iran being a Shia country and Assad being an Alawite (a sub-sect of Shia Islam) and his opposition being mainly Sunni. But Iranian support for Assad goes beyond sectarianism – Iranian goal ensuring the survival of the Assad regime is to provide strategic depth for its proxy fighters fighting in Lebanon and keeping a check on Israel. Iranian support is not merely providing arms and resources, but manpower as well. It has mostly done this by diverting its various proxy actors in other states (such as the Hezbollah in Lebanon) and by using the Quds (external wing of the IRGC).

Russian intervention in the Syrian conflict has been in support of the Assad regime. Their support, while secondary to that of the Iranians, have nonetheless been very important in the survival of the regime. Russian support has been mostly in the form of financial help, arms, and air support. The air support has been vital in securing cover for regime ground forces to operate and was indispensable in Syria's fight against ISIS. Russia's interest in the conflict is to secure a withdrawal of the Western interference from the country. It legitimizes its own involvement by pointing to the fact that its presence is solicited by the sovereign of the country, while Western presence is not. More broadly, Russia rejects foreign states intervening against autocratic governments on behalf of domestic opposition movements.

Turkish interest initially was to see the Assad regime go, but it quickly realised that it was not possible. Since then, its primary interest in the country has been to prevent the establishment of a Syrian Kurdish entity in northern Syria. Turkey has a significant Kurdish minority, one which demands autonomy and even separatism. Particularly problematic for Turkey is the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), a group Turkey labels as a terror outfit. PKK has contacts with the YPG operating in Syria, and Turkey worries that a Syrian sovereign Kurdish entity might support the PKK and make Turkey's domestic situation more unstable. Turkey has launched a limited incursion into Northern Syria along its border to flush the region of Kurdish insurgents, a move many have termed genocidal of Kurds. (Ford 2019)

Thus, foreign intervention in Syria has been from myriad powers with differing interests. But would it be correct to say that foreign intervention has led to the destabilization of Syria? The role of the Syrian government under Assad cannot be underestimated in causing destabilization in Syria. After all, Assad's extremely brutal and heavy-handed response to the Arab Spring protests is what caused the militarization of the conflict in the first place. Also, it was Assad who invited foreign powers to interfere in support of his government, by enlisting the support of Russia and Iran.

One can say that, while foreign intervention is not the primary cause of the Syrian conflict, it has certainly made matters much worse. By introducing advanced weaponry, increased conflict funding and foreign fighters, external intervention has increased the scale of the conflict. This has had an unfortunate collateral effect on the civilians, and that has contributed to the tragedy of the refugee crisis.

Bahrain

Bahrain has been a different case altogether from Libya and Syria. Unlike in those countries, foreign intervention has been restricted to a single power –

Saudi Arabia – which acted on the behest of and in support of the government. However, like Syria, Bahrain is also one of the few countries where the minority community (in this case, Sunni Muslims) form the ruling class.

Historically, the Shia majority has felt oppressed by the rule of the Sunni minority. Many protests have been held by the Shias in Bahrain, and they form an active dissident group. It is also true that many Shia groups in Bahrain have taken assistance from Iran, the leading Shia power in the Middle East. However, it would also be wrong to say that the Arab Spring protests in Bahrain were only sectarian in nature. While most protestors were Shia (which is natural since the Shias form a majority of the population), Sunni protestors were also present.

However, it was the Bahraini monarch who attempted to use the brush of sectarianism to tarn the reputation of the protestors. Not only did he say that the protests were a Shia conspiracy to topple the Sunni monarchy, but also that the protestors were funded and supported by Iran. By blaming Iran, the Bahraini monarch sorted to portray this as an external intervention into Bahraini internal affairs, rather than legitimate demands by an aggrieved population.

There is no evidence to suggest that the Bahraini protests were indeed the handiwork of Iran. In fact, Bahrain was not even on top of the priority list of Iran, who were more concerned with the situation in countries like Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. However, the lies and the falsehoods of the monarch did work in his favour, as he succeeded in turning them into self-fulfilling prophecies. It led to a withdrawal of Sunnis from the protests since they were afraid of being seen as collaborating with foreign powers. Shias were the only ones left protesting, and the non-sectarian nature of the protests had broken down. The demands of the protestors got increasingly sectarian, and it seemed as if the monarch's hold over the country was weakening.

The Bahraini government made an appeal to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC, a six-member body of countries in the peninsula), and Saudi Arabia was happy to oblige. Saudi Arabia sent 1200 troops to Bahrain, while UAE helped with another 800 troops. It was not just soldiers though, but advanced weaponry like APC's and helicopters, and together they put down the protests. Saudi Arabia had succeeded in preserving the rule of the Khalifa family in Bahrain. (Bronner & Slackman 2011)

It must be asked as to why Saudi Arabia acted swiftly in the case of Bahrain, while it did not do so in other examples. One big and obvious reason is that Bahrain is a neighbouring country to Saudi Arabia. However, the situation also needs to be understood within the context of the new Cold War in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia and Iran are engaged in a conflict for domination within the Middle East. And this is where it leads us back to sectarianism. While Shias are in a minority in Saudi Arabia they are concentrated in the eastern region. It is

not a stretch suggest that Shia victory in Bahrain might lead to support for the Shias in Saudi Arabia as well. (Nuruzzaman 2013)

While it is true that the Arab Spring protests in Bahrain were not funded by Iran, it is also true that the success of the protests in removing the regime of Khalifa family would greatly benefit Iran. Iran phobia is not limited to Bahrain but is present in Saudi Arabia as well. If Iran can get a foothold in Bahrain, it could lead to Iranian entry in the Gulf region, which is presently dominated by Saudi Arabia. This is unacceptable to Saudi Arabia, and hence the Saudi eagerness in their intervention in Bahrain. As further evidence of this, Saudi's (along with the other GCC countries) blockaded Qatar when they felt that Qatar was getting too close to Iran.

Effects of External intervention

Now that we have looked at three countries where external intervention did take place in the context of the Arab Spring protests, we can look at some things in common regarding the results. In all these countries, the protests got violent. However, in only two of the countries (Syria and Libya) did it go to the extent of Civil War. Violence in Bahrain was mostly one sided, by the regime (and Saudi and Emirati troops) against the protestors. This was no worse than in Egypt, where Mubarak used similar force against the protestors.

One important observation regarding intervention is that intervention often decides as to who prevails. In the Libyan case, NATO intervention in favour of the opposition was crucial in the downfall of Gaddafi. In the Bahraini case, Saudi intervention ensured the survival of the Al Khalifa monarchy. In the curious case of Syria, where intervention was multilateral, Iranian and Russian support of the regime seemed to trump the American and initial Turkish support of anti-regime opposition, ensuring its survival. Foreign intervention thus can play a decisive role in ensuring the end result of a conflict, and it is proof that intervention works in getting the (short-term) objective of the intervening power.

However, this is no proof that the long-term objectives of the intervening powers would be met as well. One only needs to look at the present situation in Libya to see that things are not what NATO had in mind when the first bombs were dropped from their aircrafts. One reason for this is of course the lack of foresight: foreign powers often do not have any idea about what their long-term objectives in the region are and lack a long-term strategy. They have a very myopic vision and think that if they are able to fulfil their short-term objectives, then their long-term plans would fall into place. The second reason is that, often, the best-laid plans can go to waste. As the saying goes, Man proposes, and God

disposes. Hence, an unanticipated event might lead to carefully thought of plans to be rendered useless.

Another important effect is increasing the intensity of violence. In all the three cases of intervention we looked at, the intensity of violence increased sharply right after foreign intervention began. This is easily explained: foreign powers often bring advanced weaponry and, in many cases, foreign manpower. In fact, this is not unique to the period of the Arab Spring, nor to the Middle East region. Substantial previous research has been conducted on the effects of intervention on civil conflicts, and the consensus seems to be that external intervention increases the intensity (in terms of casualties) as well as the duration of conflicts. (Sousa 2014)

There are also some conclusions that should not be taken. These are those misleading statements that partisan groups often put out, but on a closer examination have no actual basis. One such take is that external intervention from outside the region leads to greater instability than from within the region. Even a cursory look at the various conflicts post-Arab Spring would show that this is not true. While NATO intervention in Libya did cause a civil war in the aftermath of the downfall of Gaddafi, the same is true for Iranian intervention in the Syrian conflict. The fact that Saudi intervention in Bahrain did not cause instability and civil war can be easily explained on account of the fact that protests never got very violent in the first place, and it was a simple case of government repression than civil war. Blaming extra-regional groups for instability in the Middle East is a blatant attempt to mislead and spread propaganda by those with vested interests in not allowing extra-regional actors into the region, while their own destabilising activities go on unhindered.

Implications for the region

We have looked at how external intervention has affected the region after the Arab Spring protests. Using the takeaways from our analysis on this, we could create a model to predict how future intervention would look in the region, and what consequences it would have for the region.

The most important takeaway for a would-be external intervener from this series of events is that, while external intervention in support of one side can decisively shift the conflict in favour of that side, if two interveners support opposite sides of a conflict, it only drags out the conflict and makes it worse without any quick resolution. This can be framed through the model of a prisoners' dilemma.

In this case, the two external powers (each supporting a side in the conflict) are equivalent to the two prisoners. Cooperating would involve not intervening in support of your side in the conflict, while defecting would involve intervening in support of your side. If both cooperate, it will mean neither power intervenes, and the scale of conflict stays low and there is a chance for peaceful resolution of the conflict. If one power cooperates while the other defects, it means one power intervenes in support of their side, and the scale of conflict stays low while there is a quick but violent resolution of the conflict. However, if both powers defect, it means both intervene in support of their side, and the scale of conflict goes up while the chances of a quick resolution (peaceful or violent) evaporate.

Now that we know what the possible decisions and payoffs are for each power, it is quite easy to know what they would actually do, since prisoners' dilemma has been modelled repeatedly (e.g., Wagner 1983). It is in the collective interest of each power to not intervene with their respective side, since not only would this allow the conflict to be peacefully and quickly resolved but also save resources which could be employed elsewhere. However, the fact that it is in the individual interest of each power to intervene would mean that both would end up intervening in support of their respective sides, worsening the situation for both. Both could not cooperate because of a fear of defection; anarchy in the international arena forbids cooperation.

As we have previously mentioned, American unipolarity is slowly eroding and we're going towards an age of multipolarity. What this means for the region is that more and more powers are going to be assertive in the region, supporting countries and even proxy actors. This includes both extra-region powers (like Russia, China, or maybe EU and India in the future) as well as intra-regional (Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel). With all these powers having their own interests in the region, we could see a prisoners' dilemma like situation, except with multiple prisoners instead of just two. This would only increase the incentive to intervene, since you have to fear from intervention not just from one other power, but many.

Essentially, this would mean that interventions in the region would only increase. That is not to say that external powers are not aware of the damage they are doing, or the futility of their efforts in intervention. They are aware that any intervention on their part would be answered by intervention by the opposing power in the support of their respective side, which would drag out the conflict and prevent either power from achieving their originally intended objective. However, they also know that the price of not intervening would be letting the other power achieve their objective, and thus their position would be relatively worse off. This is the exact same logic that caused several interventions in the Third World from both US and the USSR, despite causing tremendous destruction to the countries as well as huge expenditures on interventions.

The increasing intervention in the region would mean that conflicts which would have stayed as local, small-scale ones would through external intervention turn into large-scale protracted conflicts. Not only would conflicts become longer and involve more and more people, but the amount of large, high-tech weapons would also increase. Conflicts which were earlier restricted to small arms (due to the restriction of resources of local participants) would now involve heavy weaponry like artillery, armour, and manned and unmanned air power.

The last point was in full display in the Second Libyan Civil war. While the first Libyan Civil war was a mostly one-sided intervention (by NATO, in favour of anti-Gaddafi rebels), the Second civil war was a multi-sided intervention with two broad fronts. The first is the GNA government, based in Tripoli, which is supported by Turkey and has the recognition of the major international bodies such as the UN and EU. The other is the LNA government, led by Gen Haftar, which is supported mainly by Russia but also Qatar and France. The GNA government has deployed Turkish drones to great effect, destroying LNA air defences. Russia on the other hand, has mostly stuck to using conventional fighters, but not too much effect. The Second Libyan civil war is a precursor to the future conflicts in the region, which would see increased use of drones. The Yemen Civil War is another example, where Iranian made Houthi drones has been a source of headache for the Saudis, who cannot figure out a way to counter them.

Possible Solutions: A proposition

In the last section, we looked at how external intervention in the Middle East can be modelled using Prisoner's Dilemma. Thus, defection becomes the norm and cooperation becomes impossible. However, since the same game would be played repeatedly, we can also say that it is an instance of repeated Prisoners' Dilemma. Repeated prisoners' dilemma has some crucial differences compared to prisoners' dilemma, due to which cooperation may be possible.

In prisoners' dilemma, the fact that neither side has any repercussions for defecting or any incentive for cooperating makes defection the rational choice. However, in repeated prisoners' dilemma, since the game is played multiple times there is a repercussion for defecting. If a player chooses to defect, it knows that in the next game the other player would defect as well. Also, there is an incentive to cooperate, since if it chooses to cooperate, there is a high chance that its opponent would cooperate in the next game as well.

What does it mean for the external powers in the Middle East? If they could agree to not intervene in the conflicts of the region, then any state which breaks this agreement and intervenes would know that in the next conflict every

other power would intervene as well. However, if they all stay true to the agreement, then they can benefit in the long run as they would save their resources, benefitting the region as well.

This agreement between states can take the form of an International Treaty of non-intervention. If big powers see that it is in their own interest to not intervene and are assured that other powers would not break this agreement, then they would be amenable to sign such a treaty. Gradually, this treaty would be elevated to the status of international law and become one of the norms of an international order. However, the problem would be getting states to trust each other, and look at long-term benefits over short-term objectives. States often become very myopic in international affairs, and as such they may think that such a treaty would not be in their immediate interests. Thus, maybe such a treaty is very improbable.

Final Remarks

The Arab Spring were a series of protests that first started in Tunisia, but then spread to all over the Arab world. The effect of the Arab Spring varied across countries, while some such as Tunisia and Egypt saw regime change, others such as Syria and Libya fell into civil war, while yet others like Jordan and Bahrain saw no discernible change. This paper tried to look into external intervention as a potential cause for the different results in different countries.

Firstly, the paper considered three countries where no external intervention took place, as a control group. Next, it looked at three countries where external intervention did take place. Next, it compared the two groups to see how intervention affected the conflicts. It found that, in cases where external intervention is only in support for one side, it is decisive and turns the scale of the conflict in that sides favour. But if intervention by multiple powers is in support of both sides, then the conflict gets protracted. Another thing this paper observed is that external intervention increases the scale of the conflict, in terms of both manpower and armaments. This often translates into higher casualties.

The paper also looked at the role of UN as an external mediator and intervenor. It described how increasing assertiveness by the emerging powers like Russia and China would mean that the UN Security Council's effectiveness in decreasing by the day. As the world shifts towards a multipolarity, we would see increasing use of veto in the Security Council, as a result of which UN-sanctioned actions would be a rarity.

The paper goes on to model how external powers would behave in the future using Game Theory. The decisions and payoffs in this scenario resemble that of game theory, thus it can be expected that states would rather defect and intervene in support of their respective sides, than cooperate and keep external intervention away. Thus, instances of external intervention in the Middle East would only grow in the future, with some new powers also stretching their might to secure their own interests.

Lastly, the paper looked at a possible solution for this problem, which would model it on Repeated Prisoner's Dilemma. Since the same situation would be played over and over game, external powers may have an incentive to cooperate and not intervene, if they can be assured that other powers would do the same. This can be done through an international treaty, where states would vow not to intervene in internal conflicts of other states in the Middle East. However, since states are myopic and only interested in their short-term objectives, it is unlikely that such a treaty would be adopted or followed.

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Book Review : "Central and Eastern Europe after the First World War". Edited by Burkhard Olschowsky, Piotr Juszkiewicz, and Jan Rydel.
De Gruyter, Olderbourg. 2021. 435p.

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"Central and Eastern Europe after the First World War" is an impressive book that resulted from the conference held at the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Berlin (January 31 - February 2, 2018). Edited by Burkhard Olschowsky, Piotr Juszkiewicz, and Jan Rydel, this book incorporates 25 articles signed by 26 contributors from eight countries.

The Institute of European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (Warsaw) and the Federal Institute for Culture and History of the Germans in Eastern Europe (Oldenburg) are the main supporters of this book published to commemorate the moments that defined the (re)construction of Central and Eastern Europe, in the aftermath of the Great War. The topic of the volume is an extensive one, covering precisely the most important aspects of the historiographical debate:

- history of conflicts
- history of ideas
- territorial history
- economic and social history
- psychological consequences of war
- history of memory.

The **Introduction** created by the three editors of the book is a complex and logically structured synthesis in four sections. This is a real thematic incursion into the meaning of every page in this book. Contextuality is the strong point of this *Introduction*; the authors have managed to capture in an easy-to-decipher key exactly the elements that can help the reader to understand the works published in this volume. Contextuality is historiographical, geographical,

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political, journalistic, social, anthropological, economic, cultural so that the Great War and its consequences can be seen in itself.

An important subchapter of this *Introduction* is entitled "Founding States - Successes and Failures". Going through it offers the chance to understand the contextual insight of the states' building between 1918 and 1920. In the interwar period, they became the actors of European politics and were on the political, diplomatic, and military agenda of the great powers. Knowing the process of their constitution helps the reader to appreciate the broader perspective of interwar European geopolitics. Finally, this *Introduction* discusses all the major themes of the era: violence, paroxysm, revisionism, colonialism, ideologies, the Spanish influenza pandemic, modernization, emigration.

After such a complex introduction from a historical and thematic point of view, the book opens the way for the reader towards the five thematic groups of articles published by contributors.

History of Conflicts discusses *The Central European Civil War, 1918-1921* (J. Böhler), *How the Habsburg Monarchy, Austria and Hungary were drawn into the Russian October Revolution between 1917-1919* (I. Murber), *'The Red Scare 'in Yugoslavia: The Hungarian Soviet Republic and the beginning of the Yugoslav anti-communism 1919-1921* (T. Lompar), I*nternationalism or national separatism. The relationship between Kosice social democracy and Czechoslovakia 1918-1919* (A. Simion) and *Charades at Versailles: Poland and Ukraine at the Paris Peace Conferences* (W. Templin). In essence, these chapters highlight the fact that some conflicts have been provoked by nations in order to achieve what they could not achieve in other ways. On the other hand, the experiences of Hungarians, Yugoslavs, Czechoslovaks, Ukrainians have shown that similar ideological movements in the new states have encountered the barriers of nation-states, which have often hindered cooperation between them.

The second part of the book contains three chapters that have been grouped under the theme ***History of Ideas***. In his article, B. Olschowsky compares the two competing perspectives on the principle of self-determination of nations: V.I. Lenin and W. Wilson. In the author's opinion, they "failed because of their far-reaching utopian ideas and the persistently severe social and national damage inflicted by the 'Great War'." For his part, M. Bresciani points out that "Fascism's own idea of Europe was grounded in hierarchies of nations and empires, in which fascist Italy had to play a leading role." An interesting perspective on the post-war world was illustrated by P. Juszkiewicz (*Modernism and War. The idea of regeneration in European Art and Architecture after the First World War*). From this perspective, "the relationship between the First World War and modernity can also be approached not so much as an external factor of modernization, but as a crucial element of the modernization process itself."

The five chapters in the third section (***Territorial History***) present the internal processes of rebuilding the states of Central and Eastern Europe. Austria (A. Suppan) Hungary (L. Szarka), Romania (A. Dancila; M. Sălăgean) and Georgia (B. Kobakhidze) are the case studies that this section of the book depicts to the reader in order to highlight the particularities of the determinants in post-war consolidation of nations.

Similarly, the fourth section (***Economic and Social History***) provides four studies on fiscal and monetary policy during the economic transformations of Central and Eastern Europe (M. Górny and W. Borodziej), revisionism and political radicalization in Bulgaria (O. Schulz), The Belarusian Civil War, 1918-1922 (A. Zamoiski), but also about post-war transformations in Jewish politics (A. Hofmeister).

Psychological Consequences of War is the title of the fifth section of the book. The three chapters of this part deal with Slovak (M. Syrny) and Polish (J. Urbanek) society, but also the struggle of women for civil, social, and political rights in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland (K. Labowicz-Dymanus).

Finally, a key theme in completing the debate on the evolution of Central and Eastern Europe is the ***History of Memory***. The case studies presented in the sixth section are those of: Poland (B. Dziewanowski-Stefanczyk), Lithuania (V. Safronovas) and Romania (F. Abraham). The narrative of each nation in the post-war period was intended to justify either a certain right to state independence, or a certain geopolitical evolution, or the evolution of the relations being built between the new states.

The volume coordinated by Burkhard Olschowsky, Piotr Juszkiewicz, and Jan Rydel has a real historiographical value. Written to celebrate a century since the end of World War I, this book paves the way for a complex and interdisciplinary approach to the evolution of Central and Eastern Europe in the aftermath of the Great War. The book sets the foundation for historians to broaden their research agenda for what the first interwar decade was for Europe's political, economic, and social evolution in the twentieth century. The contribution of so many authors from numerous countries provides this volume with a special value in the recent historiography of the last century.